



**Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION  
2024 LEGISLATIVE REPORT  
pursuant to Section 20.058 Florida Statutes**

Friends of the Reserve

Citizen Support Organization (CSO) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

PO Box 120, Eastpoint, FL 32328

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

850) 670-7700

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Website Address (*required if applicable*): www.apalachicolareserve.com

Check to confirm your Code of Ethics is posted conspicuously on your website.

**Statutory Authority:**

**Section 20.2551, F.S., Citizen support organizations; use of property; audit; public records; partnerships.** In summary, the statute specifies the organizational requirements, operational parameters, duties of a CSO to support the Department of Environmental Protection (Department), or individual units of the Department, use of Department property, audit requirements, public records requirements, and authorizes public-private partnerships to enhance lands managed by the Department.

**Section 20.058, F.S., Citizen support and direct-support organizations.** In summary, the statute specifies the organizational requirements to submit an annual report each year for each designated CSO and to post that information on the Departments website.

**YOUR MISSION AND LAST CALENDAR YEAR'S PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

**CSO's Mission:** (Consistent with your Articles and Bylaws)

Our mission is to support program funding, environmental education, stewardship of natural and cultural resources, scientific research, and all other endeavors of the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve.

**Describe Last Calendar Year's Results Obtained:** Brag! (List or discuss the past calendar year's accomplishments and contributions. Cite specific support from last calendar year's Annual Program Plan.)

**Education**  
The Friends of the Reserve supported TOTE Teachers of the Estuary), an in-service program in which teachers from the area engaged in activities and training to help them better incorporate the estuarine and marine science into their teaching. FOR provided lunch for the participants. FOR also supported three events led by the Education department by providing food and other supplies for activities. They were Estuaries Day, An Afternoon with Monarchs, and Serenade by the Sea. FOR applied for and received a \$2000 event promotion grant from the Franklin County Tourism Development Council to help offset the costs of the t-shirts given out at Estuaries Day. In addition, FOR awarded a \$2000 college scholarship to a Franklin County High School student who exhibited interest in a career in a related field.

**Describe the CSO's Plans for the Next Three Calendar Years:**

**Education**  
Continue support of the Teachers of the Estuary program.  
Award a \$2000 scholarship annually to a high school senior interested in a career in a related field.  
Provide support for large events hosted by the Education Department such as Estuaries Day, An Afternoon with Monarchs, and Serenade the Bay.

**Sea Turtle Conservation**  
Continue sea turtle conservation efforts by providing stipends for interns. t-shirts for volunteers, and other supplies as needed to secure and protect turtle nest.  
Furnish dorms as needed to house interns.

**CSO's LAST CALENDAR YEAR STATISTICS:**

**Total Number of CSO General Membership:**

**Total Number of Board of Directors:**

**Total Volunteer Hours for the Board of Directors:**

**ORCP & CSO RELATIONSHIP:**

Do not duplicate by describing accomplishments and contributions in the summary. Brag in the above Results Obtained. Below, describe the relationship.

**AP Manager's Comments on the CSO & ORCP Relationship and Support:**

Provide your perspective on

- Changing developments of the managed area provided by the CSO.
- Effectiveness of the organization in fulfilling their purpose to support the managed area(s).
- Effectiveness of the Board of Directors in completing their Annual Program Plan.
- The relationship between the ORCP team and CSO. What went well? Are there areas of improvement?

The Reserve manager continues to have a strong relationship with the Board and the Executive Director of the Friends. Communication is happening at least on a weekly basis and frequently more often. The board meets every other month but will do poll by email if needed between meetings.

The Friends continue to support the Apalachicola Reserve website, where most of the public connect to the Reserve. There are several publications found there including maps of managed areas, the Roadmap to Recreation, the quarterly Oystercatcher newsletter, and more information about the programs. The website is also a repository for educational videos, Symposium recordings and Sci Café presentations. In addition, the president of the Friends contributes regular posts to the Friends Facebook page, which is also used as a marketing tool for the Training Program's Stewardship Series. This year, the advertisements for the classes (which are free) have been "boosted" on Facebook, which has increased attendance significantly.

The Friends have been assisting the Reserve in fulfilling a new requirement for all DEP volunteers to go through a Level 2 Background Check. This includes fingerprinting, which is a bit challenging given our location. All volunteers that work with children, including those that work at the Center, assist with education programs or help with outreach activities must go through the background check. The Friends are paying for all of the regular service volunteers to get this completed. This is a cost that the DEP is not able to cover and would normally be the responsibility of the volunteer. Our volunteers contribute 1000s of hours each year and are a huge asset to all of the Reserve's programs.

A huge support that the Friends has offered this year is to act as fiscal agent for events at the Reserve. Because of the rural nature of our location, it is difficult for people attending all day events to go get lunch in a timely manner. What we have been able to do this year is have the Friends pay for a caterer to provide lunch at the Reserve that is paid for by the participants. This has worked out well and has allowed for meetings to be more productive. The Friends also continue to serve as fiscal agents for grants and other pass-through monies.

The Friends continue to support the Sea Turtle Adopt-A-Nest program which has had moderate success raising money for the sea turtle program. Changes will be made this year to improve outreach about the program to promote it as well as follow up to the donors. Improvements to the donation portal have already improved the process considerably. The Friends will continue to support all steps of the process going forward. The most important outcome of the adopt-a-nest program from the Reserve's perspective, is the funding supports two interns through the summer that assist the nest monitoring on St. George Island and Little St. George Island. The Friends support the Reserve programs in many other ways and we are very grateful to them for their willingness to consider supporting new initiatives at the Reserve.

**CSO President's Comments on the CSO & ORCP Relationship and Support:**

Provide your perspective on the relationship between the ORCP and CSO. What went well? Are there areas of improvement?

We have an excellent relationship with the ORCP. She attends all of our Board meetings and gives us a complete rundown on events, hiring practices, and special needs at each meeting. She also is an active participant in any brainstorming the group has to do on new ideas or improved policies and procedures. I do not see how this relationship can be improved since it is working very well at the present time.

**SUMMARIZE FINANCIAL ACTIVITY FOR LAST CALENDAR YEAR, DIRECT AP(S) SUPPORT & REVENUES: Program**

**Services** are costs related to providing your organizations' programs or services in accordance with your mission. Describe and provide expenses that directly support the AP(s). For established nonprofit organizations, program service expenses generally represent most of the overall expenses of the organization. For the last calendar year provide the total \$ for each that apply. **Do not use commas.**

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Building improvement, construction, or renovations   | \$              |
| Cultural resources (e.g., historic structure restoration/ renovation)                            | \$ 0            |
| Natural resources (e.g., native plants, natural lands restoration)                               | \$ 1500         |
| Maintenance equipment (e.g., mowers, chippers, blowers, chainsaws)                               | \$ 0            |
| Other facilities and landscape maintenance   | \$ 2000         |
| Vehicles (e.g., trucks/cars, UTVs, golf carts, accessible devices, etc.)                         | \$ 0            |
| Amenities (e.g., water fountains, benches, picnic tables, recreational equipment, kiosks etc.)   | \$ 0            |
| ORCP employees or volunteers support (e.g., interns, training, uniforms, awards, or recognition) | \$ 15000        |
| Big ticket visitor center exhibits or interpretation updates                                     | \$ 0            |
| Preserve exhibits, displays, signage   | \$ 0            |
| Preserve publications, brochures, maps, etc.   | \$ 0            |
| Programing/interpretation support material purchases   | \$ 0            |
| Other program services   | \$ 10000        |
| <b>Total Program Service Expenses</b>  | <b>\$ 27150</b> |

**Visitor Services Revenue** are revenues and the sources generated from fundraising on preserve property. **Do not use commas.**

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Preserve gift shops, craft stores, and concession sales                                    | \$ 0            |
| Merchandise sales (e.g., plants, firewood, ice, t-shirts, hats, etc.)                      | \$ 27000        |
| Programs and Special Events (e.g., fundraising workshops, seasonal events, concerts, etc.) | \$ 0            |
| Vending (e.g., drink machines, penny press, laundry, Wifi, etc.)                           | \$ 0            |
| Rentals (e.g., bikes, canoe, kayak, SUPs, etc.)  | \$ 0            |
| In-preserve donation boxes   | \$ 7800         |
| Other visitor services revenue   | \$ 0            |
| <b>Total Visitor Services Revenue</b>  | <b>\$ 34800</b> |

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**NET ASSETS:** \$

Organizations end of last year's Total Assets minus Total Liabilities. This is not the above's Visitor Service Revenue minus Program Service Expenses.

**CSO AUDIT THRESHOLD:**

**Last Calendar Year's Total Expenses (including grants)** \$

Are the CSO's annual total expenses \$300,000 including grants? Then Section 215.981(2), Florida Statute requires an independent CPA audit using Government Audit Standards ([U.S. GAO Yellow Book](#)). The audit is **due by September 1** (9 months after the CSO's calendar year ends) to the Florida Auditor General and to the Department.

**CONFIRM ATTACHMENTS:**

Code of Ethics

**The most recent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N receipt. All IRS Form 990's must be complete with Part III Program Service and all appropriate Schedules (A, O, and others as appropriate). If filing an IRS extension, attach the IRS 8868 receipt and the most recent complete 990 and schedules.**

**2024 CSO Legislative Report Acknowledgment**

**This information is complete to the best of my knowledge pursuant to Section 20.058 Florida Statutes**



Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printname: Doug Jimerson, CSO President

Friends of the Reserve, Inc.

Date: 5/24/2024

Signature: Jennifer Harper Digitally signed by Jennifer Harper  
Date: 2024.05.24 08:32:17 -04'00'

Print name: Jennifer Harper, AP Manager

Date: 5/24/2024