

Friends of the 500th
Committee Charter
Environmental Education Committee

The Bylaws of the Friends of the 500th provide that the Friends Board of Directors shall create such committees deemed necessary to accomplish the purposes of the Friends. Each Friends committee shall have at least one (1) Board member who shall be appointed by the Friends President, subject to the approval of the appointee and the Board of Directors, and who shall report at each Board of Directors meeting on the activities of the committee. However, the committee chairperson need not be a Friends Board member. All members in a decision-making role within the committee must be Friends members in good standing.

All actions of committees shall remain consistent with the purpose of the Friends corporation status under the laws of the State of West Virginia and tax exempt status pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code and shall be subject to final governance of the Friends Board of Directors.

Each committee may adopt its own rules provided they are not inconsistent with this Friends Committee Charter, policies and procedures adopted by the Friends Board of Directors, or the Friends Bylaws and are consistent with the purpose of the corporation status and tax exempt status. Such committee rules will be provided to the Friends Secretary and entered as official records of the Friends.

The Purposes of the Friends are:

- (a) To preserve and promote awareness of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) and to conserve the unique natural and cultural resources contained therein, while promoting nature oriented education.
- (b) To enlist volunteers, sponsor special events, and provide public involvement in decision making as it relates to the preservation and appreciation of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge.
- (c) To do anything necessary and proper for the accomplishment of any purpose set forth herein and any other activities, purposes and goals consistent with the purpose of the corporation status under laws of the State of West Virginia and tax exempt status pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.
- (d) To enter into agreements with the U.S. Government and /or the State of West Virginia, or local branches of government or agencies for this purpose.

Background & Purpose: The Friends of the 500th have been pursuing and promoting environmental education opportunities on the Refuge and in the community since their inception. Environmental education is a priority goal for both the Friends and the Refuge. To coordinate and maximize these opportunities, a formal committee has been formed and tasked with pursuing the following mission and goals.

MISSION:

The Environmental Education Committee of the Friends of the 500th will work in close cooperation with Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge to promote environmental stewardship, especially of the Refuge, and recognition of the Refuge as a positive resource to the community by creating an organized and diverse package of Environment Education initiatives.

GOALS:

1. Convey a consistent message and promote recognition of the Refuge thru volunteers, not just staff in uniform.
2. Plan programs consistent with Refuge program priorities and initiatives.
3. Create an organized package of programs that gives everyone a reason to come here. Expand audiences and programs.
4. Provide training for Environmental Education trainers and volunteers.

Board Liaison: A Friends Board Liaison to the Environmental Education Committee shall be appointed each November following elections for the Friends Board of Directors and shall actively participate in meetings, activities and decision making of the committee.

Friends Membership Requirements: All members of the Environmental Education Committee shall be members in good standing of the Friends. Anyone assisting with implementation of these environmental education programs will be encouraged to support the Friends through membership, but it will not be required. Attendance shall be recorded at all meetings and a membership roster shall be maintained by the chairperson.

Tenure: The Environmental Education Committee shall be a standing committee of the Friends and shall work to accomplish the specified purpose as outlined in their mission and goals in cooperation with the Refuge. The Friends Board of Directors may revoke the committee charter, by a two-thirds vote of the full Board, if it is determined that the committee is no longer fulfilling its mission and the mission of the Friends.

Timeline: *N/A*

Rules (Powers and Duties) :

- The Environmental Education Committee shall be directed by a chairperson chosen from committee members. The committee must have at least four active members, including the chairperson and the Friends Board Liaison. Additionally, at least one Refuge staff member will actively participate.
- The committee roster shall be provided to the Friends Secretary at least once per year and maintained on file with the permanent records of the Friends of the 500th Board of Directors.
- The committee shall meet at least quarterly.
- To the extent possible, at least five days advance notice shall be given for all meetings.
- Written minutes of meetings shall be kept. Such minutes shall be distributed to all members and participants and shall be provided to the Friends Secretary in a timely fashion to be maintained on file with the permanent records of the Friends of the 500th Board of Directors.
- Recommendation for all new programs must first meet the approval of both the Friends Board of Directors and the Refuge.

Quorum: The quorum of the Environmental Education Committee to conduct business shall be the majority of the active members. However, members, as specific program leaders and assistants, may engage in all aspects of planning necessary to develop and implement an approved program.

Financial & Reporting Responsibilities:

- The Board Liaison shall report on the activities of the committee at each meeting of the Friends Board of Directors.
- An annual report, outlining the status and accomplishments, shall be provided to the Friends President by the Environmental Education committee chairperson for the Friends Annual Membership meeting.
- Environmental Education committee members shall expend funds only as approved in the Friends of the 500th annual budget, including those funds that may be designated as specific Refuge projects with Refuge approval. Expenditures greater than \$150 that are not itemized in the budget shall first be brought to the Friends of 500th Board for approval. Receipts and reimbursement requests must be provided or arrangements made for prepayment. Additional funding needs will be addressed on as needed basis.