

Friends of the 500th
Committee Charter
Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley

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: Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley were initiated in 2006 as a Chapter of the West Virginia State Master Naturalists Program. This chapter was dissolved according to guidelines outlined in the original charter with the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (the State Program). Remaining funds were transferred to the Friends of the 500th (with permission of the State Program). In early 2010, the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley was chartered as a Chapter of the West Virginia State Master Naturalist program with the Friends of the 500th being the sponsor. As such, the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley function as a committee of the Friends of the 500th. The Friends will serve as the fiscal agent and the Chapter shall operate under the Friends 501(c)(3) federal tax exemption status. The Friends and the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge had previously supported the Master Naturalists by providing instructors,

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meeting space, volunteer opportunities, student scholarship assistance, and more. The Friends and the CVNWR will continue to support the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley in this manner.

Purpose: The purpose of the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley committee is directly related to the purposes of the Friends as specified above. Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley provide nature oriented education and provide a rich volunteer base for Friends and Refuge projects. A detailed mission of the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley is described in their Chapter Bylaws (attached to this Charter). The focus is to be “an educational, non-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to developing a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of West Virginia.” The Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley will be largely self-supporting.

Board Liaison: A Friends Board Liaison to the Master Naturalist of Canaan Valley 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 Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley Coordinating Committee shall be members in good standing of the Friends of the 500th. All Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley candidates shall be a member of the Friends for the first year that they participate in the training period, and this membership fee shall be included in the program registration fee and transferred to the Friends general funds. In subsequent years all members will have opportunity to and shall be encouraged to renew their membership with the Friends; Friends membership will not be a prerequisite for being Master Naturalist after the initial training year. The Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley committee shall maintain a roster of members and Coordinating Committee and shall keep this on file with the permanent records of the Friends of the 500th. The membership roster shall be updated each year and anytime there is turnover within the Coordination Committee or a substantial change in committee members.

Tenure: Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley shall be a standing committee of the Friends and shall work to accomplish the specialized purpose identified in the mission statement. Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley shall retain the powers provided within this charter until subsequent official actions of the Friends amends the charter or disbands the committee. The Chapter may disband the committee by a two-thirds vote of the certified members present at a meeting called for that purpose. 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):

- All actions of the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley shall be governed by their Petition for Charter, Affiliation Agreement and Bylaws filed with the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program.(attached to this charter)
- The composition of the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley Coordinating Committee shall include at least one member of the Friends Board of Directors representing the Chapter's sponsor
- Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley shall keep written minutes of their meetings. Such minutes 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.
- Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley may conduct fundraising activities or initiatives for project specific purposes; however such projects must first be approved by the Friends Board of Directors.

Quorum: The quorum for the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley committee to conduct business shall be a minimum of the majority of their Coordinating Committee OR the total of the voting members attending a membership meeting.

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 financial status and accomplishments, shall be provided to the Friends President by the Master Naturalist committee chairperson for the Friends Annual Membership meeting.
- Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley funds – those funds raised for project specific purposes or through donations earmarked by the donor for Master Naturalist projects – will be documented as a separate line item in the Friends financial reports. The Friends of the 500th will maintain the Chapter's financial records and report on those funds at each Friends Board of Directors meeting.
- All funds raised by Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley are ultimately funds of the Friends of the 500th. As such all expenditures of Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley funds shall be in keeping with the mission of the Friends of the 500th and the mission of Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley. Expenditures greater than \$150, for items other than instructor honoraria and travel expenses, WVDNR Master Naturalist Manuals, or normal expenses of doing business, shall first be recommended to and approved by the Friends of the 500th Board of Directors.
- The Friends Treasurer will provide to the Chapter Treasurer an annual report of all disbursements and deposits made on behalf of Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley within 15 days of the end of the fiscal year. The Chapter Treasurer will prepare an annual report of Chapter financial records and submit said report to the Coordinating Committee, the general membership, the State Coordinator and the Friends' Treasurer 30 days following the end of the fiscal year.

- The Friends of the 500th will have sole authority for depositing Chapter funds in the Friends bank account on behalf of the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley and for making all payments from those funds at the direction of the Chapter Coordinating Committee designee. A written, signed request will be submitted and kept on file for each request for payment. The Chapter is to be self-supporting with expenses being paid with Chapter generated funds.
- If the Master Naturalists of Canaan Valley disbands, its net remaining assets shall be transferred to the Friends of the 500th general fund.

FRIENDS OF THE 500TH