

Master Naturalist/DNR Advisory Board Meeting

March 27, 2019
North Bend State Park Lodge
Minutes

Attending: Kieran O'Malley, Scott Warner, Jim Fregonara, Ellen Hrabovsky, Andrea Dalton, Tommy Zeitz, Ann Wakeford, Clark Dixon, Carol Nix, Rebecca Linger, Steve Swank, Keith Richardson, Sue Flowers, Gregory Phillips,

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Welcoming Remarks: Andy Dalton: Had sent out a questionnaire about chapter setup. Please complete and return to her. Reminds all to think about how we can help our state park. For the conference, we have over 100 registrants so far.

Scott Warner: Would like to keep the cooperation with the Parks and Wildlife folks strong through the rest of the year. Today's meeting will address any issues for the state conference.

Approval of minutes: from November 13, 2018, moved by Dixon, seconded by Hrabovsky. Minutes **Approved.**

Treasurer's Report: Our bank account at United Bank has \$6,095.45. Our PayPal account has \$9,147.99. Major expenses since the last report were: website fee: \$131.28. IRS fee: \$400.00. The IRS form 990EZ for 2018 was completed and sent to Andrea Dalton for further processing and submissions. Paypal seems to be working fine and most people are using it to register for the conference. *Respectfully submitted by Carol Nix.*

Andy Dalton: Paperwork filed with the IRS indicated that we were a private foundation; we are refileing to indicate we are a public charity. Will take 180 days and cost \$400. This will allow us to file the 990EZ postcard for our IRS reporting.

Chapter Reports

Tygart Valley, Ann Wakeford (designee): meeting with WV Scenic Trails, specifically, the trail from Bruston Mills to Virginia Border, looking for new members and volunteers to maintain the trail. Looking to collaborate with the Trail group, got eight new Tygart Valley members and many folks to work on the trail. Do 25 mile sections that can be adopted to maintain. They are always looking for new volunteers. Call Brian Hurt or Kelly Bowyer. www.wvscenictrails.org

Potomac Valley, Clark Dixon: Chapter get-together, made bee barns for native bees and pollinator education. Set up the barns around properties in the eastern panhandle. Got 21 new members for the next year. Charge \$300 to attend the classes. Have scholarships of \$150 for new members that come from a silent auction at the annual meeting. This year, they took in \$950. Also give out awards for longevity: 5 and 10 year awards. Swiss Army Knife and trail bag.

Kanawha Valley, Becky Linger: Will hold the orientation class on April 11. Had six members certify in 2018 and so far two members in 2019. Average attendance at classes 15-20. Average enrollment each

year around 30 members. Advertise in the local ad bulletin newspaper and set up a table at conferences and expos in our area where we also have the list of all chapters throughout the state. Will be back up at North Bend Saturday for the WV Herb Association Spring Gathering. Will also advertise at the St. Albans City Park “Walk on the Wild Side,” April 6 and Kanawha State Forest’s “Osbra Eye Spring Nature Walks,” April 13.

Monongahela, Ellen Hrabovsky: Had first class last week, 23 people and perhaps three more. Advertise word-of-mouth and in the newspaper. Other advertising not as effective. Charge \$60. Uses the WVU Ag school and the Botanical Gardens. Have a lot of support from WVU Extension, Plant Pathology. Volunteer work with several places. Arboretum will be training members to help with the wildflower walks. To recertify, \$10/yr. Don’t usually spend a lot of money. Most instructors are WVU professors or members. Brochure and materials will be available at the Farmer’s Market in Morgantown. Has a student who will be redoing the brochure. WV Land Trust folks are interested and five people have signed up this year. The Land Trust is a great source for volunteer work.

New River, Keith Richardson: Working on partnership with NPS, should have that in place within the next month. Have added a few members; classes will start up in the next month. Wildflower walk is provided by the NPS, instructor from NPS; class becomes the wildflower walk. The birding class is coordinated with the WV Birding and Nature Festival in May.

Mid-Ohio Valley, Sue Flowers (designee): Not sure what the charge for membership. The first day of workshops had 14 attendees. Have only eight new members for this year. Working on a Facebook page for the chapter. Collaborating with the Friends of the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge one workshop per month from May to November. Meet on the second Saturday of each month and also at North Bend. Biological assessment of the old growth section of North Bend. Will be traveling to Babcock SP for two-day field trip May 17-19. Six of the Saturday workshops will be held at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Reserved Visitor’s Center, three at North Bend SP and one on a private farm.

Andy Dalton: if you have an event that is unique to your area, please advertise it to the group.

Canaan Valley, Andy Dalton: End of April will start classes. Currently five new members, but have 11 expressed interest. Leading walks every Saturday for Canaan Valley SP. Averages between 1 to 11 attendees. Park is pleased with the volunteer work. Not advertised in the paper, but if they can have two MNs for each walk, they will advertise. Invasive survey at Blackwater Falls was a success from last year. Charge \$15/year for dues. Have classes held for four weekends per year 6-9 Fri, 8-9 Sat, 8-12 Sun. Once a month an elective will be held for the continuing education.

DNR Update:

Certification data: a copy of the certification paperwork as well as the certificate itself is physical and electronic. Would like to eliminate the files as they are running out of room. Discussion: it is the chapter’s responsibility to maintain its records of certified members. DNR should have reports about the chapter so that if there is a discontinuity of leadership, the DNR can help restart the chapter given these data. DNR is creating databases of all their programs to keep track of the members.

Andy Dalton: Would be a good idea to keep a digital copy of the certificate. The chapter coordinators should keep the other paperwork. The number of certified members each year is reported on the Annual Report Form.

Gregory Phillips: What about State Conference data? Keep each list of class attendees and information about the conference for four years.

Jim Fregonara: Always need volunteers. Regularly sending out emails that we all receive. Jim will receive a list of chapter coordinators so he can email us directly. National Hunting and Fishing Days in Sept. Camp Dawson; more interest in the southern part of the state. Went to a conference The Alliance of National Resource Outreach and Service Programs in New Orleans in Sept. 2018 (www.anrosp.org). Meeting of states who have started Master Naturalist Programs. Lots of activities. Using Story Maps that use GIS. Will be sending out the information that he learned. Next conference to be held in Maryland.

Andy Dalton: Makes a motion to join ANROSP. Seconded and approved. Carol Nix will register the WVMN as a Program member.

KO: Diversity Unit: Protection of the Candy Darter; recently listed. Lives in Southern WV. Have been captively propagating CD and restocking in the New River catchment. The issue is hybridization with the Varigate Darter; the genes are swamping out the Candy Darter. Have introduced regulations to prevent introduction of the Varigate Darter in Candy Darter streams. Becomes a marquee project due to the partnership with Fish and Wildlife. Charleston newspapers have been adverting the issue.

State Action Plan: Conservation Focus Areas; concentration of species of greatest conservation need and opportunities to protect, restore and preserve these species. Partnering with Nature Conservancy. Local Stakeholder groups are also invited to partner. Presenting the concerns of the DNR to the public. Will be working in the Greenbrier Valley this year. Need to partner with private landowners. Have two open houses and will hold up to five. in 2019 will work in the High Allegheny and Greenbrier Valley area. Will hold workshops with partners and stakeholders to ensure that they are on target and what is done is feasible. The DNR will send out invitations to workshops.

Light Up West Virginia: Recall at Fall meeting, Mack Frantz presented "Light Up West Virginia." He worked with the GIS specialist and developed a story map for the firefly website (<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=073c065f82ec478789c9fd44ba1b45ef>)

Andy Dalton: We need to use the conference to highlight the up and coming citizen science projects in the state.

Monarch Butterfly and all pollinator conservation in West Virginia: Sue Olcott was on the national committee for Monarchs. To affect change on private lands partner with NRCS, has a biologist who develops planting mixes that are appropriate for different soil types to make habitats for pollinators. Plan to hold workshops on planting habitats for pollinators. Great success at Jackson Mills last year (over 100 attendees). www.wvmonarch.org.

In Parkersburg, Game and Wildlife has been working with gas and pipeline folks; adding eight WMAs, adding 200 acres to expand North Bend SP. These acquisitions also run along the Little Kanawha River and other streambeds.

A national initiative: R3 Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation for hunters and anglers. Recall the funds for DNR come from hunting and fishing licensing. Looking at wildlife recreation will host a summit at some point to reach out to the conservation community to brainstorm about getting people more involved with wildlife tourism.

Invasive Plant Surveys and Work Crews at the State Parks: First workdays at North Bend in April 8th through 10th. Scott will coordinate with TV station to publicize the activity. Need petty cash from DNR for first aid and other items (less than \$50).

Gold Rush: Stocking Golden Trout during the first week of April.

List of Instructors willing to travel: Andy has created the list structure and will send out a survey to get more information. Will email the list to the group. Need to have details on how the instructors are paid.

Bylaws Task Force: Clark had sent out an email with the draft of wording for officer description:

SAC secretary and treasurer positions (use same or similar language for each position)
The Secretary and treasurer positions requires special skill, talent, proficiency, and experience. Therefore in order to find someone who has these qualities the nominee will not be required to hold the position chapter coordinator as do other SAC positions. Nominees can be recruited from among the WVMNP chapters when necessary.

In order to find candidates and fill these positions in a timely manner qualified candidates can be recruited from state chapters or if necessary from outside state chapter.

Volunteers benefiting from services

Volunteers shall not profit from WVMNP unless approved by the SAC. Master Naturalist events including the annual and other WV Master Naturalist events that require certain services or products including photography, catering, clothing, memorabilia, lectures, instructions, guided hikes, etc. shall be pre-approved by the SAC.

Discussion ensued with the result that the discussion will be tabled until the Fall meeting to allow further reflection.

Clark Dixon: Would like feedback on the planning manual for the State Conference. Suggestions for a committee: Becky Linger, Steve Swank and Ellen Hrabovsky along with anyone else.

Master Naturalist Brochure (Scott Warner): Talked to Sheldon to use WVU extension to develop a brochure for the program. Sheldon suggests that if there's someone who is a graphic designer and can help with the design that will save us some funds. If we have WVU Extension design and print 5000 copies it would cost less than \$1,000. This would count as volunteer hours. Have your graphic designer contact Andy Dalton.

Location for the 2020 Master Naturalist Conference: Canaan Valley Resort State Park. Should get literature from Canaan Valley to pass out at the Pipestem conference.

Lunch Break

Introduction to Stephen Jones, Superintendent and Ken Zebo, Naturalist of North Bend State Park.

Process for Chartering New Chapters: In 2006, DNR required a Petition for Charter and a copy of the chapter Bylaws. Some chapters do not have a copy of their agreement with the DNR. We need to establish a standard operating procedure to set up the chapter. After much discussion, Scott proposed that an ad hoc committee be chaired by Becky Linger with Keith Richardson and Scott.

Liability Insurance: Scott has talked to the AG's office about liability. When you are affiliated with the DNR, BRIM will cover some of the activities, but not all, for example: if you are assisting within the State Parks, you are covered. As long as you are on Public Lands, you can be covered as long as there is not gross negligence. If you are operating on your own and have instructors that are not affiliated with the state, you may not be covered.

For special events, the DNR purchases special insurance to cover the event; example: Hunting and Fishing Days.

What about the Liability waiver? You can still be challenged and would have to retain an attorney. Another issue, background checks for adults working with children. We may get to the point where we will need to address this as the WVMN.

Conference Needs and Updates: Needs volunteers to introduce the instructors and record as needed. Needs ribbons to mark the cars for carpools. Need details on registration table. Sales tables will be covered by the DNR staff. Name badges will be printed by DNR. Would like color coding on the badges. Room signs handled by DNR. Schedule of classes and room assignments need to be given to Gregory Phillips by May 1st. **Call for telescopes.** Also need video cameras for the classes. We plan to pay a \$160 for four SD cards for the video cameras to record the classes. We have the WV Humanities Council grant.

RESOLVED: Purchase three Shidu Original Voice Amplifiers, moved, seconded and approved.

Issue with Moth Class on Friday. Would Mack Frantz be able to do a firefly presentation at the shelter where the pig roast will be held and Doug Wood gives his extirpated species talk.

Group Volunteer Opportunities: Amy Cimarolli is writing a grant proposal to do day trips at several State Parks to invasive species removal or assisting the Parks with other projects as needed.

Mid-Ohio Valley: North Bend and Wildlife Refuge and Blennerhassett

Potomac Valley: Cacapon and Berkley Springs

Kanawha Valley: Kanawha State Forest, Ward Hollow Wetlands Habitat, St. Albans City Park

More information is available on the Chapter Annual Reports

RESOLVED: Certified Master Naturalists from other states, or members who are in process: each person's situation is unique and the chapter coordinators should work with the person to determine what classes would be transferable to WVMN. Volunteer hours in other states would count. Andy moved Clark seconded. So moved

Conference opened up to other organizations: we're getting pretty full (over 100 registrants so far). This issue will be revisited after April 15th. Also, Bluestone State Park has cabins (about 5 to 10 miles from Pipestem).

New Business

Youth outreach in New River; portion of Oak Hill high school's property (all ages on the same campus) , 30 acres is useless; fully wooded right along a rails to trails. In negotiation with the school board to give the property to the New River Birding and Nature Center. Proposes that learning platforms and trails be developed in the property.

Scott met with the HS Principal and Superintendent of Schools. All constituents are on board. Would like to set up a certificate program for the kids. Sue Flowers has extensive experience setting up youth programs with the Wood County board of education. Goal is to have a WVU graduate student take on the project to get the junior program set up. Becky will try to get the details of the Junior Master Gardener program that was recently set up in Kanawha County as a template. Have also talked to the WVDEP and Sierra Club as well.

Action Items for Next Meeting:

- Clark and Becky: Continue discussion about Bylaws updates (to be voted on Fall 2019)
- Scott, Becky and Keith: Develop New Chapter Information Packets following the information that we have in place already
- Andy: Insurance update
- Greg: Shredder extraordinaire. Electronic format of chapter details
- Scott: Graphic Artist needed to help redesign the brochure (Keith might have someone)
- Sue Flowers, Keith and Scott: Youth Program at Oak Hill HS
- Scott: Showcasing the good work of the WVMN. Through social media, West Virginia Magazine, newspapers, etc. Parks has social media and other ways to promote. Denise Gwinn will post on the mnofwv.org website.
- Clark, Becky, Steve and Ellen: Conference planning package.

Meeting adjourned at 2:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Becky Linger