

Friends of the Savannah Coastal Wildlife Refuges Draft Strategic Plan

Section I. Introduction

Friends of the Savannah Coastal Wildlife Refuges (“FSCWR”) held a two-day strategic planning “retreat” on Friday, September 14 and Saturday, September 15. The purpose of the meetings was to develop a strategic plan for the organization that would set specific goals for the next five years. The meeting was organized by the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of FSCWR. The Board retained the services of Joan Patterson, Director of Grassroots Outreach, National Wildlife Refuge Association (“NWRA”), to facilitate the planning process.

Friday’s evening meeting was held at the Visitor Center at Savannah National Wildlife Refuge. Saturday’s all day meeting was held at Pinckney house at Pinckney Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Those in attendance for all or part of the retreat were:

Board officers: Rick Shields (President), Allyn Schneider (Vice President), Tim Kilty (Treasurer), and Dot Bambach (Secretary).

Other Board members: Dave Chafin, John Crawford, Linda Etchells, and Bob Williams.

Other FSCWR members: George Cathcart, Twila Gray, Bill Hamel, Joyce Murlless, Carroll Richard, Beth Roth, Regi Sonnen, Connie Terrell, and Tracy Toogood.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (“FWS”) representatives: Christine Fox, Monica Harris, and Russ Webb.

Joan Patterson kicked off the effort by clarifying what was meant by strategic planning. The group agreed that planning included setting objectives, establishing a way to measure success, setting specific goals and the steps needed to reach them, and making decisions about where priorities lay.

Joan then set the agenda for the two-day retreat:

Friday evening: Review the organization’s mission statement, its mandates (both formal and informal), and its accomplishments and shortcomings from 2008 through the present.

Saturday: Establish a “Vision for the Future”, complete with an enumeration of specific goals and an outline for how to reach them and an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats can help or hinder achievement of the vision. We will also appoint a subcommittee to produce a detailed written plan within the next 2 months.

Before beginning the formal review of the mission statement, participants were asked to identify possible issues that they would like to see addressed. Responses included:

- Governance – including leadership development and succession planning
- Membership – recruitment and involvement
- Fundraising
- Volunteer activities/recruitment
- Partnerships
- Education
- Projects
- Advocacy
- Outreach

Section II. Review of Mission Statement

"The mission of the Friends of the Savannah Coastal Wildlife Refuges, Inc. is to support and advocate for the seven refuges within the Savannah Coastal Refuges Complex and to promote public understanding of the need to protect and preserve wildlife and wildlife habitat."

The mission statement reflects the core values of the Friends:

- Protect wildlife and wildlife habitat
- Create public awareness of wildlife and habitat
- Value the mission and efforts of the Fish and Wildlife Service
- Promote volunteerism
- Rely on scientific knowledge in making decisions and setting policies

Within the context of the Mission Statement, the Friends are currently addressing broad issues of conservation and preservation of the refuges and their habitat, including external threats, as well as promoting environmental awareness.

The mission statement implies that the Friends should address these issues by advocating, supporting and promoting the refuges' protection and preservation of wildlife and habitat.

The mission statement also implies a group of key stakeholders, i.e., people or groups with an investment, share or interest in the mission and activities of the Friends group. These are people and groups to whom the Friends are in some sense accountable. While the stakeholders broadly include the Fish and Wildlife Service and the general public, more specifically they include members of FSCWR and conservation organizations with shared interests and values. In

addition, the wildlife that lives in or migrates through the refuges must be considered among stakeholders.

Section III. FSCWR Mandates

Mandates recognize the essential parts of the organization's role and responsibilities. They can be either formal (required by law, contract, or bylaws) or informal (desirable, given the organization's mission and operating philosophy).

The following **formal** mandates were identified:

- Maintain 501(c)(3) status – there are specific legal requirements and prohibited activities with which the organization must comply
- File annual federal and state tax returns
- Comply with the Friends Partnership Agreement between FSCWR and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Meet all legal requirements – business licenses, sales tax filings, etc.
- Meet all financial obligations – pay bills, review bank statements, prepare financial reports
- Comply with all requirements of the FSCWR By-Laws, including scheduling and conducting an annual General Membership meeting to elect board members

Additional **informal** mandates were also identified:

- Maintain a close and cooperative relationship with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate roles for a Friends group
- Maintain a book/nature store at Savannah NWR's Visitor Center
- Generate adequate sources of funds to meet program goals
- Attract new and retain existing members

Section IV. Historical Review of Past Five Years

In order to gain a better understanding of the organization's strengths and weakness, the group was asked to itemize the activities it had engaged in during the past 5 years (2008-2012) and to determine which ones were successful and which had disappointing outcomes. The accomplishments and setbacks are listed below by the year in which each event was substantially completed. It was noted that the initial founding and incorporation of FSCWR occurred in 2007, with no other substantial activities relevant to that year.

2008

- Started website to make people aware of FSCWR's existence
- Set membership dues levels and recruited new members

2009

- Conducted first General Membership meeting, elected first Board of Directors and first set of Board officers – the meeting also generated a number of new members
- Installed butterfly garden at Pinckney with volunteer help
- Executed a Friends Partnership Agreement with FWS
- Conducted a mentoring session for new Friends groups led by a representative of NWRA

2010

- Stocked and opened The Gator Hole, the book and nature store at the Visitor Center – devised inventory system and set up credit card capabilities – and assisted with the Grand Opening ceremonies for the Visitor Center
- Purchased and installed *Iron Ranger* donation box at Pinckney
- Helped FWS to organize and promote Refuge Week activities at Harris Neck and provided funds for refreshments
- Recruited volunteers for invasive plant control effort (EDRR)
- Assisted FWS and other volunteers to purchase and install plants for a butterfly garden at the Visitor Center
- *Setback:* The Wildlife Drive at Savannah NWR was closed for an extended period of time for repairs to the water control system
- Assisted FWS in clearing interpretive trail through woods at Savannah NWR Visitor Center

2011

- Helped FWS to organize and promote Refuge Week activities at Savannah NWR and on a Savannah Riverboat cruise, retained a Teddy Roosevelt impersonator and provided funds for refreshments
- Contributed funds to FWS to support retention of an intern at Savannah to cover the front desk and store on Saturdays and when other volunteers were not available
- Promoted and recruited volunteers for a cleanup along the banks of the Savannah River where the river passed through the refuge
- Provided funding for the annual Volunteer Appreciation/Recognition dinner
- Upgraded the website
- Provided written comments to the Corps of Engineers in opposition to the proposed deepening of the Savannah River and port
- *Setback:* A Congressional subcommittee scheduled a hearing concerning the claims of the Harris Neck Land Trust, thus resurrecting this issue
- Sponsored a Board officer to fly to Washington D.C. to deliver testimony in the Harris Neck Land Trust dispute
- *Setback:* Harbor Deepening for the Savannah port was tentatively approved by the Corps of Engineers

2012

- Contributed to the design and financing of the art installation in the Visitor Center “tower”
- Provided funding for the annual Volunteer Appreciation/Recognition dinner
- Organized and conducted a strategic planning retreat for FSCWR
- Initiated the first-ever Friends photo contest
- Helped FWS to organize and promote Refuge Week activities at Wassaw Island NWR and on a Savannah Riverboat cruise, retained a Teddy Roosevelt impersonator and provided funds for refreshments

Other Challenges Encountered

During the same five-year period, there were several threats that the organization confronted and to which it had to respond. Those that were handled successfully included the Harris Neck Land Trust issue and the South Carolina incorrect property tax assessment. The organization was not successful in dealing with relatively static membership in recent years and an ineffective/inactive committee structure. The organization largely ignored other problems, including the needs for a leadership succession plan and overall strategic planning to guide day-to-day activities.

Section V. Wish List for the Future

As a relatively young organization, the Friends group has a long wish list for future activities and accomplishments. All reflect the mission of the group and the needs of the refuges.

1) Activities and Programs:

- a) Public support for research
- b) Citizen science
- c) On-site educational programs as well as outreach to schools and organizations
- d) Major projects

2) Finances: Enough funding to meet unappropriated needs of the refuge.

3) Staff: An active volunteer program that can help fill unmet staffing needs.

4) Board:

- a) Representative of the broader community, not just existing stakeholders

b) Leadership development and succession plan

5) Partnerships:

a) Widespread and strategic -- Partners should represent the broad range of interests of the organization, including educational, environmental, scientific, financial and advocacy, and partnerships should be established in order to provide mutual benefit to the missions and goals of the respective partners.

b) Web page should be a clearinghouse for partners and partnership activities.

6) Refuge:

a) Safe, well managed habitat for wildlife

b) Attractive and comfortable for visitors without compromising wildlife needs

7) Relationships: Widespread public awareness and support of the refuges and their purpose, and public engagement with the refuges.

Section VI. SWOT Analysis

The planning group used the review of past activities to identify FSCWR's internal strengths and weaknesses as well as the external opportunities and threats that it could expect to encounter in future years. The intent is to build a plan that builds on the strengths and opportunities to correct the weaknesses and successfully address the threats.

Strengths

Several strengths become apparent in reviewing past accomplishments, including:

1) A core group of members is passionate about the Complex's refuges and FSCWR's role in supporting them. This group, although limited in numbers, is talented and creative and has been highly effective in getting the work of the organization done.

2) The refuges in the Savannah Coastal Complex offer excellent wildlife viewing opportunities which make them appealing to the organization's membership and the wider public.

3) There is an open and highly cooperative and supportive relationship with FWS staff, which has helped FSCWR through its initial startup efforts. Staff has worked side-by-side with

members and volunteers to ensure that activities and events are successful and to provide guidance on FWS needs and priorities.

4) FSCWR has enjoyed consistent and strong support from NWRA, which has provided funds, resources and guidance at critical junctures in the organization's development.

5) The membership base spans a broad geographic area and contains people with diverse skill sets and interests

Weaknesses

In reviewing how it has dealt (or not dealt) with past opportunities and threats, several organizational weaknesses became apparent:

1) There is too much reliance on one person – the Board President – to do the work of the organization. He currently acts as webmaster, buyer for The Gator Hole, ~~chief front desk volunteer~~, chief event organizer, and membership director, in addition to his regular duties as chairman for Board meetings.

2) The organization lacks a strategic plan to shape its future direction. As a result, it has tended to be more reactive to situations that occur rather than proactively selecting its activities.

3) Board committees do not have written action plans and accountability measures.

4) The Board does not have a plan for, and has invested little time in, developing new leadership, including recruiting new board members and key volunteers. There is no formal or informal management succession plan.

5) There is no fundraising program to explore sources of revenue other than membership dues and store sales. The Board lacks experience in grant writing.

6) Volunteer coverage of the front desk and Gator Hole is too thin.

7) Security at the Gator Hole is minimal and informal, leaving the store vulnerable to theft.

8) There has been poor turnout for the general membership meeting and for volunteer work projects, with reliance on the same small core group for many of these events.

9) There is low awareness and understanding of the refuges and FSCWR among the general public.

10) There is an absence of diversity – age, racial and social – in the makeup of the Board and general membership. Large portions of population are unrepresented in membership and board.

Opportunities

The Friends group and the refuges have numerous opportunities that can be exploited to advance the organization's goals. Chief among these are:

1) Grants and endowments from foundations and other organizations

2) Relationships with the National Wildlife Refuge Association, Fish and Wildlife Service and DNR.

3) Community Niches: hunters, fishers, birders, photographers

Threats

Conversely, a number of situations also are potential threats or roadblocks to the achievement of the organization's goals. Most important among these are:

1) Funding cuts for the Fish and Wildlife Service and resulting service reductions, especially enforcement, would inhibit protection of wildlife and habitat.

2) Proposed dredging of the Savannah River, which would damage or destroy freshwater marsh within the Savannah Refuge boundaries.

3) Lack of public awareness of the refuges and the issues confronting them makes it difficult to generate support for the refuges.

4) Harris Neck NWR would be damaged or destroyed if efforts by a private group to acquire refuge land for residential development are successful.

Section VII. Principal Themes and Goals

After reviewing the results of the historical review, the visioning process and the SWOT analysis, several recurrent themes or goals emerged that would be used to build the full strategic plan. These goals were prioritized by applying two criteria:

- Did some goals need to be accomplished before others could be started?
- Were some goals more important in relation to the organization's mission statement and core values?

The following list of goals/themes, in order of priority, was agreed upon. Expanded descriptions for each goal are found in Section VIII.

Goal 1 Governance/Organizational Capacity

Goal 2 Financial Capacity

Goal 3 Stewardship

Goal 4 Communications

Goal 5 Partnerships

Goal 6 Advocacy

Goal 7 Community Awareness

Goal 8 Major Projects

Section VIII. Detailed Goals and Objectives

For each of the major goals/themes, a timeline for completion of critical intermediate steps (objectives) as well as final accomplishment of the goal is outlined below.

Goal 1 Governance/Organizational Capacity – Weaknesses in the Friends’ organizational structure will impede the successful completion of other plan components unless they are among the first issues to be addressed. This goal seeks to strengthen governance capabilities by a) ensuring the By-Laws support effective operation of the organization, b) broadening and deepening the pool from which future leadership can be drawn, c) developing an inventory of skills available within the membership base, and d) developing and implanting a leadership succession process.

Responsible individuals: **Rick Shields, Allyn Schneider, Bob Williams**

INTERMEDIATE STEPS/OBJECTIVES	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
1. Bylaws:	
Review existing bylaws and identify shortcomings	Mid-Feb. 2013
Present proposed bylaw amendments to full board for approval	End of Feb. 2013
Circulate proposed bylaw amendments to general membership	Early March 2013
Vote on bylaw amendments at general membership meeting	Early April 2013
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when revised bylaws have been adopted	
2. Succession Plan Development and Implementation:	
-Revise duties of Vice President to include those of “President Elect”	Early Feb. 2013
-Develop and present written succession plan to Board that incorporates the elements below with timetable for each	End of May 2013
-Establish mission and objectives of an Advisory Board	Early June 2013
-Assess current board membership skills and gaps	End of June 2013 and biennially thereafter
-Write job descriptions for board members and each officer position	End of July 2013
-Survey membership, leaders of other organizations and non-member refuge volunteers for potential Board or Advisory Board positions with emphasis on filling identified skill gaps	End of Sept. 2013 and annually thereafter
-Appoint initial members to Advisory Board	End of Jan. 2014
-Recruit new candidates for election to Board of Directors	End of Feb. 2014
-Review course offerings by NWA, NCTC, GA Center for Nonprofits, etc. to strengthen Board skills in areas of identified weakness	End of Aril 2014 and biennially thereafter
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when written succession plan has been approved and fully implemented and Advisory Board has been appointed.	
3. Committee Structure	
Revamp Board’s committee structure to align with 8 strategic goals	End of Feb. 2014
Appoint at least two Board members and one advisory Board member to each committee	Early April 2014
Establish a schedule for each Committee to give a report quarterly to full Board of Directors	Late April 2014
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when one cycle of	

quarterly reports has been received by Board	
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Goal 2 Financial and Budget Planning – As with Governance, the organization will have difficulty in achieving its other goals unless it first ensures that it has the financial ability to support those efforts. This goal therefore looks to develop a budgeting process and an annual budget that reflects the anticipated activities and needs for each coming year based on the goals and objectives for that year. It also requires that FSCWR develop the ability to tap into multiple funding sources (such as membership dues, store revenues, donations, bequests, and grants) and establish a structure for endowment funding of select ongoing needs.

Responsible individuals: **Tim Kilty, Dot Bambach, Sharon Lindsay, Twila Gray**

INTERMEDIATE STEPS/OBJECTIVES	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
1. Appoint a Finance and Budget Planning Committee	Nov. 2012
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when committee is in place.	-Completed-
2. Institute a framework for developing an annual budget	
-Establish method for setting annual priorities.	March 2013
-Identify all potential revenue sources, including dues, store revenues, donations, bequests, grants, and endowments.	March 2013
-Establish methods for determining costs for requested activities, including impacts of full and partial funding.	June 2013
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when a budget guidance document is completed and adopted by the board	
3. Budget for 2013	
-Analyze past 5 years growth trends in revenues and expenses.	Jan. 2013
- Project likely “status quo” revenues and expenses for 2013, considering known financial commitments	Feb. 2013
-Present budget to Board for adoption and publication	March 2013
4. Budget for 2014	
-Estimate revenues from all sources for 2014, including carry forward, if any.	July 2013 and annually thereafter
-Set priority targets for activities and projects for 2014, such as hiring a nature store manager.	September 2013 and annually thereafter
-Evaluate feasibility of priority projects based on revenue estimates, including impacts of partial funding.	End of October 2013 and annually thereafter
-Present budget to Board for adoption and publication	End of Nov. 2013 and annually thereafter
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when Annual Budget Document is adopted by board and published	
5. Establish grant-writing capability for designated individuals; secure appropriate training if needed.	Mid 2014
6. Budget Review	
-Review and evaluate effectiveness of prior year's budget process and	End of January 2014

resulting budget.	and annually thereafter
-Incorporate changes in budget process resulting from review.	End of March 2014 and annually thereafter
-Review and evaluate revenues and spending during current year and incorporate anomalies into next year's budget planning, including recommendations for new revenues and revenue sources, and spending targets.	End of June 2014 and annually thereafter.
<u>Measurement</u> : This step will be deemed complete when budget review is submitted to board prior to start of following year's budget process.	

Goal 3 Stewardship – This goal relates directly to FSCWR’s core value of protecting wildlife and habitat and therefore rates a high priority in the plan. Ensuring good stewardship of refuge land and wildlife will require that the organization develop an extensive volunteer base and engage it, all in close cooperation with FWS, in activities that benefit wildlife and wildlife habitat. Examples of such activities include invasive plant control, wildlife studies and surveys, and trail clearing/maintenance.

Responsible individuals: **John Crawford, Dave Chafin, Linda Etchells, and Connie Terrell**

INTERMEDIATE STEPS/OBJECTIVES	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
In collaboration with FWS, set a schedule for stewardship and citizen science projects through Sept. 2014 and the volunteer help needed for each	Late March 2013
Recruit volunteers for each of the scheduled stewardship projects	One month prior to each project date
Establish a small “youth scholarship” to serve as a stipend for an environmental activity at one or more of the refuges.	May 2013
Develop a list of potential partnering organizations for scheduled stewardship efforts and establish a dialogue with a contact person at each	Late June 2013
Build and maintain a database of volunteers and their specific skills and interests for use in recruiting help for specific projects	Late October 2013
Recruit (and train, if necessary) a “roving naturalist” for Pinckney	Jan. 2014
Identify corporate partners that would be willing to contribute funds or manpower for specific stewardship projects	Feb. 2015
Measurement: This goal will be deemed complete when 20 new volunteers have participated in one or more stewardship projects	

Goal 4 Communications – This goal relates directly to two of FSCWR’s core values: to create public awareness of wildlife and habitat and to promote volunteerism. The goal implies development of a broad-based internal and external program for communicating and publicizing Friends activities. The plan should include the development of “core messages” that reflect the central values of FSCWR and can be used to set the tone for all communications..

Responsible individuals: **Rick Shields, Pat Metz, Tracy Toogood, Marty Coolidge, George Cathcart**

INTERMEDIATE STEPS/OBJECTIVES	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
1. Appoint Communications Committee	Dec. 2012
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when communications committee is appointed and sets first meeting	-Completed-
2. Create communications plan	
-Identify short term and long term communications objectives	End of March 2013
-Identify target audiences	End of March 2013
-Develop core messages based on core values	End of June 2013
-Identify feasible communications tactics and media (such as a traveling display board) to connect messages to audiences, including projected costs.	End of August 2013
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when board adopts communication plan presented by committee	
3. Implement Communications Plan	
-Prioritize audiences	End of Sept. 2013 and annually thereafter
-Develop ad hoc messages that reflect core messages	End of Sept. 2013 and annually thereafter
-Identify feasible tactics and media for delivering ad hoc messages, such as refuge events and annual report, to priority audiences	End of Nov. 2013 and annually thereafter
- Execute, tying in with community awareness activities from Goal 7	End of 2013 and annually thereafter
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when Communication Plan is ready to be executed	
4. Review and Update	
-Develop measures for evaluating communications success	End of 2013
-Review and evaluate existing communications activities	End of Feb. 2014 and annually thereafter
-Identify unmet communications needs	Early April 2014 and annually thereafter
-Revise Communication Plan as needed	Late April 2014 and annually thereafter
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when each annual plan is revised	

Goal 5 Partnerships – This goal relates to three core values: to protect wildlife and habitat, to promote volunteerism, and to create public awareness of wildlife and habitat. It seeks to expand FSCWR’s reach in achieving its goals by identifying and engaging other organizations with compatible missions, strengths that complement our own, and mutual objectives.

Responsible individuals not yet assigned.

INTERMEDIATE STEPS/OBJECTIVES	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
Identify potential partner organizations including other Friends groups, environmental organizations, youth groups, educational organizations, and governmental and civic agencies	April 2015
Make personal visits to each of above to explain the mission of FSCWR, identify areas of mutual interest, and solicit cooperation on projects and activities sponsored by each organization	December 2015
Schedule and conduct refuge tours for contacts from partner organizations	April 2016
Schedule and conduct periodic environmental brown bag lunches	September 2016
<u>Measurement:</u> This goal will be deemed complete when two events have been concluded that involved significant cooperative efforts by partnership organizations.	

Goal 6 Advocacy -- This goal calls for engaging and educating local, regional and national decision-makers about refuge needs and the impact of current issues on the refuges. Strategies include close consultation with FWS and development of talking points relevant to the issues and consistent with the core messages in the communication plan. Ultimate success will be the recruitment of decision-makers as advocates for refuge issues. This goal relates to several core values: Valuing the mission and efforts of the Fish & Wildlife Service, Relying on scientific knowledge to make decisions and set policies, and Protecting wildlife and habitat.

Responsible individuals not yet assigned.

INTERMEDIATE STEPS/OBJECTIVES	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
1. Appoint Advocacy Committee made up of individuals with the skills and the willingness to engage directly with decision-makers	End of 2015
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when committee has been appointed and first meeting scheduled.	
2. Develop Advocacy Plan	
-Identify key decision local, regional and national decision makers and categorize each by history of engagement with refuge, accessibility, potential impact on refuge operations.	End of March 2015
-Prioritize decision-makers identified in first step	End of March 2015
-Identify best methods (tactics) and, where appropriate, best people, for engaging high priority decision-makers.	End of March 2015
-Develop core talking points for engaging with decision-makers	End of March 2015
-Develop specific talking points for engaging with specific decision-makers	End of May 2015
-Schedule engagement activities such as Congressional Days at the refuges	End of June 2015
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when all steps are completed and advocacy engagement schedule is adopted by board.	
3. Advocacy Plan Implementation	
-Establish contact and engagement goals for identified spokespersons	End of June 2015
-Develop measures for evaluating advocacy efforts: contacts made, actions resulting from contacts, impact on refuge activities	End of June 2015
-Monitor and review engagements	Ongoing after June 2015
-Monitor internal and external activities that could affect communications and contacts with decision-makers and revise tactics as needed	Ongoing after June 2015
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be ongoing.	
4. Review and evaluate effectiveness of advocacy plan	Ongoing after June 2015

Goal 7 Community Awareness – This goal seeks to enhance the community’s awareness of, and knowledge about, the seven refuges in the Savannah Coastal Complex in order to cultivate appreciation for the value of wildlife conservation and to lead, ultimately, to increased public involvement and support for FSCWR and the refuges, as well as to promote volunteerism. “Community” encompasses the general public in the SC and GA, with particular emphasis on the Low Country, as well as school, business and government officials in those areas. Environmental education and refuge-based activities are included in this goal.

Responsible individuals not yet assigned.

INTERMEDIATE STEPS/OBJECTIVES	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
Provide support to FWS for ongoing events such as Family Fun Days, Earth Day, and Refuge Week.	Annually beginning in Jan. 2013
Manage annual photo contest	Annually beginning Dec. 2012
Deploy Friends display board at 8-10 venues per year, including on-site at refuges, festivals, civic fairs and events, etc.	June 2014
Develop speakers bureau with three different topics that can be offered to partner organizations and book three speaking engagements	June 2016
Set a schedule through December 2014 for regular Friends-sponsored walks or tours to explore the Complex’s refuges by vehicle, on foot or by canoe/kayak, including topics such as ecology, birding, photography, history. Identify a leader for each. Publicize through newsletter, website, partner organizations and public media.	Jan. 2014
With prior approval of FWS, develop and implement a schedule for quarterly events/programs held at the refuge	Sept. 2016
With prior approval of FWS, develop and implement a schedule for bi-monthly events/programs held at the refuge	Sept. 2017
Review and revise community awareness program	
-Develop measures for evaluating success	End of 2015
-Review and evaluate past activities	Feb. 2016 and annually thereafter
-Identify unmet needs	April 2016 and annually thereafter
-Revise community awareness program as needed	Sept. 2016 and annually thereafter
<u>Measurement:</u> This goal will be deemed complete when average annual attendance at events has increased by 10% or more over 2014.	

Goal 8 Major Projects -- This goal seeks close collaboration with FWS to identify, plan, fund and complete at least one major project within the next five years. Major projects can help to enhance public awareness, promote volunteerism, and protect wildlife and habitat.

Responsible individuals not yet assigned.

INTERMEDIATE STEPS/OBJECTIVES	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
1. Appoint a Major Projects Task Force consisting of at least one board member, two volunteers, refuge manager or designee, one decision-maker or representative	End of 2015
2. Develop a process to identify a feasible major project that will benefit the Savannah Coastal Refuges and their mission in a visible, significant way.	
-Conduct a comprehensive survey of refuge needs and make priority list of potential projects without considering costs.	End of June 2016
-Estimate costs of priority items	End of July 2016
-Determine financial capacity to undertake and complete items, including potential to raise funds specifically for various projects if operational or reserve funds are not sufficient.	End of September 2016
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when task force submits itemized recommendations to the board for approval.	
3. Select project and publicize same with help of communication plan	December 2016
4. Implement project	
-Develop detailed budget and begin fund-raising if necessary	End of Nov. 2016
-Obtain necessary FWS approvals	End of Jan. 2017
-Estimate completion date	End of Jan. 2017
-Obtain bids and let contracts if necessary; recruit and schedule volunteers	End of March 2017
-Begin work	Mid-April 2017
<u>Measurement:</u> This step will be deemed complete when work begins. It is not possible to determine at this time the completion date for the project until we know what the project is.	