MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
of
Friends of Cibola NWR
An Arizona Non-profit Corporation

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Friends of Cibola NWR was held on the 25th day of July 2026 at 10:00 a.m., held at Teams Meeting online. John Rosenfeld, Rebecca Notarangelo, Brian Donahue, and Andy Anderson, and Dave Kaihara were present and participated in the meeting, being all the Directors and officers.

Carissa Rosenfeld, Secretary of the Corporation, and treasurer acted as the secretary for the meeting and the Chairman.

The Chairman announced that a quorum of the Directors was present, and that the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with its business.

1) Reading of the previous minutes
   a. The previous minutes were read. Rebecca Notarangelo made a motion to accept the minutes as read and Dave Kaihara seconded the motion; the motion was carried.
2) Treasurer's Report
   a. Membership: 114
   b. Educational Outreach: $2,002.87
   c. Financial Report:
      1.

07/25/2026	Current Bank balance	$15,295.87
	Available Bank balance	$13,293

*For further detailed information regarding expenses, please contact Friends of Cibola NWR

   d. Youth Waterfowl Savings: $4,725.23
   e. Secretary Budget: $94.62
   f. Volunteer Hours: 1,000
3) U.S Fish & Wildlife Service-present
   a. Updates
      i. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has approved filling the Biotech position, which they fund. However, due to the federal hiring timeline, the earliest the position could be onboarded is December.
      ii. No positions at the refuges located along the river are being looked at to be filled. In the region, some positions in New Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma are being filled.
      iii. While at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) was Advanced Refuge Management Academy (that Chris Lohrengel attended) Josh Corsey said realignment of the US Fish & Wildlife Service will be focused on the field and staffing and budgets for the field to make sure that they are able to do their jobs on the ground.
      iv. The seasonal volunteers, which will be the same as last year's volunteers, will be coming back starting in October.
      v. Water delivery to the Island Unit is expected to begin in August to fill the meanders and begin moist-soil preparation in Unit 11. The goal is to match last year's progress when

volunteers arrived, weather permitting. River levels determine whether the refuge can pump water, and those levels depend heavily on agricultural water orders downstream. When local farmers receive rainfall, they do not order irrigation water, which keeps the river level low. Because the refuge has no control over these orders, periods of low demand can prevent pumping entirely. At this time, rainfall patterns do not appear likely to cause issues.

vi. With no staff currently assigned to Cibola Refuge, support has been coming from the complex office. Jim, a maintenance worker, has been traveling to Cibola three to four times a week to keep essential operations running, while Scott and Chris Lohrengel have also been providing additional assistance.

vii. Chris Lohrengel explained that Cibola Refuge has been struggling for years due to extreme staff shortages and turnover, worsened since before COVID. Because the station currently has no staff, it was not allocated a budget this year, and only received special maintenance funding to cover basic bills like pumps and operational overhead. He acknowledged that the lack of staff has made it impossible for the refuge to meet community expectations or support events, which has damaged relationships with local residents and partners. He added that leadership has instructed them to openly report these shortages and the ways they are impacting both the community and refuge operations, which is now a major focus of their current reporting efforts.

4) Old Unfinished Business

a. Jr. Ranger program-tabled

b. Youth Waterfowl Camp-

   i. We received an email notifying us that we received some of the funding requested from the grant and that more information was to follow in emails at a later time.

c. Website-still under construction

d. Accountability for funds from Friends group to the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)

   i. Unit 2 clearing & UN32 Fertilizer

      1. Since the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service no longer has its own fire crew, the refuge can't do prescribed burns to clear Unit 2. Chris Lohrengel suggested a simpler solution: push the brush piles to the edges of the fields so the area can be worked. To do this, they're trying to bring down a loader with a grappler arm from the Lake Havasu refuge. The semi-truck needed to move the equipment is currently out of service but should be fixed by next week. The goal is to get all the brush moved before goose season starts. The piles were burned once already, but they were too dense and full of dirt to burn completely. Normally they would be restacked and burned again, but without a fire crew, moving them to the field edges is the only practical option.

      2. Regarding the UN32 fertilizer: Concerns in past years that planting wheat might be viewed as baiting led to extra caution around the practice. Although wheat was planted that year, the UN32 fertilizer purchased by the Friends group was never applied. After further review, wheat planting has been confirmed as a standard soil-stabilization practice, and soil stabilization is part of normal agricultural

operations. With planting now approved again, the Friends group is hopeful that the supplier may still honor the original UN32 purchase so the fertilizer can finally be used as intended, even though a significant amount of time has passed since it was bought.

5) New Business

a. Dramatic membership decline

i. The directors discussed the recent sharp decline in membership and noted that much of this trend reflects the reduced hunting opportunities on the refuge in recent years. While hunting is only one of the many programs and activities the Friends group supports, it remains an important draw for a significant portion of our membership. As those opportunities have diminished, the lack of consistent management and limited access has had a direct impact on renewals. A longtime Friends member attended the meeting and shared that he has always been a strong supporter of our mission and youth programs. However, he explained that, aside from participating in the youth hunt, he probably will no longer use the refuge due to the overall decline in opportunities. He emphasized that this concern was not directed at Chris, but rather reflects broader management challenges that have developed over the past decade. He also expressed concern that others who are not as deeply committed may choose not to renew their memberships for the same reasons. The directors agreed that this pattern is likely to continue unless refuge performance improves and opportunities are restored.

b. Partnership agreement renews in 2027

i. The Friends partnership agreement is up for renewal in 2027. Chris Lohrengel explained that, due to the current lack of staffing on the refuge, there is concern about the ability to fully support and uphold the commitments outlined in the agreement. He shared that, unless staffing levels improve by December, the refuge may not be in a position to renew the partnership agreement. Chris expressed that he felt reluctant and genuinely disappointed to deliver this news, noting that it would not be fair to promise support the refuge does not have the personnel to provide. He emphasized that, even without a formal partnership agreement, the Friends group would still be welcome to assist the refuge and continue its community-focused work. The primary change would be the absence of the formal agreement itself, as the refuge wants to avoid committing to obligations it cannot realistically fulfill under current staffing limitations.

c. Membership booth

i. The Friends group reviewed the results of the 2025 membership booth held during the opening of dove season. The booth generated a total of $87, all of which came from Nature Rewards rather than new memberships. Directors noted that, following a conversation with the refuge in July 2025 regarding the decision not to plant wheat, the Friends group felt this contributed to their decision to release a social media post around the dove opener stating that, due to wheat not being planted, the group would not be placing out trashcans or banners for the event. Chris Lohrengel shared that this decision was hurtful and made him feel he could no longer rely on the Friends group to follow through with commitments. The Friends directors expressed that they had also felt hurt when the fertilizer purchased by the group was not used. Chris additionally noted that not being invited to two Friends meetings contributed to communication challenges. The Friends directors clarified that the reason Chris had not been invited to those meetings was because one focused solely on internal management matters, and the other occurred around Thanksgiving with a limited agenda. They explained

that they did not want to take up his time unnecessarily and that, in hindsight, their intentions were misinterpreted. After discussion, both parties agreed to move forward with a fresh start. The Friends group committed to placing out trashcans and signs for the upcoming dove season opener, and Chris expressed appreciation for this renewed cooperation.

d. Idea for backpack program for next year

   i. Vice President Rebecca Notarangelo reported that she had learned of a community need for backpacks for local youth ahead of the upcoming school year. With school expected to begin on August 5th, the directors noted that the limited time available would make organizing a backpack drive difficult. The group explored the possibility of purchasing supplies directly; however, due to the high cost, it was suggested that planning begin earlier next year so the Friends group could be prepared to provide these items. Director Brian Donahue stated that he would contact the Boys and Girls Club of Stanton, CA, which operates a backpack program, to inquire whether they might have extra backpacks available to donate for youth in Cibola.

e. Do we try to offer help to assist with: the visitor center, the nature trail, and trashcan maintenance

   i. The directors discussed potential assistance with the visitor center, nature trail, and trashcan maintenance. Chris Lohrengel supported incorporating Friends group help at the visitor center this year. He noted that the nature trail likely needs work due to recent winds and agreed that efforts should begin before October.
   ii. Regarding broader volunteer tasks, Chris expressed appreciation for the Friends group's willingness to help but explained that, due to managing three refuges and limited staffing, the refuge does not have a volunteer coordinator to provide required training, process agreements, issue keys, or oversee daily activities. He noted that while volunteers are increasingly important nationwide, Cibola currently lacks the staff needed to utilize the Friends group in the same way other refuges do.

6) Next Meeting-

a. August 29th at 10am to be located at 65771 North Currey Lane, Cibola, AZ 85328

7) Call to public-

a. Public input was discussed earlier in the meeting and noted in the appropriate area as to what matters were discussed.

Next meeting is to be 08/29/2026. There being no further business to be transacted upon motion duly made by John Rosenfeld to adjourn the meeting, Brian Donahue seconded and carried the motion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:27am.

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SECRETARY/Carissa Rosenfeld

I, the undersigned Director of Friends of Cibola NWR hereby approve the contents of the foregoing minutes from the meeting held on the 25th day of July 2026.

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DIRECTOR