

*Empowering Friends
as Nonprofit Leaders*



**Coalition of Refuge
Friends and Advocates**

**Annual Report
2022**

www.coalitionofrefugefriends.com

ABOUT US

The Coalition of Refuge Friends and Advocates (CORFA) is a community of Friends members collaborating to strengthen our organizations and our ability to support refuges, hatcheries, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service). **Together we are creating a network of support.**

GOALS

The CORFA team values being inclusive, collaborative, and agile leaders. Our goals are to be a resilient organization, actively engage the Friends community, and to influence decision-making processes affecting Friends. **When Friends succeed, everyone succeeds.**

OFFICERS

Joan Patterson
President

Cheryl Hart
Vice President

Jim Stone
Treasurer

Aimee Arent
Secretary

TRUSTEES

Linda Kilgore
Kenneth Kupchak
Sue Wilder

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Sue Hix
Joe McCauley
Mark Musaus
Barbara Volkle



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

Frequently I'm asked what makes the Coalition of Refuge Friends and Advocates (CORFA) different from other organizations supporting national wildlife refuges and hatcheries. **Our focus is Friends.**

We believe that strong Friends organizations are the most valuable partner a National Wildlife Refuge and a National Fish Hatchery can have. Friends are the key to making refuges and hatcheries community assets. We know that within the Friends community there is a wealth of skills and experiences that, when shared, strengthen the entire Friends community

and therefore our partnerships with refuges and hatcheries. CORFA's focus is listening to Friends, facilitating sharing, and creating networks of support.

Who is CORFA? If you are participating in one of our networks of support, you are part of CORFA. The networks include our Facebook groups, website, webinars, and quarterly newsletters produced in partnership with the National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA). I'm extremely grateful for the volunteers, including our board members who facilitate and guide these activities and for our partnerships with all of you, NWRA, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).



For CORFA, 2022 was a year of growth and enhancing partnerships. More Friends utilized our services and participated in activities. USFWS helped present and promote a number of our webinars and we helped promote their work with the Friends community. **We continued to strengthen our ties with the National Wildlife Refuge Association and our joint efforts of providing news, webinars, and actions to bolster funding for refuges.**

Canada Goose, DC Booth Society by Les Heiserman; Sharing time with the members of Friends Academy 2022

2022 was also a year of planning. It was an opportunity for the board to pull together what we heard from Friends and create a roadmap for the coming years. The plan is centered around three focus areas:

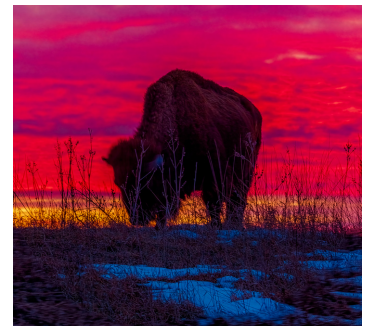
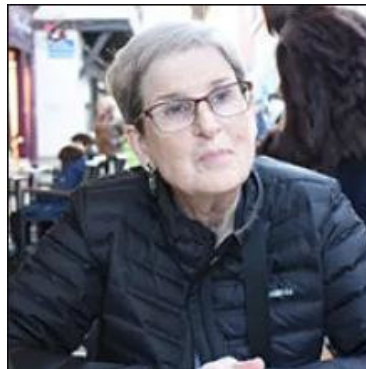
1. Actively engaging the Friends community to ensure that no Friends group feels alone.
2. Influencing decision-making processes affecting Friends so Friends are understood and respected by partners.
3. Being a resilient organization that Friends can look to for networking opportunities and resources.

In the coming year our goal is to create more opportunities for Friends to connect and share questions, concerns, challenges, and successes so that all of us can excel and be the champions that refuges and hatcheries need to fulfill their mission. We want to hear from you! Please let us know what you need and how we can help each other. Together we can amplify the accomplishments of the community of Friends.

Best regards,

Joan

Joan Patterson
Board President



Connect with us.

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/coalitionofrefugefriends>

Website

www.coalitionofrefugefriends.com

Email

coalitionrefugefriends@gmail.com

Ruby-throated hummingbird, Friends of Blackwater NWR, MD by Lisa Mayo; Bison at Sunset, Friends of Neal Smith NWR, IA by Dale Bales; Great Egret fledglings by Larry Woodward

PROGRAMS

Our programs and activities are facilitated by a small core team that helps to jump-start programs and identify resources in the Friends community. All of CORFA's programs and activities are possible because of partnerships with Friends, National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA), and the Service.

9,979 website visits

813 group members

450 webinar participants

13 webinars with Friends

4 issues of **The Link** published

TESTIMONIAL

"We recognize CORFA as the Friends-centered partner to whom we can turn with questions and share Friends information.

Our relationship with CORFA is built on its support for Friends and our work. Friends, CORFA, and NWRA are a better team for what we achieved together this year."

Peg Hall, Board Member, Friends of Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs, FL

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

BUILDING A STRONGER ORGANIZATION

With Mark Musaus, retired FWS and NWRA and now CORFA Board member as facilitator, the board created a Strategic Plan that Formalizes our Vision and Goals. We continue working on planning, building our board, and formalizing committee structure. We officially formed an Advisory Council of supporters with expert knowledge in critical areas who can help us provide strong support for Friends groups.

GETTING THE WORD OUT

- Held regular meetings with FWS and NWRA including a meeting with Director of FWS, Martha Williams, quarterly Q & A with Cynthia Martinez, Chief of Refuges, and monthly meetings with Marco Aguilar, COO of NWRA.
- Provided written testimony on improved support for refuges and the renewal of the FWS Partnership Policy to committees of House and Senate.
- Made presentations at Friends Academy, NWRA Board Meeting, and two Regional Friends Coordinator Quarterly Calls.
- Worked with NWRA on a Campaign to Increase Refuge System Budget and Staffing, including presenting webinars on Telling Your Story and building a relationship with your Member Of Congress (MOC) and inviting them to your refuge.

Facebook Group Photo Contest Winners

- January – Mark Lindvall, Fort Niobrara NWR
- February – Dale Bales & Linda Frazier, Neal Smith NWR
- March – Bob Glennon, Alligator River NWR
- April – Les Heiserman, DC Booth Fish Hatchery
- May – Lisa Mayo, Blackwater NWR, MD
- June – Lisa Mayo, Blackwater NWR, MD
- July – Sue Wilder, Friends of Louisiana Wildlife Refuges, LA
- August – Karen Van Dyk, Friends of Wallkill NWR, NJ
- September – Jim Osborn, Friends of Crab Orchard NWR, IL
- November – Julie Filiberti, Friends of Missisquoi NWR, VT
- December - Peg Hall, Friends of Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs, FL

SUPPORT



Donate now.

Donate to CORFA through the **National Wildlife Refuge Association**. Add **CORFA** to the memo line to have it count towards us.

<https://www.refugeassociation.org/donate>