Minutes of Annual Meeting
February 26-27, 2011
Dana on Mission Bay Meeting Room
San Diego, California

Saturday, February 26, 2011

The meeting called to order by Moderator Les Beaty at 8:30 AM.

In attendance were:

Don Redfearn
Evelyn Redfearn
Bill Reffalt
Christine Reffalt
Ron Fowler
Les Beaty
Sharon Beaty
Ed Crozier
Caryl Crozier
Phil Morgan
John Martin
Marie Springer, on Skype/telephone

Beaty reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

A motion to suspend the reading of the minutes of last year's meeting was made by Bill Reffalt and seconded by Phil Morgan. The motion carried by voice vote.

President's Report – Don Redfearn

Don stated that he has previously distributed his written President's Report to the Board. A copy of his report is attached to these minutes. He elected not to read his report at the meeting. Ron Fowler asked if the President's Report would be suitable for distribution to the Members Group. It was agreed that Ron should do that.

Ed Crozier referred to Don's statement in his report that "We continue to have difficulty in enticing new candidates for our Affiliate group." Ed stated that our real challenge was getting our existing Affiliates involved. It doesn't do any good to recruit new Affiliates if they don't contribute. Don mentioned that he intended to involve two new Affiliates, Ron Hight and John Taylor, in his effort to establish communications with the Friends Group. Those two have agreed to work on this group. Gail Fishman and Florence LaRiviere have both agreed to participate. Don wants to expand that group to 8 to 10 people to spread out the responsibility for establishing and maintaining contact with the various Friends Groups.

Don also suggested that at some point we should take a hard look at our Affiliates roster and purge from that list any who do not wish to contribute to our efforts. How this is done is open to discussion. But, basically, Don agreed with Ed's point that we should seek ways to energize and engage our existing Affiliates.

Beaty agreed that we needed to determine ways to keep the Affiliates involved. He opined that there is something about the way we do business that does not lead to involvement by most Affiliates. Perhaps we should be more assertive in making specific assignment to specific individuals.

Reffalt described how his working group on the National Bison Range issue functioned and how Affiliates remained involved.

Treasurer's Report - Including PayPal - Les Beaty

Les provided a summary of the annual Treasurer's Report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. This report covers the calendar year 2010, which is the new fiscal year for the BGA. We changed to a calendar year based fiscal year beginning with 2009. As shown by this report, we began the year with a balance of $12,553.24 and ended the year with a balance of $11,851.50. Thus, our total assets declined by $701.74 during the year.

Regarding our payments to Holland and Hart, there was some concern expressed at last year's meeting about our financial obligations to Holland and Hart for our suit regarding the National Bison Range issue. The total payments to Holland and Hart last year and this year were $4,646.85. The bulk of that cost has been offset by donations to our legal defense fund. The current case is over. Future legal actions will presumably require a new Board decision.

The attached report details the activity in our new PayPal account. It should be noted that this account is not free. PayPal charges about 2.5% for donations received from debit/credit card users (it was 2.35% last year). Thus, a $100.00 donation provides us with $97.50 in real money. When we set up the account, we had the option of requiring the donor to pay this surcharge. We opted not to do so but rather absorb it ourselves. It seemed like the gracious thing to do.

Ron Fowler made and Evelyn Redfearn seconded a motion that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. The motion carried by voice vote.

Report on Court Ruling on National Bison Range Lawsuit - Don Redfearn

The judge issued a ruling on September 28, 2010, that rescinded the AFA at the National Bison Range. In doing that, she put CSKT completely out of the picture for about a day. The lawyers for the Justice Department and for CSKT asked for consideration that the annual bison roundup was going to start on October 1st. The court order was September 28th. The FWS proposed that they hire the CSKT crew for 30 days to assist with the roundup.

The FWS/Region 6 hired back members of CSKT on a short-term, emergency hire. Our lawyers asked how long that would take, and the reply was 4 or 5 days. When the roundup was over, those temporary hires were terminated.

Almost immediately after that, the people in the FWS who negotiated the AFA began meeting with the tribe to figure out how they could take action to get back on as soon as possible.

The lawyers from the Justice Department and from CSKT had 60 days from the date of the judge's ruling to appeal. They waited until right up to the end of the 60-day period before they announced that they were going to appeal. They did file appeal papers. About 2 or 3 days after that whoever does the reviewing in the Justice Department decided to withdraw the appeal. So, that was the end of the case. All that now remains is the filing of claims with the court by Holland and Hart and by PEER for the recovery of costs associated with bringing the case. The court has not yet ruled on those claims. It's possible that we might get some of our costs back, but that is very uncertain at this point.

The judge ruled primarily on the NEPA argument. She also ruled that both the BGA and PEER had standing to bring the suit. She dismissed our two primary charges. So, the court may try to isolate the NEPA part of the case in determining the amount of reimbursement of expenses to allow. Our costs do not include the salaries of the Holland and Hart lawyers who worked on the case. We only paid for the additional, non-salary costs such as filing fees, photocopying, Internet legal search fees, courier service, telephone charges, etc., etc. Holland and Hart may submit a claim to the court for only the NEPA part of the case. We don't know how much of our costs were associated with that part.

There ensued a general discussion of AFAs and their impact on Federal agencies. It was pointed out that in today's climate of fiscal constraint, AFAs might be pointed to as a means of holding down operational expenses in those agencies. The reality is that AFAs tend to end up costing more money than would be the case if the agencies retained full operational responsibility.

A question was raised regarding the current disposition of the Interior Department Inspector General's investigation into various allegations surrounding employee treatment at the National Bison Range. No one seemed to know the current status of that investigation.

Don pointed out that if the AFA at the National Bison Range had been allowed to stand, it would have had a ripple effect throughout the Refuge System, as well as other Federal land agencies. There are many refuges, particularly in Alaska, where Native American tribes would seek similar arrangements for "co-management."

Saturday Morning - After Break

Status of Refuge Issues Monitored by BGA – Bill Reffalt

Bill's written report was distributed to the attendees. He summarized his report for the group.

Bill's report covers two categories of project, those in which he and other BGA Affiliates are actively involved and those that they are simply monitoring. Active involvement means working alone or in coordination with other groups to provide comments or take other actions to resolve problems, such as direct contact with principals. Monitoring involves trying to keep up with things that are going on. The list of projects didn't change very much from 2009.

The major project that his bison group took up in 2010 dealt with the legislation that was proposed by the House Natural Resources Committee, Indian Affairs Subcommittee, on amendments to the Indian Self-Governance Act. The bill was H.R. 4347. It contained provisions dealing with what constitutes inherently federal functions. It also contained language requiring specific language in non-BIA agency guiding legislation (such as the NWRSAA) prohibiting the delegation of management to Indians in order to prevent such in any Annual Funding Agreement (AFA).

H.R. 4347 passed the House by concurrent resolution voice vote as a non-controversial piece of legislation. There was no recorded vote. The assumption when it got to the Senate was that it was a non-controversial piece of legislation that had passed the House with a two-thirds majority vote. However, thanks to the actions of the BGA, and others, the bill was tabled in the Senate during the recent lame duck session. We should be alert to the reintroduction of this measure in another Congress.

Bill also briefed the group on the Baca NWR oil and gas exploration issue. Both this and H.R. 4347 issue are included in his report that has been distributed to all Affiliates.

Report on BGA Booth at Festival of the Cranes at Bosque del Apache NWR – Les/Sharon Beaty

At our annual meeting at Bosque del Apache in 2009, Don Redfearn asked Bill Reffalt and Les Beaty to set up an exhibit at the Festival of the Cranes at Bosque that coming Fall. However, the task was forgotten over the summer. Don did not forget. The next year he asked again that an exhibit be set up. This time, he asked Jim Hubert to organize the exhibit and make the arrangements with the Friends of Bosque del Apache NWR that hosts the Festival each year. Jim did so and seven of us (Don and Evelyn Redfearn, Bill and Christine Reffalt, Jim Hubert, and Les and Sharon Beaty) manned the exhibit on November 19-21, 2010. Jim Hubert has already submitted a report of our participation to the Affiliates.

The official attendance at the Festival, as calculated by the Friends Group, was about 2,700 people. The Festival is a big event in that area. It had numerous exhibits and information booths for a wide variety of organizations and interests. Some booths were in the open air. Others were beneath sunshades. Still others were inside large tents. Wildlife artists had exhibits inside one of the tents. Bus tours were offered around the refuge tour loops. The refuge had a significant population of snow geese, as well as other waterfowl. It made good wildlife viewing for the visitors.

Hubert estimated that about 2,000 people visited our exhibit. We handed out about 250 of our Case booklets with the Crozier DVD inserted in the back. We also handed out about 40 of our Hidden Lands reprints, about 200 of our brochures, and about 250 of our It's About Time pins. Those pins were popular with the kids. Every kid had to have a pin.

We learned a number of things at this event. We saw people walking around and struggling with an assortment of literature and other stuff they picked up at the various booths. It occurred to us that if we made available inexpensive plastic bags with our LOGO on the side, we might make lots of visitors happy. Also, we discovered that there were no Refuge System maps available anywhere. Several people came to our exhibit and asked for them. We checked with the Bosque visitor center staff, and they had none. Sevilleta NWR had an exhibit, and we checked with them. They also had none. A spirited discussion ensued regarding whether such a refuge system map is even needed in this day of computers and smart cell phones. It appears that the FWS has opted not to spend the money on this map although it is apparently still in need throughout the refuge system.

[Editor's Note: It appears that a "Centennial" edition of this map, which is the reverse side of a handout titled "National Wildlife Refuge System, A Visitor's Guide," may still be available, perhaps from regional offices.]

Another thing we learned was that you could take a brochure, a donation slip, and a tri-folded Dream sheet and slip them inside a Case Booklet with the DVD in the back and you had an excellent handout for any occasion. We also learned that you couldn't simply place handout material on a table, walk away, and expect people to help themselves. They won't do it, for several reasons. They may just not be interested. They may be in a hurry. They may be hassled by kids, etc. Or, they may think it costs something. So, we began to button-hole people, ie.,

engaging them in conversation when they walked by. Once we did that, they seemed genuinely interested in what we had to say. And, the vast majority was supportive of our mission.

Whether exhibits like this are worth the effort is a question we will get back to when we talk with Don Hultman about his strategy thoughts later in the meeting.

Funding from Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) – Ron Fowler

Ron reported that he first made a presentation on this subject at the Sebasian, FL meeting in 2003. He said that he worked with Ginger Merchant Meese at the NWRA when she was preparing an application to get the NWRA included in the CFC. That was basically what got the NWRA started on their way. The Office of Personnel Management has some requirements for qualifying organizations. To qualify, an organization must have a national membership, which we have. The organization must have activities of a qualifying type in at least 15 States within the most recent three-year period. The third requirement is that the organization use accrued accounting and have a recent recognized audit. Beaty mentioned that the accrued accounting and the auditing were just administrative hurdles that can be overcome. The real problem is the requirement of qualifying activities in 15 states.

The CFC timetable goes something like this. OPM has a December 1st deadline every year for organizations to submit applications for qualification. Then, in February or March, a decision is made by OPM if the organization qualifies. Those that qualify are then included in the list of eligible organizations that is published for the October CFC campaign.

Reffalt mentioned that he was also involved with the NWRA when Ginger was working on getting the NWRA qualified. He stated that the requirements were much less stringent back then. He thought that we could still qualify, but that it would not be nearly as easy as it used to be. For example, back when the NWRA was making application, putting up an exhibit at the Festival of the Cranes would have been considered as a qualifying activity. It would have been assumed that the interaction with 2,000 people would have been an educational experience and would therefore qualify. Today, you cannot qualify by just having organizational members go down and hand out leaflets and stuff. In order for the Festival experience to qualify in the CFC context, we would have to hold workshops at Bosque, have people sign up, come in, sit down and see presentations, show videos, answer their questions - it would have to be an active, interactive kind of event so that it would be viewed as a substantial effort by the BGA. "Substantial" is the operative term. To qualify, we must have at least 15 substantial projects over the three-year period preceding the application. Looking at the list of projects Bill reported on at the meeting, only about eight or nine were active, and not all of those would be considered substantial. The monitoring projects would not qualify.

There followed a very spirited discussion about the CFC and whether or not the BGA could ever qualify for inclusion. The general consensus arising out of this discussion was that the BGA did not now qualify and may not in the future unless the number of active Affiliates increased substantially and generated the number of qualifying activities which would be favorably considered by OPM. Thus, discussion of this topic ended.

[Editor's Note: According to the OPM/CFC website, the CFC raised nearly $282.6 million in pledges to non-profit programs in 2009. Initially, growth in the number of participating national charities was slow -- from 23 in 1969 to only 33 in 1979. The CFC today is known to be the most inclusive workplace giving campaign in the world with the number of participating charities estimated at over 20,000 nonprofit charitable organizations worldwide. The charities supported through the CFC range from nascent community groups to large, well-known charities.]

Posting Bold Ideas for Future of Refuge System – Ed Crozier/Ron Fowler

Ed reported that he first learned about the Conserving the Future website from information put out by the NWRA. This website is sponsored by the NWRA to support citizen participation in the development of their vision document. Ed thought it would be a good way to get the word out about the BGA and promote our mission to a wide audience, particularly Friends Groups. Don Redfearn uploaded a "Bold Idea" describing the BGA mission, Ron Fowler posted a link to the Noreen Clough video, and Les Beaty posted a link to the Crozier Video on YouTube. But, several people reported that the site was very difficult to log in to and navigate around.

Ron mentioned that this was the second instance of trying to log on and vote for items on a website like this. The first instance was the Great American Outdoors initiative. We did post our BGA mission on that website and there were some votes in support. However, our idea (mission) did not make it in to the final report that came out a few weeks ago.

Ed said that his initial interest in the NWRA's Conserving the Future website was not to try to influence the decision makers by the submission of ideas because they probably weren't going to listen to us anyway. His objective was to utilize the website to get more exposure for the BGA mission and idea.

Potpourri of 'should do' items (seeking more Affiliates and defining role; developing draft legislation; posting suggestions for America's Great Outdoor initiative; suggestions to OMB effort to change government for efficiency and economy of operations) – Don Redfearn

The group entered into more discussions about the recruitment of new Affiliates.

Don also reported that he had submitted material to the Administration (OMB) as a follow-up to President Obama's announcement of an effort to reorganize government.

Saturday Afternoon - After Lunch

Review/Discuss/Modify the Draft Legislation Prepared by Don Hultman – Bill Reffalt

The group discussed the draft Refuge Service legislation that Don Hultman had prepared. Hultman joined the meeting via a Skype conference call to add his perspective and hear the discussion. The group agreed that this would be a working draft in sufficient shape to be distributed outside the BGA (Friends Groups, Congressmen, etc.). It is not intended to be a polished document.

The group spent about an hour and 15 minutes discussing the draft legislation. Bill went through about eight or ten questions, comments, or suggestions about the draft with considerable discussion of each by Hultman and others. Bill said that he would reduce those comments to writing and email them to Hultman for modification of the draft, as appropriate. Other attendees brought up questions and comments for discussion. All were encouraged to also email their suggestions to Hultman. These points of discussion are not described in detail here since they were intended as feedback to Hultman on his draft. He will produce another draft for review by the Board.

There was some discussion about the proposed name for the new agency, and everyone seemed to continue to support the name "National Wildlife Refuge Service" as the preferred name.

John Martin asked if it were possible or advisable to insert language exempting the NWRS from the requirements of the Indian Self-Determination Act. It was decided that this was not the time to insert such language because it would add controversy to the bill and reduce its chances of passage. Bill suggested that a better strategy would be to work with committee staff once the bill got traction in Congress and try to have that type of language inserted at the last moment. Martin agreed that was a preferred strategy.

Hultman suggested that once he received everyone's comments and produced a second draft, he could have a retired Interior Solicitor he knows review the document from a legal perspective. That might help correct some technical flaws. He was encouraged to do so.

Regarding a deadline for getting comments to Hultman, the group agreed that March 15th was a reasonable date.

Discussion of Hultman's "Strategy Thoughts" – Evelyn Redfearn

Legislation –

There was some discussion as to whether now was the best time to put forth draft legislation given the current climate in Washington for cutting Federal spending and for reorganizing the Federal Government (with the implication of eliminating Federal functions). Someone pointed out that if we could find an interested Congressman, that person might be a better judge of the timing for our legislation. Phil Morgan opined that if we wait until the timing is right, hell might have frozen over. Beaty offered the observation that regardless of what is zeroed out of the current budget, this recession will end, the economy will recover, the nation will be strong, we will prosper and grow rich, and when we do we want a Refuge Service that is prepared to expand and grow and do wonderful things. We don't want to build in limitations on what the new Service can do.

Hultman pointed out that our proposal is not a cost-neutral proposition. The creation of a new agency will bring with it added costs. Hence, we probably should not try to sell the idea on economic grounds.

BGA Mission –

Once again we discussed the BGA's mission statement relative to the purposes spelled out in our bylaws. After considerable debate, we agreed that both statements were still relevant and need not be modified.

Outreach –

Don Hultman, in his strategy thoughts paper, raised the issue of outreach. He made the statement that perhaps the BGA was obsessed with outreach. However, in that same paper his stated that keeping the dream alive may be our most important task. After considerable discussion, the group reached an understanding and agreement that outreach to the general public was probably not useful or important to our mission. However, outreach to specific, targeted audiences who can make a difference is important to our mission. Audiences such as Congressional interests, NGOs, and, probably, Friends Groups fall into this latter category. That is where our outreach efforts should be focused and where the greatest payoff will lie. Hultman mentioned that if we can get a Congressperson to introduce our legislation, it would give the Friends Groups something to latch onto and get excited about.

Crozier brought up the subject of how we might use the draft legislation to promote our effort. He felt we should use it as our primary tool for attracting attention. We need to get it out there so that there is discussion about it. We can generate excitement about it whether it has been introduced or not.

Membership –

The problem of recruitment of new members comes up at every meeting and is a perennial problem for which no one seems to have an answer. Hultman believes that getting draft legislation out there might generate more interest in getting members to join us.

On the subject of advertising the BGA, Ron Fowler and Bill Reffalt had purchased a quantity of coffee cups with the BGA logo printed on the side. These very attractive cups were made available at the FWS Retirees Reunion and included with the handout packets for each registrant.

Saturday Afternoon - After Break

<u>Activating Grass Roots Support from Friends Groups - Don Redfearn</u>

[Editor's Note: This topic was next on the agenda for the meeting. It was a very important topic and was referenced at various points during our meeting. However, your intrepid moderator experienced a 'Senior Moment' and skipped the topic going to the next one instead. Don has since detailed his plans for implementing this task in an email to a select group formed to work on this task. That email is included below as a substitute for his presentation at our meeting.]

"I made a commitment at the annual meeting to organize an action group for the purpose of contacting ALL "Friends" groups in an effort to determine how many would be interested in becoming advocates for a National Wildlife Refuge Service? The people listed to receive this initial message are:

Florence LaRivere
Ron Hight
John Taylor
Eileen McLaughlin
Gail Fishman
Marie Springer

"I have talked with some of you on this list, but not all. You would be considered the core group of such an effort, because all of you are either active members of a "Friends" group, or have had direct involvement with friends.

"I have drafted a letter that might be appropriate to send to such groups, but I will hold it in abeyance until I explain a bit more how I envision we (BGA) would hope to interact with such groups.

"For groups who agree with our mission for agency status, we could coordinate efforts to contact Representatives and Senators in their Districts when we have found champions to introduce draft legislation in Congress. In the interim, for those groups who have not been active with their Representatives we could encourage and give advice to them about getting those people to visit their refuge(s). We would also keep them abreast of BGA efforts.

"I had considered we could go direct to each group, but decided it would be better if we first contacted the Refuge Manager involved to determine his/her attitude toward separation from FWS. I am aware of some serious conflict that could be counter productive to our efforts.

"For starters, I envision we will want/need to increase the number of people involved in this effort (hopefully from friends groups as well as BGA). With the initial contact, we would provide to the person identified as the liaison with BGA, a copy of our revised 'The Case for a National Wildlife Refuge Service' and a copy of the Crozier DVD; a reference to our web site; and any other information we deem pertinent.

"Les Beaty has the ability to host conference calls through Skype that would not engender cost to any of us. I realize each of you will have questions, both before we proceed, and certainly as we proceed with such an endeavor. I would like to have a response from each of you regarding your willingness to be a member of this action group. Once we get that resolved, I will send to you a revision of my draft letter to Friends and we can follow with the first conference call to discuss strategy, etc.

"I have attached a copy of the February, 2011 version (sans graphics) of The Case for a National Wildlife Refuge Service. We will have printed copies when we send them out with a packet of materials to the individuals in Friends groups identified as supporters of separate agency.

"Don"

Strategy for Meeting with Selected NGOs in D.C. Area to Discuss Legislation Support – Les Beaty

Les proposed a strategy for working with selected NGOs in Washington that required a Washington Representative of the BGA. This Rep would develop and maintain communications with those NGOs with the objective of learning of their interests and objections to our mission and suggesting strategies to the BGA to overcome those objections. Les stressed that it was critical to our ultimate success to have the support of selected NGOs for our legislation. Otherwise, Congressmen are not likely to be enthusiastic. The strategy Les outlined is different from a strategy of arranging a meeting with these NGOs and discussing our mission. A single meeting is not sufficient. A continuing dialog and a relationship must be developed. That's where a BGA representative on the scene becomes valuable. This task cannot be performed at a long distance. It must involve someone on the ground in, or near, Washington, DC.

BGA Representative in D.C. – Ron Fowler

Ron agreed that we needed to have a personal relationship with the players both in the NGO community as well as people on the Hill. Reffalt suggested that the primary meeting list should include the top members of the CARE group that are all very interested in refuges. These include Audubon, Wilderness Society, Isaac Walton League, National Wildlife Federation, etc. Those are the top NGOs. But, one must work his way down through a rather long laundry list of organizations to establish such relationships. Crozier asked if Ron could attend the CARE meetings as a non-member. Reffalt suggested that Ron could probably go with a member as a guest. Reffalt also suggested that this was an excellent place to not only interact with representatives of the member organizations but also to make our presence felt among that group.

Reffalt suggested that Ron meet with representatives of Audubon, NRDC, and REP in the near future since those three organizations have taken definitive action to endorse our mission. We need to know what their present comfort level is with their past support and our current efforts.

Attendance @ Refuge Conference in Wisconsin in July – Ron Fowler

There was considerable discussion about this conference and what BGA's role should be; specifically should we send a representative? Several opinions were expressed. The consensus was that Ron should find out more about the conference to determine if a BGA presence would be (1) welcomed and (2) productive. He will advise the Board at a later date.

Web Master to Support V.P. for Communications – Les Beaty

Les stated that he had talked with both Chuck Danner and Ron Fowler about this topic, and it was his opinion, with which they both agreed, that the VP for Communications was a big enough job that we should think about having a separate webmaster to take care of the BGA website. This webmaster doesn't necessarily have to be an Affiliate

now, but should be supportive of our mission and probably should become an Affiliate. This person should have the skills to maintain the website. There are webmasters for the websites of the various Friends Groups. Perhaps we could find a person among those who would be willing to help us.

Finding a Grant to Study Refuge Benefits to Economy in Local Areas – Les Beaty

There was a general discussion about what it would take for the BGA to obtain a grant. Reffalt mentioned that the FWS had completed a study of refuge benefits on local economies within the past few years. Two conclusions came out of this discussion. One was that we needed a clearly described project to interest a grantor in giving us money. The other is that it is unlikely that a project involving reorganizing government would have much appeal to grantors.

Report re: Online Meeting with Board Members Unable to Attend Annual Meeting – Les Beaty

An online meeting was held on February 13th. Les hosted it with Skype. He connected with Marie Springer and Don Redfearn on their Skype accounts and with Burkett Neely, Don Hultman, and Florence LaRiviere on their home telephones. Chuck Danner and Glenn Elison were unavailable.

The purpose of this conference call was two-fold. One, we wanted to experiment with using Skype to set up and manage a conference call. Two, we wanted to obtain comments and suggestions from Board members who were not planning to attend our annual meeting.

Florence, Marie, Burkett, and Hultman all stated that when we start contacting Friends Groups, we should remember that they are all different. They work in different regions and with different refuge managers. So, we cannot assume that they are a homogeneous lot and that each will react in the same way. It's very important to understand this. If the refuge manager is supportive of our mission, the Friends Group is likely to be supportive. If the manager is opposed, the group is likely to be reluctant to support us.

Regarding the conference call capability, Les reported that he can set up a conference call for anyone who wishes to hold a conference call meeting. He cited Don Redfearn's Friends Group project.

Sunday, February 27, 2011

The meeting resumed at 8:30 am.

Elections – Sharon Beaty

Sharon read the list of nominees for the following positions. These people have agreed to serve a term of office in the positions designated.

President - Ron Fowler
Vice-President - Bill Reffalt
Vice-President for Communications - Eileen McLaughlin
Secretary - Marie Springer
Treasurer - Les Beaty

Board of Directors:
- Ed Crozier
- Burkett Neely
- Don Redfearn
- John Taylor
- Phil Morgan

No other nominations were laid on the table. Phil Morgan moved that the nominations as read by Sharon Beaty be accepted for those positions. Les Beaty seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried. There was some discussion if this motion was a motion to elect the nominees for the positions designated. It was determined by the attendees that it was, and hence the nominees are considered as being elected to those positions and the election process was closed.

Don Redfearn turned over the presidency to Ron Fowler, the new president.

Ron Fowler asked who was continuing on the Board from last year. They are:

Don Hultman
Glenn Elison
Chuck Danner
Florence LaRiviere

Miscellaneous

There was a general discussion of our reporting requirements for the State of New Mexico. Les Beaty stated that he would work with Marie Springer in preparing the report to the N.M. Public Regulation Commission. Also, he would file the proper report with the N.M. Attorney General's office. Les also reported that he had filed the BGA's IRS return (Form 990N) electronically a couple of weeks ago and had received an acknowledgment from the IRS.

Ron expressed his appreciation for Don Redfearn's leadership as president and said he considers it an honor to take over the reins of the BGA. He stated that the three R's of the BGA were Recruitment, Recruitment, and Recruitment. He requested the attendees to consider the attendees of the FWS Retirees Reunion as potential Affiliates of the BGA. He distributed the most recent list of the attendees at the Retirees Reunion. A discussion ensued regarding the refuge people on that list and the ones who should be contacted.

Don Redfearn suggested that we should review the list of Affiliates to determine if the ones who have been inactive are still interested and committed to our mission. Perhaps we should purge those who are not active and have lost interest in our mission. A discussion ensued regarding how to contact the inactive Affiliates and how to engage them in our efforts. Ron made the comment that we had to work on our communications with the Affiliates. Others suggested that we energize Affiliates to make contacts with their local Congressional representatives, or their local staffs, and that we need to think about having Affiliates write in support of draft legislation once we get it introduced.

Ed Crozier mentioned that the NWRA has a capability on its website for having members send emails to their representatives through the website. That makes it easy for members to respond to Action Alerts. We don't have that capability. Bill Reffalt mentioned that in today's economic climate and with the current mood in Congress, it was much more important that Refuge supporters express their concern about maintaining funding for Refuges. Ed asked if our website could be adjusted to do the same thing as the NWRA website so that we could monitor the activity. Ron said he did not know but that it was something that Eileen could check into.

Phil Morgan suggested that we express to Eileen McLaughlin our interest in her obtaining help with maintenance of our website and that we believe the website should be upgraded. There are some funds in the BGA account for website maintenance and upgrading.

Phil also stated that if all the refuge managers in the country were going to be at the Vision meeting in Wisconsin, that someone from the BGA ought to be there to show that we are interested in the Refuge System and what is going on. Nobody seemed to have a good idea of how the BGA would make its presence known at such a gathering. Phil suggested that it might be accomplished by having a person well known to the present refuge managers represent our interests at the meeting. No decisions were made.

Phil then brought up the subject of grants, following up on the discussion yesterday. He suggested that we follow up with Marie to see if there was any worthwhile way that we could make another effort to get some money to do something. Les Beaty mentioned the availability of a service called GrantStation via TechSoup that might be useful to us. Les indicated that he would talk with Marie about GrantStation.

A renewed discussion ensued regarding the Combined Federal Campaign and whether or not the BGA could or should ever qualify to participate. There is some doubt that we would ever be able to establish the national scope of the type required for qualification for the CFC.

Referring to the website "Conserving the Future," Ed Crozier mentioned that the "Bold Idea" he posted now ranked 2nd in voting (with 75 votes) on that website. He felt that somehow we should take advantage of the interest shown in the idea of a separate Refuge Service, or at least an enhanced position within the FWS as a stepping stone to achieving an independent Refuge Service. There was some debate about the inclusion of the phrase "within the FWS" but the real question Ed raised was that we should take advantage of the interest shown by the voters in the principle or idea of increased Congressional and public interest in the Refuge System. The problem we recognized was that nobody could articulate an effective way to take advantage of that interest.

In terms of failed attempts to generate responses, Evelyn Redfearn mentioned the effort to stimulate votes for the Refuge Service idea which Don Redfearn had posted on Administration's Great American Outdoors website. Ed Crozier and Ron Fowler had put together a list of 600 email addresses and emailed requests to vote for the Refuge Service idea. Ron reported that he was unable to determine if any of those folks cast a vote for the idea.

There followed a discussion of how to post links on the "Conserving the Future" website to our documents including the We Have A Dream sheet, the Case Booklet, and, if time permits, the draft legislation. Ron agreed to move the Case Booklet text from the Affiliates section of our website to the General Public section where it can be read by everyone.

Ron mentioned that until we could find a webmaster, he would continue to perform the webmaster chores while Eileen McLaughlin assumed the duties of VP for Communications.

Phil made a proposal that the group being formed by Don Redfearn to develop communications with the Friends Group adopt as a sub-goal the recruitment of new Affiliates. Phil made the point that we were not just trying to recruit Affiliates; we were trying to recruit activists. He stressed that there was little point in recruiting Affiliates if they were not going to be active. He restated his firm belief that the BGA must recruit new Affiliates who will take an active part in the activities of the Alliance.

Next Year's Annual Meeting

There was some discussion about possible sites for next year's meeting. Bill Reffalt moved that a committee consisting of Ron Fowler and Don Redfearn decide on nominations for a site for next year's meeting and that further discussion be delayed until they make their recommendation. Les Beaty seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned by the President, and the group moved outside to have a group picture taken.

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Submitted by: Sharon and Les Beaty

Approved by Ron Fowler, President. Electronically signed /s/ Ronald L. Fowler 03/25/2011

BLUE GOOSE ALLIANCE

PRESIDENT REPORT

ANNUAL MEETING – FEBRUARY 26 –FEBRUARY 27, 2011

The ancient Chinese curse, "May You Live in Interesting Times," might seem apropos to the efforts of the Blue Goose Alliance. However, I am inclined to believe that in the most trying of times there are opportunities that should not be lost to naysayers. Though economic woes hang like heavy clouds on the horizon, we should not lose sight of the positive aspects of the call for protecting the environment, go green and reorganize government.

The Alliance can take heart in a United States District Court ruling on September 28, 2010 negating the Annual Funding Agreement (AFA) between the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Consolidated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) of Montana. That AFA had relinquished management responsibilities at the National Bison Range Complex to the CSKT. It is not yet clear what the future might be on that issue, since a spokesman for the FWS has indicated the intent to find ways to accommodate the CSKT in future management. This statement is extremely disturbing since the avowed intent of the CSKT is to not only manage the Bison Range, but to eventually have the lands restored to ownership of the Tribes. Further, the precedence of allowing AFAs of that nature to continue would be the death knell of the system of National Wildlife Refuges as we now know it. The record should be clear that the precedence of such an AFA would likely have gone unchallenged without the pro bono support of the law firm of Holland & Hart.

Evelyn and I did go to the bison roundup in October because the FWS thwarted the Court order by rehiring CSKT employees for thirty days under the ruse of an emergency authority. Some elements in the FWS had quickly assembled a crew from other stations and former Bison Range employees to take care of the roundup. Other elements in FWS claimed the CSKT employees were needed because they had already been trained, etc. We went because of BGA concern and implications of what FWS actions might have on the judge's ruling. It turned out the short-term hire was terminated after 5 days and no repercussions.

We have been trying to respond to initiatives by the President Obama and the FWS that would strengthen our case for a National Wildlife Refuge Service. America's Great Outdoors report has been completed. It can be accessed on line at www.doi.gov/AmericasGreatOutdoors . Though we submitted comments it is too broad in scope for the BGA purposes of influencing management and organizational structure. We have also submitted comments to the FWS invitation for Bold Ideas, but the web site has proved to be nearly unnegotiable. We haven't totally given up on that one.

We continue to have difficulty in enticing new candidates for our Affiliate group. Our sales pitch seems to lack the promise of sizzle or reward. Or maybe it lacks a challenge?? We have had some success but not enough to satisfy what we consider necessary to keep up with natural attrition. This issue will have to be addressed in the coming year.

This Annual Report should not dwell entirely on what was, or was not, accomplished during 2010. It is hoped it can also be a catalyst for mapping out immediate and future efforts by the BGA. Thanks mainly to Bill Reffalt, the BGA has gained recognition among refuge field rank and file for taking a position on issues that, if not recognized by the BGA, would be ignored within the FWS. It has served also to make the major NGOs aware of the new kid on the block that has integrity and in-depth knowledge of the workings of the Refuge System. This effort should continue for the purpose of keeping the public aware of the shortcomings of FWS management of the Refuge System.

It is time for the BGA to have an on-the-ground presence in the Washington D.C. arena – maybe not a lobbyist per se, but certainly an individual to represent the BGA, and available for face-to-face contact for discussions and information with NGO representatives and members of Congress. We hope to have such representation in the near future.

As we have become more aware of greater needs for public awareness, it is also obvious we can benefit by having more effort directed toward our website since it is our main means of communication with the world. We need to locate an individual who can keep our site attractive, easy to access and up-to-date. This individual should work closely with our Vice President for Communications. This effort should have priority in the ensuing weeks of our annual meeting.

We have a draft Bill to establish a National Wildlife Refuge Service that needs to be reviewed, edited, polished and readied to present to potential congressional champions. In conjunction with seeking congressional champions, we need to begin work on eliciting grass-root support from NGOs and "Friends" among the variety of groups who volunteer on and support individual refuges.

A working group needs to be formed to liaison with Friends group. This team should develop an ongoing relationship to keep each individual friends group up-to-date on BGA activities, status of proposed legislation, quest for contacts with individual Representatives and Senators, and other issues of common concern. Contacts have already been made with individuals to serve on this working group.

In furtherance of the effort to build support for legislation, the BGA should initiate a meeting with select NGOs to be held in the D.C. area. The purpose would be to draw upon their experience and solicit their ideas, guidance and hopefully their support. The BGA representative in D.C. will be key coordinating such a meeting. This effort too will require a team to be involved and to maintain contact with the NGOs.

Don Redfearn, President

Treasurer's Report - 2010
Les Beaty - Jan. 20, 2011

This report covers our fiscal year beginning January 1, 2010, and ending December 31, 2010.

On January 1, 2010, our account balances were as follows:

General Fund:	9,639.63
Legal Defense Fund:	298.61
Danny Redfearn Fund:	2,615.00
Total:	12,553.24

This total represents a $318.14 decline from the beginning balance last year.

In March we set up a PayPal Account to receive donations. We also created a second non-profit bank checking account to link to our newly established PayPal account. Periodically, I transfer funds accumulated in our PayPal account into the second checking account. And, when needed, funds can be transferred from the second checking account into the primary checking account. Since PayPal has access to the second checking account, Wells Fargo recommended its use so that PayPal would not have access to our primary checking account.

Activity in the accounts during 2010 included the following:

INCOME

Donations received during the year totaled $11,097.84, apportioned as follows:

Primary Checking Account	
General Fund:	9,101.00
Legal Defense Fund:	1,232.00
Danny Redfearn Fund:	0.00
Sub-Total:	10,333.00
PayPal Account	764.84
Total Income:	11,097.84

OUTGO

Travel Reimbursements:	8,375.38
Directors and Officers Insurance:	1,260.00
Holland and Hart (Legal Action re NBR):	755.36
Bosque del Apache, Festival of the Cranes:	1,369.93
Miscellaneous (Filing Fees, Postage, Web Hosting, etc.)	39.07
Total Outgo:	11,799.74

ACCOUNT BALANCES AS OF 12/31/10

Primary Checking Account	
General Fund:	7,625.32
Legal Defense Fund:	775.25
Danny Redfearn Fund:	2,585.93
Sub-Total:	10,986.50
Second Checking Account	181.90
PayPal Account	683.10
Total Assets:	11,851.50