

Friends of Seven Bends State Park

Open Meeting Minutes
Saturday, June 18, 2022
Lupton Picnic Shelter, SBSP
12:00pm-1:00pm



“The focus of Friends of Seven Bends State Park is to support and advocate for the educational and recreational use of the Park for all.”

E-mail Address: fsbsp@fnfsr.org

Website and Events Calendar: www.fnfsr.org/fsbsp

Contact information:

FSBSP: Joan Chapman, Chair (joan.chapman@fnfsr.org 703-507-2276)

Matt Kowalski, Vice-Chair (mkowalski@cbf.org 540-233-1066)

SBSP: Tom Stevens, Assistant Park Manager (thomas.stevens@dcr.virginia.gov 540-335-0476)

FNFSR: David Brotman, Executive Director (david.brotman@fnfsr.org 540-252-9545)

Julia Sargent, Director of Programs (julia.sargent@fnfsr.org 443-223-7199)

1. Welcome by Matt Kowalski, Facilitator
 - a. Introduction of participants
2. Updates
 - a. Seven Bends State Park (SBSP aka “the park”) Updates
 - “Event” of June 14, 2022 - The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Public Communications Office invited all Seven Bends Committee (SBC) members to represent FSBSP at the dedication of Seven Bends State Park. The ceremony included remarks by Governor Glenn Youngkin and acting Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources Travis Voyles, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Gokotta hiking and biking trail. For those unable to attend the dedication ceremony, a video of the proceedings has been uploaded to the Virginia State Parks’ YouTube channel and Facebook page. It can also be found at <https://dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/seven-bends-dedication> .
 - Seven Bends State Park Tale Trail was installed on May 5, 2022. Social media posts feature scenes from the trail, as well as photos of the artist, writer, and translator. The tale of Sadie and Kiko is located along the Eagles Edge Trail on the Lupton side of the park. For more information about the tale and about purchasing the book, go to <https://fnfsr.org/taletrail>.
 - Merchandise trailer - Assistant Park Manager Tom Stevens has received the merchandise trailer for the park and is having it outfitted for sales. Tom hopes to have it in operation later this summer. There will be volunteer opportunities for those 17 and older to handle summer sales. Park staff will be involved in the training of the volunteers and separation of the park’s funds from FSBSP funds.
 - PlaySpace features - Two features are still being completed for this space. Tom is working with Craig George regarding the features and the entry sign. Park staff will be involved in the construction of a portion of the sign.

- Park staff positions filled - Ida McClanahan has been hired to fill the administrative office position at the park. Matt Golliday, who was employed at the park last summer (2021) as a seasonal hire, was recently hired on a part-time basis. He has since been promoted to a Trade Tech III supervisory position.
- Office space in Woodstock - The rental of office space in a Main St., Woodstock, house has fallen through. DCR is in the process of accepting proposals from other locations for rental office space. The complete process from accepting proposals to a signed lease is a months-long endeavor.

b. Friends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River (FNFSR) Updates

- FNFSR summer camps for River Rangers (youths 9-12, June 6 thru June 10) and River Players (youths 6-8, June 13 thru June 15) were filled to capacity. These youngsters participated in river-based activities. For the Rangers, these activities included cave explorations and kayaking.
- North Fork Conservation Corps (youths 13-17) - Two sessions are being offered: July 11 to July 15 and July 18 to July 22. This program is sponsored by the Shenandoah Community Foundation. Each week, participants will be involved in 18 hours of community service at the park and 12 hours of educational/recreational activities. A participant can register for either week or for both weeks. There is no fee. Registration is still open, but is filling fast. Register at <https://fnfsr.org/nfcc2022>.
- Shenandoah Reel Women Fly Fishing Camps for Young Women - The day camp was held at Seven Bends State Park on June 13, 14, and 16. The overnight camp is scheduled for June 26 thru June 30 at Shenandoah River State Parks. These camps are held in partnership with FNFSR and are a featured recipient of the Wildlife Foundation of Virginia/Virginia Wildlife Grant Program.
- FNFSR celebrated Earth Day at three different cleanup locations April 23-25. Each day found FNFSR staff and volunteers at one of these sites.
- Kathleen Fish hosted third graders from WW Robinson Elementary School at the park on May 23. Kathleen lead a benthic macroinvertebrate program for the students.

3. FSBSP Update

- a. Women in Nature (WIN) program - This program was hosted by FSBSP and lead by Megan Dellinger. It included activities at the park over six Saturday afternoons, beginning April 23 and ending May 28, from 1pm-4pm. Sessions included yoga and forest therapy, nature art, a tree ID hike, kayaking, outdoor cooking and fishing. The program filled very early during registration and the women attending have asked for a fall or winter WIN program.
- b. Benches at the Park - Matt Kowalski has completed the first of two benches that he is constructing and will shortly start on the second. A goal of the SBC and park staff is to have at least one bench installed along the Gokotta Trail at the first fishing pad in time for the Seven Bends Walkers' Club inaugural walk.
- c. The Seven Bends Walkers' Club is hosting its inaugural walk on Saturday July 23 at 8am. The walk will be at an easy pace on a flat walking surface. Registration is open at <https://fnfsr.org/events>. There is no fee for this event and parking passes are not required. Joining us on this walk will be Kirk Andrews, local birder, and Christine Jorgensen, Northern Shenandoah County Master Gardener.

- d. Bird Walks with Kirk Andrews - Kirk is a local birder who enjoys teaching others to recognize and identify birds by their vocalizations, as well as by sight. Both the April and May bird walks were very successful in identifying a total of 92 different species. Kirk will be at the Walkers' Club July 23 walk to add to the fun. Also, stay tuned for bird walks during the fall migratory season.
- e. Wildflower Walks with Christine Jorgensen - Christine is a Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener who will be joining the Walkers' Club inaugural walk on July 23. Christine will also be leading two wildflower walks at the park, August 27 at 8am and September 25 at 9am. Register for these walks at <https://fnfsr.org/events>.
- f. 250th Shenandoah County anniversary will be commemorated on September 10 from 11am-5pm in Toms Brook. The location for the celebration is the Shenandoah Germanic Heritage Museum, Hottel/Keller Homestead. FSBSP will have a presence at this event, hosting a table to disseminate information about FSBSP. Any FSBSP volunteers who would like to help represent FSBSP, please contact joan.chapman@fnfsr.org.
- g. Discovery Zone at the Fish Fry Float, Strasburg, June 19 - Seven Bends Committee members Cecelia Latham, Linda Walcroft and Joan Chapman shared a table with Shenandoah Reel Women, just a table away from Megan Dellinger who represented Seven Bends State Park, and across the aisle from Kathleen Fish, the Education Specialist for FNFSR.
- h. Cecelia Latham is in contact with FastSigns of Winchester to design an interpretive sign for the Sensory Garden at the PlaySpace. The sign will illustrate the five senses - touch, smell, sight, hearing, and taste - with sketches and will contain photographs of plants at the garden that would be most connected to a specific sense (ie, cactus -> touch).

4. Upcoming Events and Programs

For more information and to register for events, unless otherwise stated in the listing, go to the website <https://dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/seven-bends>.

June

20th: What's Buggin' You? - Investigate the macroinvertebrates living in the river - hosted by SBSP – 2pm-3pm – Lupton boat launch

July

9th: Kayaking Tour – hosted by SBSP – 10am-11:30am – Lupton access boat launch

11th-15th: North Fork Conservation Corps for youths 13 to 17 – hosted by FNFSR – 9am-3pm – Hollingsworth access – register at <https://fnfsr.org/nfcc2022>

17th: Forest Therapy – hosted by SBSP – 9am-11am – Lupton access boat launch

18th-22nd: North Fork Conservation Corps for youths 13 to 17 – hosted by FNFSR – 9am-3pm – Hollingsworth access – register at <https://fnfsr.org/nfcc2022>

23rd: Seven Bends Walkers' Club Inaugural Walk – hosted by FSBSP – 8am-10am – Lupton picnic shelter – Come walk with friends, meet new friends, bring your partner, your dog, you children and celebrate the new benches at the park -- registration opens soon at <https://fnfsr.org/events>

August

13th: FSBSP **Workday** at the Park – 9am-12pm - location TBD – registration opens soon

13th: FSBSP **Open Meeting** – 12pm-1pm – location TBD – no registration required

27th: Wildflower Walk with Christine Jorgensen of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardeners – hosted by FSBSP – 8am-10am – Lupton picnic shelter – registration link to follow-- registration opens soon at <https://fnfsr.org/events>

September

25th: Wildflower Walk with Christine Jorgensen of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardeners – hosted by FSBSP – 9am-11am – Lupton picnic shelter-- registration opens soon at <https://fnfsr.org/events>

October

8th: FSBSP **Workday** at the Park – 9am-12pm - location TBD – registration link to follow

8th: FSBSP **Open Meeting** – 12pm-1pm – location TBD – no registration required

December

10th: FSBSP **Workday** at the Park – 9am-12pm - location TBD – registration link to follow

10th: FSBSP **Open Meeting** – 12pm-1pm – location TBD

5. The next FSBSP Open Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, August 13, 2022, from 12pm-1pm. This meeting will be at the location of the August workday, TBD.