



UF/IFAS Extension Brevard County

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SPACE COAST REGIONAL FRIENDS GROUP BYLAWS

DATE ADOPTED: October 1, 2025

Local Friends Group of the Florida Master Naturalist Program

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The Foundation for The Gator Nation An Equal Opportunity Institution

ARTICLE 1: NAME

The name of this Friends Group of the Florida Master Naturalist Program is reflective of the geographic region for which it focuses their primary functions and activities. This includes Brevard and is thereby referred to as Space Coast Regional Friends Group. The Articles of Incorporation, US Treasury Form 990-N, and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services acknowledge this group as the Space Coast Regional Chapter - Florida Master Naturalists, Inc.

ARTICLE 2: OFFICE LOCATION

The Space Coast Regional Friends Group of the Florida Master Naturalist Program (FMNP) is affiliated with the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Extension Service, Brevard County.

The official address for the Space Coast Regional Friends Group is University of Florida IFAS Extension Brevard County, 3695 Lake Drive, Cocoa, Florida 32926.

ARTICLE 3: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Friends Group is to support the mission and goals of the Florida Master Naturalist Program by 1) providing environmental educational activities and outreach to the general public and to students of natural resource conservation; 2) promoting awareness, understanding and respect of natural resources; 3) advocating for the protection of native plants and ecological communities; 4) encouraging passive recreation; 5) endorsing sustainable environmental practices and appreciation of Florida's natural environment; 6) participating in environmental educational outreach activities; 7) supporting environmental clean-up events; and 8) assisting environmental education facilities through the volunteerism of Florida Master Naturalist Program members.

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP

Membership eligibility is defined by those persons who have completed a minimum of one Florida Master Naturalist Course.

Members are considered to be in good standing when their annual dues are current. Members in good standing may participate in Friends Group business activities, serve on committees, and participate in voting decisions. Members are expected to remain active by volunteering a minimum of five (5) hours per year.

Annual dues shall be established by the Board of Directors and are designed to support the administrative services and needs of the Friends Group to conduct official business in accordance to these Bylaws. Annual dues collected shall maintain the Member for twelve (12) months from the date the dues are collected. Adjustments in the annual dues shall be presented by the Board of Directors to the general membership and shall only take effect when approved by an affirmative vote of at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the ballots cast by Members. The vote shall be conducted via online survey, with a mail-in ballot option provided upon request by a member.

Membership is open to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status.

ARTICLE 5: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The affairs of the Friends Group shall be managed by its Board of Directors (BOD). The BOD shall consist of no less than three (3) and no more than five (5) Directors. These individuals may periodically meet outside of general membership meetings in an effort to conduct essential business in accordance to these bylaws. Only Directors shall have voting privileges at BOD meetings. Exception: In the event of a tie vote among the Directors, the Facilitator shall cast the deciding vote. The Facilitator's vote shall be restricted solely to breaking a tie and shall not be counted for quorum or any other purpose.

ARTICLE 6: OFFICERS

Officers of the Friends Group shall consist of the President, Secretary and Treasurer. The officers may also include a Vice President and a Past President. A director, other than the President, may serve more than one office concurrently. The duties of each Officer are further defined in the Standard Operating Procedures.

President: The President shall be the executive officer of the Friends Group and shall have control and supervision of the affairs of the Friends Group. The President shall preside at all meetings of the general membership and of the BOD. The President shall serve a term of one (1) year.

Vice President: The Vice President shall assist and support as needed the President in the performance of their duties. The Vice President shall serve a term of one (1) year.

Past-President: The Past-President shall transition from the President's position following conclusion of their presidential term. The Past-President shall assist and support the President in the performance of their duties when requested by the President. The Past-President shall serve a term of one (1) year.

Secretary: The Secretary shall keep official Friends Group minutes of all general membership and BOD meetings and generate an agenda with information from BOD and Committee Chairs. The Secretary shall serve a term of one (1) year.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall keep accounting records, prepare financial statements, make deposits and payments as needed, and be responsible for the timely filing of reports or returns required of the Friends Group. The Treasurer shall serve a term of two (2) years.

Vacancies: Any unplanned vacancy of an Officer of the Friends Group shall be filled as soon as reasonably possible by calling a vote of the general membership.

ARTICLE 7: ELECTIONS

The Nominations Committee shall develop a ballot for election of officers by the general membership. The ballot shall be prepared by November 1st of each year. Election of Officers shall be conducted over a two (2) week period, November 1st - November 15th of each year. The vote shall be conducted via online survey, with a mail-in ballot option provided upon request by a member. Online and mail-in ballots must be received by November 15. Results of the election shall be determined by the Chair of the Nominations Committee by the number of votes received by Members in good standing. Once all Charter Officers of the Friends Group are in place, the ballot shall consist of the following candidates: Annually—President, Vice President, and Secretary. Odd Years—Treasurer.

ARTICLE 8: COMMITTEES

Committees shall consist of Members in good standing with one Member of the committee appointed as Chair by the committee. Committees are essential in achieving the goals and objectives of the Friends Group. Committee membership is appointed by the BOD. Standing Committees are listed below and conduct their business as needed. Ad-Hoc Committees are special assignment committees that are created to address a specific task and are dissolved after completing their task or objective. Ad-Hoc Committees may be created by the BOD at any time as deemed necessary. An Ad Hoc Committee may be recommended by a Member in good standing during a general membership meeting and placed in active status by a majority vote (51%) of those in attendance either in person or virtually. The duties of each committee are further defined in the Standard Operating Procedures.

Standing Committees

Nominations: Shall consist of three (3) members in good standing. This committee shall develop an election ballot by November 1st of each year. The Chair shall facilitate the election during a 2-week voting period from November 1st - November 15th. The Chair shall report the results of the election to the President before election results are announced at the membership annual meeting in November.

Friends Group Activities and Events: Shall consist of three (3) members in good standing. This committee shall be responsible for planning general membership meetings and arranging speakers, and coordinating Friends Group outings, field trips, and special events.

Education and Outreach: Shall consist of one (1) to three (3) members in good standing, whose primary responsibility is to coordinate activities beyond the Friends Group (e.g., representation at community fairs, festivals and other special events consistent with the Friends Group's mission). This committee shall coordinate with Friends Group facilitators and other organizations for volunteer opportunities for Members and communicate these opportunities via social media and other outlets. This committee shall work closely with the Friends Group Activities and Events Committee.

Awards and Recognition: Shall consist of one (1) to three (3) members in good standing, whose primary responsibility is to recognize member achievements and recognition of nonmembers that have supported or contributed to the success of the Friends Group and the FMNP program within the Friends Group's region.

Membership: Shall consist of one (1) to three (3) members in good standing, whose primary responsibility is to actively recruit new members, encourage participation in FMNP educational modules, maintain an active membership roster, and assist the Treasurer on duties as needed.

Fund-Raising: Shall consist of one (1) to three (3) members in good standing, whose primary responsibility is to seek outside support of the Friends Group's functions and needs, conduct fund-raising activities, raise funds for a Friends Group FMNP scholarship, and look for other creative opportunities to obtain financial support within the mission of the FMNP and Bylaws.

ARTICLE 9: MEETINGS

Annual: The annual membership meeting shall be held in November or December, at a location and time determined by the BOD. The purpose shall be the announcement and placement of new officers, treasurer's report, membership report, projected activities and events for the year report, and other business as needed. Written notice of the date, time, and location of the Annual Meeting and any proposed Bylaw changes shall be delivered to each Member in good standing at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the date of the meeting.

General Membership: In addition to the annual membership meeting, at least two (2) general membership meetings shall occur throughout the calendar year, at a location and time determined by the BOD. Written notice of the date, time, and location of the General Membership meeting shall be delivered to each Member in good standing at least one week prior to the date of the meeting.

Board of Directors (BOD): The Board shall meet at least once each quarter with the time and location determined by the President. Notice of all meetings shall be made at least one week in advance of a scheduled meeting. The President may establish a calendar of BOD meetings for the year, including date, time, and location that shall constitute notice for all such future scheduled meetings. BOD meetings shall be open to all Members in good standing.

Special: Special meetings may be called at the request of two (2) BOD members or at the request of ten percent (10%) of the Members of the Friends Group. Members shall be notified of such meetings at least one week in advance of the meeting. Such notice shall state the reason the meeting was called, the business to be transacted, and by whom it was called. No other business but that specified in the notice may be transacted at such special meeting.

Quorum: Three (3) members of the BOD shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the board.

ARTICLE 10: BOOKS AND RECORDS

The Friends Group shall keep correct and complete books and records of accounts and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of BOD, Annual, General Membership, Special, and Committee Meetings, and other records as necessary to operate the Friends Group. All books and records of the Friends Group may be inspected by any Member in good standing at any reasonable time. The Standard Operating Procedures has additional information related to books and records.

ARTICLE 11: INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE

No Officer or Director of the Friends Group shall be personally liable for any obligations of the Friends Group or for any duties or obligations arising out of any acts performed for or on behalf of the Friends Group.

ARTICLE 12: AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Friends Group Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed by the affirmative vote of a 51% majority vote of Members in good standing who are voting by online survey, or by mail-in ballot upon request by a member.

ARTICLE 13: DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of Space Coast Regional Friends Group, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, and distributed to the University of Florida IFAS Extension Brevard County for a public purpose.

SIGNATURE OF OFFICERS:

Rhonda Mayo
Rhonda Mayo, President

Ann Cook
Ann Cook, Past President

Rick Follet
Rick Follet, Vice President

David Turcotte
David Turcotte, Secretary

Sherry Fowler
Sherry Fowler, Treasurer