



**Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION  
2023 LEGISLATIVE REPORT  
(pursuant to Section 20.058 Florida Statutes)**

Citizen Support Organization (CSO) Name: Friends of Our Florida Reefs

Mailing Address: 180 Gulf Stream Way, Dania Beach, FL 33004

Telephone Number: 954-290-7673

Website Address (*required if applicable*): <https://www.floridareef.org/>

Check to confirm your Code of Ethics is posted conspicuously on your website.

**Statutory Authority:**

**Section 20.2551, F.S., Citizen support organizations; use of property; audit; public records; partnerships.** In summary, the statute specifies the organizational requirements, operational parameters, duties of a CSO to support the Department of Environmental Protection (Department), or individual units of the Department, use of Department property, audit requirements, public records requirements, and authorizes public-private partnerships to enhance lands managed by the Department.

**Section 20.058, F.S., Citizen support and direct-support organizations.** In summary, the statute specifies the organizational requirements to submit an annual report each year for each designated CSO and to post that information on the Departments website.

**YOUR MISSION AND LAST CALENDAR YEAR'S PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

**CSO's Mission:** (Consistent with your Articles and Bylaws)

Friends of Our Florida Reefs (FOFR) is a registered 501c3 nonprofit citizen support organization dedicated to conserving and protecting over 100 miles of vital coral reefs (directly offshore SE Florida between Miami-Dade and Martin Counties) by enhancing and complementing the critical efforts, programs and activities of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Coral Reef Conservation Program.

**Describe Last Calendar Year's Results Obtained:** Brag! (List or discuss the past calendar year's accomplishments and contributions. Cite specific support from last calendar year's Annual Program Plan.)

2023 was FOFR's 8th full year as a CSO for the DEP CRCP and its regional partners raising approximately \$17,411. This year FOFR officially became the citizen support organization for DEP's Coral Protection and Restoration program as well. FOFR donated \$5,000 to support unprecedented coral rescue efforts for the summer 2023 bleaching event at The Reef Institute in West Palm Beach. FOFR sponsored the Coral Carnival at the Cox Science Center, supported DEP CPR and CRCP workshops and meetings and assisted with SEAFAN and BleachWatch training and expenses such as new shirts for BleachWatch instructors. Outreach FOFR attended was the SOS Ocean Conservation Day, the Broward Sierra Club Earth Day Event, and the Tortuga Music Festival. FOFR's biggest accomplishment of 2023 was embarking on a website overhaul and new social media and email marketing campaign. FOFR hired marketing contractors to take on the task and the response has been outstanding. Standard yearly donations have doubled as has followers and general interest.

**Describe the CSO's Plans for the Next Three Calendar Years:**

FOFR's plans for the next 3 calendar years include continued support for DEP CRCP and CPR programs as needed including outreach and education, citizen science (e.g. BleachWatch), and reef cleanups. FOFR commits to maintaining significant unrestricted funds available for FDEP CRCP should a rapid response need occur. FOFR also commits to

promoting the coral program by attending outreach events and giving presentations (both virtual and in-person). This will be accomplished by embarking on a volunteer recruiting and training program set to begin the summer of 2024. FOFR's marketing contractors will lead this effort in training volunteers to attend more outreach events which will hopefully expand our reach. Many volunteers have already expressed interest in this effort through the social media campaign. FOFR also commits to continuing the social media and email campaigns by searching for funding mechanisms such as brand partnerships and grants which are already being explored and pursued.

**CSO's LAST CALENDAR YEAR STATISTICS:**

**Total Number of CSO General Membership:** N/A

**Total Number of Board of Directors:** 8

**Total Volunteer Hours for the Board of Directors:** ~1000

**ORCP & CSO RELATIONSHIP:**

Don't duplicate by describing accomplishments and contributions in the summary. Brag in the above Results Obtained. Describe the relationship here.

**Manager's Comments on the CSO & ORCP Relationship and Support:**

Provide your perspective on

- Changing developments of the managed area(s) provided by the CSO.
- Effectiveness of the organization in fulfilling their purpose to support the managed area(s).
- Effectiveness of the Board of Directors in completing their Annual Program Plan.
- The relationship between ORCP team and CSO. What went well? Are there areas of improvement?

The CSO Agreement was updated to include support for the Department of Environmental Protection's Coral Protection and Restoration Program (CPR) along with the support they have been providing the Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP). There is consistent communication/coordination between CRCP/CPR and the CSO. They provided support with public outreach events, and have been increasing their efforts to reach out to the local community and increase connections with CRCP/CPR. Both programs are grateful for the continued support and commitment of our CSO.

**CSO President's Comments on the CSO & ORCP Relationship and Support:**

Provide your perspective on the relationship between the ORCP and CSO. What went well? Are there areas of improvement?

As the CSO president I have open communication with my ORCP Site Manager at FDEP CRCP. My site manager provides timely and helpful support whenever I need it.

**SUMMARIZE FINANCIAL ACTIVITY FOR LAST CALENDAR YEAR, DIRECT SUPPORT & REVENUES:**

**Program Service Expenses** are costs related to providing your organization's programs or services in accordance with your mission. Describe and provide expenses that directly support the managed area(s). For established nonprofit organizations, program service expenses generally represent most of the overall expense of the organization. For the last calendar year provide description and total \$ for each that apply. Replace examples with your information.

Building improvement, construction, or renovations	\$
Cultural resources (e.g., historic structure restoration/ renovation)	\$
Natural resources (e.g., native plants, natural lands restoration)	\$
Maintenance equipment (e.g., mowers, chippers, blowers, chainsaws)	\$
Other facilities and landscape maintenance	\$
Vehicles (e.g., trucks/cars, UTVs, golf carts, accessible devices, etc.)	\$
Amenities (e.g., water fountains, benches, picnic tables, recreational equipment, kiosks etc.)	\$
ORCP employees or volunteers support (e.g., interns, training, uniforms, awards, or recognition)	\$
Big ticket visitor center exhibits or interpretation updates	\$
Managed area exhibits, displays, signage	\$
Managed area publications, brochures, maps, etc.	\$
Programing/interpretation support material purchases	\$
Other program services	\$

**Total Program Service Expenses \$17,665.17**

**Visitor Services Revenue**

Describe revenues and the sources generated from fundraising on managed area property. Replace examples with your information.

Gift shops, craft stores, and concession sales	\$
Merchandise sales (e.g., plants, firewood, ice, t-shirts, hats, etc.)	\$
Programs and Special Events (e.g., fundraising workshops, seasonal events, concerts, etc.)	\$
Vending (e.g., drink machines, penny press, laundry, Wifi, etc.)	\$
Rentals (e.g., bikes, canoe, kayak, SUPs, etc.)	\$
Managed area donation boxes	\$
Other visitor services revenue	\$
<b>Total Visitor Services Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>

**\*Other Revenue – (Misc Donations) - \$17,411.97**

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**NET ASSETS: \$**

Organizations end of last year's Total Liabilities minus Total Assets. This is not the above's Visitor Service Revenue minus Program Service Expenses. **\$33,270.76**

**CSO AUDIT THRESHOLD:**

**Last Calendar Year's Total Expenses (including grants) \$17,665.17**

Are the CSO's annual total expenses \$300,000 including grants? Then Section 215.981(2), Florida Statute requires an independent CPA audit using Government Audit Standards ([U.S. GAO Yellow Book](#)). The audit is **due by September 1** (or 9 months after the CSO's calendar year ends) to the Florida Auditor General and to the Department.

This information is complete to the best of my knowledge pursuant to Section 20.058 Florida Statutes			
Title	Name	Signature	Date
CSO President	Melissa Sathe	<i>Melissa Sathe</i>	5/20/2024
ORCP Manager	Alycia Shatters	<i>Alycia Shatters</i>	5/23/2024

- CSO's Code of Ethics is attached
- CSO has attached the most recent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N receipt. All IRS Form 990's must be *complete* with Part III Program Service and *all* appropriate Schedules (A, O and others as appropriate). If filing an IRS extension, attach the IRS 8868 receipt and the most recent complete 990 and schedules.

**FRIENDS OF OUR FLORIDA REEFS, INC.**  
***CODE OF ETHICS***

**PREAMBLE**

- (1) It is essential to the proper conduct and operation of Friends of Our Florida Reefs, Inc. (herein “CSO”) that its board members, officers, and employees be independent and impartial and that their position not be used for private gain. Therefore, the Florida Legislature in Section 112.3251, Florida Statute (Fla. Stat.), requires that the law protect against any conflict of interest and establish standards for the conduct of CSO board members, officers, and employees in situations where conflicts may exist.
  
- (2) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state that no CSO board member, officer, or employee shall have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or incur any obligation of any nature which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties for the CSO. To implement this policy and strengthen the faith and confidence of the people in Citizen Support Organizations, there is enacted a code of ethics setting forth standards of conduct required of Friends of Our Florida Reefs, Inc. board members, officers, and employees in the performance of their official duties.

**STANDARDS**

The following standards of conduct are enumerated in Chapter 112, Fla. Stat., and are required by Section 112.3251, Fla. Stat., to be observed by CSO board members, officers, and employees.

**1. Prohibition of Solicitation or Acceptance of Gifts**

No CSO board member, officer, or employee shall solicit or accept anything of value to the recipient, including a gift, loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service, based upon any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the CSO board member, officer, or employee would be influenced thereby.

**2. Prohibition of Accepting Compensation Given to Influence a Vote**

No CSO board member, officer, or employee shall accept any compensation, payment, or thing of value when the person knows, or, with reasonable care, should know that it was given to influence a vote or other action in which the CSO board member, officer, or employee was expected to participate in his or her official capacity.

**3. Salary and Expenses**

No CSO board member or officer shall be prohibited from voting on a matter affecting his or her salary, expenses, or other compensation as a CSO board member or officer, as provided by law.

#### **4. Prohibition of Misuse of Position**

A CSO board member, officer, or employee shall not corruptly use or attempt to use one's official position or any property or resource which may be within one's trust, or perform official duties, to secure a special privilege, benefit, or exemption.

#### **5. Prohibition of Misuse of Privileged Information**

No CSO board member, officer, or employee shall disclose or use information not available to members of the general public and gained by reason of one's official position for one's own personal gain or benefit or for the personal gain or benefit of any other person or business entity.

#### **6. Post-Office/Employment Restrictions**

A person who has been elected to any CSO board or office or who is employed by a CSO may not personally represent another person or entity for compensation before the governing body of the CSO of which he or she was a board member, officer, or employee for a period of two years after he or she vacates that office or employment position.

#### **7. Prohibition of Employees Holding Office**

No person may be, at one time, both a CSO employee and a CSO board member at the same time.

#### **8. Requirements to Abstain From Voting**

A CSO board member or officer shall not vote in official capacity upon any measure which would affect his or her special private gain or loss, or which he or she knows would affect the special gain or any principal by whom the board member or officer is retained. When abstaining, the CSO board member or officer, prior to the vote being taken, shall make every reasonable effort to disclose the nature of his or her interest as a public record in a memorandum filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who shall incorporate the memorandum in the minutes. If it is not possible for the CSO board member or officer to file a memorandum before the vote, the memorandum must be filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting no later than 15 days after the vote.

#### **9. Failure to Observe CSO Code of Ethics**

Failure of a CSO board member, officer, or employee to observe the Code of Ethics may result in the removal of that person from their position. Further, failure of the CSO to observe the Code of Ethics may result in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection terminating its Agreement with the CSO.

*June 10, 2015*

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**Tax Year 2023**

**Form 990-N**

**Form of Small Exempt Organizations**

**Friends of Our Florida Reefs**

**EIN: 47-3822204**

**Copy - Do Not File**

**Electronic Notice (e-Postcard)**

**2023**

**Open to Public Inspection**

Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service

▶ For Tax-Exempt Organizations not Required to File Form 990 or 990-EZ.

**A For the 2023** calendar year, or tax year beginning **01-01-2023** , and ending **12-31-2023**

<p><b>B</b> Check if applicable:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Termination</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less</p>	<p><b>C</b> Name of organization Friends of Our Florida Reefs</p>	<p><b>D</b> Employer ID number 47-3822204</p>
<p><b>E</b> Website Address:</p>	<p>Doing Business As Name</p>	
	<p>Number and street (or P. O. box, if mail is not delivered to street address) 180 Gulf Stream Way</p>	
	<p>City or town, state or country, and ZIP + 4 Dania Beach, FL 33004</p>	
	<p><b>F</b> Name of Principal Officer: Melissa Sathe</p>	
	<p>Number and street (or P. O. box, if mail is not delivered to street address) of Principal Officer 3452 Madrid Ave</p>	
<p>City or town, state or country, and ZIP + 4 Cooper City, FL 33026</p>		

**COPY**  
**DO NOT FILE**