



Friends of the Wichitas 2023 Year in Review

In 2023 the Friends of the Wichitas made significant strides in support of our Partnership Agreement with the US Fish and Wildlife Service managing the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge including:

- Successfully managed the Friends Nature Store and its staff, ensuring all proceeds benefit the Refuge
- Reestablished regular membership meetings
- Reestablished various annual Refuge tours as approved by Refuge Management
- Purchased signage for various locations throughout the Refuge
- Supported the Biology Department with the removal of invasive species
- Conducted Friends outreach, education, and membership campaigns
- Co-hosted the Keep Our Refuge Beautiful event celebrating [National Public Lands Day](#)
- Funded the restoration of the Bunkhouse in the old residential area
- Funded the interior remodel of Law Enforcement staff quarters near the Environmental Education Center
- Funded replacement of storm damaged windows at Ferguson House, Headquarters and Residences
- Partnered with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation on their Adopt-A-Highway program
- Paid for Elk Count, Helicopter Hog Hunts, and assisted in Bison Roundup
- Purchased equipment for the Marvelous Monarch program
- Cut, bundled, and sold firewood, as well as ice, to Camp Doris visitors
- Developed and printed the 2023 calendar sold in the Friends Nature Store
- Provided the Refuge with stop-gap funding for trash removal
- Supported the Refuge's First Annual Tribal Summit with food and gift bags
- Provided funding for the Refuge Explorers Program
- Supported the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation controlled hunts on the Refuge
- Sent two board members to the Friends Workshop at the [National Conservation Training Center](#)
- Continued to support and donate to the [National Wildlife Refuge Association](#) and the [Leave No Trace](#) foundation
- Shared significant lessons learned through participation in the [Coalition of Refuge Friends and Advocates](#)

These and many other activities were made possible through the generous donation of Friend's time, talent, and treasure. THANK YOU! for your continued support of the Association of the Friends of the Wichitas and, through us, the extraordinary mixed grass prairie habitat that is the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge.

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors, Association of the Friends of the Wichitas