

[EXTERNAL] Comments on Subject: OMB Control Number "1018-Friends"/Document # 2020-24802

Sandhills Prairie Refuge Association <sandhillspra@gmail.com>

Sat 1/2/2021 5:36 PM

To: Info_Coll, FWHQ <info_coll@fws.gov>

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Dear U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,

I am commenting on the Federal Register notice about the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) desire to collect documentation from Friends organizations. Our group, The Sandhills Prairie Refuge Association, works to support the Fort Niobrara, Valentine, and Seier National Wildlife Refuges. We have a long history of working hand in hand with refuge staff to complete a wide variety of projects benefiting the refuges. Refuge staff have access to our files, attend our board meetings, have input to projects through our annual plan of operations, and are supplied with our treasurer reports. This has worked well in keeping the refuge staff informed of our income, expenses, and project costs. We are a small group of about 25 members and income of less than \$10,000 per year.

The record keeping outlined in the proposal will be a burden for our group. I added it up and it comes to over 160 hours per year. I recommend that the amount of record keeping and reporting be reduced for small groups such as ours. We are a local volunteer group and will continue to be financially accountable and responsible. For us, a short annual report showing expenditures and income with a short narrative description of projects completed should suffice. We have kept our cooperative agreement, 501c3, and bylaws current. The refuge staff have access to these documents. I don't see where all the added reporting will benefit us or the Service.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jim Edwards

President, Sandhills Prairie Refuge Association

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