



CALUSA WATERKEEPER VOLUNTEER RANGER MANUAL - 2020

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Welcome to The Calusa Waterkeeper Volunteer Ranger Academy

First, we want to thank you for your interest in this program. The Calusa Waterkeeper Ranger Academy commenced in 2016, shortly after I was privileged to be named the first Calusa Waterkeeper. We wanted to find a way for interested volunteers to move to a second stage of involvement beyond membership or occasional spot volunteering.

So, the Volunteer Ranger Academy was formed and, in the ensuing years, has burgeoned into one of Calusa Waterkeeper's proudest accomplishments, with 58 current Rangers and this upcoming graduating class that may add nearly 30 more. The Rangers are a powerful force, helping us test the water in our 1000 square mile work project area, but also attending important agency meetings, town halls and educating and advocating on behalf of water quality issues within their specific zones and generally throughout the watershed.

In the following pages, we will offer a primer on Calusa Waterkeeper and the international Waterkeeper Alliance, address the objectives of the Calusa Waterkeeper Ranger Academy, provide a "Do's and Don'ts" page for our Rangers, a Waiver and let you know what benefits you will see as a Volunteer Ranger.

*Thanks, once again.
John Cassani*



Background on Calusa Waterkeeper and the Waterkeeper Alliance

Calusa Waterkeeper's Mission is to "Protect and Restore the Caloosahatchee River from Lake Okeechobee to the Coastal Waters." Calusa Waterkeeper takes pride in its rigorous science-based advocacy. The organization's roots date back to 1995 when a fledgling grass roots organization called the Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association (CRCA) was formed by a handful of citizens already concerned about degradation of the Caloosahatchee and its watershed.

In 2015, the organization joined the international Waterkeeper Alliance as an Affiliate Member, changing our name to Calusa Waterkeeper; and then attained full Membership the following year, in 2016, when John Cassani was named the first Calusa Waterkeeper. The organization has grown rapidly since 2016 allowing it a larger platform for education and a larger megaphone for its advocacy. Today, Calusa Waterkeeper has emerged as a leading clean water advocacy organization in Southwest Florida, often setting the pace on local, regional and even state-wide clean water initiatives.

Calusa Waterkeeper is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. As such, Calusa Waterkeeper must remain non-partisan in order to preserve its non-profit status. Calusa Waterkeeper Members and Rangers are fully entitled to their political views. But the organization does not endorse candidates, nor can it actively support candidates from either party.

The international Waterkeeper Alliance, founded in 1996, is the largest and fastest growing nonprofit solely focused on clean water, with currently 344 Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates on six continents all on the frontlines of the global water crisis, patrolling and protecting more than 2.5 million square miles of rivers, lakes and coastal waterways on six continents. There are presently fourteen Florida Waterkeepers, who have now formed an association called Waterkeepers Florida. The 14th Florida Waterkeeper is John Capece, one of the founders of CRCA and original Board Member of CWK, who just became certified as the Kissimmee Waterkeeper.

Calusa Waterkeeper Goals and Objectives

1. To strive to improve the waters of our jurisdiction, including its impacts on riparian and estuarine systems, wildlife habitat, and marine life.
2. To promote public education concerning the historical significance, present condition, and future of our water bodies and watersheds.
3. To increase public awareness of the importance of our waters to our quality of life.
4. To study the effect of domestic, commercial, and agricultural uses of our water resources.
5. To monitor and work to improve water quality, quantity, and flow characteristics.
6. To observe and participate in the activities of public bodies responsible for the management of our waters and our watersheds.



Calusa Waterkeeper Volunteer Ranger Academy Objectives

The Ranger Academy is an educational and training resource for volunteers interested in working with the Calusa Waterkeeper in Southwest Florida. Rangers volunteer as citizen monitors of area waterways and will be trained to conduct surveys and report conditions and observations while on local waters. Volunteers set their own schedules and monitor project area zones of their choice. Participants should ideally have access to area waters by boat or paddle craft, though this is not mandatory. We also want our Rangers to actively participate in advocacy initiatives, to attend town halls and agency meetings

Ranger Graduate Do's and Don'ts:

Ranger Academy Graduates are encouraged to:

- Participate in weekly water testing as administered by the Calusa Waterkeeper, John Cassani or your zone captain
- Participate in regular meetings of your zone group
- Attend town halls, agency meetings, meetings of elected officials, water summits, municipal, county and regional water quality roundtables
- Stay informed on water quality issues on both the local, regional, statewide and national level
- Become a resource to inform your friends and neighbors of salient water quality issues
- Forward all inquiries from the press to Calusa Waterkeeper, John Cassani
 - If there is not time to refer press inquiries to the Calusa Waterkeeper, then please observe the following guidelines:
 - If offering information that is in line with CWK's advocacy and messaging, you may speak wearing your CWK cap. Please refer to yourself as a "Calusa Waterkeeper Volunteer Ranger."
 - If offering a personal opinion, do not wear your CWK cap and please do not refer to yourself as a CWK Volunteer Ranger

Ranger Academy Graduates should not:

- Behave in such a way as to cast negative light on the Calusa Waterkeeper organization.
- Speak to the press in your capacity as a Calusa Waterkeeper Volunteer Ranger (or wearing your CWK cap or shirt) unless you have cleared the interview with the Calusa Waterkeeper John Cassani (exceptions above notwithstanding)
- Wear the Calusa Waterkeeper Ranger cap or shirt while attending a political rally, campaign or political meeting or event for either party.



Calusa Waterkeeper Volunteer Ranger Benefits

Once you have completed the Ranger Academy Training course, you will receive the following:

1. CALUSA WATERKEEPER VOLUNTEER RANGER CERTIFICATE



2. SECCHI DISK – used to measure water transparency or and turbidity in bodies of water.



3. CALUSA WATERKEEPER VOLUNTEER RANGER CAP (replacement caps can be purchased for \$20)



4. (OPTIONAL) CALUSA WATERKEEPER RANGER SHIRT (For \$20 Co-Pay – please contact KC to order...)



CALUSA WATERKEEPER VOLUNTEER RANGER CONSENT, RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

This Consent Form, Release and Waiver of Liability (the "Release") executed on this ____ day of _____, 20____, by _____ (the "Volunteer") releases Calusa Waterkeeper, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Florida and each of its directors, officers, employees, agents (collectively, the "CWK") and any partnering organizations.

- I will at all times, while wearing the CWK Volunteer Ranger cap or shirt, conduct myself in a way that does not cast disrepute on the Calusa Waterkeeper organization.
- I will, whenever possible, refer press inquiries to the CWK, John Cassani.
- I will, in public meetings, and in my community, refer to myself as a "Calusa Waterkeeper Volunteer Ranger"
- I understand that Calusa Waterkeeper may - at any time and at CWK's sole discretion - revoke my Calusa Waterkeeper Ranger Certification. If I asked to revoke my Calusa Waterkeeper Volunteer Ranger Certification, I will return my CWK cap. If my Volunteer Ranger Certification is revoked, I will be reimbursed for my fee for joining the Ranger Program.

Volunteer understands that the scope of the Volunteer's relationship with the CWK is limited to a volunteer position and that no compensation is expected in return for services provided by the Volunteer, that the CWK will not provide any benefits traditionally associated with employment, and that Volunteer is responsible for his/her own insurance coverage in the event of personal injury or illness as a result of Volunteer's services to the CWK.

The Volunteer hereby freely, voluntarily, and without duress executes this Release under the following terms:

Release and Waiver: I, the Volunteer do hereby release and forever discharge and hold harmless the CWK and its successors and assigns from any and all liability, claims and demands of whatever kind or nature, either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereafter arise from the services I provide to the CWK.

I understand and acknowledge that this Release discharges the CWK from any liability or claim that the Volunteer may have against the CWK with respect to any bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result from the services I provide to the CWK, whether causes by the negligence of the CWK or its officers, director, employees or otherwise. Volunteer also understands that the CWK does not assume any responsibility for or obligation to provide financial assistance or other assistance, including, but not limited to medical, health, or disability insurance in the event of injury or illness.

Medical Treatment: Volunteer does hereby release and forever discharge the CWK from any claim whatsoever which arises or may hereafter arise on account of any first-aid, treatment, or other medical services rendered in connection with an emergency during my tenure as a volunteer with the CWK.

Assumption of Risk: Volunteer hereby expressly and specifically assumes the risk of injury or harm and releases the CWK from all liability for injury, illness, death, or property damage resulting from the service I provide as a volunteer, or occurring while I am providing volunteer services.

Insurance: Volunteer understands that the CWK does not carry or maintain health, medical, or disability insurance for any volunteer.

Photographic Release: Volunteer does hereby grant and convey unto the CWK all rights, title and interest in any and all photographic images, video or audio recordings of me or my likeness or voice made by the CWK, including, but not limited to, any royalties, proceeds, or other benefits derived from such photographs or recordings.

Other: As a volunteer, I expressly agree that this Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of Florida and that this Release shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida. I agree that in the event that any clause or provision of this Release is deemed invalid, the enforceability of the remaining provisions shall not be affected.

By signing below, I express my understanding and intent to enter into this Release and Waiver of Liability willingly and voluntarily.

Name (please print)

Parent/Guardian (please print) *If under 18

T-shirt size

Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date



Calusa Waterkeeper Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure

Objective

Calusa Waterkeeper strives to create and maintain a work environment in which people are treated with dignity, decency and respect. The environment of the company should be characterized by mutual trust and the absence of intimidation, oppression and exploitation. Calusa Waterkeeper will not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind. Through enforcement of this policy and by education of employees, Calusa Waterkeeper will seek to prevent, correct and discipline behavior that violates this policy.

All employees, regardless of their positions, are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who violates this policy. Based on the seriousness of the offense, disciplinary action may include verbal or written reprimand, suspension, or termination of employment.

Managers and supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate discrimination, harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report such misconduct to human resources (HR), are in violation of this policy and subject to discipline.

Prohibited Conduct Under This Policy

Calusa Waterkeeper, in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local anti-discrimination and harassment laws and regulations, enforces this policy in accordance with the following definitions and guidelines:

Discrimination

It is a violation of Calusa Waterkeeper's policy to discriminate in the provision of employment opportunities, benefits or privileges; to create discriminatory work conditions; or to use discriminatory evaluative standards in employment if the basis of that discriminatory treatment is, in whole or in part, the person's race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information or marital status.

Discrimination of this kind may also be strictly prohibited by a variety of federal, state and local laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1967 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This policy is intended to comply with the prohibitions stated in these anti-discrimination laws.

Discrimination in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.

Harassment

Calusa Waterkeeper prohibits harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, and will take appropriate and immediate action in response to complaints or knowledge of violations of this policy. For purposes of this policy, harassment is any verbal or physical conduct designed to threaten, intimidate or coerce an employee, co-worker, or any person working for or on behalf of Calusa Waterkeeper.

The following examples of harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal harassment includes comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person's national origin, race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, body, disability or appearance, including epithets, slurs and negative stereotyping.
- Nonverbal harassment includes distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of national origin, race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, appearance, disability, sexual identity, marital status or other protected status.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful employment discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and is prohibited under Calusa Waterkeeper's anti-harassment policy. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), sexual harassment is defined as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature ... when ... submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions ... or such conduct has the purpose or effect of ... creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment."

Sexual harassment occurs when unsolicited and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature:

- Is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- Is used as a basis for an employment decision.
- Unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or otherwise offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may take different forms. The following examples of sexual harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal sexual harassment includes innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, lewd remarks and threats; requests for any type of sexual favor (this includes repeated, unwelcome requests for dates); and verbal abuse or "kidding" that is oriented toward a prohibitive form of harassment, including that which is sexual in nature and unwelcome.
- Nonverbal sexual harassment includes the distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters and cartoons that are sexually suggestive or show hostility toward an individual or group because of sex; suggestive or insulting sounds; leering; staring; whistling; obscene gestures; content in letters, notes, facsimiles, e-mails, photos, text messages, tweets and Internet postings; or other forms of communication that are sexual in nature and offensive.
- Physical sexual harassment includes unwelcome, unwanted physical contact, including touching, tickling, pinching, patting, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, fondling, and forced sexual intercourse or assault.

Courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, noncoercive interactions between employees that are appropriate in the workplace and acceptable to and welcomed by both parties are not considered to be harassment, including sexual harassment.

Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationships

Calusa Waterkeeper strongly discourages romantic or sexual relationships between a manager or other supervisory employee and his or her staff (an employee who reports directly or indirectly to that person) because such relationships tend to create compromising conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. In addition, such a relationship may give rise to the perception by others that there is favoritism or bias in employment decisions affecting the staff employee. Moreover, given the uneven balance of power within such relationships, consent by the staff member is suspect and may be viewed by others, or at a later date by the staff member, as having been given as the result of coercion or intimidation. The atmosphere created by such appearances of bias, favoritism, intimidation, coercion or exploitation undermines the spirit of trust and mutual respect that is essential to a healthy work environment. If there is such a relationship, the parties need to be aware that one or both may be moved to a different department or other actions may be taken.

If any employee of Calusa Waterkeeper enters into a consensual relationship that is romantic or sexual in nature with a member of his or her staff (an employee who reports directly or indirectly to him or her), or if one of the parties is in a supervisory capacity in the same department in which the other party works, the parties must notify the HR director or other appropriate corporate officer. Because of potential issues regarding quid pro quo harassment, Calusa Waterkeeper has made reporting mandatory. This requirement does not apply to employees who do not work in the same department or to parties where neither one supervises or otherwise manages responsibilities over the other.

Once the relationship is made known to Calusa Waterkeeper, the company will review the situation with human resources in light of all the facts (reporting relationship between the parties, effect on co-workers, job titles of the parties, etc.) and will determine whether one or both parties need to be moved to another job or department. If it is determined that one party must be moved, and there are jobs in other departments available for both, the parties may decide who will be the one to apply for a new position. If the parties cannot amicably come to a decision, or the party is not chosen for the position to which he or she applied, the HR director and senior management will decide which party will be moved. That decision will be based on which move will be least disruptive to the organization as a whole. If no other jobs are available for either party, the parties will be given the option of terminating their relationship or resigning.

Retaliation

No hardship, loss, benefit or penalty may be imposed on an employee in response to:

- Filing or responding to a bona fide complaint of discrimination or harassment.
- Appearing as a witness in the investigation of a complaint.
- Serving as an investigator of a complaint.

Lodging a bona fide complaint will in no way be used against the employee or have an adverse impact on the individual's employment status. However, filing groundless or malicious complaints is an abuse of this policy and will be treated as a violation.

Any person who is found to have violated this aspect of the policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Confidentiality

All complaints and investigations are treated confidentially to the extent possible, and information is disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis. The identity of the complainant is usually revealed to the parties involved during the investigation, and the HR director will take adequate steps to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the investigation. All information pertaining to a complaint or investigation under this policy will be maintained in secure files within the HR department.

Complaint procedure

Calusa Waterkeeper has established the following procedure for lodging a complaint of harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The company will treat all aspects of the procedure confidentially to the extent reasonably possible.

1. Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after an incident has occurred, preferably in writing. The HR director may assist the complainant in completing a written statement or, in the event an employee refuses to provide information in writing, the HR director will dictate the verbal complaint.
2. Upon receiving a complaint or being advised by a supervisor or manager that violation of this policy may be occurring, the HR director will notify senior management and review the complaint with the company's legal counsel.
3. The HR director will initiate an investigation to determine whether there is a reasonable basis for believing that the alleged violation of this policy occurred.
4. If necessary, the complainant and the respondent will be separated during the course of the investigation, either through internal transfer or administrative leave.
5. During the investigation, the HR director, together with legal counsel or other management employees, will interview the complainant, the respondent and any witnesses to determine whether the alleged conduct occurred.
6. Upon conclusion of an investigation, the HR director or other person conducting the investigation will submit a written report of his or her findings to the company. If it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, the HR director will recommend appropriate disciplinary action. The appropriate action will depend on the following factors:
 - a) the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the conduct;
 - b) prior complaints made by the complainant;
 - c) prior complaints made against the respondent; and
 - d) the quality of the evidence (e.g., firsthand knowledge, credible corroboration).

If the investigation is inconclusive or if it is determined that there has been no violation of policy but potentially problematic conduct may have occurred, the HR director may recommend appropriate preventive action.

7. Senior management will review the investigative report and any statements submitted by the complainant or respondent, discuss results of the investigation with the HR director and other management staff as appropriate, and decide what action, if any, will be taken.
8. Once a final decision is made by senior management, the HR director will meet with the complainant and the respondent separately and notify them of the findings of the investigation. If disciplinary action is to be taken, the respondent will be informed of the nature of the discipline and how it will be executed.

Alternative legal remedies

Nothing in this policy may prevent the complainant or the respondent from pursuing formal legal remedies or resolution through local, state or federal agencies or the courts.