GEORGIA'S CAMP CHARLIE

A WEEKEND OF FAMILY FUN IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

V. FUNDING

In order to eliminate the costs for families, or keep them as low as possible, funds will need to be raised from outside sources. If funding is not secured to provide scholarships for all families, consider having a sliding scale for fees. Hopefully, no families will be excluded because they don't have the ability to pay. There are several ways to raise money for Camp Charlie.

- Charge families who can afford to attend.
- Seek corporate assistance, possibly from local businesses.
- Ask community service or sportsmen's clubs to sponsor families.
- Work with local media to sponsor a family.
- Grants can also be a great source of general funding for your program. Be sure to explore grant possibilities early in the process, as most programs have hard-and-fast deadlines that must be met. Consult with Georgia Wildlife Federation to determine possible grant opportunities.

The Executive Committee will be responsible for establishing the budget, but the Funding Committee will need to fully understand all of the costs and needs associated with the event. This will enable members to think "outside of the box" and come up with creative solutions to get the most out of the weekend.

In general, the Funding Committee will:

1. Work with Executive Committee on the budget to determine needs for funding.
2. Prepare sponsorship package.
3. Recruit sponsors and donations as needed.
4. Keep accurate records and thank donors.

Georgia's Camp Charlie at-large was funded through a grant from the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The pilot weekend at the Okefenokee was funded through a $10,000 grant from the Plum Creek Foundation. This money covered all expenses for the weekend.

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

Plum Creek

Determining Funding Needs

Budgets will vary from program to program depending on the activities planned and how extensively each coordinator wants to promote Camp Charlie. The figures listed here are a rough estimate only.

Sample Expense Budget
Based on 5 camping families, 5 mentors, and 25 volunteers

Camp Charlie Program Costs:

Advertising	$500
Registration	$500
Administration/Overhead	$2000
Volunteer training	$500
Travel	$500
Total	**$4000**

Weekend Costs:

Camping Fees	$750
Equipment	$500
Food	$1500
Speaker/Instructor fees	$600
Total	**$3350**

Total Estimate to Host a Camp Charlie Weekend: $7350

The sample budget is based off of the pilot program at the Okefenokee. As you work through the planning process, items such as travel and advertising may not be relevant for your event.

Prepare Sponsor Package

Preparing a clear and concise sponsor package is an effective way to communicate your needs to potential donors. Before you go out seeking funding and in-kind donations, but sure you have

- An appealing description of the program
- A clear list of your specific needs
- Specific ways your sponsors and donors will be recognized
- The deadline for sponsors to be included on promotional items

Recruit Sponsors and Donors

As you begin your fund-raising efforts, consider all types of potential contributors — big corporations, small local businesses, foundations, and individuals. Camp Charlie is a very sellable idea. Do not hesitate to offer sportsmen's clubs, local businesses, radio stations and other groups the chance to sponsor a family. They may enjoy this opportunity to do something personal.

Tips on Acquiring Sponsors

Obviously, the easiest option is to find one sponsor for the entire event. However, it may be necessary to break down the costs into smaller amounts. Consider the special interests of potential sponsors. Below are suggestions of sponsorship packages that might catch the eye of funders.

Sponsor a Family	Include food, camping fees, equipment and activities	$350/family
Sponsor Mentors	Includes food, camping fees, equipment, activities, and training for volunteers	$350
Promotional Items	Water bottles, backpacks, and t-shirts for each participant.	$500
Food Donations	Provide food and volunteers for a special meal (low country dinner, BBQ, etc.)	$250
Programs & Activities	Find a sponsor for all programs and activities.	$600

At the Okefenokee, participants received water bottles, t-shirts and backpacks with the Camp Charlie logo.

Keep Accurate Records and Thank Donors

It is critical that all donations and sponsorships be tracked thoroughly. Sponsors and donors should submit payments directly to Georgia Wildlife Federation. At the conclusion of Camp Charlie, a complete list of all donations (monetary and in-kind) should be submitted to GWF for record-keeping purposes.

The Funding Committee should submit the names of all donors to the Executive and Logistics Committees in a timely manner so that donors and sponsors can be recognized appropriately. Although acknowledgement letters will be mailed to all donors by Georgia Wildlife Federation, hand-written notes and photographs are much

more impactful. Consider preparing thank you letters in advance of your weekend, and set aside a few minutes for campers to sign. Invite your contributors to attend a group meal or other special event during the weekend and recognize them with a special presentation if they do attend. In general, you want to foster a positive partnership with your contributors for future years and Camp Charlie programs.

Sponsors and partners for Camp Charlie at the Okefenokee were recognized on promotional items, signs and registration materials. Camp Charlie artwork is available for download through the GWF website.

Notes: