



Save Our Bosque Task Force

Working collaboratively to support a healthy Rio Grande Bosque and riparian ecosystem while celebrating its benefits to the communities of central NM

Save Our Bosque Task Force Monthly Board Meeting
Socorro County Annex Office
198 Neel Ave, Socorro NM

Tuesday, June 7th @ 3:00pm

Meeting Location: Socorro County Annex

In attendance: Gina Dello Russo, Matt Mitchell, Jeff Havlena, Amy Erickson, Christie Smith, Danielle Hensley, Jerry Wheeler, Jennifer Bencomo, Carolyn Black. On Zoom: Heather Kline, Athena Cholas.

Board Member Action Items –

- **Jerry** will send fire/burn ban updates for Danielle to post to social media
- **Matt and Jeff** will set up trail cams at the riverine parks
- **Matt, Danielle, and interns** will schedule date and find topics and station leads for Bosque Conservation Day
- **Danielle and Gina** will reschedule a date for the project site tour
- **Danielle** will discuss park cleanup with the Mayor and City work crew
- **Danielle** will finalize the ACE internship contracts
- **All** – We have an open position on the board so spread the word to interested folks
- **All** – send Danielle newsletter articles by June 21
- **All** – Send Danielle photos, short blogs, etc for social media posts

Meeting began at 3:05 pm.

Approve agenda and minutes from last month's meeting

Matt motioned to approve agenda, Jeff seconded, passed.

Matt motioned to approve the April minutes as written, Jeff seconded, passed.

Attendees gave a brief introduction.

Treasurer's Report

Gina gave the treasurer's report. Our balance at the beginning of May was \$33,760.80. At the end of May our balance was \$42,995.22. Activity for the month included a \$10,000 deposit from the MRGCD memorandum of agreement and a \$4696.07 drawdown from the Bureau of Reclamation cooperative agreement.

Fundraising update: No word yet about funding from SunZia. Grants available for us to apply for include funding from New Mexico State Forestry and a grant from the River Stewardship program. Sierra SWCD, partnering with us for Tiffany Fire Rehab work, was not selected for the Wildfire Risk Reduction grant and we have not heard back about our WaterSmart grant application. MRGCD has funding available to develop baseline transects and monitoring data on the levees – Amy sent the information to Danielle.

Program Director's Update

Danielle gave an update – she is working on the summer newsletter and would appreciate articles on recent projects, community outreach, or other topics of interest for our members. Please get articles to her by June 21. Amy will send a bird highlight article. Who wants to write an article about the Rio Grande Trail updates?

Project updates –

ACE Internship Contract

Interns Jennifer and Carolyn started a few weeks ago and are already out doing field work.

Bureau of Reclamation Cooperative Agreement

Danielle gave an update of the BOR Cooperative Agreement. Vegetation surveys will begin soon, there is already quite a bit of Tamarisk popping up. We did not have much inundation this spring so the weeds have not gotten too bad yet.

New Mexico Counties

Jerry gave an update. We paid the contractor today for work on the FY22 project near Bosquecito and the County will be reimbursed soon. Before and after photos have been taken at the site and it looks good. The County was awarded \$70K for a new FY23 project which is an increase from the previous awards which were capped at \$50K. This project will involve retreatments at the site that was previously cut/masticated along with some additional mastication. We are hoping to have a contractor for this work by July 1. Any mastication will not start until September due to migratory bird disturbance factors. Cost for herbicide has doubled since last year. Danielle and the interns will visit the site to map where we need to do mastication and spray tamarisk resprouts.

City of Socorro FY22

Danielle gave an update. The city of Socorro workers are planning to install a couple new grills and tables that were purchased from city funds soon. We will purchase more grills and tables with the next \$5k installment from the city, but prices have increased so we will purchase fewer grills than planned this year. We are developing signs for the riverine parks – Danielle will work with the city and the Tourism department on this. We are still working with the city and MRGCD to better understand liability issues at the parks and who is responsible for maintenance and upkeep. Jeff will be setting up a few trail cams at various locations at the parks.

MRGCD / Capital Outlay

Danielle and Jerry are discussing this possible \$30K funding source with Yasmeen Najmi at MRGCD. We would like to re-treat the Severance Project (west side bosque between Escondida bridge and Brown Arroyo) which is experiencing quite a bit of saltcedar regrowth since it was treated a few years ago.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Matt gave an update. Angel needs to review the Barclay agreement and finalize the language. We have about \$37K left to spend on this cooperative agreement after signing agreements for the two current projects. Ken Hart is cutting down resprouts with a backhoe and wants to do a native grass planting. We should get these grass plugs ordered and schedule a work day for this fall. Matt, Jerry, and Danielle are in contact with a couple other landowners near Pueblitos who are interested in Partners Project funding.

Parks and Trails

Rio Grande Trail – Gina gave an update. Signage for the parks will be discussed, but we need to be consistent with the language on the signs as it will be part of the much larger Rio Grande Trail as a whole. We need better signs warning of fire danger at Otero and Escondida parks in particular. There is funding from the state to pay for a number of trail-related projects including infrastructure, signage, and to help with legal issues. Jerry thinks we can make some progress here by talking with the county commissioners and county manager. Senator Jeff Steinborn may be able to meet with MRGCD to discuss legal issues including liability for the trail.

There will be a public meeting discussing the Rio Grande Trail on June 18th from 9:00-noon at the Socorro Plaza. This is the same time as the Saturday Farmers Market and we will have an information booth and a questionnaire for visitors to fill out.

We discussed implementing an adopt-a-park program with local businesses like we have done in the past. We can contact the Ham Radio Operators, Back Country Horesmen, and others who have adopted parks in

the past. The Parks and Trails committee will discuss getting this set up, as well as scheduling regular trash pickup days.

The Mayor of Socorro has offered the city crew to help with trash cleanup at the parks – Danielle will bring this up at her next meeting with the Mayor and his staff.

Social Media

Please send Danielle photos or anything you would like posted on social media.

Project tours with members

This has been postponed until August or September.

Other Business

Matt brought up Bosque Conservation Day – we need to start planning for this which will take place in October. We usually have 8-12 presenters from many SOBTF partners at the Socorro Nature Area at stations with hands on learning about the bosque. This event brings in area 5th grade students. If you have ideas for stations and topics, please reach out to them or talk to Matt. The interns will assist Matt and Danielle with organizing the event this summer. We do have about \$2500 in the bank for BCD, and we can apply for a Nusenda grant and get at least \$1,000 more.

Matt motioned to adjourn, Gina seconded, passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.

***** Our next board meeting will be on Tuesday, July 5th at 3:00 pm *****