

Save Our Bosque Task Force  
Tuesday, February 3, 2015 Minutes

Attendees: Doug Boykin, Gina Dello Russo, Matt Mitchell, Jon Erz, Dustin Armstrong, James Jones, Larry Levesque, Al Lopez, Fred Hollis, Bob Markwell, Kathy Markwell, Chris Hill, and Yasmeen Najmi and Elizabeth Driggers (by phone).

9:10 AM Save Our Bosque Task Force Meeting

1. Approve Agenda. A change in the agenda to allow the Corps of Engineers representative Al Lopez to update the group first. *Motion made by Fred to approve as amended, second by Chris, approved.*
2. Approve Minutes from February 2015. There was a correction that the name of one group is the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance. *Motion made by Matt to approve as amended, second by Fred, approved.*
3. San Acacia Levee Project Update  
Al Lopez, Project Field Manager for the San Acacia Levee Project Phases I and II updated the group. 90% of the clearing and grubbing of debris for these phases are done. They are processing dirt at the fairgrounds, that's why we are seeing so many trucks through town. They are starting the engineered levee construction at the south end, getting toe drains in, jetties removed as needed, and establishing the 15 foot vegetation free zone on the riverside of the levee. The contractor is staying within their construction footprint. There have been many tours to date of the project site. Good feedback from the public so far. They have hired many local citizens and local contractors. Local law enforcement assistance is available as well to help with speeding and access issues. They have hired a retired sheriff to patrol the area. They have 600 calendar days to complete the contract and they are 70 days into that as of this meeting. There have been no safety issues to date; they hold toolbox safety briefings often. Al said to call him if you see any of their workers speeding. Always check in first with Al if you want to see the site, his number is 505-453-4587. He thanked Bureau of Reclamation for their quick responses to questions, logistics, and permitting.  
Comments and questions: Doug said the wood cutting permit has been changed to exclude the construction area. Bob asked if there was a website for information. Al checked with the Project Manager for the COE and they will write up a summary and have it put on their website: **[www.spa.usace.army.mil](http://www.spa.usace.army.mil)**. Clarification that the project length is from the North Diversion to 2 miles upstream of Brown Arroyo. Signage isn't part of the project, he said the Task Force could do this if we wanted to post that the parks were closed. We can see on the 27<sup>th</sup> if this would be necessary or helpful. Their workdays are 7-5, not on the weekends. Al's office is off Harold Drive. The mulch is going to the landfill, helps the city out with site stabilization. William DeRagon is the lead for the COE for mitigation from project impacts to vegetation.
4. Treasurer's report
  - a. Rhodes administration funds moved to SOBTF fund: \$5605.26. Total in account = \$5,605.22. \$0.04 down in Saavedra account right now. Again thanks to donors.
  - b. Bills for Mitchell restoration project and USPS box total: \$2153.00.
5. Project Updates
  - a. Rhodes Project: The slash piles should be burned this month. Willows are mostly in the ground. Cottonwoods will be planted this year if possible, if not next winter.
  - b. Wildland Urban Interface Mitigation Project: The County has been sending more information as requested. That is probably good news, means they are reviewing the

grant proposal now. Reminder: Now is the time to start working towards a supplemental grant for the northern part of the county around Bernardo. Fred suggested they start meeting next spring to discuss that area's potential work and the County will be sending in this year's letter of intent to submit a proposal by May.

- c. Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program: nothing to report.
  - d. Riverine Parks/SNA: Socorro Nature Area (BLM)

Bob suggested some pea gravel or other stabilization material for the trail. Possibly the Corps of Engineers could supply with leftover levee material. The Inmate Work Crew is done with Unit 2 (Otero Street to the North Diversion) initial clearing. Next time they come out they will start in Unit 3 (Hope Farm to Brown Arroyo) with an additional \$30,000 in funding now available through 2015. MRGCD could put some dollars into the IWC project this year as well. Doug reminded us that a new work plan with signatures is needed for the River Parks.
  - e. Healthy Kids Socorro: nothing to report.
  - f. Other Projects: 1) Department of Agriculture, NMSU, and Homeland Security/Border Defense (Jessica Smith is the local contact) is leading a collaborative effort to address Drought in Socorro County. An informational meeting is set up for February 26 at the County Annex building. Matt and Gina were requested to represent the Task Force at this first meeting. 2) Fred suggested the Task Force prepare a proposal and presentation for the Socorro County Commissioners requesting funding assistance for some of our projects. **Follow up: Fred and Gina met with Delilah Walsh, County Manager and she suggested we prepare a packet to go in for the FY 2016 budget.** Matt submitted the request for \$2500 in funding from Walmart which now goes to the corporate offices instead of being handled locally. This funding would go to our future trash pickup days and could assist with bus scholarships for Bosque Conservation Days. County has hired a grant writer who can help with our efforts. 3) Elizabeth Driggers from Senator Udall's office said his office can help with finding funding sources if we work up a scope of work and designate a fiscal lead. Maybe some of the COE mitigation projects could be expanded with this funding or more of the clearing between the levee and the river along the levee footprint length could be found. MRGCD could possibly cost share on this.
6. Website update – please send pictures of projects to Nick and Gina to organize for Bear and the website. The appreciation paragraph for Priscilla has been sent to Bear. Looking for a picture of her to include, Dustin thinks he may have a good one.
  7. Calendar: Next meeting is March 3, 2015. The Tamarisk Coalition meeting will be held in Albuquerque in 2015, February 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>. The Drought Response workshop is February 26, and the San Acacia Levee Project tour is February 27.
  8. Other agenda items: 1) It was suggested that we have a yearly award for citizen involvement in the Task Force. Follow up with this next meeting. 2) A new project area, the Ingalls property, has been identified and many of you may remember that it was one of the Conceptual Restoration Plan's priority sites because it is a historic wetland. Representing the Task Force, Gina has been introducing the family to conservation and restoration projects in the area, landowners we work with, and some ideas for their property. 3) Reclamation has work going at the San Acacia Diversion Dam to protect the river right bank. They have finished mowing the LFCC in the levee project area and worked north to the SNA on one side. They are now working in the Fort Craig area of the LFCC. Next up is the San Juan Drain. The County and Reclamation will be getting together on a possible project in the Rio Puerco area. Work could be on federal

or non-federal lands. They also have a possible project in the Bosquecito Crossing area. 4) Chamber of Commerce might help with our next trash pickup day.

9. Individual Reports: Yasmeen – Bosque Conservation Action Plan that the New Mexico Heritage Program has been compiling should go to the MRGCD board by the end of February. Lorenzo Benevidez is the new Socorro Division Manager for the MRGCD. Congratulations Lorenzo. Matt – County trash system is concerning because staff at dumps are reporting much less trash. This trash may be going to the city landfill instead because they are now able to do that with the punch cards. Jon – no word yet on a proposal they submitted for wetland units on Sevilleta NWR. **Follow up: Congratulations Sevilleta NWR, they were funded for two wetland projects through Fish and Wildlife Service.** There is a meeting tomorrow on other grant funding possibilities. Chris – she is showing Larry Levesque around the BLM projects in the area. Fred – staff changes, new staff member Catherin Cory to work on EOC, the Certification Program and School training. We should see her at Bosque Conservation Day.
10. Adjourn: *At 11:20 AM, Fred made a motion to adjourn, second by Chris, approved.*