**Save Our Bosque Task Force Board Meeting**

Socorro County Annex Office

198 Neel Ave.

Socorro NM

**Tuesday March 3rd @ 3:30pm   
Meeting Location: Socorro County Annex, West Conference Room**

**In attendance: Gina Dello Russo, Matt Mitchell, Micah Muller, Jerry Wheeler, Gail Tripp, Amy Erickson, Sandra Noll, Sarah Anderson, Kathy Granillo, Galen Hecht (on phone), Yasmeen Najmi (on phone)**

**Meeting began at 3:32 pm.**

**1. Approve Agenda –** Mattmoves, Jerry seconds, passed.

**2. Approve Minutes from February meeting -** Sandramoves, Matt seconds, passed.

**3. Action Items:**

* **Sarah will schedule a meeting for the Parks Committee to discuss projects for the $5,000**
* **Sarah will schedule a closed session board meeting to discuss advocacy issues**
* **Jerry will review FAWRA grant proposals before they are submitted**
* **Yasmeen will ask about remaining MRGCD funds allocated for Bosque Conservation Day**
* **All – Send Amy or Sarah calendar items to put on our website calendar. Send Amy or Sarah updates, stories, pictures, etc to put on the Facebook or Instagram page.**

**4. Treasurer’s Report**

We had a beginning balance of $43,147.37 and an ending balance as of March 3 of $49,788.48. Debits include annual membership to MRGEDA, TetraTech’s January invoice, and annual tax preparation.

**5. Fundraising update**

Capital outlay – Yasmeen gave an update. MRGCD received $30,000 for the riverine parks but the paperwork still needs to be completed. This money will be used to re-treat Severance project saltcedar resprouts, do additional fuels reduction, general trail work and maintenance, and repair or replace picnic tables and signage. This funding can be used in conjunction with the funding from the City of Socorro.

City of Socorro – Gina and Sarah went to the city council meeting on March 2nd. The council approved an annual $5,000 for the bosque trail and parks within the city limits of Socorro. We need to set a time for the Parks committee to discuss needs. Sarah invited Bob Markwell to sit on the committee and he said he would. We can use the information on park conditions collected by the interns to guide our efforts.

Gina and Sara spoke with Jack Dickey and Susan Rich about funding opportunities through State Forestry’s Forest and Watershed Restoration Act (FAWRA) grants. Potential projects include: Funding for phase II of the Conceptual Restoration Plan update, tamarask control and restoration on FEMA NMDGF and Game and Fish acreages, and a Tiffany Fire implementation project. Proposals are due on March 17th. Sarah and Gina will have drafts done of the first two grant proposals within a week or so.

Phase II WaterSmart Grant – applications are due in October.

**6. Community Outreach**

The Socorro Fishing Derby is Saturday April 4th – we need to get going if we want to have a booth there showcasing information on the Socorro Valley Trail. We discussed creating bandanas to give away which we can be reimbursed for.

Bosque Conservation Day – there is money in the MRGCD budget that wasn’t used because we did not do BCD this year, and that money will expire at the end of June. Yasmeen will see if she can get another $500 for next year’s BCD. Could we use the $500 for a SOBTF fundraiser? Yasmeen will ask.

There will be a trash pickup at Belen Marsh on Saturday April 4th from 9:00-11:00. Gloves, trash bags, snack, drinks, and bug spray will be provided.

Sandra mentioned that we should all have SOBTF shirts to wear during events. Maybe we could get a donation or discount from a local t-shirt company?

**7. Advocacy**

Yasmeen had a number of questions and comments about the letter to the governor. The board decided to have a closed session meeting at a later date to discuss how we want to handle advocacy issues moving forward, and help clarify limits on control and oversight by agencies, as the Task Force is not an agency organization.

We also discussed supporting a potential National Academy of Sciences Rio Grande study. As stated above, we will not make a decision regarding advocacy issues until we meet as a group, so we will table the discussions for now.

**8. Project Updates**

**Rio Grande Trail / Socorro Valley Trail**

Sarah and Attila are planning a community meeting in mid-March to present three potential trail alignments. Chad and Yasmeen have volunteered to visit alignments and take photos. Yasmeen wants to ensure that we make it clear to the public that the alignments are not finalized.

Sandra talked with some landowners in Polvadera/San Acacia/Lemitar to let them know about the upcoming meeting and they are interested in getting more information. She has heard a lot of interest in the idea that the trail will tie in with local attractions.

Field season is coming up and a lot of grants are due in March. Sarah would appreciate some help if anyone wants to volunteer to take on some tasks. We must make sure the public knows that their input from the first meeting was heard ie) connecting to communities and existing trails**.**

**BOR Cooperative Agreement**

Sarah and Gina developed a 2020 timeline and budget spreadsheet with Ashlee. They have been out with contractors to look at sediment removal on the project footprints. A timeline for interns this summer has been developed. BOR is covering the cost of one intern and part of one other.

**Partners for Fish and Wildlife**

Matt gave an update –

Gonzales is starting on his work this week. Matt got a call Friday from Matthew Sais asking about the reimbursement and Matt told him that he could be reimbursed (~$2500 for plants) after he sends an invoice.

Sarah and Matt visited the Hart project area. The contractor is starting out there soon so we need to get the agreement written up. Matt will get this written and send it to the group. This is a 6-acre project that includes tamarisk clearing and a number of enhancements for wildlife.

We discussed planning a future project on Mandeville, which will be cleared of saltcedar under a New Mexico Counties grant soon.

In the past we have not done a vote for Partners projects, we just went by consensus and conversation. Everybody agreed that we do not need to change to a vote-based system.

**Sevilleta**

Sevilleta planted 2500 trees from Will K. plus 540 cottonwoods from BDA during the community planting days. Audubon sponsored one planting day with 25 people and provided a bus to bring people from Albuquerque. At least 8 people stated that they would have not been able to volunteer without the bus ride so Audubon will continue offering transportation to similar projects in the future when possible. New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors sponsored one planting day and brought 20 people. Will K. will provide another 2500 trees for next year.

**Tiffany Fire**

Site prep is happening (tamarisk control on BOR property). The Ingalls family and Armandaris Ranch put in proposals for restoration work to be completed on their private land. There will be a project team update meeting on April 15th.

**WaterSmart Grant**

Conceptual Restoration Plan update – the team is meeting soon to get the geodatabase completed and move towards the state of the river report. An outline for the river report has been produced.

**NMC Grant**

We should have a bid from the contractor (Forest Fitness) soon. They already did a site visit. We are waiting on a vendor number from the county, then the county can get the bid. Jerry has contacted C. Mandeville to get information from him and get his signature.

**Other**

We discussed moving the meeting from 3:00-5:00 instead of the current 3:30-5:30. The board is supportive and we will send out a notice of the time change when it becomes official.

Next SOBTF board meeting: Tuesday, April 7th @ 3:30pm.

**10. Adjourn**

Gina moved and Amy second. Passed. Adjourned at 5:00 pm