

Save Our Bosque Task Force
Tuesday, December 9, 2014 Minutes

Attendees: Doug Boykin, Gina Dello Russo, Matt Mitchell, Nick Smokovich, Jon Erz, Fred Hollis, Connie Robnett, Chris Hill, and Yasmeen Najmi (by phone).

9:10 AM Save Our Bosque Task Force Meeting

1. Approve Agenda. *Motion made by Fred to approve, second by Chris, approved.*
2. Approve Minutes from December 2014. *Motion made by Matt to approve, second by Nick, approved.*
3. Treasurer's report
 - a. SOBTF fund: \$3,875.84. Total in account = \$5,677.86. Again thanks to donors. Doug has electronic access to account for future reports.
 - b. Bill for Website Domain Name sent to Taos Net: \$21.64.
4. Election: Connie Robnett was elected to the Save Our Bosque Task Force. Welcome Connie.
5. Project Updates
 - a. Rhodes Project: The tour of the property was informative to those attending: we looked at work in progress in the southern portion of the property and work accomplished in the northern portion. Doris outlined her vision of land management for the future. We had a good discussion about techniques utilized during restoration and potential partners for the next phase. Thanks to SWCD's Will Kohlbenslag for monitoring the current work in progress.
 - b. Wildland Urban Interface Mitigation Project: Fred said that we should here in 30 to 60 days about our proposal. 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. The County and MRGCD is working on culverts to improve access for emergency/firefighting in the northern parts of the county along the river.
 - c. Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program: The tour of Matt Mitchell's property was informative as well, with tour participants getting to summary from Matt on the history of restoration work on their land, hear about the current project, and what next steps (native planting) will occur there. Matt will follow up with Angel Montoya and Nyleen Stowe on the funding for those native plants supplied by the Plant Material Center in Los Lunas. We are hoping to hear by the next meeting if the Perry property has been approved for funding through the NRCS. That will help the Partners program design the complimentary aspects of their project on these lands.
 - d. Riverine Parks/SNA: Socorro Nature Area (BLM)
The Inmate Work Crew is almost done with Unit 2 (Otero Street to the North Diversion) with initial clearing. They have also gone back and retreated Unit 1 (Otero Street to Hope Farm). They will be moving next to Unit 3 (Hope Farm to Brown Arroyo) with an additional \$30,000 in funding now available through 2015. Price per acre has gone up from \$500 to \$850 per acre. Work is going well. Reclamation is masticating what is left after firewood harvesting is done in the area; this material is larger than the chips from last year but this method saves in price in the overall project. They are issuing several permits for firewood each day. Concern over the new County policy on transfer station costs was voiced by members. With the change in charging system to a punch card, some are afraid it will increase illegal dumping in the bosque. Fred Hollis, County

Emergency Management Director, explained this new program should save most households money over the year. We will watch the area for the first few months to see if the concern is warranted and what we might do to limit this dumping. Punch cards will be available at the County Manager's and Treasurer's offices, and at the Senior Center. Local businesses have also offered to assist with selling punch cards with a \$5 fee for this service. City dump will accept punch cards as well. Chris Hill, BLM, reported that visitation is up at the Socorro Nature Area (SNA). There is new signage at access routes to help people find the area, locals, scouts out of Albuquerque and Santa Fe are utilizing it as well. Deck rehabilitation design and construction is slated for 2016 with deferred maintenance funding. This year is the 20 year anniversary of the SNA, maybe a good idea to plan something special. Thanks to NM State Forestry and BLM for spearheading these efforts to protect, improve, and showcase the Socorro Valley Bosque.

- e. Healthy Kids Socorro: Issac Burleigh of Healthy Kids Socorro reported that he has a work conflict with attending our meetings. We will keep him up to date through meeting notes and the Website calendar for opportunities to join us in events.
 - 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. This will be put on next month's agenda with other funding opportunities to consider. Matt will work on a request for funding from Walmart which now goes to the corporate offices instead of being handled locally. 3) The Task Force voted on the Chamber of Commerce nominations for community honors for 2015. 4) Firewise calendar for 2015 should be determined soon through the County Firewise program, Ken Wolfe is the lead.
6. Website update – please send pictures of projects to Nick and Gina to organize for Bear and the website. Nick suggested an appreciation letter for Priscilla Gwin be posted on the website. Nick will draft something for our review for the next meeting with a card to send to the family. Nick also suggested a levee project update or summary of closures, etc. be put on the parks tab in the website. Yasmeen and Gina will try to get updates on the project from their contacts.
 7. Calendar: Next meeting is February 3, 2015. The next Water Dialogue meeting will be held in Albuquerque on January 8th. The Tamarisk Coalition meeting will be held in Albuquerque in 2015, February 10th – 12th. You can check their websites for details.
 8. Other agenda items: Gina will check with Senator Udall's staff about attending a future meeting to discuss San Acacia Reach initiatives and their interest in assisting.
 9. Individual Reports: Jon Erz reported on the projects planned or underway at Sevilleta NWR along the river. They have applied for a Cooperative Restoration Initiative grant through Fish & Wildlife Service and will be installing new infrastructure to support these projects. Project partners include the Interstate Stream Commission, Bureau of Reclamation and FWS. It was suggested we tour these projects sometime in the future when it is convenient to the Refuge. Yasmeen reported that the new Chief Engineer for the MRGCD, Mike Hamman will start on January 20, 2015.
 10. Adjourn: *At 11:10 AM, Matt made a motion to adjourn, second by Doug, approved.*