

Save Our Bosque Task Force
Tuesday, August 4, 2015 Minutes

Attendees: Doug Boykin, Matt Mitchell, Gina Dello Russo, Carlos Coontz, Fred Hollis, Doris Rhodes, Gail Rogers, and Yasmeen Najmi (via conference call)

9:15 AM Save Our Bosque Task Force Meeting

1. Approve Agenda. *Motion made by Fred to approve, second by Matt, approved.*
2. Approve Minutes from July 2015. *Motion made by Fred to approve, second by Connie, approved.*
3. Treasurer's report
 - a. Balance - \$ 5,650.60 in SOBTF funds, \$445.59 in Saavedra Project funds for a balance of \$6,096.19. On the books, there is still \$24,900 available for the Gonzales property and \$22,410.00 available for Perry project.
 - b. Bills - Board approved final bill for Connie, Matt for lodging and tour for raffle. *Motion by Connie to approve, second by Matt, approved.*
4. Project Updates
 - a. Wildland Urban Interface Mitigation Project: Fred reported that all paperwork has been submitted. As a reminder, the project has tentatively begun as of April 30, 2015. Grant is at FEMA waiting for approval, everything looks good in terms of matching funds, proposal language, just waiting. Fred is going to follow up this coming week. If Gail, Nick and Gina can get together and start working on maps, treatment plans, prioritizing projects (based on mobilization and threat from wildfire, number of projects in the area) that are ready to go to NEPA/Compliance contractor. Schedule site visits. Again, partners in the project are Socorro County, Socorro Soil and Water Conservation District, NM State Forestry, and the Task Force. From the Secretary Mitchell of Homeland Security for NM this work is a priority for him.
 - b. Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program: Gina is working with Vannetta and others on project plan. Gina sent Vannetta, Nyleen, Will, Doug, and Angel a draft Partner's proposal for their review. There is a NRCS project to complement the Partners project. The Task Force will assist with planning and planting. Vannetta will find out about the NRCS funding and report back to us. We need to check on Gonzales property project.
 - c. Riverine Parks/SNA: SNA - no report for now, no update on BOR help with pond but the offer of help has been relayed to maintenance person in charge. Suggestion was made to schedule stakeholder meeting with COE project management for the fall to talk about the river parks and mitigation work from the levee work. Doug will schedule this for September. Reports of ATV use in the river parks area, State Forestry did make an effort to control this. We need to get out to see the status of the parks.
 - d. Other Projects: 1) Levee Project: work will start up again in Mid-September. 2) Rhodes Property: the south easement tamarisk has been removed, plantings have gone in and Doris Rhodes will be hiring a contractor to spray Russian knapweed this fall. The next round of plantings is scheduled for this winter then we are all done with existing funding and grants. Doris and Gina are working with ISC and BOR to see about getting water on the property for Phase II project work and with Audubon NM are talking to the ISC and State Engineers Office about a depletions offset strategy for the San Acacia Reach. The ISC has indicated that they will help to put water on the Rhodes property. We have gotten considerable help from USFWS and Audubon NM. We are hoping to tour Congressional staff out to the property soon. SunZia is potentially negotiating an agreement with the SLO and is still discussing Rhodes Property as mitigation. It has been almost exactly 10 years that we started on the Rhodes Property project with Matt and Gina talking with Virgil and Doris Rhodes about conservation easements and restoration.
5. Fundraiser: Summary of our Fundraising event. The event had over 350 views on Eventbrite with 84 tickets sold for the tour. Purchases were highest in the first week after getting the word out. Summary:

Total earned = \$4509.91; Net earned after Eventbrite charges = \$4175.84; Total earned for Armendaris Tour = \$3885.84; net to Task Force from tour = approximately \$1511.02 + \$390 in donations = approximately \$1901.02. One bill for food is outstanding and will be reported on at the next meeting. These funds are earmarked for on the ground restoration. We used the following method for randomly selecting the four winners of the raffle: All names were listed in one column of an excel spreadsheet; random.org (sequence selector) was used to generate a random sequence of numbers, with one random number placed next to each name. If someone bought multiple tickets, their names were displayed multiple times. Using excel and under Formulas/Math & Trig/RANDBETWEEN, one number was selected and matched with the winner's name. We repeated this three more times to select our four winners. Winners are: Dobbie, Ruff, Harrison, and Sinclair. The board had decided at a previous meeting that board members were eligible to win because of the random method of selecting winners. Congratulations to our winners! And, many thanks to all who joined us in this fundraising effort.

6. Outreach/fundraising strategies – Doris presented her efforts to put together a basic fundraising plan for the Task Force. Typically the approach is to: 1) come up with a target we would like to raise – for us, operating and specific projects, 2) in order to approach specific donors develop a case statement which lays out who we are, 3) in terms of looking at perspective donors, break it down into categories of prospective donors – develop prospect list – people we know, in our geographic area, or wealthy individuals who might be interested. Doris handed out a rough draft of the fundraising plan including a list of potential donors. The donor list is for internal use only and will not be distributed to our email list. Suggestions during discussion include: 1) talk to Chamber about collaborating with them because we benefit the environment that supports businesses in Socorro, 2) the plan draft, when it is more fleshed out, will be available for members to review, 3) it would be good to take some of these potential donors on a tour – make the tour small and specific to these donors, 4) this could be a full-time job so we need to consider how we want to support this effort. Doris' next steps will be to put together a case statement and Task Force Board will put together some very specific examples of what we have been doing. We will compile a packet to distribute to potential donors. We really need to organize our funding priorities and put dollar amounts on this. Be prepared. Connie can assist later in the fall by helping with our website. Matt will volunteer to look at names and gather some background information on these potential donors. We need to develop individual and business lists. If someone has a contact with this individual/business then we will include that too. Lots of research needed. We will meet after our September meeting about this topic. 1 pm on September 1, at State Forestry.
7. Tour and roundtable discussion planning session: Host a discussion with stakeholders on the following topics and follow this with a tour of some of the restoration areas and a public outreach event later in the season. Fred and Doug will help Gina organize this. Topics could include:
 - restoration efforts planned or underway in the reach – including but not limited to Task Force, County, COE, BOR, ISC, private lands programs (SWCD, NRCS and Partners), private landowners, Refuges, others.
 - funding strategies for getting this work done.
 - coordination and partnering on projects.
 - depletions offsets for restoration work.
 - mitigation if SunZia powerline goes through.
 - Endangered species status in the reach and Biological Assessment Conservation Measures.
 - Design public outreach event to follow this roundtable/tour.
8. Other agenda items: 1) Rio Grande Trail Commission – Gina attended the first meeting of the newly formed Commission. Background: an effort started in 2004 with a Coordinating Commission formed in 2005, process advanced to the point of an approved charter and a plan for a trail from Belen to Sunland Park. Under this new commission, they have designated some state parks along the river as beginning trail segments. The Commission is planning to hire a coordinator (NMEMRD) and one task for the future is to develop a strategic management plan and work program. They discussed numerous examples focusing on the Appalachian Trail to some degree. This may or may not be the best example for use when comparing to the Rio Grande. They came up with a list of topics for possible workgroups or committees. They are planning two more meetings for the commissioners; one in Taos and one in Las Cruces for later

this calendar year. You can follow this effort at the website:

<http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/admin/riograndetrailcommission.html>. Discussion – vision of trail and checkerboard of landownership were two issues with the trail.

9. Website: we need to streamline our website and train someone on the board or a volunteer to assist Bear with this task. We will work on this in the fall because it will be important to our outreach and fundraising plan.
10. Calendar: Next meeting is September 1, 2015. Agenda items: Bosque Conservation Day on Oct 16th, and Trash Pickup Day Oct 23rd, “Celebrate the Valley” MRGCD event is on September 19, in ABQ at the Hispanic Cultural Center and their office. They will be closing off 4th street, district-focused and we are all invited. If someone has ag products for sale, have them get in touch with Tom Thorpe. If the Task Force would like to have a booth let Yasmeen know, Gina will help with that. October 10th is San Antonio Harvest Festival. Festival of the Cranes is November 18th through the 22nd this year.
11. Individual Reports: Gina - Armendaris Ranch floodplain strategic plan draft was submitted to Turner Enterprises, Inc. She would like input from the Task force when available. Nick is glad to be home from Fire Assignment in Washington – sage grouse habitat, wheat country. Matt reported that the tamarisk leaf beetle has arrived at Pack Mandeville property in Bosquecito. The landowner has given permission for monitoring there. Doug reported fire behavior in Ft Craig Fire was different; maybe there was an impact from the leaf beetle prior to fire start or other factors. He observed different fire behavior than July in the past. Yasmeen –MRGCD goat contractors interested in potential work for treatment, something to keep in mind. Mike Lopez is new MRGCD Belen division manager, Lorenzo still manager in Socorro.
12. Adjourn: *At 11:30 AM, Fred made a motion to adjourn, second by Connie, approved.*