

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**

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

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**Tuesday, August 3rd @ 3:00pm
Meeting Location: Socorro County Annex**

In attendance: Amy Erickson, Sarah Anderson, Sandra Noll, Jeff Havlena, Gina Dello Russo, Matt Mitchell, Rex Myers, Jerry Wheeler, Ginny Weisar, William Haywood, Yasmeen Najmi (on phone).

**Board Member Action Items** –

* + Yasmeen and Sarah will coordinate to get the No Camping signs installed at Otero, Island, and Sandbar park
	+ Yasmeen will develop a draft guidance document to get our segment of the trail designated into the Rio Grande Trail system.
	+ Gina will reserve the Sedillo Park picnic shelter for Wednesday the 11th
	+ Gina, Amy, Rex and Matt will schedule a meeting sometime before the end of August to discuss selecting our next Program Director
	+ Amy will make a Facebook post about our September trash pickup and send out a notice to our e-mail listserv
	+ All – Send Amy or Sarah calendar items to put on our website calendar
	+ All – Please send Sarah a post for the Facebook page so we can keep everyone engaged in our work. We would like to have a post from each board member.

Meeting began at 3:09 pm. Attendees gave a brief introduction.

*Approve agenda and minutes from last month’s meeting*
Amy forgot to add an agenda item for the interns’ presentation, so we decided to put that after the public open forum. Rex motioned to approve the agenda modification, Jerry seconded, approved. Last month’s minutes – Amy didn’t receive any changes. Yasmeen motioned to approve the minutes as written, Matt seconded, approved.

*Public open forum*
Rex mentioned that the recent high winds dropped a bunch of trees at Bosque Park. State Forestry is going to work on it but their equipment currently in use. Some trees are down in San Antonio Park but access is not being blocked. We discussed having more regular trash pickups if people see the need, especially now with our new membership. We have a community trash pickup day every October, and the interns have been working on the parks a lot this summer. We could do a trash pickup in mid-September since we have a truck now and it would be easy to haul the trash to the dump. We discussed having a trash pickup at each park and doing some weed-whacking and brush removal at the same time. We can do them on a weekend morning so the community can come. We can take the trash to the county dump and tell them it is from us and dump it for free or we can leave it on the side of the levee and call MRGCD to come pick it up. We penciled in September 18th at 9:00 for a trash pickup at Bosque Park. We can nominate a new cleanup site at each meeting. Amy will put it on the Facebook page and someone will send the announcement out to our membership. We should highlight the fact that we will be going to a different park once a month.

*Internship*
The interns gave a presentation on their work this summer. Will created a guide to summer birds of the bosque and Ginny created a pamphlet on small critters in the bosque. The interns will give Sarah a short writeup about their summer experience so we can put it on the website. They will also make recommendations for future interns, such as what the Task Force can do to improve the internship program. Their last day is next Friday. We are having a going away party on Wednesday the 11th at 5:00 at the Sedillo Park large picnic shelter. Gina will call the city to reserve it.

*Treasurer’s Report*
Matt gave the treasurer’s report. As of last meeting our balance was $35,313.48. As of this afternoon our balance is $35,520.35. We received a few donations from the community – thank you!

*Current grant applications*
We don’t have any grants in the works right now. On our to-do list is the Water Trust Board grant, and a pre-proposal is supposed to come out sometime this month. This would be for on-the-ground projects, and not to finalize the Conceptual Restoration Plan. State Forestry would be the lead on this, not the Task Force.

*Fundraising efforts*No updates. We have donation and membership buttons on our website.

Gina has a tour with the State Forestry private lands conservation coordinator this Friday. Abigail and Gina are taking him on a site tour including Tiffany Fire, private lands projects, and NMDGF projects to give him an overview of what we do so we can build support for future grant applications with State Forestry.

Sarah and Yasmeen will touch base this week about our MRGCD funding and next steps for that. They will also discuss next steps to request capital outlay funding.

Project updates -

*Partners for Fish and Wildlife*
Matt gave an update. We have a hard deadline to close out old projects and finish reporting by the end of September. Our one active project is Barclay, and once we develop the budget we can submit it to USFWS. Amy mentioned that she is working with NRCS to do saltcedar removal on Hank Taliaferro’s farm, and if he gets funded she can do a followup treatment on his PWF project site from last year.

*Riverine parks and bosque trail*
Can we allows fires at the parks now? Yasmeen said that Jack can take down the no campfire signs and take off the restrictions on the grills as long as there is no tall grass and weeds around the grills. We can ask the city to help with that. The interns said they have time to remove the signs and check on the weed situation before they go. They will take the weed whips down there.

*Riverine parks subcommittee*
The members of this subcommittee are Rex, Sandra, Yasmeen and Gina. The Mayor reached out about a possible meeting to schedule workdays for the crews, but the meeting has not been scheduled. They have our budget for the year but have not approved it. The Riverine Parks subcommittee came up with a budget for this year’s $5k, but until we are approved for the funding not much can be done. The interns have been developing signage. Sandra has some sign design ideas from TNC that she will share with Yasmeen.

Felipe is going to help put up the no camping signs. We have not purchased them yet.

*Rio Grande trail / Socorro valley trail*
There is a RGT commission virtual meeting on August 18at 9am. Yasmeen still needs to figure out what is the process for MRGCD to designate our section of the trail. If we are going to seek assistance from somebody to work through the paperwork to designate our existing trail we need to have some sense of what the MRGCD process would be.

*Sevilleta NWR*
No one here from Sevilleta. Tabled.

*NMC grant*
Jerry said the project status has not changed from last time and that cuckoo/swfl surveys are ongoing. There is one more cuckoo survey to be done. There may be one cuckoo on the site. Hopefully we know if we can proceed by the middle of September so we can masticate in October/November. The contractor has been paid for the spraying, then we will get reimbursed from the NMC grant.

*BOR cooperative agreement*
Nothing to report there.

*Review board action items*
BLM gave an update on the Socorro Nature Area and somebody will come to our September meeting.

October 28th at 9am is the big trash pickup. Can the county supply a dumpster again?

Sarah sent Yasmeen photopoints from the Severence site to assist with developing a maintenance plan.

*Community outreach*
Matt has been trying to contact the schools about Bosque Conservation Day but has not heard back. Sandra has reached out to someone who works at San Antonio Schools to have a table at BCD.

Will recommended that we do a community trash pickup while the interns are here. The interns did a writeup of each of the parks that can go on the website.

*Advocacy*
Rio Grande Basin Study - the study is not officially underway and we do not know the timeline. The Interstate Stream Commission is developing a 50-year water plan. It is on the ISC website.

*Other*
There are open positions on the board. Board members thinking of retiring from the board need to let the other board members know. Then we can gage interest on board member position. Sandra will be stepping down after two years in November. She will still be part of the Task Force but will not hold a position on the board. Gina will step down as an officer. She may need to stay on the board because she signed the lease on the truck.

Sarah will be leaving her role as Program Director later this month. She got a job working for WEST and the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program. We all wish her well at her new job and are thankful for her working so hard for the Task Force over the past two years. We need to write up a new job description and will interview for the job as soon as possible, hopefully in September. We created a selection committee to do interviews. Rex, Amy, Gina and Matt will be on the selection committee.

We are having a going away party for the interns and for Sarah. The party is at the Sedillo Park big picnic shelter on Wednesday, August 11at 5:00. Stop by and wish them well, and bring a snack or side dish if you want to stay and eat, and maybe a chair.

Sandra motioned to adjourn, Jerry seconded, passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

**\*\*\* Our next board meeting will be on Tuesday, September 7th at 3:00 pm \*\*\***