**Save Our Bosque Task Force Board Meeting**

Socorro County Annex Office

198 Neel Ave.

Socorro NM

**Tuesday February 4th @ 3:30-5:30 PM
Meeting Location: Socorro County Annex, West Conference Room**

**In attendance: Gina Dello Russo, Chad McKenna (via phone), Matt Mitchell, Russ Thrun, Dixie Daniels, Jerry Wheeler, Amy Erickson, Jack Dickey, Sandra Noll, Kathy Granillo, Sarah Anderson, and Rafael Sierra-Castro**

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

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

**2. Approve Minutes from January Meeting -** Mattmoves, Gina seconds, passed.

**3. Action Items:**

* **Sarah will update our letter to the governor and send it back to the board for a final review.**
* **Sarah will draft an MOU between the Task Force and the City of Socorro to receive funding for upkeep of the 5 riverine parks within the city limit.**
* **Sarah will set up a time for her, Amy and Matt to do a Conklin site visit.**
* **Yasmeen will keep us updated on the capital outlay funding request to maintain the parks.**
* **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.**
* **All – Review our letter to the governor and provide comments/suggestions**

**4. Treasurer’s Report**

We had a beginning balance of $29,736.18. We had an ending balance on February 1st of $43,147.37. Checks went out for payroll and reimbursements for Gina (WIX website account). Currently Amy, Jerry, Matt, Gina and Sandra can sign checks.

**5. Fundraising update**

Amy, Sarah and Yasmeen met with the mayor about receiving funding to maintain the riverine parks that are in the Socorro city limit (5 parks). The mayor agreed that we can set up an agreement to receive $5,000 from the city on an annual basis. The money will be reimbursable, or we can send the city what we need to purchase and they can purchase it for us. The mayor also suggested that the city parks workers could spend a set time each month working out at the riverine parks doing general maintenance, trash pickup, etc. We need to create an MOU between the City of Socorro and SOBTF with all board members signing. Some things the money can be used for: New picnic tables, new signs, general maintenance, possibly fencing, etc. Sarah and Jack agreed to be on a committee to oversee this project. Chad agreed to work on graphic design for the signs, and can provide help with recommending/installing trail cams.

Other fundraising updates - Gina met with Garrett from New Mexico Wild who recommended speaking with the NM Office of Outdoor Recreation which has funding that could be used for the Rio Grande trail and for the internship program.

Rafael will send Amy information about the NRCS grant. We discussed partnering with NRCS on projects that benefit wildlife to receive funding for project management.

Patagonia grant – these are small grants between $5-20K for environmental work. They don’t fund trail work, maintenance or creation but it could be used to get program management funding for the CRP. Deadline is May 1st.

Gina will look into grants from the Turner Foundation for capacity building and our internship program – this funding can’t be used for on-the-ground projects.

**6. Community Outreach**

April 11 – fishing derby at Escondida Lake. We discussed having an information booth about the Socorro Valley Trail and give away prizes. We discussed designing bandanas – Sarah will ask Atilla if the SVT fund can pay for that.

Sandra mentioned partnering with Presbyterian on some youth outdoor / health activities. She will look into this further.

Gina mentioned we could partner with the Ancestral Lands Program as they have a program focusing on youth and outdoor health/activities.

**7. Advocacy**

Matt looked at Galen’s letter and thought it fit the mission of the task force. Sandra provided comments and sent them to Sarah. Chad reviewed and supports the letter. Amy reviewed and also supported the letter. Sarah will update the letter and send it back to the board. All board members should review the letter after Sarah edits it, and get any additional comments in by the next board meeting so we can get it sent out and off our agenda.

**8. Project Updates**

**Rio Grande Trail / Socorro Valley Trail**

A public meeting date not yet been set but will happen sometime in the next month or so. Sarah has finished the current proposed alignment in GIS and will develop a couple more potential alignments before the public meeting is scheduled. Glen Duggins and San Acacia Riding Adventures would like to be involved. We need to get their contact information and put them on our trail list.

**BOR Cooperative Agreement**

We are starting to gear up for field season. We are looking at getting interns through the Ancestral Lands Program. Due to the interns being staggered we are looking at alternate housing options (in the past the interns have been housed at the field research station at Sevilleta).

Sarah, Gina and Chad have met with BOR and ISC three times to get all of the 2019 monitoring data reviewed and to direct the work for 2020.

**Partners for Fish and Wildlife**

Matt spoke with Sue Conklin about a small project on her property. She has a place to do some upland/dryland planting. Sue was concerned about the success of the project but we are confident that we can design a successful project using drought-tolerant shrubs and grasses. Matt is working on a project outline. Sarah will set up a time for a Sarah, Amy, Matt field visit.

Ken Hart is still interested in a small project on his property, but Matt is having trouble getting ahold of him.

Polvadera / Crane Haven is interested in getting 12 acres under conservation easement. It could be a site for a Partners Project in the future.

On-the ground work on the Gonzales project will begin soon.

**Sevilleta**

Trees from Will are coming on Feb 13th – Sevilleta will plant about 3,000 trees on Feb 14th, 15th, 21st and 22nd. These are community planting days and anyone is invited to attend.

**Tiffany Fire**

Jack gave an update. State Forestry has the signed funding agreement with BLM. The Task Force can help with outreach to landowners and also let them know that we can help design restoration plans on their property. Jack is putting out a public advertisement.

**Bosque Ribbon**

Inmates got in 10 days of work in January moving south from Brown Arroyo (east side of the low flow). They are looking at about 50 crew-days. They are chipping as well as creating firewood. Gina suggested spreading chips on the areas with knapweed – Russ said that the chips can’t be spread too thickly because of fire danger but they can try to target the heavy knapweed areas. Maybe Sevilleta can use some of the mulch, or we can use the mulch on Partners Projects as long as we don’t spread knapweed seeds around.

**WaterSmart Grant**

We are waiting on Tetra Tech to finish creating the geodatabase and write the river reach report. We are hopeful that the project will be completed this summer. We turned in our 270 day report.

**NMC Grant**

This project will start soon (tamarisk removal on ~50 acres near Bosquecito). On Friday at 10am, Sarah and Gina will take the contractors (Forest Fitness) out to the site. Jerry may go as well. NMC grant applications will come out again in Feb/March for a max of $50,000 so we may want to apply for that again, using the FEMA acres that we have compliance on.

**Website, FB, Instagram**

Sarah created a new page for the CRP update on the website. Sarah is going to do weekly posts on Instagram and Facebook to keep us on people’s pages. Please send announcements, cool photos, etc to Sarah or Amy to put on the Facebook page. If anyone else would like to be an administrator on the page, please contact Amy.

**Other**

Sarah and Gina are working on year-end tax filing.

MRGEDA – we discussed whether or not we want to renew our $50/year annual membership. Dixie from Plants of the Rio Grande donated enough to cover the cost, and other members donated as well so we will go ahead and renew. We appreciate the generous support of all of our community members, friends and partners!

Next SOBTF board meeting: Tuesday, March 03, 2020

**10. Adjourn**

Matt moved and Jerry second. Passed. Adjourned at 5:11 pm