**­­Save Our Bosque Task Force Board Meeting**

Socorro County Annex Office

198 Neel Ave.

Socorro NM

**Tuesday, Aug 4th @ 3:00pm
Meeting Location: Zoom call**

**In attendance: Gina Dello Russo, Amy Erickson, Kathy Granillo, Renee Robichaud, Phil Pischke, Sarah Anderson, Tyler Pounds, Yasmeen Najmi, Chad McKenna, Jerry Wheeler**

**Meeting began at 3:03pm**

**1. Approve Agenda –** Amy motioned, Yasmeen second, approved

**2. Approve Minutes from July meeting –** Amy motion to accept July minutes, Yasmeen second, passed.

**3. Action Items:**

* **Sarah will let Amy know which projects have updates for next month’s agenda**
* **Sarah will send the budget spreadsheet to board members before each meeting**
* **Sarah and Matt will talk with the schools about doing a virtual Bosque Conservation Day.**
* **Yasmeen will keep us updated on the status of financial support from MRGCD and will develop language for the agreement outlining the expectations of MRGCD and the Task Force**
* **Yasmeen will speak with Lorenzo about guardrail repair.**
* **All – provide comments to Amy or Sandra about the membership drive documents.**
* ***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***
* **All – Send Amy or Sarah calendar items to put on our website calendar.**

**4. Treasurer’s Report**

Sarah gave the treasurer’s report. The balance as of today is $21,008. Expenses for the past month include Bureau of Reclamation and purchasing new grills and tables for the riverine parks.

**5. Interns Report**

The interns gave reports about their summer. They will be finished with the internship on Friday, August 14th. Tyler highlighted his work on the Barclay property and his work on researching medicinal and useful plants. Phil talked about his work on Rhodes and Mandeville and gave his thoughts on dealing with invasive plants. Phil is starting a job with the Forest Service in a few weeks and says that his internship with the Task Force will help him in his new position. Congratulations, Phil! Tyler will be finishing his Master’s degree this fall. Their presentations will be posted on the SOBTF webpage.

**6. Fundraising update**

MRGCD -
Yasmeen gave an update about the MOA between the Task Force and MRGCD. They will model the agreement off of a similar agreement they have with RGALT. MRGCD will develop a scope of work for the agreement and structure it similar to a 5-year grant agreement. The scope of work for the Task Force will be similar to the work we have been doing for MRGCD all along, and will include more robust management of the riverine parks and bosque trail. The MRGCD board will be presented with the information at their next meeting on Monday, and Gina will attend.

City of Socorro –
Sarah has purchased some grills and picnic tables. The interns have been cleaning up the parks, weed whipping, and cutting down saplings to open up the areas near the existing tables and fire rings. Sarah will plan a September workday to install the new grills and tables. These items are being stored at the Socorro County Annex yard. MRGCD may be able to store some of the items if we need more space, and can help with concrete removal at the parks.

Current grant applications-

Sarah has applied for the NRCS New Mexico Conservation Partners grant ($16,000) which would fund two outreach events on the Rhodes property and provide some funds for capacity building. Grants will be awarded on Sept 1st.

The Task Force and RGALT applied for a NFWF grant, but it was not funded.

No update on FAWRA grant applications.

We received a request to work with the Ancestral Lands Program on an RFP to benefit river recreation opportunities. This would be a good partnership opportunity with MRGCD.

Membership drive –

Sarah, Amy, Gina and Sandra are developing a membership drive for the Task Force. We will provide membership levels starting at $25 so people can support our work. We are still working out the details but would like to have the PayPal link, membership tracking spreadsheet, and possibly a new logo by September.

We have a small contract with New Mexico Department of Game and Fish to do work on the La Joya and Bernardo Wildlife Management Areas. This agreement will go through the end of June 2021.

**7. Community Outreach**

Bosque Conservation Day – we cancelled Bosque Conservation Day and decided that a virtual event would be appropriate. Matt will discuss this with the schools and see what they want this to look like. One idea: All of our regular BCD presenters can create a 5-10 minute video on their area of expertise. We will compile the videos and the schools can use them to develop an environmentally-focused lesson plan for the students.

**8. Advocacy**

We have a new mission statement: The Save Our Bosque Task Force works collaboratively to support a healthy Rio Grande bosque and riparian ecosystem while celebrating its benefits to the communities of central New Mexico. Thank you to all who provided suggestions and feedback on this.

**9. Project Updates**

*Rio Grande Trail / Socorro Valley Trail*

Tabled.

*BOR Cooperative Agreement*

Field work for the year will wrap up in September. Interns and Sarah have created maps, monitored photopoints, and kept up with the weed pulling. Sarah sent out a Request for Bids to find a contractor for noxious weed control, but did not receive any bids. She is working with Chad to come up with an alternative treatment plan.

*Partners for Fish and Wildlife*

Sarah gave an update. We are moving forward with a habitat improvement plan for the Barclay property. Conklin has had an archaeological survey completed, but we are waiting to receive the details. Armendaris – we have reviewed bids and selected a contractor. Gina will work with the contractor to design a grassland establishment project. That work will take place this month, and will be completed by the end of August.

*Sevilleta*

Kathy gave an update – a new intern is starting in mid-August. Sevilleta is hiring a heavy equipment operator and should have someone on board by October. SOBTF interns did photopoints at the wetlands.

*Tiffany Fire*

Sarah and the interns have been visiting once a week for breeding bird surveys and herbicide application inspections. Funding for this project will be finished in mid-August and Sarah will get out there this week to do the final bird surveys and inspections. The interns and Abigail have spent a lot of time working at the Tiffany Fire sites, so thank you for all of your hard work! Completion of this project will wrap up the Water Trust Board grant with Sierra SWCD.

*WaterSmart Grant (CRP Update)*

This grant is also coming to a close. We have received the final geodatabase from Tetra Tech. We requested they include a 2002-2016 vegetation change map. Any additional comments need to be in by the end of this week.

*NMC Grant*

Jerry gave an update – we will start working on Johnny Pack’s piece this fall. Mandeville is being closed out, and Jerry is getting together all the tracking metrics. We can use the same contractor without having to go out to bid again, if we want to.

**10. Other**

Amy has made a few changes to the website. Please check it out when you get a chance. Soon we will have a “Partners” page to highlight all of the good work the Task Force does with our numerous partners.

Gina set up an interview with John Larson to write an article about our improvements to the riverine parks.

**11. Adjourn**

Amy moved and Chad second. Passed. Adjourned at 4:30 pm

*Next meeting will be Tuesday, September 1st at 3:00pm.*