



# Save Our Bosque Task Force

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 Monthly Board Meeting  
Socorro County Annex Office  
198 Neel Ave, Socorro NM

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**Tuesday, July 5, 2022 @ 3:00pm**

**Meeting Location: Zoom / Socorro County Annex**

*In attendance:* Gina Della Russo, Jerry Wheeler, Jeff Havlena, Matt Mitchell, Ron Thomas, Danielle Hensley, Christie Smith

Meeting began at 3:07 pm.

Approve agenda and minutes from last month's meeting

Matt motioned to approve agenda, Ron seconded, passed.

Gina motioned to approve the June minutes as written, Jeff seconded, passed.

No introductions needed.

**Board Member Action Items –**

- **Danielle** will assist Parks and Trail Subcommittee in scheduling a meeting prior to next month's board meeting. She will develop an agenda and circulate prior to meeting
- **Danielle and Gina** will consider applying for the America the Beautiful Challenge 2022 RfP
- **Danielle** will consider applying for a new federal grant this year or next for the Tiffany Fire area
- **Danielle** will reach out to membership to remind them to renew their memberships
- Gina will report back re whether the contractor was able to do the chemical treatment on invasive plants by Aug. 1
- **Danielle** Update on Eagle Scout project
- **Jeff** on camera installation progress
- **Danielle and Gina** will meet with Kay Krehbiel of the Friends of El Camino Real and Socorro County Historical Society re signage and organizing plans for the Rio Grande Trail.
- **Gina and Danielle** will work on processing June 18 Farmers' Market questionnaires data and on updating the maps
- **Gina** reach out to Senator Steinborn and MRGCD about management issues.
- **Gina** will arrange a meeting with Michael Hawkes, Socorro County Manager, to continue engaging the county on the Rio Grande Trail project. She will see if we could apply for funds to continue our work.
- **Gina** will follow up with Jason Casuga of the MRGCD re incorporating the existing Bosque Trail into the Rio Grande Trail and to request examples of existing licenses the MRGCD has with entities managing trails and parks on their lands.
- **Danielle:** newsletter progress

Treasurer's Report

Gina gave the treasurer's report. As of June 1, our balance was \$42,995.22. As of the end of June our balance is \$37,483.40. Activity for the month included payroll, taxes, health insurance stipend, and a deposit closing out the City of Socorro budget for the last year.

Fundraising update: Danielle and Gina are considering applying for the America the Beautiful Challenge 2022 RfP. As a partner in the Tiffany Fire Rehabilitation, we are assisting NMFD in securing matching funds for the Water Trust Board grant they received recently.

#### Program Director's Update

Danielle: New federal grant – substantial funding around Tiffany Fire area, we are considering applying for this grant this year or next.

Fundraising: membership update - some have renewed their memberships; she'll ask again. We want to pull people back into the fold. One intern got bit by a bat; is away for a week.

#### **Project Updates**

##### Bureau of Reclamation Cooperative Agreement

Danielle toured project areas with Daniel Garcia, ACE Fish and Wildlife Coordinator, intern supervisor with ACE. A new contract with ACE was signed adjusting intern schedule due to sick leave for one intern. Geosystems Analysts submitted an interim report to Reclamation for this year's monitoring. The river has been flowing high due to monsoon rains and project areas will likely need maintenance following this season.

##### New Mexico Association of Counties Grant

New Mexico Counties updates—Jerry Wheeler reported that Socorro County is in the process of closing out the 21-22 project grant (\$50K) and have started the new grant (\$70K), July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023 which includes both spraying and mastication. The company recently working with the county noted that herbicide costs have increased; hopefully we can still get all we want done by April of 2023. It's muddy now; the company does need to spray but the latest time for foliar application of herbicide should be September. Gina says more recently contractors spray in early summer, but we don't always get the funding on time.

Chemicals are used to kill invasive plants, not natives, and must be used carefully. High temperatures can affect the natives adversely, so specifications have to be followed. Basil bark treatment can be used later in the year, after October. Danielle says that if spraying costs go up, we can choose to do less mastication. Gina says to shoot for Aug. 1 for chemical treatment, if possible, with the contractor. We need drier weather for mastication or spraying to assist with access. If necessary, we could spray in April of next year, but that is not a good time because it is the start of fire season and our interns have not started.

##### City of Socorro Partnership on Park Improvements

Danielle reported that a new ADA table is in Bosque Park and the city will try to dig out the concrete fire rings there. At Sandbar Park there are new grills (all pedestal grills now) and they swapped seats to change location of the ADA accessible picnic table there. We have funds for more new tables and grills and can buy them now.

##### Middle Rio Grande Capital Outlay Project

Danielle spoke with Yasmeen Najmi about the tamarisk treatment of resprouts on the five project areas of the Central Socorro Bosque Project. This project extends from Escondida Bridge to almost San Antonio, west side of the river. Work will focus on the upper three segments this year. The five segments were created by NM Forestry Division after the Escondida Fire, funded through state Capital Outlay funds, and initial treatment was in 2017. The five river parks within City limits are in sections 2 and 3, counting from the north. We're just providing information and assistance for MRGCD, they will pay for it. We might try to coordinate contract work with this and other projects to save money.

##### NM Department of Game and Fish

Danielle and the interns have completed work at La Joya refuge within the contract for FY 2022. We have another contract for FY 2023 and work will focus on Bernardo refuge. NMDGF is completing restoration at La Joya and Bernardo.

### Partners for Fish and Wildlife

One project in Pueblito is underway and the agreement draft is ready to send to Matt for review. All should think of who might be interested. Gina will reach out to another landowner in the Pueblito area. Some areas need salt cedar cleared. We have money thru FWS, so we need to find willing landowners. A landowner in Bosquecito requested assistance to maintain a fence line on his property. We offered volunteering to assist him for fence line clearing if that helps but have no funding suggestions for him.

### Socorro Area Riverine parks and bosque trail

Eagle Scout project –Danielle is working with an eagle scout, Henry Taliaferro, on his Eagle Scout project; he wanted to work in the parks, perhaps Otero, improving pathways and access to the river; he's excited about this project to add to his work for the Eagle Scout goal. He might want to work on signage at Otero. Park and Trail cleanup – Danielle reported that Lloyd Martinez of City Utilities said he's not sure how much the city can participate in this right now; therefore, we need to manage this. Parks & Trails subcommittee will meet first, gather ideas, and develop a draft plan to bring back to the larger Board. Danielle requested signage be a part of this discussion.

Topics for this subcommittee could include park clean up schedule, a designated point person for trash management and contacts put on our website, and signage at parks within the city limits. Jerry noted that the County has a number for trash pick-up. There's grant money for this at the county level. Mr. Hawkes, Socorro County Manager, might be interested in working with us on that. City, MRGCD, and County can all assist with trash pick-up.

Signage at Parks and the Trail within city limits: Danielle spoke with Yasmeen at MRGCD and we can do go ahead with signage within the city limits. We can now design signs, and plan other aspects of this. Danielle notes that we need to have uniformity and connectivity re other entities along the river; Rio Grande Trail, Camino Real, MRGCD, etc.

We also need a sign for our public outreach presence at the Farmer's Market and other events. Pam of the Farmer's Market said we should have a public outreach event at the Tuesday afternoon market too. Gina suggested that we do that after we process the questionnaires and update the map.

Webcams: We will need signage for the cameras, letting people know that the parks are being monitored for illegal trash dumping. Jeff said he'd work on getting them up in the next month. Matt suggested that we add tiny American flags to prevent folks shooting up signs.

### Rio Grande trail / Socorro Valley Trail

We had a public outreach event at the Socorro Farmer's Market on June 18, 44 questionnaires were filled out, and the interns are processing the information gathered there. Danielle is organizing a meeting with Kay Krehbiel of the Friends of El Camino Real and Socorro County Historical Society about signage and opportunities to work together. We would be coordinating with them on options on a trail east of the river along Bosquecito Road. Gina and Daniele will meet with Kay soon.

Next steps: working on questionnaires data; working on updating the maps, Gina reached out to Senator Steinborn and MRGCD about management issues. Gina will arrange a meeting with Michael Hawkes, Socorro County Manager, to continue engaging the county on the Rio Grande Trail project.

The Rio Grande Trail Commission, through NM Parks and Recreation may have funding for infrastructure and planning. Gina will reach out to them to see if we could apply for those funds to continue our work. Priorities would be planning safe access from Otero Park to the Plaza and upkeep of our existing three-mile trail.

Question: What would it take to incorporate the existing Bosque Trail into the Rio Grande Trail? MRGCD's involvement is crucial. Gina will follow up with Jason Casuga of the MRGCD to request examples of existing licenses the MRGCD has with entities managing trails and parks on their lands.

### Community outreach, social media, newsletter update

Newsletter: Danielle is working with the interns on a spread in the newsletters on plants, interns

themselves, public involvement ideas, one person's heart-felt response on the recent questionnaire. Danielle hopes for 10-11 pages.

Our next trash clean-up might be on Oct. 22 or 29, 9-noon. Bosque Conservation Day is usually the second or third week of the month.

Other

Motion to adjourn

Jeff motioned, Matt seconded, passed. Adjourned at 4:55.

**\*\*\* Our next board meeting will be at 3:00 on Tuesday, August 2\*\*\***