

Save Our Bosque Task Force

Tuesday, September 15, 2015 Minutes

Attendees: Matt Mitchell, Gina Dello Russo, Nick Smokovich, Fred Hollis, Connie Robnett, Jon Erz, Bear Albrecht, and Yasmeen Najmi (via conference call)

8:45 AM Save Our Bosque Task Force Meeting

1. Approve Agenda. *Motion made by Connie to approve, second by Gina, approved.*
2. Approve Minutes from July 2015. *Motion made by Jon to approve, second by Connie, approved.*
3. Treasurer's report
 - a. Balance - \$ 7,465.38 in SOBTF funds, \$445.59 in Saavedra Project funds for a balance of \$7,910.97. On the books, there is still \$24,900 available for the Gonzales property and \$22,410.00 available for Perry project.
 - b. Bills – no bills this month.
4. Project Updates
 - a. Wildland Urban Interface Mitigation Project: Fred reported that the County has sent FEMA requested information and hoping for approval soon. Fred will see Region 6 supervisor next week and can ask him for update. 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. Again, partners in the project are Socorro County, Socorro Soil and Water Conservation District, NM State Forestry, and the Task Force.
 - b. Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program: Proposal with Vannetta is all signed and her project is now underway. Next steps are for Vannetta and Gina to order plant materials and for Vannetta to work with SWCD and earth moving contractor and fencing contractor. The Task Force will assist with planning and planting. The Gonzales project was supposed to get back underway this fall when it was not so wet out on the site. Saavedra let Angel Montoya know he would be finishing his project in a week or two. We discussed the potential of using our funds from the raffle to collaborate to hire an SCA to serve as an intern to develop Partners projects. We currently have one in development phase, and if we had two more, it would be a good time to have a SCA that could assist with outreach, design, and follow through to plantings. It would be great experience a good role for the Task Force to play for young professionals. Discuss further, when Doug and others are available.
 - c. Riverine Parks/SNA: SNA - no report for now. Fernando Cortez is the maintenance man assigned to the SNA, as we understand it, it is his full time position now. He is in contact with BOR for help with pond. 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. Reports of ATV use in the river parks area, State Forestry did make an effort to control this. We need to check the status of the parks. This will be part of a work plan that Doug, Fred and Nick will work on so the County YCC program can be ready to go in 2016. Fred said the deadline to have that workplan ready is spring 2016.
 - d. Other Projects: 1) Levee Project: work will start up again October 1. 2) Rhodes Property: there will be a tour of decision-makers on November 4th and the Task Force members are invited to attend a luncheon with them to meet with them and talk about all the work that has been done on the property. 3) Jon reported on Sevilleta NWR Unit A' Rio Grande silvery minnow habitat improvement project where approximately 20 acres were cleared in May and yesterday the piles were burned. BOR will then come in, lower the banks, and create three backwater channels to design specifications. Interesting to note that Southwestern willow flycatchers have already moved into the area, just north of the cleared area. They used this area historically and came right back in when the decadent tamarisk was removed. This has limited some of the invasive

work they had wanted to do for the time being, but they can still do native plantings. They will plant Coyote willow, Goodding's willow, Cottonwoods, NM olive and other species to diversify the plant mix. They designed the channels to make maintenance minimal; life of the project is 5 years with completion date of December 2016. We are invited on a site visit sometime soon, maybe around the holidays if the roads are good.

5. Fundraising:
 - a. Raffle final report: \$1812.78 net earnings for raffle including a generous donation from a regular supporter who didn't get to the raffle in time. Many thanks to everyone who helped with this event. These funds are earmarked for on the ground restoration. See the discussion below on how we might utilize these funds.
 - b. Fundraising Plan discussion – tabled until October 6 meeting in the afternoon or later scheduled date TBD.
6. Bosque Conservation Day planning update (October 16, 2015): Nick left invitations at the superintendent's office and will follow up next week with calls. Now needs the commitments from agencies for stations: SWCD can't assist this year, has a prior commitment. County, yes. State Forestry, yes. Matt, yes. Fred will check with 4H. Jon will check with Sevilleta. Gina will check with Bosque del Apache and Friends of Bosque. Jon will see about doing an invasives station too. Bear will get the radios ready. Nick will check with Game and Fish. Healthy Kids Socorro, BEMP, BLM, and Bureau of Geology were other stations. Volunteers so far are Connie and Gina, probably need more. We will check in at the next meeting. Bus scholarship has been offered at one-half of costs covered by either Task Force or County.
7. Trash Pickup Day (October 23, 2015): We will meet on the west side of the Low Flow Conveyance Channel at Otero Street. Park off to the side to not block traffic since the levee work will be underway. We will be working north and south from here. We want to make sure we get to south to Brown Arroyo this time, but would be great if we worked north to the flood control along the LFCC too. In this way, we would have followed the IWC clearing projects and picked up everywhere that they cleared and made sure trash was cleared in those areas. MRGCD will provide dump truck and back hoe. County will have a dumpster on site. Hope everyone can make it. We will check in at the next meeting.
8. 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. (Tentative date early November) 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.
9. Other agenda items: 1) NRCS local workgroup meeting on the 22nd the Task Force is invited. Nick and Gina will be attending. 2) Grace Haggerty of the Interstate Stream Commission and Todd Caplan will present on their current and planned projects in the San Acacia Reach at the October 6 Task Force meeting. 3) Gina will ask Dustin Armstrong to report on the Tamarisk leaf beetle at the next Task Force meeting **(called and he will make it if he can)**
10. 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. Before the next meeting Connie will look at our website and use website design software to see how we might streamline and make our website great!!!! We will get pictures organized and in to Connie and Bear when they need them. Then Bear will work with us to see how it will fit with our current website and how to best move forward. Jon suggested Facebook as another outreach tool and may

volunteer to help us with that. Let's discuss further as our webpage gets developed and our outreach/fundraising plan gets underway. It is a wonderful offer.

11. Calendar: Next meeting is October 6, 2015. Agenda items: Bosque Conservation Day on Oct 16th, and Trash Pickup Day Oct 23rd, October 10th is San Antonio Harvest Festival, it's their 3rd year! Festival of the Cranes is November 18th through the 22nd this year.
12. Individual Reports: Fred: County Fair – they had a good group go through this year. Fire season is usually over now but the new norm might be a year round fire season, even here in NM. An example was the San Marcial fire in June, fire behavior on that one was very different than past fires. Something for us to think about and plan for in the Bosque. Bear: went out to California and Water Canyon with the Radio Club. Nick: Going to be at the State Fair tomorrow for State Forestry. Matt at the State Fair tomorrow too.
13. Adjourn: *At 11:10 AM, Fred made a motion to adjourn, second by Nick, approved.*