

Save Our Bosque Task Force
Tuesday, July 5, 2017 Minutes

Attendees: Doug Boykin, Gina Dello Russo, Miranda Kersten, Annalily Lopez, Hannah Shutka, Carlos Vega, Mike Comiskey, Jon Erz, Will Janousek, Dave and Cyndie Lawrence-Devers, and Yasmeen Najmi (via phone).

9:00 Save Our Bosque Task Force Board Meeting. Financial business, staffing, and board logistics discussed. We have a quorum.

9:30 Save Our Bosque Task Force open meeting.

1. Approve Agenda *Motion by Matt to approve, second by Carlos; approved.*
2. Approve Minutes from meeting of June 14, 2017. *Motion by Carlos to approve, second by Matt; approved.*
3. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Account Activity: Bank balance - \$81,232.28; ROR Balance = \$69,776.46. We received our regular \$2 donation. Thanks to all for the support.
 - b. Bills that cleared the bank this month: \$110.04 to cover food supplied to volunteers at a tree planting at Sevilleta NWR; \$436.28 in supplies for the Program Manager; \$31.72 for a staff lunch meeting; \$173.12 for lunch for the Synergy-Building workshop the Task Force hosted in June. A \$15 donation was made to offset some of those food costs.
 - c. Fundraising update: July 24th from 10:00 to 2:00 pm the Task Force board and Program Director will meet to discuss Task Force fundraising priorities. A meeting in August will follow up the discussions during the Synergy-Building Workshop on funding priorities for our partnership. These meetings will set the stage for the Tamarisk Coalition workshop in September.
4. Director's Update: 1) Socorro Bikeways and Trails Master Plan public meeting – Miranda attended for the Task Force please see the following links for more information <http://socorro.sites-sw.com> and <http://www.sites-sw.com/projects/socorro/>. The contractor will be presenting their plan to the city council in August, and it should be finalized by October. The main issues that people brought up were the lack of bike racks, access to the east side, and having safe routes to schools and shopping areas. In small groups, we discussed priority areas for improvements, problem areas, and current bike routes and unpaved trails. The levee was on the map as an unpaved trail. 2) Synergy-Building Workshop had 11 people attending representing eight different organizations. We spoke about our shared goals, our priorities, how we can support each other and build our presence in our community. Meetings are tentatively planned for August and again in October to focus on our shared messaging and funding opportunities. 3) Miranda was the lead author of a grant submitted through NMSU to the Turner Ranches Community Youth Development Initiative for a greenhouse that the Socorro County Cooperative Extension Service would be the lead on. 4) Miranda, Annalily, and Hannah went to the Lawrence/Devers property as a site inspection, Miranda has submitted a report on this project; 5) the interns and Miranda will also be going to NM Department of Game & Fish Bernardo Refuge, to Sevilleta NWR units C & D, and she will be participating in the fundraising planning efforts to help organize her grant writing priorities.
5. Interns' Update: Annalily and Hannah have been here a month and have finished GIS facilities data collection at parks, have finished photo points of ribbon and Severance projects, have completed 10 of the 15 plant monitoring transects in Severance project. They did an inventory of fencing needs at the Bosque Park: .5 miles of cable are needed and 29 posts. TLB monitoring has started in the Severance Project, in Severance 3. They will be working on the FEMA project plant monitoring starting this month. They will be working on G & F lands at Bernardo Refuge

and will be helping with TLB monitoring to a greater degree in the future. Doug made sure to say to be careful of snakes out there. Next steps include: finishing TLB surveys, following up on Confluence park, monitoring at Sevilleta NWR next week, TLB vegetation protocol training on July 27 and 28. We have a request for shapefiles and write ups for all of our projects, so Annalily can help with this task.

6. Project Updates:

- a. **Socorro Valley Wildfire Hazard Mitigation Project:** Environmental Compliance Consultant is working to get initial site descriptions for the EA. They have been out in the field one day so far to tour project areas 1 and some of 3. This work will continue in July. I am working on the BA for the project to be done at the same time as their work.
- b. **Partners for Fish & Wildlife Projects and Partnership:** Lawrence/Devers site visit was completed, they will be working on seeding grasses and forbs next, Taliaferro site visit to be scheduled for July, Armendaris Ranch project area was protected from the Tiffany Fire.
- c. **SNA:** Mike, assigned as a park ranger for BLM, went out to see the SNA some basic clean up and get rid of piles, looking at doing some interpretive programs at the amphitheater. Denny Apachito has replaced Chris Hill as the outdoor recreation planner and is considering leaving the gate open during the day. Deferred maintenance funding is available to fix feeder pump on pond. Maybe the interns could assist with some of the interpretive outreach at the SNA.
Riverine Parks: 0.5 miles cable needed (up to ¾ inch diameter) and 29 poles to work on the Bosque Park. Yasmeen will work to schedule this work for the fall. Mowing of levee: Yasmeen will check in again with Lorenzo about mowing at the levee after they have finished other priority work. Confluence project update on plan – outline provided (attached here) has real potential and the interns have created an outline to address resource management, landscaping, and human aspects. Gina will get the original planning group back together over coffee with interns, Miranda and Doug, others interested to look at their ideas and final outline/plan.
 - i. **Park Signs** – Design what you want on the signs by July 21 then Carlos can get this to the School Administrators. Miranda will work with Yasmeen to get this information to Carlos on time.
- d. **Rio Grande Trail, Socorro Valley Trail efforts:** ALTA is the contractor and will be working with the Resources workgroup and communities to identify sensitive areas, recreational and educational opportunities and other resource concerns. SOBTF could help compile this information for our focus area along with Striders and Riders and other interested groups.
- e. **Sevilleta NWR:** Jon said that the refuge had their meeting on their hunt plan, their restoration has impacted the hunting opportunities on the refuge so they are offering alternate places and will compile an Environmental Assessment of the options. Sevilleta NWR and ISC are working on the final design for Unit B, which will entail less construction and ISC might have funds to cover this work, but they need to be spent soon. Will presented on the Willow restoration project where interns helped with survival monitoring. He found no survival difference between species (*Salix gooddingii* vs. *exigua*), 50% survival rate in general, strong difference in pole versus stake plantings – poles rough survival rate higher - 60% to 15% stake survival but there may be other factors affecting this to some degree. An informal information meeting is planned to present this information on either August 8, 9, or 10 to review this data and field trip. A YCC group from Valle del Oro NWR will be down end of July to see restoration sites.
- f. **Central Socorro Bosque Severance Project:** Waiting for September 1 to get back out there for treatment. Doug will schedule a meeting in August about revegetation part of that project for Task Force and contractor, Yasmeen would like to attend.

- g. **Other projects:** 1) Tiffany Fire: Doug, Miranda, and Gina met with ED Edwards, Ranch Manager for Armendaris Ranch and with the results of mop up operations out there it is good to look at this as an emerging project, good opportunity since they removed the thicker salt cedar out there.
7. **Restore our Rivers Initiative:** Fundraising workshop offered by Tamarisk Coalition and a consultant they have hired to help with this initiative is scheduled for September 18-20. Other local non-profit organizations will be invited to the workshop. The Task Force hosted a “Synergy Building” workshop on June 16 with some of those area non-profits to kick off the potential partnerships with these groups. A quarterly report is due this month, Miranda will assist Gina with this.
8. **Other Agenda Items:** Cross Watershed Network has a website and we can each register as a participant. When Fred went to their workshop in Arizona, he offered to host a workshop in our river basin. They would like to discuss this with us and see if we would be a good fit to host one. Miranda will see if Fred, Gina and Doug would be available first part of August to speak with them about it.
9. **Website and Facebook items:** Still need Doug’s picture and bio. The mobile website different than desktop, Miranda will fix that. Interns will assist PM to get our website more streamlined. They are working on facebook likes, our reach on Facebook (which has gone up already), and how to improve Instagram likes and outreach opportunities. Doug will send out some photos of Tiffany Basin burn out to post.
10. **Calendar Items:** July 27 Socorro Countywide Trash pickup – does the Task Force want to pick up trash around Escondida Lake, Miranda will send out an email a couple days prior to pick up. Maybe do the pickup in the evening so more folks could come after work. Won’t take long to get this stretch done. Thursday July 13, 1 p.m. Miranda will be presenting at Sevilleta NWR conference room. Rio Grande Trail meeting July 20 at Whitfield Farm.
11. **Individual reports:** Miranda got to go down to the Tiffany Fire and observe the great partnership work down there. Annalily went rockclimbing for the first time with Miranda and Jon, Hannah went to Wyoming this last weekend, Jon looked at the Americorps program when he was investigating internship options and thought it may be worth looking into a more programmatic Americorps Vista program for future internships. Will enjoyed the Socorro Fireworks last night. Matt shared a sad story: he got a permit to take a peregrine falcon from San Lorenzo Canyon through his falconer permit but an eagle took out the nest before he could get there. All young died due to this predation. Cyndie and Dave watched the fireworks from MRO, top of Magdalena Mountains.
12. **Adjourn** 10:40 a.m. *Motion by Carlos, second by Matt; meeting adjourned.*

Confluence Park Proposal - DRAFT - July 5, 2017

As it stands, Confluence Park has many appealing aspects. The park has native tree species like the cottonwoods and not many invasives (like the tamarisk), and there are recreational opportunities available from camping, picnicking, and hiking the trail to water recreational activities due to great river access. Relative to other areas, Confluence is more car accessible due to its easy access from the North Diversion/Flood Control, which results in higher people traffic. However, historically the park has suffered from an excess of trash from illegal dumping. In order to improve the environmental health of the park and increase community involvement and access, the below improvements have been proposed:

1. Resource Management
 - Fencing

- Poles and ropes are needed to close off areas where ATV riders have made an unwanted trail. Additionally, when the bar ditch was installed, it covered and/ or knocked down some poles. Replacing and installing new poles and fence will prevent unwanted access from ATVs to the park and trails.
- The unwanted ATV trail runs from west to east in the Northern section of Confluence. Currently the eastern entrance to the ATV created trail has two large rocks placed at the end to prevent access but ATV riders have been going through and around the rocks to enter and exit the unwanted trail. At the western entrance where the ATV created trail meets the authorized road a similar problem exist with the rocks blocking the trail. ATV riders have been going around the stones to get into and out of Confluence.
- We have preliminary measurements and estimates for the amount of fence and poles needed. Total poles needed: 54, Total wire needed: about 180 meters.
- Trees
 - Surveying cottonwoods and other native species to see where and how much the parasite Mistletoe has spread. Removal or trimming is needed in order to protect the trees, and decrease the possibility of tree branches falling on park goers.
- Reclaiming Land
 - Land currently used as ATV road can be converted to a nature walk with plants found in the bosque.
 - Bar ditches
 - Create mini ramps using dirt from the ditches (if the ditches were built for drainage then a culvert would be necessary), or wood planks to have proper access to picnic tables and trails.

2. Landscaping

- Native planting
 - ATV unwanted trail converted to Confluence Nature Walk and Garden.
 - Introducing pollinator plants, replanting cottonwoods and willows and introducing native seeds for wildflowers, brushes, and cacti. We could designate an area as a pollinator garden, and work towards getting a Wildlife Friendly Habitat or “Pollinator Certification” (such as through National Pollinator Garden Network). Through this certification, the bosque can be placed on a map, possibly increasing visibility and attendance to the park.
 - Reducing plants/shrub growth in picnic and fire pit areas. A ten-foot area clearing around the pit is required. Everything potentially flammable must be removed. Include a sign that says, “Do not leave fires unattended!”

3. Human Aspects

- Extending parking lot to create access for trailers.
- Signs & Tables

- Redesigning from kids, and/or local artists to reduce vandalism.
- Signs should include park name, SOBTF logo, activities allowed in park, and LNT reminder. Sign placement should go at the beginning of the main entrance.
- Signs to that warn of fines for illegal dumping.
- Trash reduction
 - Possibly hosting talks at public schools, or the library about proper trash disposal. Further research is needed to find effective solutions.
- Adopt the Park
 - As it did exist in the past, this program can be reintroduced and we expect it may fare better given the goals we intend to set out.
 - Volunteer Program: Getting community involvement; creating a planting days involving schools groups, citizens, university groups, etc.
 - Improving the “Get Involved” section of the SOBTF website to include these volunteer/Adopt the Park opportunities.

