



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

Tuesday, March 1st @ 3:00pm

Meeting Location: Socorro County Annex

In attendance:

Danielle Hensley, Jeff Havlena, Matt Mitchell, Amy Erickson, Gina Dello Russo, Jerry Wheeler.

On Zoom: Ron Thomas, Allan Sauter, Colin Barnett, Rob Selina, Yasmeen Najmi

Board Member Action Items –

- Gina – send a thank-you letter to Sandra Postel for the donation.
- Gina – Coordinate with Wendy Otero to file 2021 taxes
- Gina – send Rex a thank-you letter for serving on the SOBTF board

Jerry called the meeting to order at 3:03.

Approve agenda and minutes from last month's meeting

Matt motioned, and Gina seconded to amend the agenda due to board member absence, passed. February meeting minutes were approved with one addition – we agreed to have our meetings at 3:00pm on the first Tuesday of every month. Minutes approved with this addition and a few other board member comments. Matt motioned to accept the minutes as amended, Jeff seconded, passed.

Amy agreed to take meeting minutes today.

Update on board status – Rex has officially stepped down from the board but would like to be a SOBTF member. We are now seeking a new board member to fill the role as Secretary.

Public open forum

Board members, staff and meeting attendees introduced themselves.

There was no other input from the public.

Fiscal Report

The beginning balance for this month was \$39,525.93 and the balance as of this morning is \$42,166.21.

The funding increase is from a BOR cooperative agreement drawdown and some membership payments. We also got \$100 from the Fidelity Charitable Foundation made at the recommendation of SOBTF member Sandra Postel. Gina will send a thank you letter to Sandra.

Gina will coordinate with Wendy Otero to file the 2021 taxes.

We are hoping to apply for a WaterSmart grant for capacity building. The grant is due at the end of March and is for \$200,000 over 2 years. Gina and Danielle are working with James Anzalone at NM State Forestry to get money via a FAWRA grant. This grant would be for outreach in our focal area and how to address issues like fire danger, habitat restoration, endangered species etc. This funding would not begin until 2023.

We will get a new cycle of funding from MRGCD and need to write a proposal to Yasmeen for receiving Capital Outlay Funding (\$30,000)

Membership update

Membership: We have 57 members and 12 have renewed this year. 2 renewal notices have been sent out. In the PayPal account we have around \$7,000 which mostly came from the membership fees.

Project Updates:

New Mexico Counties grants

Jerry gave an update. We closed out the previous grant in December and are working on the 2021/2022 grant. This funding will continue work on the Pack et al. property for fuels reduction. Gina, Danielle and Jerry did a site visit and flagged the area to expand the acreage for mastication and hand crew work. This will include spraying as well. The goal is to have mastication done by the end of April and the spraying done by mid-June. There is a new NMC grant available which goes up to \$75,000 (was formerly \$50,000). We need a 10% match and the grant is due at the end of March but must be approved by BLM by March 7.

Sierra SWCD is also applying for a New Mexico Counties grant to re-treat Tiffany Fire mastication areas while we develop a long-term plan for the site.

We brainstormed opportunities to use the NMC grant to do work in northern Socorro County – maybe MRGCD can apply? It is a priority area for us and for Socorro Emergency Management. We can get input from the county fire marshall as well. This work would not begin until 2023.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Barclay - Danielle gave an update. There was another site visit a couple weeks ago with Angel to discuss what Susan Lilly wanted to do for the project. We will mostly focus on doing native plantings but need to get the draft agreement and budget finished in the next few days. We would begin the planting projects this fall. They can apply for another grant down the road to expand the work to include engineered water structures, growing food for cranes, etc.

Sal Gonzales – Matt has been in touch with Sal about his project. We bought grass plugs to plant and those still need to be done even though the project is closed out. Sal needs our help to coordinate a planting day. Santa Ana Nursery recommends fall planting for grasses (September or October).

Hart – We need to know how much money we have left from Barclay to know what we can do on his property. He wants 200 feet of fencing repaired to keep out trespass cattle. USFWS won't spend money on fencing unless there is something to protect so it needs to be part of a larger restoration project. The budget is a maximum of \$25,000 but Hart probably would not need that much funding.

Central Socorro Bosque Severance Project

The southern 2 sections have not been treated at all so the current priority is retreating the northern three sections. The money for this project can go to re-treatments or signage at the parks. We can use the inmate work crew for this work but that may not be more cost effective because we have to provide equipment and gear for the inmates. Work needs to be done before April 15. Do we need to address the stumps left on the site? Is it a safety hazard?

Parks and Trails

Jerry gave an update. On Friday we had a trash pickup with San Antonio schoolchildren, teachers and parents. There will be an article in the paper about it. 60-70 kids helped clean starting at about 10am. They picked up downed limbs, raked leaves and picked up trash for about an hour and a half. The school brought a grill and we provided hot dogs, buns, chips, drinks, plates and etc. Then the kids went on a little hike. MRGCD will pick up the piles of trash.

Gina is working with NPS to get the final products from the trail improvement grant we received a few years ago. They developed some trail map routes and story maps. We want to have a public event at the

plaza in April or May and invite the public to show them the maps and get more input. Gina and Danielle attended the Rio Grande Trail commission meeting and let them know that we needed help bringing in the agencies to talk about management, maintenance and liability. They said they are working on bringing capacity to assist with the legal side of things.

We will work with the City (and their maintenance supervisor Lloyd) to plan a workday to install new tables and grills. We have concrete at Raks ready to pick up and security cameras as well.

We need to schedule an April trash pickup day. The city may not have dumpsters to bring out so coordinate with MRGCD or the county. Yasmeen says the later in April we do the trash pickup the better due to the irrigation season starting.

2022 Lower Rio Grande Summit

We met with the district forester and grants specialist to discuss larger scale multi-agency projects. There was a site visit to Tiffany Fire area and discussed capacity building for the Task Force. What do we need as far as capacity building goes in order to be an effective partner? We are contributing to the Request for Information.

Social Media

Danielle will put photos from the trash pickup day on our social media accounts

Other Business

These are our current working groups – Advocacy, Rio Grande Basin Study, and Parks and Trails. We renamed “Partners for Fish and Wildlife” workgroup to “Habitat Restoration”.

At the March meeting, we will officially define and name the working groups, invite new members and the public, and keep an official list of who is serving on which workgroup.

Rex was handling memberships so we need somebody to take that on until we get a new secretary. Danielle will take it on for this month and come up with a description of tasks and duties that the Secretary is responsible for.

Motion to adjourn – Gina motioned, Matt seconded, passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:13pm.

***** Our next board meeting will be on Tuesday, April 5th at 3:00 pm *****