**­­Save Our Bosque Task Force Board Meeting**

Socorro County Annex Office

198 Neel Ave.

Socorro NM

**Tuesday, June 2nd @ 3:00pm
Meeting Location: Conference call**

**In attendance: Rafael Sierra-Castro, Amy Erickson, Sandra Noll, Sarah Anderson, Nancy Spencer-Morris, Renee Robichaud, Matt Mitchell, Jack Dickey, Jerry Wheeler, Gina Dello Russo, Chad McKenna**

**Meeting began at 3:11**

**1. Approve Agenda –** Sandra motions to approve agenda, Matt seconds, passed.

**2. Approve Minutes from March meeting –** Matt motions to approve as written, Sandra second, passed

**3. Action Items:**

* **Yasmeen will ask about remaining MRGCD funds allocated for Bosque Conservation Day (may be re-allocated for budget shortfalls)**
* **Matt will contact MRGCD to ask about support for the Task Force’s work**
* ***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**

We had a beginning balance of $40,654.28 and an ending balance of $9,936.82. We opened a separate small business account to keep track of the Paycheck Protection Program loan. This account started at $9,520 and now we are down to $ $7,021.06. We may have more than the original 8 weeks to spend the money because of some changes to the regulations. Some of the PPP loan may be used to pay intern housing.

**5. Fundraising update**

Agency support from MRGCD – we have not heard anything yet. We will check on this before the end of their fiscal year at the end of June. P

We will discuss more fundraising opportunities during our board retreat.

City of Socorro – we submitted a budget for $5,000 for improvements to the 5 bosque parks within city limits and the mayor has approved it. We need to spend this money by the end of the fiscal year at the end of June. The city can purchase the items for us and then we won’t have to worry about getting reimbursed.

Current grant applications:
FAWRA grant – Gina, Sarah and Jack presented two proposals to the FAWRA advisory board. The board will score applications later this month and will fund the top projects. If chose, we will get notice to proceed, then State Forestry will work with SOBTF to develop a work plan. Our two proposals were for funding for Phase II of our Conceptual Restoration Plan update, and another one for restoration work on the NMDGF Escondida property.

NMC grant – On May 7, we received a grant approval for Bosquecito fuels reduction phase II in the amount of $48,250. This is a 2021 wildfire risk reduction grant and the project can start in July.

**6. Interns update**

Interns gave an introduction – Phil is a wildlife ecologist from Minnesota. Has experience with seed collection and habitat restoration and is excited to learn southwest plants and learn more about the ecosystem of the Rio Grande. Tyler is working on ecology Master’s at New Mexico State in Las Cruces. He is looking at how humans use the ecosystem for various resources and how that effects ecosystem health.

Sarah has given the interns project tours (ISC sites, Rhodes property, Tiffany Fire, the bosque parks, etc). So far they have been busy mapping pepperweed and whitetop on Rhodes, and taking photopoints and conducting tamarisk density surveys on the Mandeville NMC project. They are learning plant identification and field technique protocols, as well as conducting bird monitoring on the Tiffany Fire project.

**7. Community Outreach**

Some of the board members had a trash pickup and removed quite a bit of trash from most of the bosque parks. Thanks for everyone who participated. The parks have been getting a lot of use lately and that means a lot of trash is being left out there.

Bosque Conservation Day– Matt contacted all of the school principals in Socorro as well as Cottonwood Valley and Magdalena schools. He has not heard back from Midway. They all want to participate as long as school is open by then. Potential dates are ether second or 4th week in October – the second week in October is Fire Prevention Week so could be a good partnership opportunity.

**8. Advocacy**

The board retreat has been scheduled for June 12th and will be held at Sevilleta NWR.

**9. Project Updates**

*Rio Grande Trail / Socorro Valley Trail*

Sarah is still in contact with the the National Park Service intern who is working with us on a GIS project to clean up our alignment and story map. This will help us engage the public virtually.

*BOR Cooperative Agreement*Sediment removal has been completed on Rhodes. Boss Reclamation treated whitetop and pepperweed on the site footprint. The pepperweed and whitetop looks pretty dead. Soon we will look at what kind of tamarisk control is needed this summer.

*Partners for Fish and Wildlife*

Conklin – the project is signed and ready for Gina’s signature. The Hart project is also signed and ready for Gina’s signature. Archaeological surveys were waived on Gonzales but Angel didn’t wave them on Hart so now Angel is arranging for a survey to be completed there. Sal Gonzales has been out treating resprouts. He doesn’t want to hire anyone to get rid of the downed wood because he is going to sell it. We made it clear that we are planting in February so he needs to have the fence in place and have the wood moved by then. We should place an order for plants needed for the projects so we can have them ready in February.

Matt set up a meeting with the Barclay’s on June 24th to talk about a potential Partner’s project.

Bosquecito Preserve is interested in a Partners for Fish and Wildlife project.

Armendaris – we are putting out requests to find a contractor to design a grassland project. Contractors will masticate the site, prep the soil, and plant with soil additives and mycorrhizal fungi. They can also help us develop a seed mix.

*Sevilleta*

The equipment operator position has been advertised and will be open until June 12th. This means they will soon be able to do some of the wetland work in-house. The visitor’s center will remain closed for an undetermined amount of time, but the outdoor areas are open.

*Tiffany Fire*

We have submitted comments for a portion of the planning document that’s coming out this summer. We commented on the existing conditions report and now we are reviewing the measures and alternatives spreadsheets. We will rank proposed projects as a group. Sarah and the interns have been learning to do migratory bird surveys on the project footprint.

*WaterSmart Grant*

There is a new deadline for contractor of July 5th. We are in the review phase and just received the draft state of the river reach report.

*NMC Grant*

The Mandeville project is almost ready to be closed out.

**10. Other**

Sandra has provided some content for our social media. All board members need to write a post about something we’re working on or that we think people would like to hear about so Sarah can put it on our Facebook page.

**11. Adjourn**

Matt moved and Jerry second. Passed. Adjourned at 4:17 pm

Next meeting will be Tuesday, July 7th at 3:00pm.