



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, April 5th @ 3:00pm

Meeting Location: Socorro County Annex

In attendance: Amy Erickson, Danielle Hensley, Jerry Wheeler, Matt Mitchell, Jeff Havlena. On Zoom – Gina Dello Russo, Christine Smith, Ron Thomas,

Board Member Action Items –

- **Jerry** will send out the bylaws to the board members so they can review the duties of the officer positions.
- **Danielle** will send out a copy of the WaterSmart grant application to the board to review.
- **Danielle** will schedule a work day with the city to get the picnic tables and grills installed at the parks
- **Danielle and Matt** will check on the status of our PayPal account to make sure everything is finalized to accept and transfer money
- **All board members** – please submit a photo and short bio to Danielle to put on the website

Meeting began at 3:02 pm. Attendees gave a brief introduction.

Approve agenda and minutes from last month's meeting

Matt motioned to approve agenda, Jeff seconded, passed.

Gina motioned to approve the minutes as written, Matt seconded, approved.

Election of a new board secretary

We had a brief discussion on this matter. We need to look at the bylaws to see which officer positions legally need to be filled. We can table this until next meeting so all board members can review the secretary duties via the by-laws. Matt motioned, Jeff seconded, passed.

Treasurer's Report

Gina gave the treasurer's report. As of last meeting our balance was \$42,166.96. As of this afternoon our balance is \$32,319.53. Money going out included \$3,338 to Philadelphia for board liability insurance. Other deductions are supplies and payroll. Gina will be drawing down from our BOR Cooperative Agreement which will compensate us for some of our expenses. Danielle is sending an invoice to MRGCD for the remainder of this FY's MOA with them.

Matt asked about the PayPal account. Matt and Danielle will work on getting the account finalized.

Program Director's Update

Danielle is working on a number of grant applications and projects. Over the next month we will be finalizing a grant through the state and getting the ACE internship contract set up. Danielle will be engaging with the SOBTF subcommittees more over the next month or so.

Project updates –

WaterSmart Phase 1b grant

The final application was submitted on Thursday. This is the same grant we submitted last year but did not receive. The idea is to reach out to more stakeholders throughout the county and to understand what the most important issues are in our watershed and how to prioritize projects to address these issues. The ultimate goal is to create a 20 year watershed improvement plan with an eye on incorporating climate change and other long-term issues. We want to create resiliency and sustainability in water and wildlife habitat with a broad geographic scope. The grant also includes drone surveys for invasive species including Siberian elm and ravenna grass. Funding would be available September 2022. Most of the money is for the program director, hiring interns, and hiring an editor and GIS specialist for the final plan.

We need an official resolution from the board to apply for this grant. Resolution 2022-001 “Socorro County Rio Grande Floodplain Watershed Improvement Plan” was read by Danielle. Motion to approve this resolution and apply for the grant – Matt motioned, Jeff seconded, passed.

ACE Internship Contract

The final agreement is almost in place. We are paying \$400/week plus housing but we will probably raise the wage due to inflation. We are thinking \$450-\$475 which will keep our total cost for the program below \$20,000 this year. This is for 2 interns for 12 weeks each and they will tentatively be here from May 23-Aug 12.

New Mexico Counties

FY22-FY23 grants – Jerry gave an update. We submitted an application for FY2023 project. We will know by May 1 if we receive this grant for \$75,000. This is primarily to spray areas masticated in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

On the current grant, a scope of work has been prepared and sent to the contractors. We have received 2 bids. We are trying to increase the number of acres masticated but have to get final approval from NMC and BLM. This work must be completed by the end of June. So we are waiting right now to see if we can expand the acreage.

City of Socorro FY23

Danielle submitted our proposal for the city parks and we were approved for another \$5,000. We are continuing to remove or fix broken amenities and control weeds. We are installing standing grills and new metal picnic tables, improving access to the picnic tables, and general maintenance like cleaning the fire pits and grills. We are proposing to buy 7 standing grills, concrete, and 2 picnic tables. We need to decide which parks we want to prioritize. Matt still has 6 trail cams and locks to install.

MRGCD / Capital Outlay

Yasmeen and other MRGCD staff met with Danielle and Gina. We are working on liability issues with the county parks. The Severence project is still in progress and the formerly treated areas will be re-treated. The southern 2 sections we will not worry about this year since they have not even had the initial treatment done. We are researching costs for the inmate work crews to do the work.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife

FY18 project status updates – Barclay agreement is almost finished and Danielle and Angel will finalize the budget tomorrow.

Matt gave an update on Hart – Matt went out to the site last week. Ken Hart has already done quite a bit of work down out there via a grant from Socorro SWCD. The saltcedar was removed and piled but the piles didn't burn because they were muddy and the landowner was unsatisfied but the landowner is making progress with the piles. Ken wants to do tree and shrub plantings and repair some fencing to address trespass cattle. The water table is only about 4 feet down so pole plantings should do well. He also wants to enlarge a small pond and install a liner – the pond is good for wildlife and he fills it with his own water.

Matt wants to proceed with the project and says \$5,000 is a good budget for this. Everyone agreed this would be a good project and Matt will start writing up the budget.

The owner of Yo Mama's is purchasing land south of Pueblitos road and she is wanting to do some habitat improvements so this is another potential project. Wohlenbergs are interested in work on their property which is in that same area. Nolina Bryant (north of Ron) is also interested in a project.

Gina mentioned a possible Phase 3 project on the Armendaris Ranch property.

Angel is open to giving us another round of funding for PFW but this conversation is just getting started.

Parks and Trails

Licensing of county riverine parks - we are trying to get the county to accept the licensing of the parks that are not within city limits. The county does not have a crew to take care of the parks and we need to better understand what it means to have the parks licensed by the county. It takes liability off of MRGCD and will put it onto the county. Maintenance and management would go to the county and no longer dealt with by MRGCD. Possibly we will do some public outreach to see which parks are the most used and maybe we remove a couple of the less-used parks. Money from Pattern/SunZia could go to park maintenance. MRGCD could also contribute some staff time and funding so all of the work would not be on the county.

We had a discussion about the security cameras at the parks and who will be in charge of maintaining and reviewing the footage.

Rio Grande Trail

We will have a public event in June, possibly at the Farm market, to talk about the parks and the Rio Grande Trail alignment.

April trash pickup day

Usually we have a big trash pickup in April and this can be planned to coincide with Earth Day and the theme "Invest in our Planet". We can invite San Antonio schools, other schools, the general public, clubs at NM Tech, etc. Danielle or Jerry will coordinate with MRGCD about heavy equipment and dumpsters. The City or County could also help us with equipment. We need to scout out which parks need the most attention. Jeff said he would help with this.

City of Socorro FY22

We need to schedule a work day with the city to get the tables and grills installed and also put up the cameras. We have around \$480 left to spend by the end of June

Social Media

Not much activity – Danielle is updating the website as she has time. New board members need to submit a paragraph and photo for the website.

Working group Updates

Nothing that was not already addressed under projects.

Project tours with board members

We discussed taking board members out in the field to look at projects on the ground – maybe one trip quarterly or twice a year. This will engage board members with our various habitat projects. We will tentatively plan on the June meeting being a project meeting or having a separate field trip in June.

Other Business

Christine asked about signs. A lot is dependant on MRGCD needs and wants.

Jerry motioned to adjourned, Matt seconded, passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:21.

***** Our next board meeting will be on Tuesday, May 3rd at 3:00 pm *****