**Save Our Bosque Task Force Board Meeting**

Socorro County Annex Office

198 Neel Ave.

Socorro NM

**Tuesday April 7th @ 3:00pm
Meeting Location: Conference call**

**In attendance: Gina Dello Russo, Matt Mitchell, Kyle Trujillo, Amy Erickson, Sarah Anderson, Yasmeen Najmi, Sandra Noll, Chad McKenna, Kathy Granillo,
Renee Robichaud, Chas Robles, Jerry Wheeler (all via phone)**

**Meeting began at 3:05 pm.**

**1. Approve Agenda –** Matt motion to change agenda order to accommodate everyone’s schedules – Sandra second, passed.

**2. Approve Minutes from February meeting –** Matt motion, Gina second, passed

**3. Action Items:**

* **Sarah will schedule a meeting for the Parks Committee to discuss projects for the $5,000**
* **Sarah will schedule a board retreat to discuss advocacy issues and other matters**
* **Sarah will contact Socorro Consolidated Schools to set up a day in October to have Bosque Conservation Day**
* **Sarah will set up a meeting with Chad to discuss ravennagrass control**
* **Sarah or Jerry will follow-up with Mr. Mandeville or the contractors to locate the wells on his property**
* **Sarah or Gina will look into a pre-employment COVID test for interns (if available)**
* **Yasmeen will ask about remaining MRGCD funds allocated for Bosque Conservation Day**
* **All – Please provide comments on the intern interview questions to Sarah**
* **All – Send Amy or Sarah calendar items to put on our website calendar. Send Amy or Sarah updates, stories, pictures, etc to put on the Facebook or Instagram page.**

**4. Treasurer’s Report**

We had a beginning balance of $49,788.48 and an ending balance of $ 47,834.48. Payroll checks went out as well as a couple payments to Tetra Tech for $18,451 and $1049.

**5. Fundraising update**

Regarding the $5,000 for the bosque parks - Sarah is meeting with a contractor to look at the parks tomorrow to see what needs repaired. He will provide guidance and give a quote. We need to plan what materials to buy this year. Yasmeen volunteered to be on the parks committee. Matt suggested we follow up with David Monette on this, due to the funding changes caused by COVID-19.

Matt and Gina will have a conference call with Mike Hammond to follow up on a potential MOU with MRGCD. Yasmeen spoke with their financial department to discuss how/if we can use the remaining MRGCD funds for Bosque Conservation Day. She has not heard back yet.

Gina met with the NM Tech foundation to ask about receiving support from them to plan and implement projects on the Hilton Ranch (NM Tech-owned land east of the river near Escondida). Gina has not heard back yet. She also met with with Nelia Dunbar (Bureau of Geology) to discuss a potential partnership between them and the Task Force.

Current grant applications – two separate proposals have been submitted for FAWRA. One is for the restoration of land owned by NMDGF on east side of the river. The other proposal is a request for funding for phase II of our Conceptual Restoration Plan update. Sarah wrote a grant for the county wildfire risk reduction program – a draft is currently being reviewed by BLM and by Jerry.

Other potential grant opportunities include a Clif Bar grant. Sarah is working on an application that outlines the value of our projects in Socorro County and the broad impact of our work. This is a small grant of ~$4,000 and would be for capacity building (not tied to a specific project).

Yasmeen gave an update on capital outlay funding - due to projected state budget shortfalls, the MRGCD anticipates that they will not receive funding for their capital outlay requests, including $30,000 funding for the Socorro bosque and riverine parks.

Sandra asked if we approached Ted Turner for funding. Gina forwarded our project summary to the Turner Foundation, along with an ask for funding to help us with capacity building.

**6. Interns update**

This agenda item was moved up to accommodate people’s schedules. We are working with Ancestral Lands to find local interns for the upcoming field season. We are ready to post the job and start doing interviews and hope to have the interns committed by the end of the month. The Sevilleta housing is communal living space so we decided to find alternate housing through Matt Mitchell’s AirBnB due to COVID-19 restrictions. Interns will be working independently or with just Sarah and will have their own truck. General protocol for Conservation Legacy – they are continuing to operate individual placement as long as they are able to work remotely. They have continued to fill field-based internships as long as mitigating efforts are in place ie) no working with the public or engaging with a lot of other people. Sarah and Matt will work on a contract for his AirBnB. Matt stated there will not be guests there for ~10 days before the interns come in and he will clean the unit before they arrive.

Sandra – if the state testing is available, it might be good for them to get a pre-employment test (if available).

Kathy and Amy had questions about funding for intern housing – Sevilleta will fund the housing for the interns, even though they will not be housed at Sevilleta.

We discussed interview questions – Board members, please provide any comments for the second round interview (the one done thru the Task Force) to Sarah.

**7. Community Outreach**

We discussed having a trash pickup on Saturday, April 25th – Sandra proposed we go ahead with this and Matt second, passed. Upon further discussion we decided that it would be better to wait until gatherings are no longer restricted. We discussed doing a board-only trash pickup which is not announced to the general public. That way the bosque can still get cleaned up.

We can do another trash day in August or September and will try to have some information to present on the Socorro Valley Trail ready by then.

Bosque Conservation Day – It is usually in October which is a ways away but we should get a date on the calendar for Socorro Consolidated Schools. This way there won’t be potential conflicts like there has been in the past.

**8. Advocacy**

TBD about the board retreat – possibly in May. All requests for advocacy issues are tabled until after the retreat.

Matt wants to have something like a board retreat every now and then because board meetings (public meetings) sometimes don’t allow everyone to speak their minds so it is an opportunity for people to speak more openly. New board member Sandra said that would be extremely helpful for her and others agreed.

**9. Project Updates**

**Rio Grande Trail / Socorro Valley Trail**

Atilla has an intern taking an advanced GIS class so he recruited her to help us with some GIS work regarding the trail. Sarah sent the intern our data and she will work on it over the next couple weeks. She will help create a story map and will do a canopy analysis to find parts of the trail that are shady during the hottest part of the day to inform people on their hikes.

Sandra asked about the meeting in March – did any of the other landowners get in on the meeting ie) local people in San Acacia? Gina noted that we have not done outreach to landowners but it will happen. We will get input from them soon so they can be involved from the beginning.

**BOR Cooperative Agreement**

Sarah – contractors will be done with the sediment removal on Rhodes tomorrow. Contractors will regrade the site and remove sediment from the embayments. We are going to look into doing a pepperweed treatment, either chemical or hand pulling. Chad is working with GSA on the ISC sites on the west side of the river. Chad said deposition was lower on the west side sites than on Rhodes, and they didn’t have to haul any sediment to spoil areas and were able to spread it on site.

Ravenna grass – Gina and Sarah did some hand pulling at site 99.5. The interns will pull more this summer if need be. Chad said some mapped populations were missed and need to be pulled out. Sarah will set up a meeting with Chad to discuss this.

**Partners for Fish and Wildlife**

Matt gave an update –

Gonzales contractors from Socorro SWCD are finished out there, Matt sent around pictures and it looks very good. Next step is to get the fence up, get the large firewood off of the property, and put in the well and solar pump. A potential issue could be flooding in May and flooding from monsoon rains.

Conklin – we sent the first draft to Angel and he wanted more acreage so we are going to spread native grass seed and pollinator seed during the monsoon season to add another 3 or 4 acres to the project. The Conklins are good with this as long as they don’t have to water more.

Hart – the contractor is done out there. Matt talked to Ken and Ken is very excited about the project and Matt noted there is already deer etc coming to the cleared area. Ken is going to put the water line in with his own funds so we can adjust the budget for that.

Barclay project – this is the former farm in Polvadera area. Matt suggests we do Phase 1 and Phase 2. Phase 1 can be for dryland planting (since we don’t know about the status of the water rights). If they get the water rights in order or figure out water delivery, then we can do a phase II with more water involved. The landowners are motivated to do this project. Gina request that Matt send an updated cost list for all the FY18 projects.

If there’s money left after these projects we can use it on Johnny Pack (area cleared using NMC grant money). We would do mostly saltgrass plugs and pole planting along an old water feature.

**Sevilleta**

Kathy – not much going on with the shutdown because they are all teleworking. She looked at the wetland units on Sunday and the 3,000 trees planted in Feb are looking good and there is good survival.

Interns this summer could help Sevilleta monitor beetles or monitor for Pecos Sunflower. They could also help with monitoring hydrology at A-prime for minnow habitat.

**Tiffany Fire**

Sarah and Gina worked on proposals to establish fire breaks in the Tiffany Fire area with State Forestry funding. This work would happen on private land owned by the Engalls Family and Armendaris Ranch. The proposals have been submitted.

The Tiffany Fire team will be meeting on April 15th to start looking at projects that Tetra Tech has come up with.

BOR monitoring – Sarah and State Forestry mapped one of the mastication units. Sarah established photopoints that the interns can monitor throughout the summer.

**WaterSmart Grant**

We received a copy of the draft geodatabase today and will review over the next few weeks. This project will be done later this summer. We have also received rough drafts of deliverables.

**NMC Grant**

Jerry got the signature from Charles Mandeville. Charles mentioned there were three locations where he had some sand point wells in the area and wants to keep those safe, but doesn’t know the exact location. This project has to be done by June 30. Sarah and Jerry are working with the contractor – purchase order is in place.

**Other**

We need updates to the Facebook page so if anyone has ideas or has pictures to send in, we will put them on the website. Matt suggested making a post about the Gonzales project with photos.

**10. Adjourn**

Sandra moved and Yasmeen second. Passed. Adjourned at 4:27 pm

Next meeting will be Tuesday, May 5th at 3:00pm.