

Confluence Park Improvement Plan



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Background

In both urban and rural areas, perceived general health has a positive relationship with percentage of greenspace available (Maas J, et al., 2006)

To increase park use in rural communities studies show availability of parks is not the only contributing factor (National Recreation and Park Association, 2011):

- Conditions
- Access
- Facilities
- Distribution

Background

As it stands, Confluence Park has many appealing aspects. They are as followed:

- Native tree species like the cottonwoods outnumber invasives (like the tamarisk)
- Recreational opportunities available from camping, picnicking, and hiking the trail
- Access to water recreational activities due to great river access.
- Car accessible from the North Diversion/Flood Control, resulting in higher people traffic

Background

However, historically the park has suffered from a few reoccurring issues:

- Lack of visibility due to loss of signs
- Illegal dumping of garbage
- ATVs creating unauthorized roads
- Minimal landscape management

In order to improve the environment of the park, increase community involvement, and access, we are proposing the following improvements

Proposed Improvements

- Install new posts and wire for the fence
- Install ramps to the picnic tables
- Create pathways to picnic tables
- Replace and create new signs



Proposed Improvements

- Gardening projects to reclaim areas i.e picnic areas and ATV roads
- Clearing brush along the fire pit & picnic areas
- Trim off infected limbs on cottonwoods to improve safety
- Pollinator certification



Habitat Restoration

Proper habitats should include food, water, and shelter.

- Rock beds or piles of dead sticks for lizard and bee habitat
- Hanging bird baths in the cottonwoods would add protection for vulnerable animals drinking from the river.
- Planting a variety of natives that will be available throughout early spring to late fall.



Xeriscaping

- Minimal maintenance necessary.
- Saves water, pollution free, doesn't require fertilizer.
- Will include drought-resistant plants such as cacti, succulents, desert shrubs and flowers.
- Plants to consider: Wolfberry, cholla, desert marigold, buffalo grass



Littering and Vandalism

Underlying factors that cause littering

- Public sentiment on waste disposal
- Presence of existing litter
- Unavailable receptacles trash disposal



How to Prevent Vandalism and Littering

- Enforce penalties for littering and vandalism
- Inform the public about recreational aspects of the parks
- Keeping the parks well-maintained
- Information about proper trash disposal made easily available



Ideas for Preventing Vandalism & Littering

- Fines can be issued to anyone who is caught littering or vandalizing the parks. (NM fine up to \$500, with community service litter cleanup involved)
- Adding an American flag sticker on the back of signs.
- Propose free trash days to include people not within Socorro county.



Ideas for Beyond Restoration

- Trash pick-up days
- Long-term volunteer network (year round)/ Gardening projects in the ATV road and picnic table areas.
- Health initiatives with the City of Socorro
- Environmental Interpretation events



Photo courtesy of the [Save Our Bosque Task Force](#)

Questions/Suggestions?

Confluence Park



Sources

Maas, J., Verheij, R. A., Groenewegen, P. P., de Vries, S., & Spreeuwenberg, P. (2006). Green space, urbanity, and health: how strong is the relation? *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 60(7), 587–592. <http://doi.org/10.1136/jech.2005.043125>

N. (Ed.). (2011). Disparities in Distribution and Access to Public Recreational Activities . *Parks & Recreation in Underserved Areas: A Public Health Perspective*. Retrieved August 9, 2017, from http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/Papers/Parks-Rec-Underserved-Areas.pdf

List of native plants that will attract pollinators:

<http://aces.nmsu.edu/ipm/documents/new-mexico-pollinator-plant-recommendations-revised-2013.pdf>

List of all native plants in NM: <https://www.wildflower.org/collections/collection.php?start=10&collection=NM&pagecount=10>

About littering & littering prevention: <http://litterology.com.au/resources/why-do-people-litter>

Gardening to restore habitat: <http://www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/Certify.aspx>

Xeriscaping: http://eartheasy.com/grow_xeriscape.htm