

RIO BOSQUE NEWS

A newsletter reporting on events at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Center for Environmental Resource Management
University of Texas at El Paso



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RIO BOSQUE BENEFITS FROM TxDOT SUPPORT OF RIVERPARK

On January 13, the Texas Department of Transportation approved providing \$3.13 million in Statewide Transportation Enhancement Funds to the City of El Paso for the Rio Grande Riverpark Trail. Ultimately, this proposed trail will extend along the Rio Grande through El Paso County, with access at multiple sites along its length. Rio Bosque Wetlands Park will be one of those access points.

The announcement of the funding was great news for the City and for Rio Bosque. The funds are to be used for the trail segment between Ascarate Park and Rio Bosque, including a trailhead at Rio Bosque. A key feature of this trailhead: a new bridge across the Riverside Canal that will provide direct, convenient access to Rio Bosque from Socorro Road. Thank you, TxDOT; and thank you, City of El Paso for including Rio Bosque in the Riverpark proposal!



(L) Rio Bosque's wintering Bald Eagle, (R) El Paso Electric personnel install perch on pole near Park.

WILDLIFE NOTES

The **Bald Eagle** that overwintered at Rio Bosque for a second straight year was last seen February 23. During its stay, it often perched on powerline poles near the Park. After learning of our distinguished

visitor, El Paso Electric Company installed raptor-safe perches on many of the poles in the area to reduce the potential for inadvertent electrocution. The eagle and all the many raptors found at Rio Bosque will benefit. Thanks, El Paso Electric!

Want a copy of the current **bird checklist** for Rio Bosque? You can download one in MS Word format through our website (see back).

RESTORATION REPORT

Last year, with water available throughout spring and summer, we made great strides establishing native wetland and riparian vegetation at the Park. This year will be different. On February 19, the Park's water supply was cut off for the irrigation season. Rio Bosque is now completely dry and may stay dry until fall.

The lack of water doesn't mean our restoration efforts will stop. Work to remove the exotic tree

TOURS

Twice each month, UTEP offers free walking tours at the Park. On **April 27**, there will also be 3 special tours as part of the **El Paso Heritage Week Festival**:

4-6 p.m.	Sun., April 7	Introductory Tour
9 am-noon	Sat., April 13	Birds
10 am-noon	Sat., April 27	Introductory
1-3 p.m.	Sat., April 27	Introductory
3:30-5:30pm	Sat., April 27	Introductory
9-11 a.m.	Sat., May 11	Introductory
8-11 a.m.	Sun., May 19	Birds
9-11 a.m.	Sun., June 2	Introductory
8-11 a.m.	Sat., June 8	Birds

The meeting place is a bridge crossing Riverside Canal. To get there from I-10, take Americas Ave. (Loop 375) to Pan American Dr., turn left onto Pan American and travel 1.5 miles to the bridge. Please be prompt.

saltcedar continues unabated. Also, along our main water channel we have some recent cottonwood plantings we'll try to nurture through the spring and summer. Thanks go to the Southwest Environmental Center, based in Las Cruces, for providing 10 cottonwood poles for these plantings.

TRAIL TALK



In addition to the fully accessible trail now under construction, we have two other loop trails in place at Rio Bosque. All three are marked with distinctive logos: a frog for the 0.6-mile Bosque Trail (the fully accessible trail), a duck for the 1.5-mile Wetland Trail and a dragonfly for the 2.4-mile Rio Trail. Check them out on your next visit.



Thanks to the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) and

GET INVOLVED!

Each month, we have a community workday at the Park. It's your chance to get directly involved in shaping the future of Rio Bosque. Upcoming workdays:

- 9 a.m.-noon, Sat., April 20
- 9 a.m.-noon, Sat., May 18
- 8 a.m.-11 a.m., Sat., June 15

The meeting location is the same as for the tours: the bridge crossing Riverside Canal.

International Migratory Bird Day
International Plant Conservation Day
Saturday, April 20, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
at the El Paso Zoo

A full day of activities and events focused on plants, habitats and birds.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), several badly eroded road segments in the Park are now in much better shape. IBWC personnel recently repaired these areas, using base course purchased with USBR funding. These agencies continue to be among the Park's most dedicated and valued partners. ¡Gracias!

DAY AT THE PARK 2002

Thank you, everyone who attended our Day at the Park on Saturday, January 26! The feedback we got on the draft **long-range development plan** for Rio Bosque was excellent. We are using your ideas to refine the plan before presenting it to the City of El Paso for adoption. Of course, the plan will never be truly final. Rio Bosque is an evolving, changing environment. The plan will also evolve, and, as it does, we'll continue to seek your input.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit us on the Web at:

<http://www.cerm.utep.edu/riobosque>

Want to be added to the mailing list for this newsletter or ask a question about Rio Bosque? Contact:

John Sproul
915-747-8663
jsproul@utep.edu