

RIO BOSQUE NEWS

A newsletter reporting on events at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Center for Environmental Resource Management
University of Texas at El Paso



No. 5

October 2002

CELEBRATE DÍA DEL RÍO AT RIO BOSQUE

The 8th annual Día del Río takes place **Saturday, October 19**. Join us at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park to celebrate. Día del Río is a citizen-led event organized by the Rio Grande/Río Bravo Basin Coalition. On this special day, communities throughout the basin hold activities to celebrate the rich diversity of the basin and draw public attention to its rivers, groundwater and wildlife.

At Rio Bosque, our celebration also happens to be our next workday. We'll meet at 9 a.m. at the bridge crossing Riverside Canal (see box below). A variety of Park-improvement activities – trail layout, salt-cedar removal, trash clean-up, mulch spreading – await you. On Día del Río, enjoy Rio Bosque and help care for it at the same time. See you there!



Rio Bosque restoration team in action; August 17, 2002

RESTORATION REPORT

Thanks to El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1 and El Paso Water Utilities, we enjoyed a 2nd consecutive year with water at the Park during spring and summer. Our cottonwoods and willows are a lot taller now, and the vegetation bordering the water channels and wetland cells is a

lot lusher. The water also allowed us to irrigate a native grass plot consistently through the summer. With jackrabbits fenced out of this area, the grasses really took off.

Volunteers continue to play a big role in our restoration activities. On August 17, Cub Scouts from Pack 209 and Jr. Girl Scouts from Troop 424 planted honey mesquites along the main Park trail (see photo). And on September 7, Girl Scouts from Troop 27 spread wood chips on several soft and dusty road segments. Thanks go to these valuable members of our restoration team for work well done.

New to the Park vertebrate list this summer: the hispid cotton rat and Texas spiny softshell. Both were expected, since they are known from the vicinity.

FACILITIES UPDATE

The vegetation isn't all that's changing at Rio Bosque. With support from the Paso del Norte Health Foundation, we've continued work on the main Park trail. And with support from the Meadows Foundation, we've installed 2 trailhead

TOURS

Twice each month, UTEP offers free walking tours at the Park. Coming up:

8-11 a.m.	Sun., Oct. 6	Birds
9-11 a.m.	Sat., Oct. 26	Introductory Tour
9 a.m.-noon	Sat., Nov. 9	Birds
3-5 p.m.	Sun., Nov. 24	Introductory
9 a.m.-noon	Sat., Dec. 7	Birds
3-5 p.m.	Sun., Dec. 15	Introductory

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.

kiosks and repaired the fence along the Park's south boundary. The next big change: construction of the initial visitor center. The Planning and Construction Section of UTEP's Facilities Services Department is now putting the finishing touches on the project design. It features a 1,000-square-foot ramada and display area, with attached restrooms and storage space.

GRACIAS

One of the projects for which we are now raising funds is a small permanent pond to be built along the main water channel through the Park. Recently, the **Hoblitzelle Foundation** of Dallas, Texas, gave an important boost to this project through a \$10,000 grant. We greatly appreciate the Hoblitzelle Foundation's help in moving this project closer to fruition.

El Paso Electric Co. and **Epson El Paso** are also valued supporters of Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. In recent months, El Paso Electric has provided fence

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., Oct. 19 (Día del Río)
- 9 a.m.-noon, Sat., Nov. 16
- No workday in December

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

posts, mulch and other materials for use at the Park. Epson El Paso has provided office equipment and also printed this newsletter. Thanks to both of these great partners for their enthusiasm for Rio Bosque!

FRIENDS OF THE RIO BOSQUE

The Friends of the Rio Bosque are gathering steam. During the summer, this new support group for the Park held a training session for prospective tours leaders, helped lead tours, patrolled the Park, assisted with workdays, prepared a Rio Bosque display, began developing a tour-leaders' handbook, and more.



The group meets the 4th Thursday of every month from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Room 411,

Burges Hall, on the UTEP campus. By fiat, no meeting lasts longer than 1 hour. Join us for the next meeting on **October 24**. The group will be electing officers and starting to create its committee structure. To learn more: Mike Gaglio (490-8601) or John Sproul (747-8663).

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