

RIO BOSQUE NEWS

A newsletter reporting on events at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Center for Environmental Resource Management
The University of Texas at El Paso



No. 45

April 2013

PSB OK's PIPELINE TO PARK

Last November, both the El Paso City Council and the City's Public Service Board (PSB) unanimously approved a joint resolution transferring management and control of Rio Bosque from the City to the PSB.

On March 13, the PSB took its first formal action under this new administrative arrangement. It approved a resolution asking El Paso Water Utilities President and CEO John Balliew to concurrently:

- pursue design and construction of a pipeline, with necessary Texas Commission on Environmental Quality permits, for conveying either treated effluent or reclaimed water from the Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant to Rio Bosque; and, at the same time,
- return with a resolution for a possible contractual solution for future uses of treated effluent from all EPWU wastewater-treatment plants.

The pipeline will provide an alternate way to deliver Bustamante Plant water to Rio Bosque, especially at times when the Riverside Drain is not available. It will make possible delivery of some water from the Plant to the park year-round. With this action, the PSB has shown a clear commitment to meeting park water needs and realizing Rio Bosque's full environmental, educational, recreational, scientific and economic potential. Thanks, PSB! ✂



Friends of the Rio Bosque build a footbridge over the water-delivery channel from the planned turnout on the Riverside Canal, March 18, 2013.

WORK CONTINUES ON TURNOUT

Work on the planned turnout connecting the Riverside Canal with Rio Bosque Wetlands Park continues. In December, the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission completed the channel that will carry water from the turnout to the park's main water channel. Next, in March, the Friends of the Rio Bosque built a footbridge across the new channel at the point where it bisects the



Friends of the Rio Bosque Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

- Bosque Buddy (12 and under) \$6
- Student or ___ Senior (62+).....\$10
- Individual.....\$15
- Family\$20
- Bosque Booster\$50
- Cottonwood Commando \$75-\$249
- Restoration Patron \$250-\$499
- Wetlands Society \$500-\$999
- Life Member \$1,000

Please make checks payable to *Friends of the Rio Bosque* and mail to: Friends of the Rio Bosque, CERM-UTEP, 500 W. University Ave., El Paso, TX 79968-0684.

Next Meetings

Thurs., May 16

Thurs., Jun 27

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

209-A Burges Hall
UTEP

Info: 915-747-8663

park's popular Tornillo Trail. The final stage of the project will be installation of the turnout itself by El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1. ✂

WINDMILLS ON THE HORIZON

Thanks to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) and Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue (CDWR), Rio Bosque should soon have two windmills in place to provide water at two key sites. One will deliver water to a stand of Goodding willows now badly stressed by drought. The other will help maintain a pocket of wetland habitat near an overlook popular with park visitors. The USBR is providing the windmills; CDWR is funding installation of the wells. Sincere thanks go to both for their dedicated support of the park! ✂

DROUGHT CONTINUES

As this newsletter reports, recent months have seen many positive developments for Rio Bosque. For the most part, though, the effects will be felt in the future, not immediately. Our region continues in severe drought. In 2013, we expect Rio Bosque will once again be largely dry during the irrigation season. Once again, to offset limited availability of surface water from the Rio Grande, there will be extensive groundwater pumping in the region. And, once again, we expect big declines in the water table at the park, with attendant severe stress on riparian vegetation. In some parts of the park, groundwater levels in mid-March were the lowest we've ever recorded for this time of year. 2013 is going to be another challenging year at Rio Bosque. ✂



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Return Service Requested

RIO BOSQUE CALENDAR

Join us at Rio Bosque for a free walking tour or to help with habitat management, park maintenance or faunal monitoring. Coming up:

| APRIL | | | MAY | | | JUNE | | |
|-----------|-------------------|--------|-----------|-------------------|--------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|
| 20 (Sat.) | Workday | 8 a.m. | 11 (Sat.) | Bird Tour | 7 a.m. | 2 (Sun.) | Introductory Tour | 8 a.m. |
| 21 (Sun.) | Bird Tour | 8 a.m. | 18 (Sat.) | Workday | 8 a.m. | 8 (Sat.) | Bird Tour | 6:30 a.m. |
| 27 (Sat.) | Faunal Monitoring | 8 a.m. | 19 (Sun.) | Introductory Tour | 8 a.m. | 15 (Sat.) | Workday | 8 a.m. |
| 27 (Sat.) | Introductory Tour | 4 p.m. | 25 (Sat.) | Faunal Monitoring | 7 a.m. | 22 (Sat.) | Faunal Monitoring | 7 a.m. |

Meeting place for all activities is a bridge crossing the Riverside Canal. 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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.riobosque.org

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