

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. 55

October 2015

AN EXCEPTIONAL SUMMER

For 5 months, from May through September, Rio Bosque Wetlands Park consistently received water delivered through El Paso Water Utilities' new pipeline to the park from the Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant. The changes at the park – in terms of wetland and riparian plant growth and wildlife use – have been dramatic.

The deliveries ended Oct 1. The water is now going instead to downstream irrigators. The dry spell should be brief, though. El Paso County Water Improvement District #1 plans extensive work in its canals and drains this fall and winter, including concrete-lining a portion of the Riverside Canal. It plans to stop deliveries to irrigators Oct 16, after which we hope operation of the pipeline can resume.

Last year, pipeline construction limited the period when water could be delivered to the park's wetland cells, and duck use was minimal. This year, we look forward to fully flooding the cells and putting out the welcome mat for wintering waterfowl! Surveys by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service this spring led to a North American breeding population estimate for the 10 most common duck species of 49.5 million birds in the traditional survey area, up 1% from last year and the highest estimate since surveys began in 1955. ✈



Wetland Cell 1 at Rio Bosque hosted a diverse mix of water birds throughout the spring and summer.
Photo: Sept. 25, 2015.

KUDOS

Congratulations to Richard Teschner, president of the Friends of the Rio Bosque. On Sep 15, he received the City of El Paso's Star on the Mountain Award in recognition of his sustained advocacy for the planned new headquarters and visitor center for Franklin Mountains State Park.

And thank you, Nicolas Talavera and fellow Boy Scouts from Troop 86. On Sep 19, they made a big contribution



Friends of the Rio Bosque Membership Application

Name:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Bosque Buddy (12 and under) \$6
Address:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student or <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (62+).....\$10
E-mail:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual.....\$15
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Family\$20
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Bosque Booster\$50
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cottonwood Commando \$75-\$249
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Restoration Patron \$250-\$499
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands Society \$500-\$999
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> 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., Oct 22
Thurs., Dec 3
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
206 Kelly Hall
UTEP

Info: 915-747-8663

to tumbleweed removal along the old river channel at the park as part of Nicolas's Eagle project. ✎

GOING TO THE WELL(S)

The new pipeline has not been the only source of water for Rio Bosque this year. We've also made regular use of our two electric-powered wells, as we did in 2014. The water from the wells allows us to flood a larger area than we can with the pipeline water alone. But there is a cost. Operating the wells is by far our largest operating expense, and their steady use in 2014 and 2015 has severely reduced the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park Gift Fund, the park's main operating fund. We're now limiting operation of the wells to avoid exhausting the Gift Fund.

Sincere thanks go to the El Paso Zoological Society, the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society and several individual donors whose recent generous contributions to the Gift Fund have improved our prospects for the year ahead. As things stand, though, we'll still need to cut back significantly on use of the wells in 2016.

If you want to help ensure operation of the wells when they are most needed, consider a tax-deductible contribution to the Gift Fund. Checks, payable to UTEP, can be sent to: Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, CERM – UTEP, 500 W. University Ave., El Paso, TX 79968-0684. Please note on the check that your donation is for the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park Gift Fund. Many thanks for any support you can provide. ✎



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500 West University Ave.
El Paso, TX 79968-0684

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:

OCTOBER			NOVEMBER			DECEMBER		
3 (Sat.)	Bird Tour	8 a.m.	14 (Sat.)	Introductory Tour	9 a.m.	6 (Sun.)	Bird Tour	3 p.m.
17 (Sat.)	Workday	9 a.m.	21 (Sat.)	Workday	9 a.m.	12 (Sat.)	Introductory Tour	9 a.m.
18 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour	4 p.m.	22 (Sun.)	Bird Tour	3 p.m.			
24 (Sat.)	Faunal Monitoring	8 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

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

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