

# 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. 77

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## STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

This year and next, students from two El Paso-area high schools are carrying out ecological restoration projects at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park as part of two programs initiated by [Insights El Paso Science Center](#). Both programs aim to inspire a commitment to environmental stewardship in young community members and give them a foundation to become future environmental leaders.

One program, the *Student-led Environmental Stewardship Initiative (SESI)*, is funded through an environmental-education grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The other, *Young Stewards Promoting Border Resiliency*, is funded through the [Planet Stewards program](#) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

As part of the SESI program, students from Del Valle High School will be working at a site just downstream from the park's visitor center, along the former bend of the Rio Grande that winds through the park. They will be planting Rio Grande cottonwoods, Goodding's willows and other native vegetation; removing saltcedars; and creating several open-water areas in what is now a dense stand of cattails.

As part of the Young Stewards program, students from Mission Early College High School are working



Students from Mission Early College High School conduct vegetation transects at the site of their restoration project. (Photo: Sept. 25, 2021)

at a site along the water-delivery channel to Wetland Cell 2. They will be planting Goodding's willows, coyote willows and other native vegetation; and removing tumbleweeds, Johnsongrass and other exotic species in a location that has not seen previous restoration attention.

As they take part in these programs, the students will be learning about our river-valley environment, gaining hands-on experience in environmental restoration, and making an important contribution to the ongoing transformation of the Rio Bosque landscape. We appreciate their good work! 🦋

### Friends of the Rio Bosque Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Wed., Oct 27  
Wed., Dec 1  
6:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
206 Kelly Hall  
UTEP  
Info: 915-747-8663

## PROJECT UPDATE: U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Last November, the Albuquerque District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) released the [Draft Detailed Project Report with Integrated Environmental Assessment](#) (DPR/EA) for its proposed aquatic-ecosystem restoration project at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. After a public comment period, the District began finalizing the DPR/EA for approval by the USACE's South Pacific Division. Approval would complete the Feasibility Phase of the project and clear the way to start the Design and Implementation Phase.

Work on finalizing the DPR/EA has taken longer than expected. A major feature of the proposed restoration project – and the feature with the largest price tag – is

deepening large portions of Rio Bosque's two existing wetland cells. Before a project budget could be finalized, a disposal site had to be identified for the excavated material. That matter was resolved only recently. Work to finalize and certify the budget is now underway, with the goal of transmitting the DPR/EA to the South Pacific Division by the end of the year. ✂

## WILD THINGS

In June, we used irrigation water to provide 2 weeks of high flows in the old river channel. The result? As summer progressed, willow seedlings began appearing all along the channel. Our resident beaver, now present almost 3 years, has taken notice... For the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row, Yellow-billed Cuckoos summered at Rio Bosque, with birds detected on 18 dates between June 16 and August 1. ✂



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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 or park maintenance. Coming up:

OCTOBER			NOVEMBER			DECEMBER		
16 (Sat.)	Workday	9 a.m.	13 (Sat.)	Introductory Tour	3:30 p.m.	5 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour	3 p.m.
17 (Sun.)	Birding Tour	4 p.m.	20 (Sat.)	Workday	9 a.m.	11 (Sat.)	Birding Tour	8 a.m.
30 (Sat.)	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.	21 (Sun.)	Birding Tour	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](http://www.riobosque.org)

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