

# 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. 81

April 2023

## WATER WAYS

February-April is typically a water-short period at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, when we rely on our wells to keep water in the 2-mile-long former bend of the Rio Grande that winds through the park. Once again this year, the period has been especially dry. When water deliveries from the Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant ended February 12, we turned immediately to our two electric-powered wells for help.

Only one of them worked. Just days before, the engineering firm Hydro Resources, working for El Paso Water, had finished cleaning out and rehabilitating Well RB-12B, near the park's visitor center. This well performed flawlessly. Well RB-13, though, at the park's inlet, kept shorting out after pumping for less than a minute. Hydro Resources is now evaluating this well, and we hope to have it back in action soon. Until it is, water from Well RB-12B is the only surface water in the park. It is keeping approximately 2,400 feet of the former river bend wet near the visitor center. The other 8,200 feet, and both of the park's wetland cells, are completely dry. ✂

## BEAVER TALES

How have current water conditions affected our resident beaver? Since our last report, its dam-building spree continued. In early November, we found



A beaver is not the only mammal frequenting the beaver dams at Rio Bosque. A trail camera captured this image of a bobcat on January 5, 2023.

two more dams in the upstream part of the old river channel, bringing the total to five. In October, we had completed installing flow-control pipes that pass water through the uppermost dam without the beaver realizing it. The system worked, but with the four other dams still intact, water levels stayed high in the upstream part of the channel, and flows were much reduced downstream. Now, with Well RB-13 not operating, all five dams – and all of the beaver's favorite haunts – are high and dry. We don't know if the beaver has moved to the small area along the channel that still has water or left the park for greener pastures. ✂

### 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.



FRIENDS OF THE

### Next Meetings

Wed., Apr 26  
Wed., May 24  
Wed, June 28  
6:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
206 Kelly Hall  
UTEP

Info: 915-747-8663

## ¡GRACIAS!

A broad partnership makes Rio Bosque Wetlands Park possible. Sincere thanks and accolades go to:

- **El Paso Water and Hydro Resources** for greatly improving the performance of Well RB-12B, our sole source of water so far this spring.
- **UTEP's Building Maintenance Shop** for re-installing the frame for the entrance sign at the Tornillo Trailhead after it was knocked over in an unfortunate encounter with some heavy equipment.
- Outgoing Friends of the Rio Bosque President **Bill Hoover** and Treasurer **René Espinoza** for their dedicated long-standing work on behalf of the park. Bill's tenure began in 2018 and included the tumul-

tuous years of the COVID-19 pandemic. René has handled the Friends' books since 2010.

In January, the Friends held their first election since before the pandemic. New officers are President **Karla Ruiz**, Vice-president and acting Secretary **Rio Dominguez**, and Treasurer **Rocio Ronquillo**. Thanks go to one and all for their enthusiasm and willingness to help Rio Bosque Wetlands Park.

- The many **Friends of the Rio Bosque** who helped with this year's pole plantings of Rio Grande cottonwoods and Goodding's willows in January and February.
- The **El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society** for its steady support of the park since 1997 with funds raised through its annual Birdathon. Those contributions now total \$28,031. ✂



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### RIO BOSQUE CALENDAR

Join us for a free walking tour or to help with habitat management or park maintenance. Comng up:

APRIL			MAY			JUNE		
15 (Sat.)	Workday	8 a.m.	13 (Sat.)	Birding Tour	7 a.m.	3 (Sat.)	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.
16 (Sun.)	Intro.Tour	4:30 p.m.	20 (Sat.)	Workday	8 a.m.	17 (Sat.)	Workday	8 a.m.
22 (Sat.)	Birding Tour	8 a.m.	21 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.	24 (Sat.)	Birding Tour	6:30 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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Want to help support Rio Bosque?  
Make a tax-deductible contribution to the  
[Rio Bosque Wetlands Park Gift Fund!](#)