

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. 61

April 2017

MORE GOOD WATER NEWS!

The past 2 years have seen a welcome expansion of wetland and riparian habitats at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. Thanks to El Paso County Water Improvement District #1 (EP#1), the City of El Paso's Public Service Board (PSB) and El Paso Water (EPWater), this year should be even better!

In May 2014, EP#1's board passed a resolution reclassifying approximately 179 acres at Rio Bosque as irrigable land, "subject to the preparation and execution of a contract" governing delivery of Rio Grande Project irrigation water to the park. Other priorities kept this contract on hold until 2017, but on Feb 15 EP#1's board approved it...and increased the land reclassified as irrigable to 304.03 acres.

Then, on Mar 8, the PSB approved the contract and authorized EPWater to sign it. The signing clears the way for the first-ever deliveries of irrigation water to Rio Bosque to start this year in April. What does this mean for the park? A lot:

- additional water during the growing season,
- a new source of water (the Rio Grande!) for the park,
- water during some periods when it is not currently available to the park from the Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant, and



This year, the Goodding willow to the left of the windmill began leafing out Feb 7, 10 days earlier than ever before. Photo: February 27, 2017.

- a water source that meshes exceptionally well with our water-management goals for Rio Bosque.

During the growing season, our goal is to have a steady base flow of water that keeps some areas consistently wet, supplemented by occasional pulses of higher flow that can simulate flood events and flood larger areas within the park. From May through September, water delivered via the pipeline from the Bustamante Plant provides the steady base flow. Rio Grande Project irrigation water is perfectly suited for providing the pulses of higher flow. Thank you, EP#1, PSB and EPWater! ✂

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., Apr 27
Thurs., May 25
Thurs., June 22
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
206 Kelly Hall
UTEP

Info: 915-747-8663

BOSQUE IN BLOOM IS MAY 20

Please join us at Rio Bosque on **Saturday, May 20** for **Bosque in Bloom!** Celebrate the dramatic changes now occurring at the park thanks to the presence of water during the growing season. The event, sponsored by the Friends of the Rio Bosque with support from EPWater and UTEP's Center for Environmental Resource Management, takes place from **9 a.m. to noon**. Park at **Pan American Dr. and Winn Rd.**, then take a free shuttle to the park. Join us for a free event with fun activities for the whole family. Learn about our river-valley environment through tours, presentations, exhibits and interactive fun for kids. This year's Bosque in Bloom will be at a time when the park is receiving both treated waste-

water via the pipeline from the Bustamante Plant and irrigation water from the Riverside Canal. You won't want to miss it! ✈

PHENOLOGY NOTE

In 2016-17, winter barely visited the Paso del Norte region, including Rio Bosque. Each year, the first Goodding willow to leaf out at the park is in the stand near the windmill on the east side of Wetland Cell 1 (see photo on front). Since 2007, we have been noting the date when new leaves first begin emerging on this tree. Before 2015, the earliest date was Feb 20, 2009. In both 2015 and 2016, it was Feb 17. This year: Feb 7. ✈



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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:

APRIL			MAY			JUNE		
8 (Sat.)	Introductory Tour	4 p.m.	13 (Sat.)	Birding Tour	7 a.m.	4 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.
15 (Sat.)	Workday	8 a.m.	20 (Sat.)	BOSQUE IN BLOOM	9 a.m.	10 (Sat.)	Birding Tour	6:30 a.m.
30 (Sun.)	Birding Tour	8 a.m.	21 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.	17 (Sat.)	Workday	8 a.m.
			27 (Sat.)	Workday	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

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