

# 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. 68

April 2019

## WATER NOTES

Water deliveries to Rio Bosque Wetlands Park from the adjacent Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant ended Feb 10. We immediately began operating our 2 wells to keep water flowing in the old channel of the Rio Grande that winds through Rio Bosque, but the park's wetland cells quickly went dry. Last year, we used irrigation water in March and April to help maintain a flow the length of the old river channel. This year, though, the irrigation season won't begin until June. As winter moved into spring, some sections of the channel began to go dry, and vegetation in these areas began showing signs of stress. On the one hand, we recognize dry periods play a role in shaping the park's ecosystems. On the other, we eagerly await May 1, when water deliveries from the Bustamante Plant will resume. ✂

## THE BEAVER RETURNS

During the first 12 years of the wetland project at Rio Bosque, beavers moved onsite in some winters, when abundant water flowed through the park and the wetland cells were flooded. But not since the winter of 2009-10 was a beaver present at the park...until this year. On Jan 10, we saw the first tell-tale signs: lower limbs chewed off a young Goodding willow. For the next 2 months, the beaver made itself at home along the old river channel, dining on the inner bark



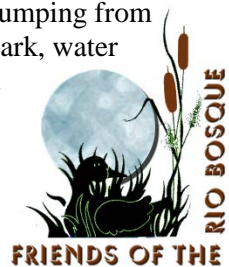
This beaver was the first to appear at Rio Bosque since 2010. (Photo: January 22, 2019)

of coyote and Goodding willows. We've seen no evidence of new activity since mid-March, though. The beaver appears to have moved on. Maybe it was responding to reduced water flows along the channel, or maybe to the cages that kept mysteriously appearing around some of its favorite willows. ✂

## ¡GRACIAS!

As always, we have many friends to thank:

- On Jan 10, when we started pumping from the well at the north end of the park, water began spraying profusely from a



### 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., Apr 24  
Wed., May 22  
Wed., June 26  
6:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
206 Kelly Hall  
UTEP

Info: 915-747-8663

large crack in the discharge pipe leading from the well to the old river channel. That didn't last long, thanks to **El Paso Water** personnel from the Bustamante Plant, who quickly replaced the damaged section of pipe.

- Once again this year, thanks go to a great group of volunteers who planted cottonwood and willow poles along the old river channel at the park in January and February. UTEP students, UTEP faculty, New Mexico State students, Girl Scouts, and Friends of the Rio Bosque all helped out.
- On Apr 4-7, [Engineers for a Sustainable World](#) (ESW) held its annual conference in El Paso. The mission of this national organization of students and professionals is to empower engineers to tackle sustainability challenges. One admirable ESW

tradition: on the final day of the annual conference, attendees get the opportunity to take part in a local service project. The local committee for the El Paso conference was kind enough to select Rio Bosque for this year's project. On Apr 7, conference attendees worked along the Bosque Trail and put a serious dent in the accumulations of broken glass and other debris that are an unfortunate legacy from past illegal trash dumping at the site. Thanks ESW!

- Well-deserved congratulations are due UTEP President **Diana Natalicio**. Among the many accolades that have come her way of late, in February the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society honored Dr. Natalicio with its annual Conservation Award...in recognition of the unflagging support she and UTEP have given to Rio Bosque Wetlands Park! ✈



Center for Environmental  
Resource Management  
The University of Texas at El Paso  
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 or park maintenance. Coming up:

APRIL		MAY		JUNE	
13 (Sat.)	Introductory Tour 4:30 pm	11 (Sat.)	Birding Tour 7 a.m.	9 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour 8 a.m.
20 (Sat.)	Workday 8 a.m.	18 (Sat.)	Workday 8 a.m.	15 (Sat.)	Workday 8 a.m.
28 (Sun.)	Birding Tour 8 a.m.	19 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour 8 a.m.	22 (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)

John Sproul 915-747-8663 [jsproul@utep.edu](mailto:jsproul@utep.edu)

Want to help us save postage and paper by receiving this newsletter only via e-mail? Let John know.