

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. 47

October 2013

WATER WATCH

It has been another challenging year at Rio Bosque. Water deliveries ended Feb 3 and are not expected to resume until November. For 11 straight years now, little or no water has been available to the park during the growing season. Over the past 3 years, reduced groundwater recharge and increased groundwater pumping have lowered the water table. This summer, groundwater levels at our monitoring wells dropped 7-15 feet below levels needed for sustaining riparian vegetation. Despite another year of hauling water nonstop by truck and trailer to water trees, we lost additional cottonwoods and willows in 2013.

A challenging year. Still, momentum for a better water future at Rio Bosque continues to build:

Once again, the park's well is putting a small flow of water in 2,200 feet of the 2-mile-long former river bend that winds through the park. Cottonwoods planted along this reach in 2010 continue to thrive.

In September, El Paso Water Utilities (EPWU) had a new well installed near the park's visitor center. It replaces the problematic and trouble-prone test well at this location that has been out of service since March 2008. Thanks, EPWU!

The park's 2 new windmills are performing well. Thanks to water from one, a stand of Goodding

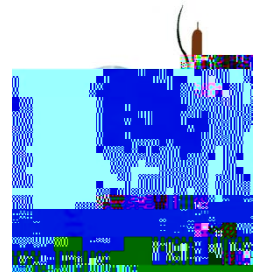


First spotted at Rio Bosque in 2010, bobcats, including this one, are now well established at the park.
Photo: Blanca Ramirez, June 9, 2013.

willows is rebounding. The other is supporting a mini-wetland.

With 2013 the worst year ever for availability of Rio Grande Project water for irrigation, none was available to Rio Bosque. Still, the new turnout from the Riverside Canal is in place to deliver irrigation water in future years, if we can find water-rights holders willing to assign water to the park.

Finally, there has been progress on another important project central to ensuring year-round water for Rio Bosque. Read on... ✂



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

-UTEP, 500 W. University Ave., El Paso, TX 79968-0684.

Next Meetings

Thurs., Oct 17

Thurs., Nov 21

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

209-A Burges Hall
UTEP

Info: 915-747-8663

IN THE PIPELINE

In March, El Paso's Public Service Board