

**Candelaria Farm Preserve
Technical Advisory Group**
May 4, 2017 • 2:30pm – 4:30pm

MINUTES

TAG & Related Technical Assistance Members Present

Steven Cox	Judy Kowalski
Beth Dillingham	Santiago Misquez
Brian Hanson	Peggy Norton
Greg Hiner	David Parsons
Christianne Hinks	Christina Sandoval
Yolanda Homann	Matt Schmader
Dave Hutton	James Stuart
Michael Jensen (Facilitator)	Kent Swanson

Community Members Present

Ann Dunlap	Melinda Moffitt
Miriam Hall	Paula Reiss
John Hart	Andrew Stone
Jason Hinkes	Carole Ward
Carmel Lepore	Denise Wheeler
Brandt Magic	

The meeting began informally around 2:45 outside the Education Building. Those present introduced themselves and there was a general discussion of the history of the site and some of the issues that led to creation of the Technical Advisory Group and its purpose.

The rest of the meeting was a walk around the site, with many side conversations taking place. Some specifics:

- The group started by entering the “South Tract”. This is all south of Candelaria Blvd adjacent to the east riverside drain. The northern end of the tract – containing the “Discovery Pond” – is used by the Rio Grande Nature Center for school outdoor education programs. The rest of the site going south is largely unmanaged and in the past had problems with residents along Campbell entering the tract and using it for personal recreation. There was some recent restoration planting just inside the fence separating the area from Candelaria and near the pond. The pond is constructed with a synthetic liner and there is a lot of invasive plants
- The main part of the walk was around the fields, with many questions and comments on the nature and extent of the farming activity. People commented on how close the fields were to the eastern pond area, which has almost no buffer on its eastern edge and on how narrow the remaining hedgerows are and how little vegetation they contain (especially where the hedgerows are along irrigation ditches, there has been a lot of invasive plant removal). Santiago Misquez (USDA/NRCS) discussed restoring the hedgerows with a

variety of native plants that could provide forage and habitat. There were intermittent conversations about the role of commercial farming, wildlife cropping, and/or a natural landscape

- During a break at the “Woodward House”, it came up that the “Tree Nursery” (located between the Duranes ditch and Rio Grande Blvd north of Candelaria) had been removed from the original Candelaria Farm Preserve site and given to City Parks and Recreation to use as a tree and sod farm and as a storage site for materials. There is supposed to be documentation for this in the files at Open Space’s offices at Montessa Park
- There was a question about water availability for the fields, whether through water rights or leasing agreements. Information about this may be in the files at Montessa Park and should be with the MRGCD and/or State Engineer
- The tour ended about 4:45

The next meeting is scheduled for May 10th @ 2:30pm; Rio Grande Nature Center Education Building