

**Candelaria Farm Preserve
Technical Advisory Group**

Rio Grande Nature Center State Park • 2901 Candelaria Rd NW
Education Building

March 29, 2018 • 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Minutes - final

Participants

Members: Brian Hanson, Chairman; Christianne Hinks, Peggy Norton, Carolyn Siegel, Steve Cox, Judy Kowalski, Heather MacCurdy, Alan Reed, Christina Sandoval

Additional Technical Assistance: Dave Hutton, Nathan Todd, Bill Pentler

Community – Kathleen Hall, Linda Shank, Richard Barris, Wes Brittenham, David Mehlman

Review of Agenda – approved

Minutes March 15, 2018: Approved

Announcements from TAG Members

- Christianne mentioned that the Alibi magazine will have an article about Candelaria Farm Preserve (CFP)
- Peggy Norton asked if there was a cropping plan for this summer yet. Nate said not yet.
- Nate mentioned that Albuquerque Open Space will begin their cleanups at trailheads in the foothills and passed out a schedule - March 31 Route 66; April 7 Copper; April 14 Menaul, April 28 Piedra Lisa
- Brian mentioned that he gave a presentation about CFP to the Alvarado Garden Neighborhood Association on March 24 and he also walked the cropland and Candelaria South with Wes Brittenham and Bill Pentler also on March 24.

Announcements from Community

- Kathleen Hall said that USDA had information on elm removal on the internet, Brian has the website. https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5410128.pdf

Wes Brittenham presentation about plant species to plant and how to do it

Wes was the manager of Plants of the Southwest, various other jobs relating to vegetation, and is now the grounds manager at Los Pablanos Historic Inn and Organic Farm on Rio Grande Blvd. Most of the discussion was about specific species to plant. He provided a map of ideas in the cropland and handed out specific species to plant in the cropland (see his information at the end). The map contains TAG's desired vegetation plans for the cropland that is contained in the meeting minutes of December 14, 2017. The areas in red are Wes's ideas.

Individual comments follow –

- Difficult to remove elms, can use herbicides but can also cut the tree down and then continue to trim resprouts for years which will eventually starve the tree of energy.
- Girdling the tree also works but resprouts may pop up.
- Compost would help provide nutrients to the soil as the compost breaks down and migrates down as it does naturally, but would take many years.
- Cottonwood leaves take many years to break down
- A natural establishment of bosque plants in an abandoned cropland would take eons.
- Wes said that he would first plant a rim of vegetation removing maybe 20 feet width of cropland, that would allow the farmer to grow and harvest the rest. More vegetation could be planted in subsequent years.

- Areas at the downslope ends of the cropland could be planted with native vegetation first, and watered through irrigation, followed by areas closer to the irrigation source later.
- Hedgerows of elms could be replaced by planting cottonwood poles in gaps of the elms first, and/or small sections of elms could be removed and planted with cottonwood poles. That way large elms could still provide habitat for wildlife until the new plants mature.
- Wes suggests plantings with monitoring could help improve future plantings.
- Concerning water use, establishment of native vegetation would not take any more water than is being used for crops; eventually water use would decline.

Wes Brittenham suggestions to TAG, handout to TAG meeting March 29, 2018.

The numbers reference the suggested vegetation for the future as approved by TAG December 14, 2017. The December 14 meeting minutes also had a map with the suggestions.

Wes also had a map of his ideas, his ideas were in red.

1. Expand wetland edge modification, grading, channels (use excavated soil to build “berms”, change grades, item 4.)
2. New wetland
3. Saltgrass – seed area with (grasses), Alkali Sacaton, Giant Sacaton, Indian Ricegrass, Muhlenbergia montana, porter, Sand Dropseed, (shrubs) Broom Dalea, Winterfat, Sandsage.
(forbs) Purple aster, Evening Primrose-White tufted, pale evening, Threadleaf groundsel.
Plant
Several New Mexico Olive around lower edge of interior perimeter.
4. Wildlife hedgerows around all field edges-plant 20’ borders inside all current fields. At least one
20’-30’ strip running East to west in center or centered in all fields except area 8. Same along
Roads, ditch, access areas. Hedgerows within fields could be various “berms” and cross cut intermittently so all is still irrigated by farm flooding. If Farmer is able to navigate, Hedgerows
Should be “wavy”, not perfectly straight. But straight edges are better than no habitat.
Tree
Species-Cottonwoods,, new Mexico olive, Mexican Elder, Desert Willow, Gambel Oak, wetter areas - Goodings, Black, and Coyote Willow. Shrubs, Three Leaf Sumac, False Indigo (Amorpha), Apache Plume, Chamisa, Cholla, Sandsage, Wolfberry. Forbs could include those in item 3, and also Gallardia, Sand Verbena, Bladder Pod.
5. Remove invasives. Replace with natives.
6. See item 4.
7. See item 4.
8. Crop area for wildlife. Consult as you are with Bosque del Apache, Valle de Oro, Bernardo, Sevilleta etc.
9. Gradual expansion of native plants and soil grade and level changes for more “organic” edges-

Erase straight lines as much as possible. See item 4.

10. Intermittent flow, from ditch release sporadically?

Status of hiring contractor for the development of a Resource Management Plan (RMP):

Alan Reed said that the team, Brian, James Lewis and Alan Reed were almost ready to select a contractor.

Site Specific Management

Running out of time, the group did not discuss this item.

Next Meeting:

April 12 - will include Dan Collins with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service talking about sandhill crane habitat, distribution and biology

Other topics - Contractor status, Site specific management

Questions or Concerns - Contact Brian Hanson at bhanson5@comcast or 505-856-1386

Minutes and agenda can be found at <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/our-department/boards-commissions/open-space-advisory-board/open-space-advisory-board>

Vision - To engage in a planning process that results in improved ecosystem health and increased biodiversity of Candelaria Farm Preserve, ensures compliance with Land and Water Conservation Fund guidelines by providing opportunities for wildlife oriented recreation, and fulfills the requirements of City Council resolutions R-16-147 and R-17-159.