

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

MINUTES

TAG & Related Technical Assistance Members Present

Steven Cox
Beth Dillingham
Brian Hanson
Loren Hines
Christianne Hinks
Dave Hutton
Michael Jensen (Facilitator)

Judy Kowalski
David Mehlman
Peggy Norton
David Parsons
Caroline Siegel
Paul Tashjian

Community Members Present

Ann Dunlap
Monica Gilboa
Kathleen Hall
John Hart

Brandt Magic
Melinda Moffitt
Andrew Stone

The meeting began at 2:40 with introductions.

Public Comment

There was no public comment

Land Use Planning Tool Presentation – Paul Tashjian/USFWS

Paula Tashjian, Hydrologist with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, gave a presentation on the “Middle Rio Grande Wetland Review Process: Potential Application for Candelaria Farm Preserve”. This is a process that was used at Valle de Oro NWR and at many other locations in NM and the SW

The process begins by trying to answer some basic physical questions on the historical physical functioning of the MRG

- channel mobility, “connected” floodplain, wide active channel
- sediment balance
- natural hydrograph (that is, pre-river engineering starting in late 1920s)

At Valle de Oro, it was done to educate the people involved in the planning before anyone knew the potential for activities at the VdO site. The Wetland Review Process revealed things like an historic oxbow through the site, wetlands, and the impact of the historical hydrograph and flow patterns on the surface and on the groundwater.

The Wetland Review Process is meant to address specific management questions and is site-specific – in this case, primarily, what should be done with the fields at CFP. The Process is

typically three days, but could be shorter, say between 1-2 days. It is a collaborative process involving land management professionals from many different perspectives and skill sets.

We need to have a general sense of the overall management plan beforehand. The product of the Process is a set of hypotheses for developing the site and a structure for testing those hypotheses; in other words, an adaptive management plan. The dataset developed ahead of and during the Process also has its own inherent value.

Tree Nursery and South Tract Status

- Tree Nursery
 - Michael Jensen researched the Open Space files for information related to the supposed “conversion” of the “Tree Nursery” site from the original ~170 acres to City Parks and Recreation for use as a tree nursery
 - There are several conflicting maps of the area, but most indicate that the Nursery is part of the original site
 - The only reference to the transfer of the site is in a memo from Mayor Kinney in 1977 claiming that it had never been the intent (of the City?) to include this land in the original CFP and that he had received “verbal” approval to transfer it from unnamed State and City officials
 - State Parks has a map made for the conversion of ~1 acre along the eastern end of Veranda; this map clearly shows the “Tree Nursery” as part of the original site and was accepted as the official map by the City
 - THEREFORE: the “Tree Nursery is still part of CFP and its use needs to be included in the Resource Management Plan developed by the TAG
 - Some Options:
 - Maintain its use by City Parks and Recreation and deem it supporting “outdoor recreation” by growing trees for City parks
 - Shift its plant production to plant material for CFP, such as hedgerow improvement, expanded and/or improved wetlands and ponds, and restoration of the “South Tract”, among others
 - Use it for an additional community garden site, like the “Community Garden Rows” at Los Poblanos
 - Use it for additional parking and access to CFP (although that was intended to be through the RGNC and only as part of scheduled guided tours)
- South Tract
 - While researching the “Tree Nursery” question, Michael Jensen discovered several documents dealing with the final boundaries of the South Tract
 - This parcel is south of Candelaria and west of Trellis. The original CFP purchase included a small area south of Candelaria where the “Discovery Pond” is located; another parcel, called “Tract X”, was also part of the CFP site, but was separated by a parcel owned by the Fraternal Order of Police
 - The State wanted the City to connect Tract X with the northern parcel and the City had indicated it would purchase the FOP site, but nothing happened
 - The State eventually insisted that the City act, at which point the FOP said it wanted a land swap for acreage inside CFP near Arbor Rd and the Duranes ditch; the State said

- no, the City agreed, and the City negotiated a swap of the FOP's 7 acres for 8 acres of Tract X located along Campbell Rd
- The City said they had State approval for this land swap, but it never went through the required process of "conversion" approved by the federal government. However, the map produced to support the conversion of the ~1 acre at the eastern end of Veranda shows the boundary of CFP after the land swap and this boundary was accepted by all parties – including the federal government – as correct

Next Steps

- There are many statements in the early documents for the proposal and implementation of the CFP site that indicate the desire on the part of federal, state, and some local officials, agency staff, and residents to create a "nature study area and wildlife preserve" that could serve not only Albuquerque, but also NM and the nation as a first-class facility. This is the opportunity and challenge for the TAG
- The 2004 CFP Resource Management Plan can form the template for the structure of the new RMP; much of the material – such as the historical context of the site, the soils analysis, and other components – likely does not need a lot of updating or revision and can be left in place as a sort of backbone for the overall RMP
- Might be worth also thinking in terms of the 1983 Management Plan, which divided the site into "management units": the RGNC, the associated ponds/wetlands, the South Tract, the Tree Nursery, the Hedgerows, the Fields
- Should implement the land use workshop as outlined by Paul Tashjian first, and use that to determine things like: what species do we want to support/attract at the CFP, what habitat(s) does that imply, what would be involved in making any changes necessary to the land use, etc

The meeting ended about 4:55

The next meeting date/time TBD; Rio Grande Nature Center Education Building