

**COMPILED PUBLIC COMMENTS, PROPOSED MULTI-USE ACCESSIBLE PATH
FROM I-40 TO CAMPBELL ROAD (November 15, 2015 through January 31, 2016)**

(1)

From: Scott Jordan

Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2015 3:24 PM

Subject: Bosque Walk Nov 13

Hello Matt,

I participated in the bosque walk last Friday. For many years I walked the trails in that section of the bosque, a beautiful place, but haven't been on them since the devastating fire. However, I was encouraged to see the restoration efforts that have already been accomplished.

I walk the bosque trails adjacent to the Rio Grande Nature Center often, observing birds and nature in general. Bicycle riders are a moderate problem there at the present time; I have to constantly be on the watch for them, which makes the walking experience much less enjoyable. Most are careful regarding walkers, but a few are traveling way too fast and require last second jumping out of the trail by walkers. Most of my friends who walk the Bosque agree with me. It was clear from the walk last Friday that bikes in that section are more numerous than I have experienced near the RGNC, and improving the trail by widening and adding a crushed rock surface will only increase their numbers. The City seem determined to "improve" the trails, so problems will only increase.

I am a strong bicycle supporter in general, just not on trails inside the Bosque. I was a member of Albuquerque's first Bikeway Study, starting in the late 1960's (our report was issued in 1974). During and after that time, I consistently bicycled to work, and have been riding on the the Paseo del Bosque Trail since it was under construction til the present time, logging over 37,000 miles since I began to keep records in 1993.

I doubt that separate trails for bikes and walkers would work because without enforcement they would not stay separate. No doubt walkers would also use the separate bike trails, even if they do so at their own risk. I have no improvements to advocate, other than doing only minor improvements on the footpaths that now exist.

I doubt the close approach to the river bank in a few places significantly impacts wildlife, so would not be in favor of rerouting the existing paths.

Many thanks,
Scott Jordan

(2)

From: james hutton

Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 2:59 PM

Cc: Scott Jordan; beth.dillingham@state.nm.us

Subject: Bosque Walk November 13 feedback.

Matt,

I went on the walk last Friday, and tried to listen to all the various comments and suggestions. I should note that I am presently the President of the Rio Grande Nature Center, but that these comments are my own. I've heard many comments from various Friends members, but can't presume to speak for or represent them.

I have some questions:

1. Who are we changing the trails for: walkers? Bikers? Disabled (wheel chairs, etc.)? Children, especially school groups?
2. What are we doing to the trails to preserve and help wildlife? I see a lot of discussion about restoring the bosque, removing some trees, overbank flooding, etc. I believe this is designed to both "restore" the river to some earlier time, as well as improving habitat for flora and fauna.
3. Specifically **how are we balancing the needs of Question 1 versus Question 2?**
4. Has anyone explained how we are to measure the "success" of any changes we make to the bosque trails? How many new walkers, new bikes, more wheelchairs, more children? I have not heard anyone discuss how we decided whether the changes were good or bad.

In my view, the present plans are designed to increase trail usage indiscriminately, to the detriment of the bosque environment, and to the detriment of enjoyment for walkers and children.

My suggestions:

1. Don't modify paths to better accommodate bikes; They already have a paved path of their own.
2. Pick a few selected places for disabled access that are paved, close to parking, easy of access, with good views of the bosque and the river.
3. Keep paths as narrow as possible, with only occasional access to the river.
4. Continue present restoration efforts to restore the bosque natural environment. I am referring to the long range plan for overbank flooding, mosaic development, and cottonwood thinning.

(3)

From: David Conklin

Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2015 10:30 AM

Subject: I-40 to Campbell Trail

Matt,

I enjoyed our hike last Friday, and (as you suggested) would like to provide a few written comments. As a frequent user of that stretch of trail for the past 25 years, I sincerely hope that a crusher-fine surface will not be constructed over the existing woodland path in that area.

The new crusher-fine trail to the south has a hard, uniform surface. This may be OK for the occasional visitor to the Bosque (and of course for wheelchairs), but walking on such a surface on a regular basis could cause joint damage in many of us. And it's not just the impact, it's also the uniformity. The slight irregularities of a natural (dirt) surface result in more range of motion in the joints; a uniform surface restricts motion and (along with the impact) leads to repetitive stress pain/injury.

You mentioned the possibility of splitting off the crusher-fine path somewhere in the vicinity of the power line, to preserve the existing dirt trail in the northern part of this segment. This is a very good idea! However, I would prefer to see the entire dirt trail left alone. If a "split" becomes the selected alternative, I'd prefer the split south of the power line: there's enough width; "cut-offs" might occur regardless of where the trail is split. Frankly, I don't see cut-offs being a big problem in this section of trail. An even better option, as someone suggested on our hike, would be to simply put a crusher-fine trail up on the levee road.

I am disappointed that our Bosque trails are being "improved" in this fashion (crusher-fines). It's great to make accommodations for disabled individuals, but to overlay miles of existing woodland trail with crusher fines, seems overkill, especially since there's already a paved, multi-use trail here extending from Alameda to Rio Bravo!! Shorter segments of handicap-accessible trails to selected riverside viewpoints would seem a more sensible management plan.

I love our bosque trails and they are one of the main reason I am still living in Albuquerque. Why do our trails have to be like sidewalks? For the vast majority of folks, the existing dirt trails are already easily accessible (parking is the biggest problem, not the trails themselves!). I think we've already made reasonable accommodation for the disabled in the bosque. My partner of the past 15 years is disabled, and she agrees with me.

Please keep me informed. (I did not sign up on your "hiker list.")

Sincerely,
David Conklin

(4)

From: MasterfulMosaics .

Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2015 11:41 AM

Cc: Mayor Berry

Subject: Bosque trail extension

Hello,

I'm voicing my opinion about the Bosque trail extension from I-40 to Montano. As a resident of the Duranes neighborhood and a daily user of the trails on the Bosque I feel my input should be heard.

I propose that we leave the section from I-40 to the Rio Grande Nature Center (RGNC) untouched and that the money planned for the trail extension would be better used upgrading the RGNC trails to be handicapped accessible. It is important to leave parts of the Bosque as natural as possible for future generations to enjoy while also paving others to allow everyone a chance to see the beauty of our Bosque. I think this can be achieved by only paving sections of the Bosque instead of the entire trail system from Tingly Beach to Montano.

The newly built trail south of I-40 is a perfect place for people who wish to be on a paved trail to walk, roll, run, or ride on. What about those of us who don't want a paved trail such as mountain

bikers, horseback riders, and people who love the feel and experience of an unimproved trail? Our voice matters most because we already use the trail. Please keep the option of an unimproved trail open to us. I run my dogs along the trail section from I-40 to the RGNC every day, sometimes twice. If you pave that trail, I will be forced to leave the community I bought my house in, because of its proximity to the natural paths, and find new places with natural trails to ride. I would have to do this because the crusher fine of the paved path wears down my dogs pads when they run with me along the trail on my bike. I used to take the trail south of I-40 all the time until it was paved, after it was paved I took it for a few weeks and noticed the wear on my dogs pads. The natural trail is their natural environment, keep it natural.

After the trail was paved, I started riding other trails in the area that were unimproved until they were covered over with logs and debris for "regeneration", then I moved to the trail north of I-40 and love it. The proposed north trail diverts from the existing trail and turns inland about halfway down right when the natural path follows the river bank. This in my mind defeats the purpose of building a trail so more people can access the beauty of the Bosque, you would be diverting the trail away from the best part of the Bosque. I walked the proposed trail and it is in a very open and boring part of the Bosque unlike that of the existing path. There is no need to build a trail there, especially if you plan on blocking off the old trail that runs along the river. Please, please, please keep the natural trail untouched and available only to those who wish to seek out such parts of nature. If handicapped people really want to experience that one part of the Bosque they can get a buggy to ride in so that a friend can push them along and they too can enjoy the purely natural trail. You don't need to build anything to bring people to nature, people who truly appreciate it, seek it out.

The RGNC already is equipped with wide trails that have already been manufactured by man, why not spend the money allotted for paving the trail to upgrade most of the RGNC trails. It is a perfect sanctuary for families and people with disabilities to see the Bosque and the Rio Grande, it just needs better paved trails. As a Nature Center, it makes the most sense to make it as accessible as possible to everyone while leaving the OPEN SPACE, a truly OPEN space.

As an able bodied outdoor enthusiast, I should not be punished because those less fortunate than myself want to go on the same trail I can go on. They already have the trail south of I-40 and should have more access to the RGNC with the paving of those trails, but they do not make up enough of the population that all the trails along that corridor should be paved. Leave the option for people to see a truly natural part of the Bosque.

Keep the section north of I40 to the RGNC untouched!!! Keep the Bosque Natural!

Thank you,
Kyle Erickson

(5)

From: smithfoto

Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 7:19 PM

Subject: /comments on proposed trail north of I-40

Matt, good session in the bosque Saturday, the 5th of December. Thanks for conducting. Here's some comments.

Background I'm the person who chatted with you and Jackie before the group assembled. I know Jackie from GARTC; I attended those meetings occasionally as GABAC member. Also I've dug trails with Jim Sattler and FooMTB. I often rode and walked the I-40 to Campbell trail along the river before the fire. Over the past few months I've regularly ridden Campbell to Tingley on the current trail along the river and on the new crusher fines trail south of I-40.

Comment on the Trails in the I-40 to Campbell Area The current dirt trail along the river is very good for both walkers and modest speed biking. An example of the latter is the family group we saw biking past us as we paused and talked under that tree. Biking speeds are modest because of the narrowness and twistiness of the trail except near I-40. There, however, it's open enough that bikers and pedestrians can see each other. If conditions change the future, then the trail could be modified.

I understand the city's push for an additional north-south trail in the area for hikers, runners, wheelchairs, horses, etc. The crusher fines trail south of I-40 would seem to fit that need. I think a fine location for such a trail would be roughly in the middle of that area. (Indeed, pre-fire there was a wide dirt trail in that location that the horse folks used. It was under the canopy of cottonwoods away from the dense thickets along the river.) Make it an interesting trail – like the crusher fines trail to the south. Note that it's mainly an open area so that's another item to consider in the design. Additionally, I'd encourage adding of signs at either end and one, maybe, in the middle. With words like: 'share the trail', 'be courteous to other users' and/or 'announce your presence'. (The 'announce your presence' that Jay Evans introduced on the paved bosque trail has worked well. Also some words like 'conflicts between users may lead to the restriction of some users'. This 'veiled threat' may serve notice to the bike racers and also may placate the vocal anti-bike folks.

A Stray Item A number of folks on Saturday's walk had strong words about dogs off leashes. Dogs need a good diet and regular exercise. In areas where there are few other people I see nothing wrong with dogs off leashes providing that they respond to their owner's voice. (On the Aspen Vista Trail above Santa Fe there is a sign saying 'dogs on leashes or under voice control'. It works.) My experience in the foothills open spaces is that dogs off leashes are quickly corralled when other users appear. So I think the city should be tolerant of such activity and not try to enforce the leash bit as they tried on the bosque ditch banks about 10 years ago.

Summary Save the current dirt trail along the river as is! Design and build another trail - possibly crusher fines – roughly thro the center of the area for general use including wheelchairs. Tolerate dogs off leash in sparsely used areas.

With Regards,
Carl Smith

From: Colston Chandler
Sent: Wednesday, December 09, 2015 9:05 PM
Subject: Trail from I40 to Campbell

Dear Matt,

Here are my comments with respect to the possible new trail between I40 and Campbell.

My preference, by far, is to delay the building of the trail to allow a more complete public process such as was embodied in an email from Michael Riorden to Councilor Ike Benton on March 24, 2015 (see attachments).

Before any further trail construction begins, I also want to see evidence that additional Bosque restoration is at a more advanced stage of planning, that plans for ADA access to the trail already built from Central to I40 are well advanced, that such access for the new trail will be built as part of the new construction, and that all permits are obtained and all stakeholders (BLM and MRGCD, in particular) are on board. As matters stand, no person that I have recently talked with believes that this Mayor intends any restoration at all and will resist any attempts (should they want) by the MRGCD to amend the plans presented in late January. Such rushing of the planning and public process smacks of authoritarianism, not democratic beliefs.

I see no reason (other than the Mayor's ego) that construction cannot be delayed until September. Indeed, there is the advantage that delaying construction would not disturb the roosting grounds of the migratory water fowl now in the area.

That said, I believe the trail building will happen as announced. So I offer these comments on a trail in the area from I40 to Campbell.

1. The trail should begin and end on (or near) the levee road. This is important at the I40 end for access to parking. Similarly at the Campbell end. In addition, and future trail through the Nature Center ought to be close to the levee (where there is already an old road that intersects the Bosque Loop Trail of the Nature Center) and not down by the river.
2. Wheelchair access at the I40 end should be built, not postponed to some indefinite future. If the ramp cannot be built now, for whatever reason, the construction of the trail should be postponed. There are already too many accessible trails in the Bosque that are orphans because they cannot be accessed from parking lots.
3. Along its full length the trail should be designed to reduce bicycle speeds.
4. Along its full length there should be consideration for what happens when a wheelchair meets a horse or a bicycle. It is frightening and dangerous for a person in a wheelchair to have a speeding bicycle or an 800 pound horse pass within arms reach. Equestrians and bicyclists that say such close encounters are of no concern (and I have heard such, even on the the 5 December walk) are wrong. Federal guidelines for a six-foot-wide multi-use trail recommend wider bulges along the trail for refuge.

5. The trail should stay away from the river. Short spurs can be built to give more protected access.

6. The section of the present river-bank trail in the area that was not burned (roughly the northern half of the present trail) should be left alone and designated as a pedestrian trail. I feel strongly about this.

Above all, keep the feel of the Bosque as wild as you can. It is not supposed to be Central Park or Golden Gate Park, as nice as those parks are. It is the sense of wildness that sets the Rio Grande Valley State Park apart from these others (something recognized in the founding legislation).

Thanks, Matt, for all you and the entire Open Space staff do for the Open Space lands. I only wish I could increase your budget!

Colston

(7)

From: Peggy Norton

Sent: Friday, December 11, 2015 12:32 PM

Subject: phase II comments

Attached are my comments on phase II.

Peggy Norton

I am writing about phase II of the bosque trail.

The first point I would like to make is that I do not consider the walks to be public meetings. No minutes are kept, there is no proof of discussion topics and the trail that was built in phase I had nothing in common with what was discussed on the walks.

The second point I would like to make is that the City should put money into making trails that are usable by wheelchairs accessible by wheelchairs. The whole trail from the siphon to I-40 is inaccessible. This phase II trail will be inaccessible. The deck at Tingley is still inaccessible. The many hard-packed trails in the bosque across from the Nature Center with some beautiful views of the river could be usable with very little work. However, they are inaccessible. The paved Aldo Leopold trail is inaccessible and in need of repair. The Paseo del Bosque multi-use trail is inaccessible. We have the trails, let's make them available for people to use.

The third point I would like to make is that the City should provide more restroom facilities. There is a very nice facility at Montano on the west side, one at Tingley Beach which closes early and is unavailable to dog walkers, and one at the Nature Center which is not usable by dog walkers or after hours. Why can't we provide the public with restroom facilities rather than expect them to use areas in the bosque. If I was in a wheelchair, what would I do?

My fourth point is that there are many more needs to be completed before building new trails. The trail from I-40 to the Nature Center is a rather narrow trail but is very usable - there was a steady flow of bicycles on the Friday walk. I have walked this area and the bicyclists are always friendly. I would call it gently-used. There is nothing wrong with that and nothing wrong with keeping it that way. The trail along the river is rather private and secluded and inappropriate for a wide, crusher fine trail. A trail between the river and the levee would result in a straight, fast trail which would not be safe for multi-use. Therefore, I think in terms of mosaic and recommend that this area stay lightly used. If a trail is absolutely needed, then do a return trail from I-40 back to Central so people don't have to return on the same trail.

My fifth point is that the Future Work Agreement from March 24, 2015 and confirmed in City Council on April 6, 2015 should be honored. It is dishonest for the Administration to claim it wasn't a valid agreement and destroys any public trust in the integrity of the process in this new phase.

(8)

From: susan selbin

Sent: Friday, December 11, 2015 6:46 PM

Subject: Comments on the City Process and the Bosque Trail

Dear Mr. Schmader:

It's a shame that the City keeps pushing ahead on the Bosque Trail in the face of public opposition to moving so quickly. That City insists on rushing this process doesn't make sense to me because the result is public mistrust.

I'm told that you are taking public comments. My key positions:

- The trail should be moved AWAY from the sensitive river bank.
- The width of the trail should be less than 6 feet.
- Alternative hard-packed natural surfaces that may be preferable to crusher fines for wheelchairs should be considered.

Thank you.

Susan Selbin

(9)

From: runr1107

Sent: Sunday, December 13, 2015 4:49 PM

Subject: Crusher Fine Trail Extension from I40 to Montano

Dear Matt,

I appreciated the opportunity to take a hike along the proposed route of an extension of the crusher fine trail.

You were very patient with questions from residents. I did not hear any objections to the trail that really made much sense to me. I do feel that the current trail from Central to I40 and the proposed extension to Montano will be more accessible by wheelchair users. The goal of keeping people from trampling off-trail is valid too. I have walked the crusher fine trail from Central to I40 and found it to be a big improvement. I also cannot see that wildlife is much effected by the trail. On our walk we were interrupted frequently by bikers. I do wonder if bikers could be advised to use the asphalt bike trails. Since our walk was on a Saturday, I would think that the bikers might be fewer during the week. Another plus for the crusher fine trail is that even though bikers share the trail with runners, I believe the crusher fine trail is somewhat wider than the natural trail so it probably is safer for bikers and pedestrians.

Finally, I want to voice my support for the crusher fine trail extension to Montano. I especially believe it is better for all users, especially wheelchair users, and the environment for this path to be extended. I know I enjoy walking and running on such a surface and I hope to use the trail after it has been completed.

Thank you and your staff for your work.
Sincerely,
Kenneth Hansson
Trail Watch Volunteer and Albuquerque Resident

(10)

From: susan selbin

Sent: Monday, December 14, 2015 10:13 PM

Subject: Further Comments on Bosque Trail Alternatives

Dear Mr. Schmader,

Following are more specific comments on the extension of the Bosque Trail from I-40 to Montaña.

- The width of the trail appears to be pre-decided, but this issue should remain on the table and be subject to alternatives. For example, an alternative to a six foot wide trail might be a narrower trail 3' wide with periodic wider turnouts, allowing a more natural feel while at the same time allowing users of the trail to pass one another easily. Alternative trail designs should be presented.
- The trail surface should be open to discussion. For instance, an alternative to crusher fines is a compacted natural surface trail that is amended to harden it where it is sandy and add sand where necessary to prevent ponding of rainwater. Sierra Club found on monthly wheelchair outings that hard packed trails can be easier to navigate than crusher fines. This should be subject to discussion.
- As the trail enters the Bosque north of the I-40 bridge, there is a section that adjoins a bank lowering project done some years ago by the Interstate Stream Commission that contains excellent habitat. After about a quarter mile, the area where the bank has been lowered becomes very narrow, and the trail is right next to the vegetation that has grown in the lowered area. Moving the trail a short distance away from river in this section

would provide more isolation for birds that may use the restored habitat in this narrow area along the bank, while maintaining a view of the river for users of the trail.

- The north part of this section is a narrow trail through a fairly dense over-story of cottonwoods and exotics like Russian olive. From the comments on the City's walks, people really like this section, because it is a narrow and intimate space within sight of the river. This section needs options to maintain the intimate experience of the trail as it presently exists. It might be good to leave this trail as is and construct a groomed trail to the east, away from the river bank.
- A compromise solution might be to leave the multi-use trail next to the river for the southerly half or so of this section. The Bosque then enters a stretch where there is a Cottonwood gallery filling the entire Bosque from the river to the levee. The multi-use trail could be moved away from the bank and into the gallery, which would still be a really nice walk (or roll).

Thanks for considering these comments.
Susan Selbin

(11)

From: Hazel Trabaudo

Sent: Monday, December 14, 2015 10:30 PM

Subject: Re: [RIO-CENTRAL-BOSQUE-ANNOUNCE] Please submit your comments on trail alternatives ASAP!

No action would be my choice. Six feet wide trail seems excessive and detracts from the natural appearance of the area.

If there must be a groomed trail I believe it should be away from the river.

This is a very special place and should be kept as natural as possible.

Eleanor Trabaudo

On Mon, Dec 14, 2015 at 9:35 PM, Richard Barish <richard.barish@gmail.com> wrote:

The City is presently devising alternatives for the extension of the Bosque trail from I-40 to Montaña. Matt Schmader, the director of the Open Space Division, has stated that the alternatives will be based on the comments he receives. Please send your comments to him at mschmader@cabq.gov. The City is presently working on the alternatives, so please do this as soon as you can!

Here are some issues you might wish to address:

1. The administration has stated that the trail will be a six foot wide, crusher fine trail, the same as the first trail section. It appears that it has thus pre-decided this issue prior to public comment. However, this is not an issue that should be off the table. It should be subject to alternatives. Please tell the administrations that alternative trail designs should be presented.

For instance, an alternative to crusher fines is a compacted natural surface trail that is amended to harden it where it is sandy and add sand where necessary to prevent ponding of rainwater. We've found on our monthly wheelchair outings that hard packed trails can be easier to navigate than crusher fines. This should be subject to discussion. An alternative to a six foot

wide trail might be a narrower trail, maybe three or four feet wide, with periodic wider turnouts, which would maintain a more natural feel while at the same time allowing users of the trail to pass one another easily. The views of the accessibility community should have great weight here, but these alternatives should be on the table for discussion.

2. As the trail enters the Bosque north of the I-40 bridge, there is a section that adjoins a bank lowering project done some years ago by the Interstate Stream Commission that contains excellent habitat. (Bank lowering brings the ground closer to the water table and flooding and gives an advantage to native plants like willows.) After about a quarter mile, the area where the bank has been lowered becomes very narrow, and the trail is right next to the vegetation that has grown in the lowered area. Moving the trail a short distance away from river, but still in view of the river, in this section would provide more isolation for birds that may use the restored habitat in this narrow area along the bank, while maintaining a view of the river for users of the trail.

3. The north part of this section is a narrow trail through a fairly dense over-story of cottonwoods and exotics like Russian olive. From the comments on the City's walks, people really like this section, because it is a narrow and intimate space within sight of the river. This section presents a conflict. On the one hand, we want access for people in wheelchairs. On the other hand, we want to maintain the intimate experience of the trail as it presently exists. Expanding it to a wider, multi-use trail would necessarily damage that experience, as a comparison of this trail with the already constructed trail along the river bank south of I-40 shows.

Some people would like to leave this trail as is and construct a groomed trail to the east, away from the river bank. A compromise solution might be to leave the multi-use trail next to the river for the southerly half or so of this section. The Bosque then enters a stretch where there is a Cottonwood gallery filling the entire Bosque from the river to the levee. The multi-use trail could be moved away from the bank and into the gallery, which would still be a really nice walk (or roll).

4. Another possible alternative is a "no action" alternative. If you believe there should be a "no action" alternative, please address that in your comments.

Please get your comments into mschmader@cabq.gov as soon as possible so that they will be considered as the City devises alternatives!

(12)

From: David Kenney

Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 7:23 AM

Cc: 'Richard Barish'

Subject: Bosque Trail I-40 to Montano

I use the trail and like it the way it is.

My first option would be "no action".

I have been going into this section of the Bosque for 35 years and see very few people.

In the developed trails around the Nature Center I have never seen anyone in a wheel chair. There are plenty of children in strollers.

The narrow winding trail south of Campbell Road should remain as it is. It is negotiable on bicycle and fun to ride. Keep developed trail to the east.

Keep the developed trail out of the lowered bank area.

David Kenney

(13)

From: Becky Noland

Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 7:56 AM

Subject: bosque trail comments

Here's my suggestion: Leave the existing trail north of the "lowered bank" section alone!!! Build the new, wider trail farther to the east.

(14)

From: Jack and Terry

Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 7:56 AM

Subject: Bosque trails alternatives

Dear Mr. Schmader,

We are daily morning users of the bosque, from north of I-40 to north of the Rio Grande Nature Center near Montano Rd., and have been in the nearly 35 years we have lived in the near North Valley. While we are sorry that the area will be undergoing man-made change, we understand it will happen, so here are our comments to that end.

1. The trail should not uniformly be 6 feet wide. No natural trails are, and these trails are penetrating natural areas. If that is the size of the city grader, then get a different attachment for it. Parts of the trail might be as wide as 6 feet to allow a bike to pass, for example, but it should generally be no more than 4 feet wide. We have never had problems over the years with crowding with other users with the natural trails at 2 to 3 feet wide.
2. Consider a natural material, not crusher fine. Like many bosque users, we walk our dogs in the bosque, and the crusher fine hurts their paws. We understand that a compacted sand material works well for wheelchair users.
3. Much work has been done over the last decade to lower the river banks in areas along this stretch, to allow natural flooding and the growth of willows and cottonwoods. We have witnessed the work as it progressed, and have seen the success achieved by these well considered and well designed efforts to enhance the bosque as an area friendly to bird life and wildlife in general. Any new trails should diverge away from these areas; any existing trails near these areas should not be widened.
4. If part of the idea of creating groomed trails in the bosque is to allow users with disabilities or the need to use assistance to access river views, then create a trail loop to and parallel to the river for a short distance at a point that currently is open and without vegetation cover, that loops back

out to the main access trail. The best area for that is near Campbell road. Then, leave the rest of the bosque as it currently is.

If that will not be done (leave the rest of the bosque alone), then create any new primary trail to the east, closer to the existing bike path on the levee.

5. Do not block or close off the existing paths.

6. Be careful when disturbing the Queen of Heaven trees that have invaded the area closest to the freeway. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ailanthus_altissima . Eradicate them properly when trail building there; otherwise you will only be spreading them.

7. Russian olives make good habitat, as do snags and dead trees. Do not remove all the dead trees, and if they are not near a trail where they might endanger a walker, then leave them.

Thank you for considering our comments.
Jack Cargill and Terry Storch

(15)

From: Kathleen Rhoad

Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 10:06 AM

Subject: Public Comment - Trail Alternative

Hello Matt,

I walked the trail proposed for the second section from I-40 to Campbell Rd again on Friday, Dec 11 and it has two distinct sections. The north part close to the river is a narrow trail through a fairly dense overstory of cottonwoods, willows and exotics like Russian olive. From the verbal comments on the City's two walks, people really like this section, because it is a narrow and intimate space next to the river. However, this section presents a conflict. On the one hand, we want access for wheelchairs. On the other hand, we want to maintain the intimate experience of the trail as it presently exists. Expanding it to a wider, multi-use trail would necessarily alter that experience and damage this most sensitive area. The south part from I-40 up to the north end of the cottonwoods planted 12 years ago is fine for multi-use.

The alternative I am suggesting is to create a new meandering multi-use trail for the north section starting at the north end of the cottonwoods that were planted 12 years ago in a restoration effort - at the area where there was a fire in 2003. Design a new multi-use route that goes to the east of the old Rio Grande Cottonwood gallery which is largely open space all the way to Campbell Rd. The route can be designed so that the end of it passes to the left/west of the ramada at Campbell Road. This would result in a future third section of trail being able to connect to the Bosque south of the Rio Grande Nature Center on the east side where there is already a hard packed earthen trail that is well away from the river with many native plants including Rio Grande Cottonwoods, NM Olive, Three-leaf Sumac, Four-wing Saltbush -.a very fine interpretive area. At the northern end of this section the Aldo Leopold Trail could be extended to reach the river for viewing that would be accessible for wheelchairs.

From the point where this new alternative multi-use trail goes to the east of the old Rio Grande Cottonwood gallery, the entire length of the existing narrow trail close to the river going north should be left as is and perhaps designated for foot traffic only. Right now dangerous situations are created by some bicyclists riding at high speed when there are also people walking. Several individuals from the Alvarado Gardens neighborhood have been experiencing this for years and are amazed that there has not been an accident resulting in injury. I was walking with three of them on a narrow section at the final part of the Dec 5 walk led by your colleague, Jim Sattler and experienced high speed cyclists coming toward me. Leaving the narrow trail along the river as is would protect fragile habitat of great importance to birds, other wildlife, birders.

One spur trail going toward the river could be made to connect the newly designed multi-use trail on the east side of the old Rio Grande Cottonwood gallery to a viewing point at the river at the narrow trail. The narrow hard packed earthen trail could be improved as needed for short distances on either side of the spur intersection so that those using wheelchairs could roll along the river. Specifically, any low areas that flood could be filled in and graded so the water flows off the trail. Tree roots, if any, could be covered with a gentle grade platform or similar so that the trail is smooth for those rolling. Users could use the spur trail to return to the new multi-use trail going north/south.

The new multi-use trail does not have to be 6' wide. It could be 3' wide with periodic 6' pullouts to preserve the natural area as much as possible.

I am one of the Bosque Sentinels for this section of trail and an Open Space Trail Watch volunteer, City of Abq and have walked it at least 8 times during the past several months. It's close to my home in the North Valley where I have lived for 5 years.

Thanks for the opportunity to make public comment.
Kathleen Rhoad

(16)

From: Phil Grossblatt
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 12:29 PM
Subject: Bosque development plans

I received an email saying that you were collecting comments.
I do not want the Bosque developed in any way, other than maintaining existing paved trails.
Thank you,
Phil Grossblatt

(17)

From: Joan Robins
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 2:56 PM
Subject: alternatives to the Bosque trail

Dear Matt,

After attending a walk last year with you, then having the city go ahead with plans not even presented on the walk and before our thoughts could percolate for the best answer, I hesitate to support any plans. Therefore, my first preference is for NO ACTION so as to not disturb the natural environment that is left.

My second choice is for such changes as Richard Barish of the Sierra Club has researched, including narrower pathways, using materials present and adding a hardening agent in sandy/slippery spots instead of crusher fine, and leaving birding areas with narrow pathways near the river.

It is high time that the city kept its promises and stopped tricking us.

Sincerely,
Joan Robins

(18)

From: Susan Kutvirt

Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 3:16 PM

Subject: Suggestions on the Bosque trail

Hello Matt,

Thank you for considering alternatives to the city's proposed Bosque trail north of I-40. My concern from having walked the existing trail is that it comes entirely too near the riverbank now and further widening of it would surely disrupt the nesting habitat for our bird life. The Bosque ecosystem is unique for a city the size of Albuquerque and indeed was just recognized as such by the award of a significant grant recognizing Albuquerque as an Urban Bird Treaty city, one of only 21 cities in the US. Our unique riverine ecosystem can be sabotaged by indiscriminate development in the Bosque that disrupts bird migratory and nesting patterns. It could alternatively be enhanced as an educational environment by careful consideration of trail placement and signage that recognizes our status as an Urban Bird Treaty city.

Of particular concern is the portion of the trail just north of the I-40 bridge where there is a section containing a bank lowering project done some years ago by the Interstate Stream Commission. This provided excellent habitat for our native willows and thereby important nesting habitat for the willow flycatcher and grosbeaks. In this area the trail is right next to the river and any "improvements" will have to include removal of riverside vegetation that is mainly willows. However, if the trail were moved even a short distance away from the river the birds would have the solitude to nest undisturbed. The river would still be in sight through the vegetation for people to enjoy.

Further north there is a beautiful place where the trail winds through and under cottonwoods. This area is magical for the unique forest environment and the trail could be maintained in the forest and so further from the river here. Perhaps a river access spur in one or

two places could satisfy the desire of those who wish to sit by the river. The Campbell Road trail itself has full access to the river so there will be adequate opportunity to get to the riverside.

This Bosque environment already attracts a lot of people for quietude, bird watching, dog walking, and cycling. The presence of wildlife encountered in the Bosque is integral to the joy we have in visiting this place. Please encourage the mayor to be careful in placement of trails there as the unique nature of our open space along the river is a treasure to us all, wildlife and humans.

Thank you for the forum to express our views and concerns.
Susan Greiwe Kutvirt

(19)

From: Catherine Smith
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 5:49 PM
Subject: Bosque trail

I live near the Rio Grande Nature Center and I went on one of the walks of the proposed trail. I don't see the point of yet another paved trail. **We have too many already.** We have a paved bike trail AND a "road" parallel to that trail, from I-40 to Campbell. Most of that road is gravel, but it too is paved, closer to Campbell. Then there is yet another trail, dirt, east of the ditch, (the bike trail is west of the ditch.) AND there is a dirt trail west of the paved bike trail. Four trails/roads covering that area from I-40 to Campbell. Why in the world do we need any more?

If you pave another trail, you get rid of habitat which is managing/struggling to exist. People who want to walk near the river are perfectly happy with the way the "river trail" is now. And there are exactly zero wheelchair people using the trail from the bio park to I-40. There is no call from wheelchair people for an extended trail. If they want one, they could use the bike trail. Kick the bike people off, and put them on the gravel road. It will give them a better workout than the paved trail. Bike people act like terrorists. If the City would crack down on them for violating traffic laws, the vast majority of us would be better off.

This is all so exasperating. If I live long enough, I suppose I'll eventually see a story in the press about who paid off Berry to wreck the Bosque for some kind of profit. Who knows? A floating casino on the river, and they want easier access from the shore?

Catherine Fellows, exasperated voter.

(20)

From: Beth Morris
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 12:08 PM
Subject: Re: I was on Saturday's walk

Hi Matt. Thank you for the information about the length of this segment of trail, which is reassuring to me at least in the short run. I have written my comments in the attached document, which I hope can be included in the ongoing evaluation. Thanks for this opportunity. I will make every effort to continue my involvement in the discussion and decision-making.

Beth

From: BethMorris
Sent: Monday, December 07, 2015 10:03 AM
Subject: I was on Saturday's walk

and returned on Sunday to walk the southern portion which has already been completed. We were pleasantly surprised by the unobtrusiveness of the crusher fine path and its meandering character, as well as the many narrow side paths - and the 5 or 6 porcupines we saw. Before I write my full opinion and suggestions, however, I was wondering if there is a map for that part of the project as you provide for the area north of I-40 to Campbell Rd? And two additional questions: what is the comparative distance between the southern and northern parts of the plan? does the 2015 plan include areas north of Campbell, i.e. the Nature Center, or will it stop at the Campbell cut through?

Thanks for a wonderful walk-and-talk on Saturday and for any additional answers you can provide here.
Beth Morris

(21)
From: Tomás Radcliffe
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 4:11 PM
Subject: Alternative Proposal for Trail South of I-40

Dr. Schmader,
Overall, I find the current trail between I-40 and Campbell Road to be well-placed from an ecological standpoint. However, there is one particular 500-600-foot stretch of the current trail that could easily be moved east to allow for a small existing Coyote willow thicket to expand. This stretch begins about 150 feet south of where the powerlines overpass the river (approximate coordinate 35.114153, -106.690340) and extends north for the next 600-or-so feet, about 100 feet past where a short cottonwood snag stands just east of the trail. The bank west of the trail in this area is low, and Coyote willows have formed a thicket through this stretch. It would be ideal to move the trail east at least 50 feet to allow for the bank to be lowered further east in this area, which would encourage the willow thicket to expand. There are some immature, presumably pole-planted cottonwoods that grow intermittently from about 50 feet east of the bank, and one could extend the trail to these and let these line the east side of the new trail location I propose. The Bosque in this stretch is wide, with the levy 50-100 yards from the riverside; since this area was scorched in the fire last decade, there are few trees that would be disturbed by moving the trail east.

Moving the trail away from the riverbank by just 50 feet for this 600-foot stretch would extend the thicket by many thousands of square feet, and since expansive, continuous thicket is necessary for many nesting birds (a small patch of isolated willows will not suffice), this would encourage nesting by riparian-thicket dependent birds, such as Common yellowthroats, Yellow-breasted chats, and, conceivably, by the endangered Southwest willow flycatcher; it would also create further buffer between the trail and sensitive riverside habitat. These willow habitats will become increasingly rare and valuable as the warmer, drier climate that is predicted decreases the amount of water in the river, as well as lowers the water table--and especially as riverside thickets further south struggle to survive as the river dries out through the summer, as it recently has and is expected to do consistently. Creating a thicket on a lowered bank in a stretch of the river that is required to remain wet during the summer will be invaluable habitat for many riparian birds as they try to adapt to climate change.

I would also like to comment on the trail just north of the stretch I have identified above, as it reenters the cottonwood canopy and approaches the Campbell Road trail head. Since the trail hugs the riverside in this stretch, many will likely ask that it be moved away from the bank to protect sensitive habitat. However, in this stretch the bank is steep, and there are no willow thickets. Also, the Bosque to the east of this area, beneath the mature cottonwood canopy, is home to as many porcupines and coyotes as any stretch through the middle of the City that I can think of. I'm afraid that moving the trail east away from the riverside will disturb many more coyote hideouts and dens than the trail in its current location will disturb riverside birds.

Thank you, as always, Dr. Schmader, for your commitment to maintaining the integrity of the Bosque ecology while also ensuring that this remarkable natural setting is as accessible as possible to as many people as is possible. I appreciate your considering these recommendations. I'm also happy to visit these sites with you in person or clarify any of the details and locations I described above.

In appreciation,
Tomas Radcliffe

(22)

From: Sue Gunckel

Sent: Thursday, December 17, 2015 9:28 PM

To: Schmader, Mathew F.

Subject: Bosque Trail north of I-40

Dear Matt,

I was pleased to get to participate in the walk to view the situation and plans for a trail north of I-40 to Montano. I live within a quarter of a mile of the bosque and use the paved bike trail regularly. I have walked and sometimes biked very happily in the undeveloped bosque for 30 years

I really think there should be no changes made to the trail north of I-40. The trail that has been widened and surfaced south of I-40 has already disturbed the bosque more than it should have and based on how far most people "hike" in any park situation, it will serve the needs and desires of most postential users of the the bosque for developed trails north of Central Ave. However, since it appears that the mayors office is determined to "develop" more mileage of trails in the bosque, here are my concerns and comments:

1. The "trail" that we followed on our walk was plenty wide, At the current width in most places, it will be accessible and still keep as much wildness as possible.
2. We need to avoid the riparian areas that have been restored next to the river. Any trail should be kept closer to the middle of the bosque area with periodic spur trails traveling to a river overlook area so that birds and wildlife are disturbed as little as possible but can be enjoyed.
3. It appeared to me that hard dirt of the current "trail" gave adequate accessibility to wheelchair users without creating a noisy crusher fine surface that disturbed the peacefulness of the trail and drives wildlife and bird away.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in and comment on proposed trail development in the bosque. I do hope it has an impact on what is done.

Sue Gunckel

(23)

From: Richard Barish

Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 11:22 AM

Cc: Camilla Feibelman

Subject: Sierra Club alternatives comments

Dear Matt:

I want put in writing the Sierra Club's suggestions about alternatives that should be included for the public to comment on.

1. The alternatives should include alternative materials and trail widths. These are important considerations that will affect the experience of the trail and about which there are different opinions. The City cannot claim to have had a true public process if it takes such an important issue off the table and dictates at the outset, as has been the case up to this point, that the trail will be a six-foot-wide, crusher fine trail. I am also concerned that this is not what the public has been told on the walks.

Alternatives should include a trail constructed of the dirt existing in the Bosque that is amended to eliminate sandy areas and areas where water ponds so as to provide a continuous, firm surface for wheelchairs, and that eliminates or circumvents obstacles for wheelchairs such as roots and small hills. Alternatives should also include narrower trails, for instance, three or four-foot-wide trails, with periodic wider areas that could be spaced, for instance, every 200 feet. On the Sierra Club's wheelchair outings, there have been an array of opinions from wheelchair users about what surfaces and widths are most desirable and people, especially wheelchair users,

should have the opportunity to comment on those alternatives. Also tree removal should be avoided in the trail project.

An example of a place where a narrower trail constructed of in situ materials would be especially beneficial is the portion of the trail south of Campbell Rd. This area is presently a narrow trail traversing a shaded canopy. On the hikes you led, there was very strong opinion expressed that this trail should be left open for use and that it should not be expanded, because of the quality of experience it provided. At the same time, Mary Beresford expressed the view that there should not be a different trail for wheelchairs and hikers. Having an improved, natural surface trail that does not expand the width of the trail could meet the wishes of both groups: there would be access and the same experience for all users, but the intimate experience of nature in the Bosque would be maintained. Such an alternative should be included for public comment.

2. Another alternative that should be included for the area south of Campbell, and one that was probably covered by the alternative routes you showed us on Wednesday, would be to move the multi-use trail into the Bosque where the burn area ends and the cottonwood begins. A trail through the cottonwoods would be very pleasant – similar to the existing trail north of Campbell. I visited this area again this weekend, and the area where there are cottonwoods seems to me to extend further south than you were describing on Wednesday. Depending on how long the trail through the Bosque was, drop-down trails to the river could be built to provide riverside views for users. In phase one of the project, there are similar pedestrian-only trails along with the wider, multi-use trail, and the same could occur in this phase. On the other hand, our sense is that the small trail should be closed before it be widened to more than three feet because of the impact it would have on trees, nesting birds, and riverside habitat.

3. Many of the alternatives that you showed us on Wednesday moved the trail away from the river bank, but in all cases where it did so, it moved the trail into the center of the Bosque. In the area at the north end of the bank lowering project(s), north of the power lines, there is only a narrow sliver of restored habitat between the trail and the river. This would seem to be an area where use of the trail would be highly likely to disturb birds and other animals that might otherwise utilize this area. If the trail were moved even a short distance away from the restored habitat, it would still provide a view of the river for users of the trail, while at the same time providing greater seclusion that might make the area much more usable for birds and other animals, without the need to move the trail into the center of the Bosque. Such an alternative should be included for public comment.

4. In all cases low impact signage should indicate to users at the beginning of each trail and periodically through out that wheelchair users are expected on the trail and to please moderate speed.

Richard Barish
Camilla Feibelman

(24)

From: M.J.

Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 8:09 PM

Subject: Feedback about the Bosque trail

Dear Mr. Schmader,

I am the person who weeds the labyrinth and volunteers for Open Space trail patrol in the I-40 to Campbell Road area of the Bosque. I attended your first information hike. I am deeply connected to this area and to the wildlife in it. It is sacred territory to me. So, the idea of a wide trail cutting through it is difficult for me, but since I assume it will happen, regardless of citizen protests, I would like to offer you my knowledge of where the wildlife tends to live and move in order to plot the trail in the best way possible.

My basic recommendations are:

- (1) to stay away from the river as much as possible, especially where the willow marsh has been created for Western willow fly-catchers, and where the woods are close to the trail,
- (2) to veer away from the coyote den at the power pole by the levee (go towards the river there), and
- (3) to veer away from the labyrinth (back towards the levee) to protect the quiet of that space. It might be nice to plant some bushes between the trail and the labyrinth as well, since it will be much less private with a trail on its level in the open area.
- (4) I would also like the trail to be more narrow and with a more natural surface, and as winding as possible, to help the bikes slow down. It is the speed of the bikes I worry about, in terms of how they affect the animals, and a wide almost-paved trail is going to allow bikes to go through that quiet animal corridor way too rapidly.

Attached is a longer version of these recommendations, giving the reasons why this corridor tends to have higher numbers of wild animals than the area north of Campbell Road, and also my offer to help plot it as carefully as possible. I hope you have time to read the longer version.

Please contact me if you would like to draw on my knowledge of the wildlife in this area.

Sincerely,

M.J. (Mary Jane) Zimmerman, PhD
Open Space volunteer and longtime walker in the Bosque

December 21, 2015

Dear Mr. Schmader,

I am writing to give you my feedback about the proposed trail in the Bosque from I-40 to Campbell Road. I attended your first public hike through this area. I am the person who weeds the labyrinth and who pointed out the coyote den (near the power pole by the levee). I also volunteer for Open Space and do Trail Patrol in this part of the Bosque.

I have been walking almost daily in the Bosque, mostly between Montano and I-40, for the past 15 years. Thus I am very familiar with the wildlife there and with how people use the trails. Right now it does break my heart that the city is planning to build a new and wider trail in the stretch between I-40 and Campbell Road, because I have experienced this as the wildest part of the I-40 to Montano area. North of Campbell Road there are already trails through the middle of the Bosque, between the river trail and the levee trail. South of Campbell road there is not a middle trail for most of the way. Maybe that is why the coyotes have their den there and the porcupines are found more often there, since the middle area there is a quiet corridor for animals.

I do think that a middle trail will interrupt the quiet of this region and cause many of the animals to move away.

My first preference would be to have the trail up on the levee for the stretch that is narrow, and then take it down into the Bosque again north of the labyrinth where the land area is wider. You could have educational signs explaining that it is to protect wildlife habitat, and tell people to look for coyote pups down below, because that is the area in which I have seen them running and playing.

However, I strongly suspect that such an option will not be allowed by the city. That said, I would prefer a middle trail to widening the river trail, because the river trail is so densely wooded and wild in places. It would be a shame to ruin its beauty. Right now it functions as a multi-use trail (except for wheelchairs), as I regularly see hikers, runners, mountain bikers, and horses on it. Also, because it is narrow and winding, the bikes do have to slow down somewhat, which to me is a good thing.

My basic recommendations are:

(1) to stay away from the river as much as possible, especially where the willow marsh has been created for Western fly-catchers, and where the woods are close to the trail,

(2) to veer away from the coyote den at the power pole by the levee (go towards the river there), and

(3) to veer away from the labyrinth (back towards the levee) to protect the quiet of that space. It might be nice to plant some bushes between the trail and the labyrinth as well, since it will be much less private with a trail on its level in the open area.

(4) I would also like the trail to be more narrow and with a more natural surface, and as winding as possible, to help the bikes slow down. It is the speed of the bikes I worry about, in terms of how they affect the animals, and a wide almost-paved trail is going to allow bikes to go through that quiet animal corridor way too rapidly.

I know that the mayor wants to make this trail to facilitate more people entering the Bosque. To me this is a good goal, but it brings up the question: what does it mean to truly enter the Bosque? I have been walking in this part of the Bosque for 15 years and I am still entering it. I am still learning what there is to see and hear there, and how to relate to it. I am concerned that a trail which makes it easy for humans to travel rapidly through the Bosque will not facilitate their encounter with the Bosque and the animals there at all. They might enjoy the beautiful trees, but won't really get to know them or get to know the ecosystem personally at all. They will continue to look at nature as a collection of objects, as a resource to be consumed for their enjoyment, rather than as a community of subjects with whom one must relate in a reciprocal way. In fact, their presence will probably scare away most of the larger mammals which would have been exciting creatures for them to see.

I am sad about this trail, which I feel will happen even if citizens protest. However, if it does have to happen, I would like to offer you my help in plotting it out in the best possible way to protect the wild creatures in this area as much as possible. (I know that all these creatures will adjust by finding other spots to roost and den, but it would be better for the ecosystem and for the people visiting to have them be able to stay there.)

If you are still deciding the possible routes, I would be happy to meet with you to show you exactly where the den is, where the porcupines tend to hang out, and where the Cooper's hawks nest. Maybe I could show you on an electronic version of the map if you have one.

I am trying to make the best of what I think is an unfortunate change in this part of the Bosque. It is a sad change to me, because of how I think it will affect my friends, the birds and animals.

But I think it is an inevitable change since most people do not think very carefully about what it means to really enter into a living ecosystem.

I hope you are not offended by my comments. I am trying to be helpful while at the same time staying true to my heart on this matter. Please do let me know if you want more details about where the animals and birds live.

Sincerely,

M.J. (Mary Jane) Zimmerman, PhD
Open Space volunteer and longtime walker in the Bosque.

(25)

From: Sara Meeks

Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 9:46 PM

Subject: Bosque Trail

Matt,

To lessen the human "footprint" in the Bosque and at the same time make it wheelchair accessible, please seriously consider a 3-foot-wide hard packed trail with turnouts, in planning further trail work. It would be infinitely more practical than the current City 6-foot-wide crusher fine trail. Also, to consider is the necessity of keeping the trail away from the shoreline, which is a habitat and river access for certain animals.

Thank you.
Sally Meeks

(26)

From: Julie Kutz

Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 10:16 PM

Cc: Richard Barish; Benton, Isaac; Mayor Berry

Subject: Comments for the Bosque Trail

I am writing, as a discouraged citizen, to offer my public input on the proposed bosque trail from I-40 to Montano. First, let me say I am discouraged because I really don't believe that the City wants to hear any public input that is contrary to what they have had planned for all along: a 6-foot wide trail paved with crusher fines that doesn't take into account any sensitive ecosystems or other environmental impacts or what the nature experience might be for the people who would use the trail.

That being said, I would urge that:

Number 1. I urge you to consider alternatives to the 6-foot wide trail with crusher fines. The trail should be a 3-foot-wide option with hard packed dirt and wider outtakes for passing, not the 6-foot wide trail that is planned. The 3-foot wide option would not only comply with best practices but would also reduce the environmental impacts on the bosque.

Number 2. Keep the trail away from environmentally sensitive habitat, including areas that have had bank lowering done; these areas contain habitat for listed species such as the SW willow flycatcher. Please move the trail away from these areas and farther from the river, it can be done such that views of the river could still be experienced.

Number 3. The north part of the proposed trail contain areas of an existing narrow trail that winds through old cottonwoods and denser vegetation. The trail that already exists should remain as it is, a narrow trail where one can truly experience the beauty and stillness of the bosque and the river, providing a wonderful nature experience. This experience would be lost with a 6-foot wide trail with crusher fines.

Thank you,
Julie Kutz

(27)

From: Judy Evans

Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2015 1:16 PM

Subject: Proposed Bosque Trail Improvement

I walk with the seniors from the Nature Center south. Putting down crusher fine does not make sense. Every fall when the leaves and twigs fall they will cover the crusher fine and be difficult to clean away without disturbing the crusher fine which will result in the crusher fine having to be replaced often.

(28)

From: Fred Houdek

Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2015 4:05 PM

Cc: Winter, Brad D.

Subject: Bosque Multi-use Accessible Path Project

Hi Matt,

You may not remember me. I have been on several of your walks looking at the trail developments both south and north of I-40. I introduced myself to on one walk. I'm Dara Johnson's father and moved here from Illinois 2 years ago. I lived along the Fox River west of Chicago. That section of river has over 20 miles of various trails on both sides and I regularly used them for both walking and biking.

I reviewed the alternatives published on the website. I like alternative 3 for several reasons. First it leaves the pedestrian trail more in liking to what most people on you walks preferred. Also, it leaves most of the pedestrian trail in tact. Second, it has connections to the river on the north end that would allow those in wheelchairs to have access to the river in a more secluded and quiet space. The entire northern part of that stretch of trail is very enjoyable to visit.

I hope at the public hearing on January 7th, the width and surface of the trail will be open for discussion also.

Fred Houdek

(29)

From: Sharon Gross

Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2015 10:50 PM

Subject: Rio Grande Bosque trail

Please allow comment and public input on trail design. Not only do many different jurisdictions have distinct roles and missions in the Bosque, but various sectors of the public have different visions. There is not one size fits all. I hope the trail extension will reflect various visions and not just be a duplicate of what was built in 2015.

We can love a thing too much. The basic health of Bosque trees, plants and wildlife needs to be nurtured for this vital area to survive and delight people. Flooding is essential for tree regeneration. Appropriate habitat and lack of intrusion are essential for wildlife.

I encourage reconsideration and public comment on the trail being a six foot wide, crusher fine trail. I much prefer a 3 foot wide trail with hard packed dirt and wider outtakes for passing. This design not only provides accessibility but also reduces environmental impacts. I urge the City to select this design for the trail.

I hope the City will move the trail away from the river edge in various places, especially where there is excellent wildlife habitat.

Sincerely, Sharon Gross

(30)

From: David Parsons

Sent: Tuesday, December 29, 2015 11:07 AM

Subject: Comments on Bosque Trail I-40 to Montañó

Re: Comments on Rio Grande Valley State Park, I-40 to Montañó Trail Project

Dear Dr. Schmader:

I am a Wildlife Biologist with B.S. and M.S. degrees in Wildlife Biology/Ecology and have worked as a career wildlife biologist for the past 40 years.

The biological importance and uniqueness of our 22-mile contiguous intercity bosque has been well established. The significance of this biologically rich natural amenity was recognized 32 years (3/15/1983) ago by the NM Legislature when it established by legislation the Rio Grande Valley State Park with a declared policy that **“The preservation, protection, and maintenance of the natural and scenic beauty of [the state park] is in the public interest.”**

It seems clear from the public’s response that an overwhelming majority of Albuquerque citizens support a plan that prioritizes ecological preservation and restoration with ecologically sensitive access improvements.

I remain unconvinced that a new constructed trail in the bosque is necessary. The existing gravel service road along the paved recreational trail combined with the paved section of the existing Aldo Leopold trail in this section seem to provide more than adequate public access. An improved trail from the end of the paved Leopold loop to the river providing access to view the river for people of all abilities, include those using wheel chairs would be an acceptable and desired improvement in my view.

For these reasons, my preference would be a “no action” alternative, with the exception of the recommendation above.

The enabling legislation establishing the Rio Grande Valley State Park and subsequent official public policies dictate that any developments within the bosque be constructed in the most ecologically sensitive manner possible. Thus, should the City decide to construct a new trail from I-40 to Montañño, nature protection should be the driving design criterion for the proposed trail. This criterion supports the following general design features:

1. A narrower trail is better than a wider trail. Six feet wide seems excessive. Three feet wide seems adequate and preferable.
2. Construction on existing trails is preferable to blazing a trail through existing vegetation or ecologically sensitive areas, except for existing trails in the riparian zone where ecological restoration should be the priority.
3. Trail location in the interior of the bosque is preferable to the more biologically diverse and productive riparian zone. Thus, trail construction near the riverbank should be avoided. Strategically located spur trails to a small clearing for river viewing are more ecologically sensitive.
4. Trail location should avoid impacting existing or planned habitat improvement or ecological restoration projects.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this document.

Sincerely,

David R. Parsons

Wildlife Biologist (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Retired)

(31)

From: Diane Bloom

Sent: Sunday, January 03, 2016 5:28 PM

Subject: Bosque Multi-Use Accessible Path Plan

As the Bosque is nature’s jewel in the middle of the City Of Albuquerque providing a unique natural world experience for its residents, my preference is for “no action”. However, if action is to be taken, I would propose that such action deemed appropriate would include the material used be those currently present as a firm surface and only 3-4 feet wide rather than that of the crusher fine, an artificial intrusion material in this setting. In addition, an environmental impact consideration must be the template for any consideration in all of the alternatives. The least disruptive is to be the imperative to maintain the nature experience. I posit the following question: Does this path project need to be rushed through this year or can the environmental study be done and proceed next year?

Diane Bloom

(32)

From: bhanson5

Sent: Monday, January 04, 2016 1:11 PM.

Cc: Sattler, James F.; Maestas, Jolynn M.; Brian Hanson

Subject: My comments on Crusher Fines, Los Duranes Trail

January 4, 2016

Mr. Schmader

See my attached comments - letter in Word and user count in Excel

I would like to see the bosque trail along the Rio Grande, Los Duranes Trail, remain as is. Many of the trail users I spoke with would like to see the trail remain natural. In addition, the trail would cause wildlife disturbance during and after construction.

Respectfully,
Brian Hanson

January 4, 2016

To: Albuquerque Open Space

From: Brian Hanson

Subject: Proposed New Crusher-fine trail between Interstate 40 and Campbell Road.

I object to the proposed work on the bosque trail, Los Duranes, along the Rio Grande. The proposed widening, grading, compressing and the addition of hard crusher fines would destroy a trail that is enjoyed by hikers, bikers and runners. I closely monitored the trail use during 11 hikes from November 25 through January 3 around 11 AM. During this winter period I counted 68 users during 10.5 hours of observation. Hikers accounted for 59 percent of the use followed by 26 percent bikers and 15 percent runners. This trail along the Rio Grande is centrally located for residents in Albuquerque and they would have to travel many miles to find a similar natural, high quality trail like this one.

During my hikes the hikers I talked to wanted to see the trail remain natural. A hard surface would be more difficult on the legs and feet. Personally I enjoy seeing animal tracks and a crusher-fine surface would be too hard to show tracks. As demonstrated by the data, bikers enjoy this natural surface also. When they want a hard flat surface, they bike on the adjacent paved levee trail.

Concerning wildlife, I suspect a crusher-fine trail would cause more disturbance to wildlife use than the present trail. I do agree that closure of rogue trails would slightly help, but my documented use of trails shows very little off-trail use. Other actions could greatly benefit wildlife such as removing tumbleweeds and planting shrubs. In addition, lowering the river banks to create shallow water habitats, creating water flow through areas in the bosque and ensuring the future of native cottonwoods by planting young ones would greatly benefit wildlife.

Respectfully,

Brian Hanson Brian has logged over 375 miles during 130 hikes in Albuquerque Open Space trails during 2014 and 2015. The trails included all Open Space properties. Brian's career as a fish and wildlife biologist spans over 33 years.

Winter User, Bosque Trail Between Campbell Rd and Interstate 40.

Date	Day	Trail Miles	Time Started	Observation Time (hr)	Hikers	Bikers	Runners	Unleashed Dogs	Leashed Dogs	Temperature at Start
Nov 25	Wednesday	2.5 8	10: 22 AM	0.8 8	5	0	0	0	1	60
Nov 27	Friday	2.5 8	10: 32 AM	0.9 3	0	1	1	0	0	43
Nov 29	Sunday	2.6 3	10: 24 AM	0.9 3	2	3	0	0	4	54
Dec 1	Tuesday	2.3 7	10: 27 AM	0.8 7	1	1	0	1	0	44
Dec 6	Sunday	2.4 2	10: 32 AM	0.9 0	3	5	2	3	0	38
Dec 9	Wednesday	2.3 6	10: 30 AM	0.8 8	0	2	0	0	0	52
Dec 14	Monday	2.3 9	10: 34 AM	0.8 8	1	0	0	1	0	34
Dec 17	Thursday	2.4 1	10: 34 AM	1.0 2	5	1	1	0	1	36
Dec 19	Saturday	2.4 1	10: 25 AM	1.0 2	5	1	2	2	1	38
Jan 2	Saturday	2.6 6	10: 25 AM	1.0 2	1 0	4	2	3	1	38
Jan 3	Sunday	2.4	10:	1.1	8	0	2	2	0	34

		1	27 AM	3						
Total		27. 22		10. 46	4 0	1 8	1 0	1 2	8	
Average Use per hour week days					2. 2	0. 9	0. 4			
Average Use per hour weekends					3. 6	2. 6	1. 6			
*About 2.47 miles of trail was hiked in both directions and users counted. * temperature was taken approx. 25 minutes before start time. Author Brian Hanson										

(33)

From: Jill Yeagley

Sent: Monday, January 04, 2016 1:14 PM

Subject: Re: Comments on the Proposed Bosque Trail from I-40 to Campbell Rd

The Bosque is a gem of Albuquerque and an important habitat for our animals and humans. I applaud the efforts of City officials to make it wheelchair-accessible and I encourage you to do so in a manner that least impacts the environment.

A 6-ft. wide trail is unnecessary and intrusive, as is using crusher fines! This area can be readily accessible with a 3 ft. trail that contains somewhat wider “passing areas” every so often and is comprised of wood chips or a similar substance. In addition, I encourage your office to utilize Alternative #3 which would set the trail apart from the river bank, with periodic branch trails leading to the river. I believe this would safeguard the habitat for wildlife while still affording we humans the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the river and the border area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jill Anne Yeagley

(34)

From: Rebecca Puck Stair

Sent: Monday, January 04, 2016 1:49 PM

Subject: Bosque trail improvement

Hi Matt!

Thanks for your efforts on the Bosque trail improvement project. Of the options presented, I personally prefer Alternative 3 because:

- 1) It revegetates the existing riverside trail (good for the riparian ecology)
- 2) It's furthest from the river

... could it be narrower than six feet (perhaps with pullouts)? And built with materials endemic to the environment?

Thanks!
Rebecca Puck Stair

(35)

From: akosanmacd

Sent: Monday, January 04, 2016 6:24 PM

Subject: extension of bosque trail

I have lived along and frequented the bosque of the Rio Grande through Albuquerque for the past 30 years. I have seen changes both good and bad. I have been actively following the "trail building" that began by the city 3 years ago. The following are comments i wish to submit for consideration on the bosque trail extension.

- 1- There should be no trail building and certainly no widening of trails close to the river's edge due to the fragility of that area. There are places where the trail could be moved from the river's edge and still allow for "a view of the river" without having to threaten or destroy habitat.
- 2- If the wildlife is of such concern, i.e. the construction of the trail must be finished before march, then why hasn't any habitat restoration been done?
- 3-Careful consideration must be made as to the impact of multi-use trails as bicycles sharing a trail with walkers, children, dogs, horses, has the likely potential of creating dangerous situations when any or all meet up.
- 4- If making a trail that is accessible for all citizens is important, then why are not other trail surfaces being investigated? I have been on wheelchair outings, sponsored by the sierra club and the bosque action team, where the hard pack trails were easier to negotiate than the crusher fine trails. Surely other agencies (eg: national parks) with extensive trail building knowledge of going through sensitive areas could be consulted and results made public.
- 5- Making trails useful for the physically challenged is great, but if these individuals can't get to the multi-use trail they are useless. For example, access by "kissing gates" are great for limiting bicycles and motorized vehicles, but they create quite a challenge for those in wheelchairs.
- 6- Back in march of 2015, as a result of the public outcry concerning the city's last trail building exercise, the city entered an agreement that established procedures for further work in the bosque. This addressed issues of allowing adequate time for public comment, adherence to best practice as far as scientific analysis and review, and for alternative ideas to be investigated and analyzed. this autumn the mayor reneged on this agreement. As the city continually states their concern for the public process and for the bosque, this seems to be in opposition to these concerns and fosters continued mistrust in the political

process. The agreement in no way would keep the city from realizing its *stated* goal of making the bosque accessible to the citizens of Albuquerque.

7- SWCA report continually asks for conservation, public education and further monitoring to determine IF there will be impacts and what those impacts are on the native habitat of the bosque. Surely a conscientious following of this report would be to actually gather information on the environmental impact of the first part of the trail (a few months is not enough time for a truly scientifically assessment to be made), analyze it, and make any adjustments that the analysis suggests.

Sincerely,
Sandria Cook

(36)

From: Guy Dahms

Sent: Monday, January 04, 2016 7:55 PM

Subject: Phase II of Bosque Trail.

The purpose of this e-mail is to provide my comments regarding the proposed "Phase II" portion of the Bosque Trail (Campbell Road to I-40).

I think the proposed 6 foot wide, "fine crusher" trail and surface design is satisfactory. I have walked on the existing trail ("Phase I"), and I appreciate the surface being of high enough quality to enable multiple modes of use. The 6 foot width (versus a narrower trail by a couple of feet) does not seem a significant effect on wildlife. I do not support the "no trail" alternative, as this effectively prohibits access.

Thank you for your time in listening to my opinion.

Sincerely,
Guy Dahms

(37)

From: teddy hoobler

Sent: Tuesday, January 05, 2016 12:49 PM

Subject: The Bosque trail

To Those With the Power to Make Decisions about Our Bosque:

This is a plea to do the barest minimum to change the Bosque at any of its numerous appealing points! The thoughtful public understands the need for a trail which encourages people to stick to a particular meandering area. There is the concern that folks not randomly trample the tender plants and animal burrows beneath the trees. A walking trail seems like a reasonable compromise between nature and human intrusion.

We do not endorse a six foot wide gravel covered trail -- a ridiculous width even for one wheel chair! A wheel chair access door or room is no where near six feet wide. Neither does a trail need to take up that width. And the gravel idea is preposterous in the Bosque. Walking on a natural earth and leaf-covered trail is part of the reason that we who love to walk in the Bosque wander through the trees. Why would anyone in his/her right mind cover the trail with crushed rock?! Only a person or crew without sensitivity to the environment would do a crude covering like crushed rock.

Please listen to those of us who have cherished the Bosque for over a generation! Some of us have worked to save it from fire; some of us have done what individuals can to save the Bosque for posterity; some of us appreciate your good intention to preserve the Bosque for all who love a natural setting; some of us have confidence that you will find a compromise for people, for wildlife, and for the naturalness of the river's edge.

A narrower trail with naturally compacted earth and fallen leaves remains appealing to nature lovers, and leaves the Bosque as authentic as always.

Thank you for asking for our input!
Dr. Elizabeth D. Hoobler

(38)

From: Mike Hanna

Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2016 9:19 AM

Subject: I-40 Bosque Trail Extension

I am writing as a concerned citizen about the trail extension (options) under review. As both an outdoor enthusiast and supporter of public recreation spaces, I urge you to exercise careful consideration of any environmental impact this trail extension will have on the Bosque. It is a local treasure for city folks to experience nature- water, fish, birds, trees and the big New Mexico blue sky. We can never recreate a place like this!!!
Yes, handicap access is necessary, but with minimal environmental impact. Everyone can still experience the Bosque this way.

Please implement alternative #4 or, worse case, alternative #3. These offer the best chance for preservation of the "best" of the Bosque for us and future generations.

Thank you for your consideration,
Mike and Liz Hanna

(39)

From: Renee Wolters
Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2016 12:20 PM
Subject: Bosque trail input

Mr. Schmader,

In the event that it is already decided that a trail will be built between I-40 and Campbell Rd:

I am totally opposed to Alternative 1. Environmental considerations are of great importance. I favor a narrower trail 3-4 feet that is composed of native materials hardened, as opposed to crusher fine that is harder for wheelchairs and wildlife to navigate.

I would favor Alternative 2A, which moves wide trail away from the river at the southernmost point, offering more protection to the riparian habitat and river life. It is important to preserve the original trail south of Campbell Road as it is—personal, private, and winding, which if there is an alternate trail, will be used more infrequently. Any attempt by the city to close this part of the trail will fail, as seen by Nature Center closure attempts of the riverside (original) trail north of Campbell Rd over the years. They gave up after much fence cutting and log moving and it is still in use.

Please use the comments and information received from the public to make an informed decision about the trail.

Thank you,
Renee Wolters

(40)

From: Gail Garber
Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2016 1:06 PM
Cc: Trevor Fetz; Gail Work
Subject: Hawks Aloft Comments to Proposed Bosque Trail/Path Improvements

Hi Matt,

Please see the attached letter with our comments.

Trevor and I are happy to meet with you to discuss them further if you would like to do that.

Cheers,
Gail

January 6, 2016
Matthew Schmader
City of Albuquerque, Open Space Division
1801 4th NW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Re: Construction of Bosque Trail from I-40 to Montano Rd.

Dear Dr. Schmader:

Please consider these comments from Hawks Aloft, Inc, when planning for additional bosque trail construction north of I-40 and south of Montano Road, in Albuquerque.

1 . We recommend that placement of new trails/paths, or improvements to existing trails/paths be kept at least 50 m from the banks of the Rio Grande in order to prevent additional erosion to the riverbank and to reduce disturbance to birds and other wildlife using the river and riverbank areas.

2. In order to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, it is essential that surveys be conducted for nesting birds prior to any construction. Initial surveys for early nesting species such as Great Homed Owl should occur beginning in mid-January and weekly thereafter. A final survey must occur within 48 hours of ground-breaking.

We have documented Great Homed Owls nesting within this reach of the Rio Grande bosque as early as mid-January in the past, most recently in 2015. We have a database that contains the coordinates for all stick nests in the bosque based on past work, most recently surveyed during the summer of 2015. Great Homed Owls do not build nests from scratch, but utilize nests that were previously constructed by other species. Thus, monitoring for nesting activity for Great Homed Owl should be rather straightforward.

We are willing to conduct these surveys using our experienced surveyors at no cost to the City. If an active nest is detected, it would be necessary to establish and maintain a 100 m buffer zone until the young fledge or the nest fails.

Please contact either Trevor or myself if you are interested in pursuing this option so we can coordinate survey areas with planned trail/path development.

Gail Garber

Executive Director

Trevor Fetz

Lead Avian Biologist

(41)

From: John Thomas

Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2016 4:13 PM

To: Benton, Isaac

Cc: 'Valerie Cole'; Barkhurst, Kathryn Carrie

Subject: Comments on the "Bosque Multi-use Accessible Path Project"

Matt-

I am commenting on the extension of the Crusher Fines Trail north of I-40.

First, someone is trying to make it sound like the new trail will "save" the bosque from the horrible rogue trails that are so harmful. We all know that is utter nonsense. The Bosque has been destroyed/transformed by approximately a century of abuse and mismanagement by the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District and the City of Albuquerque. The City has no meaningful plan for Bosque Restoration, as you well know. When it comes to developing a

meaningful plan for restoration of the Albuquerque Bosque, you could be one of the smartest guys in the room.

Second, when you allow cyclists on the 6' trail with poor shoulders and poor sight distance, it is dangerous to equestrians, pedestrians and disabled citizens. There have already been conflicts between speeding cyclists and other users on the stretch of the Crusher Fines Trail between Central and I-40.

You must not ignore the hazards to the public caused by cyclists on such a trail. **I am confident you and the PRD people have not done a proper safety analysis.**

Cyclists have the existing paved Bosque Trail, which is becoming increasingly dangerous for pedestrians. You should exclude cyclists from the new trail to prevent unnecessary injuries. I am a dedicated cyclist but I am also a hiker and a birdwatcher. You should do everything to protect the rights of equestrians, pedestrians, disabled citizens and nature lovers.

Excerpt from the 2015 GARTC Annual Report:

Crusher Fines Trail in the Albuquerque Bosque

In 2014, the COA/PRD designed and built the 6' Crusher Fines Trail in the Albuquerque Bosque. GARTC had previously recommended that PRD refrain from the construction until scientific studies showed that the construction would not do environmental damage to the Bosque. Our recommendation was ignored. Several GARTC members and friends toured the new trail and found it to be pleasant and more of a "nature trail" than a transportation trail. Some of the alignment and details were very pleasing and enjoyable. Some of the pruning was not adequate and the sight distance was not adequate for a trail that is open to equestrians, cyclists, walkers and rollers. In general, the 6' width is not adequate to safely accommodate a mix of cyclists and others. Professional transportation engineers recommend that the minimum width be 10'. This is in the **2012 AASHTO Guide for The Development of Bicycle Facilities**. One participant at the December 15, 2015 GARTC meeting said that the PRD deliberately made the Crusher Fines Trail narrow, winding and with limited vision (sight distance). The idea was that, this will slow down cyclists and make the Trail safer. This is "crackpot engineering" that flies in the face of experience and sound civil engineering practices. The chair recommends that the Crusher Fines Trail and its extension, if it is not constructed according to sound engineering recommendations, be limited to non-cyclists to protect the walking and ADA users. The trail was designed by people who are not licensed civil engineers with transportation engineering experience. Some may have some landscaping training and licenses. This does not make them civil engineers. Licensed civil engineers may be involved peripherally on some details but **there was no engineering oversight of the project by licensed civil engineers**. One City official implied that the reason for this was to save money. It appears that the City's willingness to design and build multi-use trails on the cheap contributes to the Albuquerque's poor rating of 31 points out of 100 (American League of Bicyclists).

The GARTC Equestrian Representative makes the following comments:

*"As the GARTC member currently representing equestrians, I have represented the New Mexico Horse Council in trails issues in the state and also represented the Coalition of State Horse Councils to the Recreation Committee of the American Horse Council. We are well aware that many multiple-use trails are designed by non-engineers in other states. As regards Item 5, the Crusher Fines Trail in the Albuquerque Bosque, equestrians who attended the open meetings **requested** a trail less than ten feet wide, with a soft surface, and without a long sight line, which they felt would discourage speed. At the "group walk" to check the finished portion of the trail,*

the fact that bicyclists threaded their way through the group without warning, and two of them actually collided with pedestrians, proves this point. This was not intended as a transportation trail. Equestrians agree with the Chair's recommendation that the Crusher Fines Trail and its extension be limited to non-cyclists to protect the other users, but do not anticipate this outcome."

Sincerely,
John Thomas

(42)

From: Chris Bauer

Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2016 4:24 PM

Subject: COMMENTS: Bosque Trail, I-40 to Campbell Road

Dear Mr. Schmader:

I have reviewed the plans and options for extending the Bosque trail from I-40 to Campbell Road on the CABQ.GOV website. All of the options have their pros and cons, and none of the options presents a "best solution." The "best solution" probably involves some characteristics from several of the proposed options. Therefore, I am going to recommend some "guidelines" for your consideration and implementation.

- **Primary Driver.** The primary driver for any Bosque trail planning should be environmental considerations. To the extent possible, any changes should improve the Bosque's riparian environment for its flora and fauna.

- **Trail Width.** The only trail width under consideration appears to be 6 feet. Consider a trail that is primarily 4 feet wide with periodic widths of 6 feet. For example, alternate between a 4-foot wide trail for approximately 200 yards and then go to a 6-foot wide trail for approximately 50 yards. This will reduce environmental impact and still provide sufficient room for users of the trail to pass each other (in the same or opposite directions). This should also reduce construction costs. Consider having one or more benches constructed of natural materials (e.g., planks on top of log sections) placed along the wider sections.

- **Trail Composition.** The only surface being proposed is crusher fines. A more natural surface is more appropriate for the Bosque environment. Consider using existing materials currently in place, mixed with other materials to provide a stable surface. The surface materials should be sloped to promote water runoff and prevent standing water.

- **Trail Proximity to Rio Grande.** The trail should be well away from the river bank. It should not be next to the river bank for several reasons. A trail "away from the river":
 - Reduces impacts on the riparian environment and wildlife.
 - Is less susceptible to erosion and flooding.
 - Reduces the use of the river as a "trash bin" and "outhouse" by people and their pets.

- **Side Trails to River.** The main Bosque trail should have several side trails or spurs that lead from the main trail to the river bank. These should be no more than 3-4 feet wide with a more open area immediately next to the river.

- **Existing “Unofficial” Trails and Paths.** Any existing trails should be closed. These trails and the areas along them should be restored to their natural environments.

I believe that these guidelines could be implemented by modifying and combining several of the options presented on the web site .

I also have several comments and recommendations that are more general in nature.

- Any actions involving the Rio Grande Bosque should be consistent with the NM State legislation and implementation guidance that established the Rio Grande Valley State Park. Aldo Leopold’s vision for the Rio Grande Bosque should be an important consideration.

- Information on the CABQ. GOV web site should include cost estimates, specific funding sources, approval process and status, and construction schedules.

- The web site should clearly address the “public process” to be used to develop and implement the city’s plans for the Bosque and trails in the Bosque. This process should have the agreement of appropriate city officials and members of the Bosque Action Team (BAT). The process should be consistent with proposed construction schedules. The process should have the concurrence of the city administration and city council. It would be nice to avoid the “he said/she said” partisan back-and-forth among city officials and city council members that has occurred over the last several months.

- As Bosque planning moves into the future, plans need to be established to address the following:

-- Removing the many “groves” of tamarisk/salt cedar in the Bosque. This invasive plant uses a lot of water that could better be used for other purposes, especially in this drought-prone desert environment where water is scarce.

-- Removing the “jetty jacks” along the river bank.

I thank you for your time and your attention to these comments and recommendations. I believe it is possible to find compromise solutions that will meet city objectives as well as satisfy environmental considerations.

Chris Bauer

(43)

From: Martha Somerville

Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2016 5:42 PM

Subject: Bosque trails

Hello Matt,

My name is Martha Somerville, and I am writing to you to voice my opinions about the Bosque trails plans. I am a physical therapist who works with people who have disabilities, so I am, of course, concerned about having appropriate access for all people. But I am also an advocate for our land and wildlife and for making decisions based on maintaining a healthy ecosystem.

I have gone on an outing with the BAT in which we all tried out using a manual wheelchair over gravel and crusher fines, and we all found that this was not only exhausting, but also downright impossible at times. Wheelchair wheels tend to struggle for traction over these surfaces. Over gravel, as was installed at the access points (don't know what they're called, but they are kind of like a turnstile), it is virtually impossible to move through independently, even for the strongest members of our group. I am concerned that the city doesn't seem to really GET what kinds of trails are appropriate for those who use wheelchairs, not only in terms of the surface material, but also in terms of the grade and the drainage. Certain paths led to an incline that was quite muddy at the bottom. On the overlook we went to, the wheels of the manual wheelchair I was in got stuck in a large crack. I would have been in big trouble had I been alone and unable to stand. So, I guess my point is that I think that a more thorough study needs to be done to determine the very best trails.

I do not think that a 6 foot trail is in anyone's best interest. The wider the trail, the greater the environmental impact, and the better the chance that people on bicycles will zoom along, which makes it more dangerous for pedestrians and for those using wheelchairs, canes, or walkers. Also, it is not ecologically sound to have formal trails so close to the river. The trails need to be farther away to protect the ecosystem at the river's edge.

Finally, I really like the idea of trails made of compacted, stabilized earth/clay. It is better for wildlife and makes a smoother, easier surface for everyone to move over.

Matt, thank you so much for doing all that you do and for listening to our comments. We appreciate your efforts!!

Best regards,
Martha Somerville

(44)

From: Jonathan Briggs

Sent: Thursday, January 07, 2016 12:02 PM

Subject: Bosque to be built from I-40 to Campbell Rd

Hello:

As an Albuquerque resident and someone who has walked along the Bosque Trail many times, I support the number three option of those the city has proposed for an extension of the Bosque Trail from I-40 to Campbell Road.

This option moves the trail away from the riverbank, which will help preserve the riparian area along the river, but it also includes a few "drop down" trails to the river. Overall, a good compromise.

Jonathan Briggs

(45)

From: bpdam

Sent: Thursday, January 07, 2016 12:54 PM

Subject: Comment on Phase 2

Dear Sirs,

I am looking forward to this public meeting! I have been a resident of Albuquerque for most of my life and I fully support the improvements being done. Especially on the Bosque Multi-use Trails. I will admit that I have had some difficulty finding a clear definition for "multi-use trail", and also for the term " non-automotive". Perhaps you could help me with this?

Thank you for reading my email.

Have a great day!

Brian D.

(46)

From: Panos

Sent: Thursday, January 07, 2016 3:19 PM

Subject: New bosque trail

Hi and thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

With the recent experience of "trail domestication" in the bosque I personally believe that putting a dirt road in place of a trail contradicts the purpose of making nature more accessible to the public, as interventions of this kind take a lot away from the "nature" experience.

I believe that the bosque is very accessible as it is, and the existing trails are more than sufficient.

In addition, cyclists are able to travel very fast on the new trails which makes it scary for little kids etc. This could be prevented with a looser surface, but then no one including little kids etc would ever be able to ride a bike on it again.

Please don't turn the bosque into a city park. Spend your money and resources on keeping it clean and healthy.

Us people that like the outdoors do not need roads through our forests. And that's what those new trails feel like.

Thank you.

(47)

From: Carl Smith (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

I think the no action option is best

(48)

From: Thomas March (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

I think less should be spent on a new trail and more should be spent on improving the space: removing elms, Russian olive, and tamarisk; improving river banks; increasing floral biodiversity by paying attention to and maintaining what's there already. Get rid of the tumbleweed and the goat-heads. Put some trash cans out.

Nevertheless, monument to politicians' egos seems to be a done thing. I'd vote for 2A as the lesser of all the evil choices.

(49)

From: Susan Larsen (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

I would suggest NO ACTION at this time.

However, if anything else happens:

6 feet wide is ridiculous—way too wide. And soil stabilizers should be used.

The fractionalization of the Bosque benefits no one and the protection and preservation (of the Bosque) is mandated by law.

There are many areas to recreate in ABQ.

Let's MINIMIZE OUR (HUMAN) IMPACT!!

(50)

From: Robert B. Grove (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

1. Prefer a narrower trail (4') width, periodic passing areas
 2. Surface should be constructed to drain (not hold water like the existing trail from Central to I-40)
 3. If Alternative 1 or 2A, B, C, D is chosen, make a spur to the levee along the existing trail that comes out at the 2 mile post on the levee (will make loops about same length as south of I-40)
 4. Design the trail to slow down the bicycles (speeding bicycles are a hazard to walkers)
 5. If Alternative 2 (A-D) is used, leave existing trail open to pedestrians.
-

(51)

From: Don Meaders (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

Most appropriate one is either the No Action alternative or Alternative #3 also a 4 ft wide trail with passing bulb outs for passing is not allowed. Many wheelchair users find that the hard packed dirt is easier to roll on.

A hard surface trail is not good for horses and a 6 ft trail would lead to high speed for bicycles.

(52)

From: Kathryn Mitchell (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

I have been walking in the Bosque quite a lot lately and I enjoy the natural trails that are already there. I would like to postpone construction until the fall after the nesting period or indefinitely until more biological studies can be made.

I have walked on Phase I and I don't like it! It is very hard on ones body because of the rock! I am also concerned with the speeding bikes!

(53)

From: Susan Selbin (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

1. No 6' trail.
2. No crusher fine.
3. No action now.
4. Study area scientifically and protect wildlife.
5. Trail does not need to be continuous.

Comments notes as speakers presented views:

*I am opposed to crusher fine for trails.

*I am opposed to a 6' wide trail.

Re: Options 2A and 2B— Comments about the coyote den and labyrinth so those areas should be avoided for the middle section. Winding the trail is a good idea. I prefer 2A over 2B with the cautions noted but believe the time line is too short for a good plan.

*Keep bikes off the trail; keep bikes on the paved trail, and provide some secure areas for bikes to be parked if riders want to walk to the trail.

*Looking at all 16 miles of the trail is important.

*Trails should wind and loop away from sensitive areas.

*I oppose plan 1—too close to the river.

** WAIT! I'm definitely opposed to the proposed timeline and start of construction on Feb 15. Wait until next year when the project is better designed and an adequate environmental study is conducted. Science needs to figure in design. No Action.

*Education! Agree that river needs to be cleaned as a priority over building trails.

*Do it right! In the absence of an agreed plan, leave trails as they are. Eventually move some trails way from the river after a scientific review of the Bosque.

(54)

From: Jewell Young (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

- Any trail should be made of the soil in place, stabilized and contoured to make a surface.
 - The trail should be 3 or 4 feet wide, not 6 feet. There can be periodic wider areas for passing.
 - Trails should be for pedestrians and horses and wheelchairs only. Bikes should not be permitted.
 - The trail along the river bank should be closed.
 - Don't use the crusher fine material.
 - #3 appears to be the best.
-

(55)

From: Attila Bality (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

- plan needs to address how closed sections will stay closed. The “public” will remove barriers.
- could BAT help with educational campaign. Instill Leave No Trace ethics. Develop educational / interp signage.
- ALT 3 PREFERRED WITH MODIFICATION. Spur trails to river are a good idea. However people WILL connect the spurs with the existing riverside path.
- consider a narrow natural surface trail pedestrian only loop to get people riverside. The spurs would not be crusher fine improved.
- or construct short riverside loop via spurs that is wheelchair accessible.
- increase sinuosity of path to reduce rider speeds. Incorporate choke points to

(56)

From: Sam Karns (written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

I hike the bosque once or twice a week every week of the year. When I saw the road-like trail being plowed through the bosque north of Central it sickened me. Doesn't the city know anything about the bosque, don't they care? I went to the Jan 7, 2016 meeting and the “alternatives” prepared by the city were all just plans for the wanton destruction of the environment. These options were like asking someone what they would prefer, cancer, polio, or AIDS. The crowd at the meeting (people who love the bosque) was overwhelmingly opposed to the road-like trail through the bosque. The city seems to be ignoring these people. This points to the most disturbing aspect of the whole process – it is undemocratic. The people need to be listened to !

Cordially,
Sam Karns
p.s. Cooper's hawks nest in February

(57)

From: Pia Gallegos

Sent: Thursday, January 07, 2016 8:10 PM

Subject: Bosque

Mr. Schrader:

The best option for existing wildlife is NO ACTION because wildlife has already adapted to existing trails and paths of compacted soil, and new trails and new materials will be disruptive to the natural environment.

The best option is NO ACTION because the underlay for a crusher fine trail is synthetic material that will disturb the ecological balance of the area.

NO ACTION is the best option because shamefully, the only trail design being considered by the City is 6 feet wide and takes a 7-foot cut. This is way too wide for the purpose of pedestrians and wheelchairs and would encourage too much pedestrian and bicycle traffic. This would be disruptive to wildlife.

NO ACTION is the best option because stabilized, natural soils consistent with the bosque's level of development can be used instead of crusher fines which are foreign to the bosque, and the City is not considering this better option.

NO ACTION will still allow wheelchair accessibility since the wheelchair study by Sarita Streng found that there are lots of trails in the Bosque that are already accessible and simply require repair and maintenance.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City has backed out of its Agreement with interested parties, and this abbreviated process is not sufficient to provide meaningful public and scientific input.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City is rushing this through, and there is no need to rush this through.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City is disingenuous since it is not planning for sufficient restoration and re-vegetation in tandem with its trail proposals.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City has failed to take into account the coyote den and the porcupine habitat along the trail.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City has failed to monitor any mammal life or to create a scientific impact statement prior to creating its trail design.

NO ACTION is the best option because there are already five trails from I-40 to Campbell Road.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City's plan for a creating a new trail will require that wildlife will have to re-adapt or disappear.

NO ACTION is the best option because the bosque is one of the longest wildlife corridors through an urban center in North America.

Perhaps at a future time, the City can repair and stabilize the existing paths. But for now, NO ACTION.

Pia Gallegos

(58)

From: Paula Reiss

Sent: Thursday, January 07, 2016 11:17 PM

Subject: Phase II of Bosque trail

Mr. Schmader,

I support making the bosque accessible to those in wheel chairs, to those with mobility issues and to families with children in strollers. I do NOT, however, support pushing forward with Phase II of the Bosque trail until there has been further monitoring of the Phase I section of the trail and until greater consideration is given to the impact of the next phase of the trail construction.

Yesterday I walked a section of the trail , south from the Nature Center to nearly I-40. For most of the area, the trail is inches from the river. I cannot imagine how heavy foot and bike traffic so

close to the river would not damage the fragile bank and impact the wildlife living or visiting there.

I love to walk to the river and sit. I do not need, however, to walk next to the river for any great distance. I would like to see a few accessible spur trails in this section of the bosque that would bring people of all abilities from their cars to the river. There are already several trails through this area, that run parallel to the river. We don't need another one.

Here are my feelings on the proposed trail:

We do not need another trail for bikes. One exists along the levee. If someone on a bike wants to get close to the river, they can walk their bike to it via a number of already existing trails. I do that.

We do not need a much wider trail. A trail 4 feet wide would adequately accommodate a wheel chair. Please consider a trail no wider than 4 feet.

It is my understanding that there are ways of stabilizing soil so that use of crusher fines would not be necessary. Crusher fines do not visually fit into the environment. I have been building and maintaining trails for over 25 years. When building a trail there are two important aims: the safety of those using it and the trail's visual blending and compatibility with its surroundings. I hope you will consider alternatives to a crusher fine surface.

Of the alternatives that are being proposed I could most easily accept Alternative 3. Alternative 3 does something none of the other alternatives do: it proposes spur trails that can bring people to river. For the most part, people want a shorter way to get to the river. The spur trails will provide better access. The other alternatives seem to suggest only a few points where the trail can be accessed.

Alternative 3 also brings the trail away from the fragile river bank to more stable areas within the bosque.

If possible, I suggest that the trail, at least in sections, be brought even closer to the Riverside Drain and perhaps run along the levee.

If it is deemed desirable, perhaps there could be short sections of accessible trail running close to the river from the spur trails. The riverside trail should NOT be continuous, however. A continuous trail encourages faster moving traffic. The river bank is a place to move slowly and to stop, to look and to listen. Those activities would be very hard to do on a six foot wide trail filled with bikes and runners.

Please do not push forward with this project without taking time to consider modifications to the alternatives presented and the impact this trail will have.

Thank you,
Paula Reiss

(59)

From: Judith Phillips

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 6:44 AM

Dr Schmader~~

I attended last evening's meeting and declined to speak as I'd just be repeating parts of what many others said. The bottom line is why the rush to make changes. Granted the area in question is one of the most disturbed stretches, but it still seems wise stewardship to monitor the impact the first phase has had on that area before plunging headlong into a second.

All of the alternatives have drawbacks. A scenario that keeps most of the traffic away from the riverbank except in a few isolated places, and away from known habitat seems most prudent. Given the proposed timeline, it does appear that you'll do what you think will work when you are able to do it, no matter what input you receive, but I hope this time Open Spaces crews actually do the work so there's some control over the process.

Thanks

~~Judith Phillips

(60)

From: Brian

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 7:09 AM

Subject: Fwd: Bosque trail.

After attending the presentation of all the alternative for the trail last night, I favor no action. This whole trail scheme seems to have been done with little thought to the way it will affect the ecosystem of the Bosque, or enhance the wild feel of the place. It's whole purpose seems to be to move as many people through as quickly as possible in as many ways as you can squeeze onto one fat trail. And there have been no improvements in accessibility in the meantime. Everything seems to have been done and decided in secrecy and haste, in order to show that this do-nothing mayor can actually accomplish something, even though you have to destroy the original intent of our precious State Park.

Brian Cobble

(61)

From: Michael O'Hearn

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 8:00 AM

Subject: Bosque Trail

I have recently relocated last year from California to the South Valley. Last summer during the heat wave I became aware of two incidents involving coyotes in the area, one involving the killing of young lambs and the other of missing cats.

I attended the Public Meeting yesterday evening regarding the Bosque. I was appalled by the disregard shown by the city to legitimate environmental and ecological concerns.

Those of us who are Christian or Jewish have an obligation to exercise proper stewardship in safeguarding our earth entrusted by God, graciously receiving the good things she has to offer, not exploitation for personal gratification or gain. The city apparently does not comprehend good stewardship and is hell bent on going forward with a proposed destructive project beginning on February 15. Their only concern is to build a wide, high speed wheelchair racing strip along the Rio Grande not adaptable to existing ground conditions.

When acts are done which upset the ecological balance, you can be sure that detrimental effects will follow for which Albuquerque~os will hold government accountable.

Please also consider that humans are part of the environment, and the goal should not be returning to a pristine world existing before the arrival of the Spanish and other Europeans. Rather, we must exercise reasonable care and common sense showing respect for Creation.

Michael O'Hearn

(62)

From: Mike Contreras

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 8:23 AM

Subject: Bosque Trail Meeting

Matt,

It was a pleasure meeting with you last night at the Bosque Trail meeting. Attached are some of my comments for you to consider.

I think you and the City are doing a great job in trying to preserve these City assets, and I encourage you to never give up in your efforts. I hope I was of help to you last night.

Please contact me if I can ever be of assistance.

Best Regards,

Michael Contreras

(written comment form from public meeting of January 7, 2016)

1. Need trails mid-way, quarter way to levee road.
2. Need to get rid of bicyclists in Bosque.
3. Need to make it a rule that people stay on trails only.
4. Need signs telling people to stay on trails only.
5. If you keep all people on trails, the rest of the bosque would be protected. In order to protect the bosque, you need to limit access, and the way to do it is to keep people on pathways, and at the same time allow people to enjoy this natural resource.

(63)

From: Kent Zook

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 10:06 AM

Subject: Bosque Trail

Dear CABQ,

I live in Don Harris' district. I support the Bosque Trail plan with the least impact on the natural environment. The trail should be as small as possible while accommodating folks in wheelchairs. I also want the Mayor to work with the stakeholders like the environmental groups to work out a mutually acceptable plan.

sincerely,

Kent Zook

(64)

From: Katie Stone

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 10:17 AM

Subject: The Bosque Trail - Comment

Dear Dr. Matt,

I live near the Bosque - between Candelaria and Griegos on the west side of Rio Grande Blvd. I use the Bosque trails and paths on a regular basis. I'm a big fan of visiting the river, meditating by the waterside and enjoying the wildlife there.

I'm also a big fan of disability access. I advocate for kids with disabilities in New Mexico and feel strongly that New Mexico could do a lot better for disabled people by having more options in our recreation areas for folks confined to wheelchairs or who need ADA compliant pathways.

That's why I'm in favor of the trail from i-40 all the way north as far as the City would like to take it. My friends in wheelchairs tell me the crusher fines make a great surface for them, and I know from my own experience that they are aesthetically pretty nice too.

My only concern is what you've probably heard from others ... I am concerned that the Mayor will use this trail to advance his other agenda - to commercialize the riverbanks ala San Antonio, Texas. I think everyone (but the Mayor, perhaps) agrees that one of the greatest things about Albuquerque is our many wild places. The Bosque is no exception. The wildness has created a special place for animals and humans to be together without the distraction and destruction of commerce. I hope you'll help make sure this pathway does the minimal amount of tree removal and damage to the wild-ness of the Bosque and that you'll consistently protect the Bosque from commercial development.

Thanks for taking my comments into consideration as you finalize the plans. I'm looking forward to a river walk with my friends who are disabled.

Best regards,
Katie Stone

(65)

From: Victoria Gallegos
Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 10:24 AM
Subject: Bosque

Mr. Schmader:

The best option for existing wildlife is NO ACTION because wildlife has already adapted to existing trails and paths of compacted soil, and new trails and new materials will be disruptive to the natural environment.

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NO ACTION is the best option because the bosque is one of the longest wildlife corridors through an urban center in North America.

Perhaps at a future time, the City can repair and stabilize the existing paths. But for now, NO ACTION.

Victoria Gallegos

(66)

From: Sara Vance

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 10:55 AM

Subject: Bosque Path Comments

To Whom It May Concern,

As a member of the Albuquerque Garden Center, Chairperson for the Xeric Garden Club Education Committee and Sierra Club, I am so disappointed in Mayor Berry's actions regarding the Rio Grande. He chose to override the earlier decision to wait till spring to cut a path. It seems that Berry wants to complete this project without the consensus of the other groups who worked hard to find a compromise.

My suggestions are that the new proposed path should not follow the river banks. As we know, many of the wildlife have nests and find their food as well. To me the Rio Grande is unique and natural with its swelling of water over its banks and its very dry spells with very little of any current. But by grading and modifying the trail, there will be damage to the wildlife and also to our river banks.

Next why cut out six feet or so for the trail when it is more natural to plow a smaller, more intimate trail? As you may notice, I am using words such as cut, plow, plunge to show how damaging this will be.

Please stop the plans until spring when a compromise can be met. I did read in the *Journal* that Brad Winters and others questioned "What is the rush?" I agree. Let us wait.

Sincerely,
Sally Vance

(67)

From: Jonathan Siegel

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 11:02 AM

Subject: Bosque Trail

I was disappointed that the meeting of January 7 ended abruptly as it did at 7:20 pm. I would have hoped that with the various City officials in attendance, the moderator would not have shut down the meeting, but would have instead allowed the final (announced) 7 speakers to give their perspectives, and then perhaps concluding remarks from City Administration would have been appropriate. As it was, I was among the last to leave (at 7:45, having returned to pick up a forgotten hat). The room was neatly cleaned up and dark, and the Community Center was still in use with basketball players and exercisers hard at play. We needn't have adjourned so early.

I had in fact signed up to speak, and had I made remarks they would have included the following:

- I support none of the proposed plans as presented.

- I would support a new and slower process being re-initiated to embrace the concerns enumerated, with the possible outcomes that:
 - a trail might be built or
 - no trail might be built or
 - a series of smaller trails be constructed
- I do not support crusher fines now understanding that a stabilized trail of on-site/local earth can be consolidated IF DESIRED
- I do not support a 6' wide trail in the proposed locations
 - I am a regular bicyclist, and have used the trail constructed last year between Central and I-40
 - I will no longer use that trail by bicycle, as I have been told that:
 - my usage is detrimental to wildlife, mostly unseen to me in my swift passage
 - my bicycle usage is detrimental to the experiences of pedestrians (I have not encountered an equestrian)
 - I do not believe that extension of the system is required by the ADA, and I believe that the experiences available to disabled citizens which are presently constructed are adequate for those with special needs
 - I am an intermittent caregiver for a brother who is disabled and who relies on the ADA
 - In any case, I believe that 6' is too wide, is insensitive to the location, and would only promote mis-use and over-use much as an over-wide city street promotes speeding
- If the City is interested in development of this part of the Bosque, I believe the most pressing needs would be trail closures and environmental restoration

The statement was made January 7 (by Dr. Schmaeder) that the proposed project and the problem is managing people. I couldn't agree more.

The City has an asset which is unrivaled among US cities. It is said that "*to a hammer, everything looks like a nail*". We need not be hammers.

Development is not the only option.

Jonathan Siegel

(68)

From: anthony@anella

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 11:03 AM

Subject: Comments on the I-40 to Campbell Rd Bosque Path

Please see below and attached.

Comments on the Bosque Path Extension: I-40 to Campbell Road

1. Postpone the construction of the extension until the design is based on ecological science. For example, the coyote den, the porcupine habitat, the Great Horned Owl nesting area as well as any other relevant ecological considerations that exist in this stretch of the *bosque* should be reflected in the design of all alternative trail alignments.

2. Postpone the construction of the extension until the first phase of the trail from Central to I-40 is complete.
3. Any new trail should be no wider than 3' – 4' with wider areas built periodically to allow citizens in wheel chairs to pass.
4. Any new trail should be constructed with existing natural materials amended and contoured as required to provide a firm, stable surface that complies with ADA requirements.
5. Of the proposed alternatives, I prefer Alternate 3 --- **BUT ONLY IF** the path is moved to the top of the levee to the east of the *bosque* with periodic east-west spurs down into the *bosque* similar to those shown on Alternate 3, and **ONLY IF** the design of these spurs are based on ecological science and comply with points 2-4, above.

Anthony Anella

(69)

From: Dave Bexfield

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 12:21 PM

Subject: Comments re: ADA Bosque Trail

Matt, just wanted to relay how thoughtful and inclusive each of the three trail alternatives the city has proposed are. While Alternative 1 might be the most beneficial for me personally as someone who is disabled, it may not be the most beneficial for the bosque as a whole. Alternatives 2 and 3 are both fantastic options and I'd be happy with versions of either. My only suggestion would be with making the end of the spurs on Alternative 3 that conclude at the river larger than the trail to allow more room for bicycles to turn around and for more than a few people to enjoy the river at a time. My trike actually takes the entire width of a street to turn around, but I can do a three point turn with a bit more room than the proposed 6-foot trail width. Also, consider the idea of a couple benches at each spur (or not, if too intrusive).

After hearing opinions of others at the meeting, Alternative 3 with its spurs does have some intriguing benefits, perhaps appealing to the broadest of public concerns (at least of those presented). It still allows access to the river while minimizing bosque impact, directly addressing those most concerned about wildlife. The multiple spurs also offer a greater opportunity for potential solitude, as people traveling the trail are unlikely to go down each one every visit. And those same spurs encourage one to stop and watch nature without worry of a cyclist motoring by at high speed. And lastly it gives the sense of a fair proposal, giving all equal opportunities at access (unlike the No Action option, which directly discriminates against the disabled).

Again, fantastic proposals and kudos on you and your colleague's patience. For instance, I was surprised at the number of people bemoaning the necessity of a 6-foot-wide trail while insisting that a narrower 3-foot-trail was a) better for the bosque and b) fine for the disabled if the soil was amended. This would be true only if the trail was restricted to travel in one direction and no passing was allowed. And it never rains. Otherwise people passing or encountering oncoming traffic will have to step (or roll) several feet to either side of the trail to allow passage, ultimately turning that 3-foot-wide trail into a 9-foot-wide trail, further intruding on habitat that lover's of the bosque are hell-bent on protecting. Puzzling.

Thanks for all your team does. Cheers,
Dave Bexfield

(70)

From: Skelly, Michael F

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 12:23 PM

To: Schmader, Mathew F.

Subject: Bosque Multi-Use Accessible Path Project (Phase II) I-40 to Campbell Road

Mr. Matt Schmader,

Thank you for your presentation last night on the proposed alternatives for the Bosque Path Project (Phase II), and thanks for soliciting our input for this project.

Here's my 2 cents:

- I've enjoyed using the existing trail in the study area for the past 30 years. It's nice to have a connection to the Rio, but I can see great need for improving access along this trail.
- More recently, I've enjoyed using the newly installed/maintained trail south of I-40 (Phase I).
- I believe the 6 ft wide, raised crusher fine material on the Phase I portion of the trail is an appropriate surface. I'm not sure what all the "anti-crusher fine" fuss is all about . . .
- My personal preference for Phase II is Alternative 2D, although the other Alternative 2 ideas would be acceptable.
- I also believe that the City should move forward on this work in a timely fashion in order to establish the path before the April bird nesting season.

Good luck with your selection process and implementation of the project.

Regards,

Michael Skelly

(71)

From: SCOTT HALE

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 12:27 PM

To: Schmader, Mathew F.; Riordan, Michael J.

Cc: Adrian Oglesby; John Kelly; Karen Dunning; Mike Hamman; Eric Zamora

Subject: Bosque Trail River Path Extension

Matt/Michael-

I've included prior email below requesting opportunity to participate both as a North Valley resident and also as Chair of CABQ Bicycle Advisory Committee. I found it stunning tonight to learn that we are prioritizing pedestrian only paths without even rudimentary discussion or representation with bicycle community/interests to address issues previously identified. As recently as late November during discussions about mastication project trail closure, I was assured via email that we "had time". Guess we didn't as I never heard a word back and didn't even know about the site visits until the Thursday before the last one. Even then, I didn't learn

of this from city, but from a concerned community member that belonged to an organization the city must have a better working relationship with city than it's own Advisory Committees.

I have a few brief comments resulting from meeting last nice but first let me say I thought the personal/professional attacks were inappropriate. Understandable based on the approach the City chosen to implement this project, but I wish our approach to what should be an outstanding, low impact, unobtrusive community opportunity would not have set the stage for anger, resentment and the obvious animosity. I would also like to further clarify that outstanding community opportunity comment by referencing the thousands of miles I have spent in places that have already implemented successful urban wildland parks, trail networks and open access facilities: Rock Creek Park almost in the middle of DC, Mississippi Riverside forest and parks in Minneapolis, the 5000 acre Forest Park with over 70 miles of multi use trails darn near in the middle of downtown Portland, the hundreds of miles of multi-use trail facilities in Riverside Park and Centennial Trail in Spokane, Boise Greenbelt, Austin, Seattle, Calgary..... Over the years I also remember a few that restricted access and how poorly that has worked out (Portland, despite being considered bike mecca, just did it again this year @ River View Nature Area and the results are already being quickly reconsidered and community MTB Plan developed). Over the years I have observed, heard and read a lot of horror stories of restricting access to wild land facilities—I have yet to hear or read of a vetted, non-interest group success story. Can the City, Open Space or Conservancy cite one? Last comment along those lines is justification for restricting access. Over the years walking my dogs (daily), riding horses and bicycles (4-6 days/wk) in the Bosque, I have yet to see a problem caused by the inanimate bike but I have seen lot's of problems caused by oblivious humans, overuse and , at times, inattentive wild land management. I think it is great we are finally addressing these issues but question the way we are doing it.

As far as restricting bikes, though this is a bike oriented advocacy, [the research cited in this article seems to be accepted/respected by many of the facility operators](#) I have talked to over the years. Can CABQ or MRGCD provide similar citations supporting restricted access?

Some quick thoughts about what I observed and have thought about since meeting.

- Everyone that signed up to speak should have been heard. The community, no matter what the perspective or inclination, deserves that respect. That in itself is every bit as disrespectful as attacking Matt as an Archaeologist when archeology, nor Matt had little to do with the problem (process) creating the anger.
- The process up to this point has been very disappointing as it has appeared to almost be divisive by design. I hope as a community and as facility operators/providers, we are committed to being better than that.
- If you begin the process assuming public will be difficult, that is often prophetically self-fullfilling. All in all, observing this has been discouraging, especially since I have worked on trail projects that have had extensive and overwhelming community support, had huge jurisdictional issues (crossed state lines), and were ever bit as environmentally sensitive.

- Much of the input I have heard at meetings and running into folks in the bosque has been insightful and inspiring. And bodes well for the Bosque—if considered....
- While I have heard that input is desired and certainly much has been provided, I don't think many feel like they have been heard with carefully planned, considered, managed, and most importantly, sincere dialog. We absolutely need to make this process dynamic and it's not.
- Stovepiping, rabbit holes, siloing and political distraction/interference have no place in this type of decision making and community commitment process. So, why....?
- Would prefer outreach to all impacted communities and that the best vehicle for that would be via existing community mechanisms (like GABAC for bikes). Never think it is appropriate when one group or interest negatively targets or represents another, yet this is exactly what is happening. Why?
- Think it is very important that focus be protecting and enhancing wild land in a unique urban environment. That means serving the urban environment by recognizing and managing urban access issues/constraints; urban, yet wild land trail standards, and both urban and wild land sensitivities.
- I think the concern based on how people would access new facilities at both North and South is good one and must be addressed. Currently, access by foot at Northern end is atrocious for most users and actually encourages bike access simply in terms of time required by all but fortunate few living immediately adjacent.
- No information provided so far on operational objectives and that's not helpful, nor confidence inspiring. Safety is a big concern as several serious accidents on steel bridge from Gabaldon and switchback (including my wife with busted femur and new hip hardware). Is this intended to be year round facility? For the last two weeks and late November there have been terrible problems with ice that users accessing new trail would have to cross. Also, is this a 24 hour facility, and if not, how will that be managed?
- After meeting I heard about aggressive planting/restoration? scheme for cottonwoods, wild grasses and other project elements I had not heard before. I missed the first part of the meeting if it was mentioned then, but this really ought to be documented, distributed and promoted. It's not the end all, but it's a very encouraging (and **smart!**) component.

I'll close by once again expressing my disappointment in process while simultaneously asking for serious consideration on many of the aspirational things that have been mentioned at the numerous meetings and out in community. All are definitely manageable and implementable if we choose to recognize that some of the bitterness and resentment is understandable and then commit to overcoming it. While I know those wanting to get stuff done at all costs might find it distasteful, I feel that more time is required to integrate community interests as anger inducing projects never end well.

Thank you all for your consideration.

Scott Hale

(72)

From: Glen Salas

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 12:38 PM

Subject: Comment on Bosque Trails

Thank you for the great public meeting last night. It was good to hear about the City's plans and the City's efforts so far, especially the ongoing Bosque rehabilitation.

Right up front, before I get to my comments on the path, I want to ask why, why was the Future Works Agreement between the City and the Bosque Action Team ignored?!? I happened to be at the City Council meeting (coincidentally, because I was there for another issue) when the Agreement was announced. A great compromise! And then it was ignored!? At the very next phase!? Isn't that deceitful? What could possibly be the City's excuse for this dishonesty, disrespect and sidestepping of the opinions of the group that is most interested in the Bosque's health?

My comments on the proposed trail: The Bosque is a natural space so environmental considerations must guide any decision. If 'no action' is out of the question then I would support a modified Alternative 3. We all heard at the meeting about the problems with Alternative 3 as presented – too wide, disruptive of and encroaching upon existing wildlife habitats, a thoroughfare that compromises the Bosque experience. So I propose to basically follow the Alternative 3 path but to be flexible and to modify it as necessary to minimize disruption of important areas like those near the coyote and porcupine dens. My ideas to minimize disruption are threefold:

- 1) Curve the path in order to give wide berth to the particularly sensitive areas and the existing wildlife habitations. Curving the path strategically will provide the added benefit of slowing down bike traffic (*mea culpa*; I ride on improved pathways and curves slow me down).
- 2) Narrow the path as much and as often as possible, and keep it narrow through these sensitive areas, to minimize the disturbed area for the benefit of wildlife. This will also improve the 'nature experience' for humans and will tend to slow traffic.
- 3) Minimize the dropdowns to maximize undisturbed areas for the health of the Bosque and the benefit of wildlife and the riparian environment. The Alternative 3 map shows three internal dropdowns. Two at most would still serve the public very well.

I absolutely hate Alternative 1 – too much impact on wildlife and the riparian environment.

I don't like the Alternative 2s because the riparian habitat will be compromised too much by a wide developed path following the river too much and too closely, and the existing footpath wouldn't be revegetated.

Thank you for considering my comments. And I really do want to hear why the City decided to ignore the Future Works Agreement.

Glen Salas

(73)

From: Heather Kline

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 2:16 PM

Subject: Bosque development plan

I would like to submit a comment regarding the proposed expansion of the Bosque trail. As a resident of Albuquerque and a lover of wilderness, wildlife, and recreational opportunities, I take great pride in our beautiful Bosque. I am always trying to tout its merits as a recreational treasure, particularly to those who don't often access wilderness. I very much support accessibility for people with disabilities. However, I think there are better options than the 6 foot wide path the city wants to develop. A smaller trail with periodic wider areas would offer equally accessible options, as shown by the United States Access Board and proven in the Bosque wheelchair hikes led by the Sierra Club and the Bosque Action Team. Such a trail, made with environmentally sound materials rather than crusher fine, would allow for the maintenance of a pristine wilderness for all of us to fully enjoy. We owe it to our local treasure to treat it, and its wildlife, with the respect it deserves for our future generations.

Sincerely,
Heather Kline

(74)

From: Deborah Gavel

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 2:28 PM

Subject: Please protect the bosque

For many years, twenty-five to be exact, I have enjoyed the river trails and the opportunity to see birds and other small animals who habitat and migrate along the corridor of the Rio Grande in Albuquerque's north valley. At this time of year it is my joy to see Sandhill cranes- migrating to the places where they roost for the night, places where they are protected in the shallow river waters at night.

I seek them out at the fields along the river near the Nature Center and Anderson Field. I like to travel to the Bosque del Apache and to the Bernardo wildlife refuge to see them as well. But here, close to home, in downtown Albuquerque I feel especially connected to the area of river between then the National Hispanic Cultural Center and just north of the Alameda overpass. All through that area I have witnessed the cranes fly in from the surrounding fields where they find food during the daylight hours.

And over the years, I have seen the cottonwood trees grow thinner. In 2003 we lost a great deal of trees in the area near Candelaria Road due to a summer fire. Later we lost more habitat in the same area due to construction of a waterline along Candelaria. It is not the beauty it once was

only two decades ago. The trees are at a loss for water and without natural flooding in the spring the cottonwoods cannot seed and grow again. Now, it is a dying system.

We should be mindful of what we have infringed upon with roads and acequias, with bike trails and gravel. We have lost much habitat due to the construction of the I-40 overpass and of course, there are numerous other losses due to the building of infrastructure around these sensitive areas. At Alameda, at Montano and at every place that interrupts the river with bridges at Central, etc. there is more loss of habitat. We have squeezed the natural order of the river, dammed the water, interfered with it's flow and all that is connected to it along this sacred web of life.

We must stop bringing in cement, crusher fine and other materials to this area. The loss can never be regained. Heavy gravel has effected habitat and makes it difficult to see imagine that there will be anything left that is natural to the flood plain in just a few years. We have done too much damage already. Stop and heed the words of Aldo Leopold: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

We need to be conservative, we need to be stewards of this beautiful place and find ways to bring back the flood plain to the cottonwoods. Otherwise, it is a dying place.

Deborah Gavel

(75)

From: Marcia Woske

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 3:07 PM

Subject: Bosque Crusher Trail

Hi Mr. Schmader,

I live close to the Bosque in an area that already has a 6 ft crusher trail and I do NOT like the idea of it continuing.

I don't understand why if we have the one we do already for folks who need better access, why we need another.

I also feel that proper stewardship of the Bosque and the impacts of this trail have not been considered.

I would like to advocate for the funds to be used for cleaning up the river.

If it's too late not put in the trail, then I would vote for alternative 3 with a better impact study and plan for protecting the habitat there.

Best,

Marcia Woske

(76)

From: David Parsons

Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 4:02 PM

Subject: Bosque Trail Plan Comments

Dear Dr. Schmader,

I appreciated the opportunity to speak last night. I would have liked to hear the last 7 speakers and don't understand why a meeting in a city facility could not be extended for another 20-30 minutes. I know for a fact that there was no scheduled use of that room after your meeting.

I am reiterating my support of the No Action alternative. I continue to believe that the controlling "public interest" in the Rio Grande Valley State Park was established by an act of the NM Legislature and is "The preservation, protection, and maintenance of the natural and scenic beauty of [the state park]." Please refer to my previous comments for more details on this legislation.

I'd like to see a legal justification of how Mayor Berry can assert his authority to change the "public interest" priorities established by State law.

Preservation, protection, and maintenance of the natural and scenic beauty of the state park must take precedent over development of any type. The declared public interest values are best served by ecological restoration and preservation/protection of the "natural" characteristics of the bosque. For example, there should be established nature sanctuaries that are not impacted by trails. A speaker last night made this point by asking why there needs to be a continuous trail all the way through the bosque. Why? I have seen no justification for a continuous trail.

Facilities to promote public enjoyment of nature in the state park must be designed to achieve this overall objective. The existing "vision" document is antithetical to this prime design criterion. I cannot endorse any alternative other than the "no action" alternative until a comprehensive plan for addressing the legislatively established public interest objective stated above.

Should you proceed with the construction of a trail, I favor routing the trail on the levee road with 2-3 lateral access trails to the river that are no more than 4 feet wide. These trails should be of stabilized natural soil suitable for use by wheel chairs.

People don't have to use or enjoy the entire bosque. The mere presence of people impacts wildlife.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional comments.

David Parsons

(77)

From: alschacht
Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 4:12 PM
Subject: Comments on the Bosque trail project

Dr Schmader,

I lived near the Nature Center for 4 years, and walked in the Bosque nearly every day, some days more than once. Also, since 2007 I have been monitoring hawk and owl nests in the Bosque for Hawks Aloft. I monitor the area between Central and Montano on the East side of the river, so I am very familiar with the area in question, as well as the area that has already had a trail built.

I, like many other people, go to the Bosque to enjoy nature, get away from everything, and enjoy peace and solitude. It's a spiritual experience for me, and part of what keeps me sane. I enjoy watching the birds, and stopping to look at things. I have had many wonderful encounters with wildlife there. I've watched coyotes play, encountered box turtles and snakes on the paths, and had a porcupine walk toward me, then turn around when it noticed me. I've watched one climb down from a tree, and seen a mother porcupine with her baby. I've seen Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Turkey Vultures and a Barn Owl in the Bosque, as well as getting to watch Cooper's Hawks and Great Horned Owls raise their young. I've seen Avocets, Willets, countless ducks, mergansers, Sandhill Cranes, herons and a White Pelican in the river. I've never lived in another city where I was able to see wildlife so close to my house. It's part of what makes Albuquerque really unique. It was walking in the Bosque, and seeing all kinds of birds next to the trail, that turned me into an avid birder.

I've happily shared the Bosque with joggers, horses and riders, other walkers, and bicycles. The existing narrow dirt trails have meant that, for the most part, cyclists ride at a reasonable speed. However, building a 6 foot wide crusher fine trail has meant that cyclists now have the ability to build up speed. Even a slow bicycle is much faster than a person on foot, and if bicycles are moving fast, everyone else has to scatter. I've had to jump off the new trail multiple times to avoid bicycles. Also, it's very hard to stop along the trail or watch birds (assuming the birds haven't been scared off by the traffic) when there is a lot of traffic, especially with bicycle traffic.

My major concern with the trail extension is the impact of inviting heavy bicycle traffic into the Bosque. I know that it's important to make accessible trails, but isn't there a way to do that without encouraging fast bicycle traffic? There are already miles of bicycle trails all over the city, and you can't enjoy the things that are special about the Bosque while speeding through anyway. I worry about the animals who have to cross the trail but can't cross quickly, like box turtles and toads, or snakes, that people will often run over on purpose, even though the snakes in the Bosque are harmless. The multi-use trail also does not serve the needs of people who want to have solitude or truly enjoy nature.

My preference would be that no action is taken at all, but I know that is not likely to happen. I think it's very important to keep the heavy traffic away from the river as much as possible, so my second choice would be one of the alternatives that diverts the trail away from the river, between the area that still has trees and the levee, and leaves the original path along the river open for pedestrians (and I would have no objection to having horses on that trail, since I never see any horses moving faster than a walk, and you can hear them coming before they reach you. I have

never had to jump off the trail in an encounter with someone on horseback, there is always plenty of time to step to the side.) This would ensure that the needs of people who come to the Bosque for a peaceful nature experience are met as well. If no alternative to the multi-use trail is provided, I think that it is likely that people who want to enjoy nature will go off-trail and create their own trails. Originally I would have picked 2A, but now I would say that whichever of those options avoids the coyote den and the labyrinth would be the best choice. I am not sure exactly where those are, because the area I spend most of my time in is the area where there are still cottonwoods, which is where the raptors nest.

In order to provide river access to cyclists and people with disabilities, perhaps a small viewing area could be cleared somewhere in the portion of the trail that does run along the river, preferably in a spot where vegetation is already sparse, with a bench and an area for wheelchairs. River viewing access could also be provided at the end of the Campbell Road extension, where there is already a break in the Bosque.

My other concern is the fact that this project is being rushed through. Although the February 15th construction date is before the nesting season for most birds, it is not before the nesting season for Great Horned Owls. There is a pair of Great Horned Owls that has nested in that part of the Bosque twice since 2007. Currently, the best nests for a Great Horned Owl to use in this pair's territory are in the area in question, and just north of Campbell Road. If the female is sitting on unhatched eggs in that area when construction begins, she may abandon her nest. Last year, we found owls on nests in late January and early February. I will be checking for this owl pair weekly until I know where they are going to nest.

Allison Schacht

(78)

From: Noralyn Parsons
Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 8:21 PM
Subject: Rio Grande Bosque Plan

Dear Dr. Matt Schmader:

Thank you for allowing me to express my comments regarding the Mayor's plan to develop a trail in the Rio Grande Bosque.

You know, they aren't making any more land these days near the Rio Grande. The wooded area we know as the Bosque is precious for many reasons. Much is being written these days about nature-deprivation, especially for our youth. We humans need the nearness of nature to retain the feeling of wholeness on the earth, for spiritual renewal, for healing. To simply "be" in a natural space offers an antidote to the difficulty of being in the world. We need and appreciate the exercise available in the bosque: walking, running, biking, rollerblading, dog-walking, birding, wildlife-watching. To bike without breathing car exhaust is a treat for most! Our Bosque offers all this.

The Bosque is precious to not only coyotes and porcupines, but to a variety of hawks, owls, ducks, and a host of other mammals and birds. The city of Albuquerque is in a unique position, having access to a natural environment with this much diversity of life within. This access enriches us as a city, and as individuals.

Further development in the Bosque — even a trail as is proposed — will tend toward the destruction of the natural environment, and lead to fewer species using the Bosque as their home or as paths for migration and dispersal. There are species who will not cross a 6-foot crusher-fines path. Immediately, we are all poorer for taking that step.

There are steps that the City of Albuquerque can take to enhance our precious resource, the Bosque. These would be planting trees, removing salt cedars, cleaning trash off the river waterway, and educating the public on the natural ecology of the bosque, and for example, to stay on the trails. Wheelchair access could be provided to the river at several points so that wheelchair users could access the river. I agree with the speaker from the recent public meeting that a “continuous trail” is not necessary. Please keep in mind that the more the development, the greater the negative impact on wildlife and on the natural experience.

My strong preference, Mayor Berry and Dr. Schmader, is for the “no action” alternative. I bike regularly in the Bosque — but the paved trail is perfectly adequate.

Thank you again for your attention.
Noralyn Parsons

(79)

From: Hazel Trabaudo
Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 8:30 PM
Subject: Bosque

Keep this space as natural as possible. No crusher fine trail.
6ft wide is far too wide for it to keep its natural feeling soil in place to make a firm surface.
It is hard for me to imagine the changes you refer to, they seem too much. They seem unnatural.
This is a place I have enjoyed walking for the last ten years. Please don't spoil this beautiful spot for me and the many others who enjoy the natural beauty of this spot.
Thank you ,
Eleanor Trabaudo.

(80)

From: K K DAVIES
Sent: Saturday, January 09, 2016 8:54 AM
Subject: Proposed Bosque Trail

Although I am doubtful that public inputs will be taken into account (because thus far they haven't), I want to respectfully offer my own.

First, I am against any further development of the Bosque in Albuquerque. There are already multiple trails with wheelchair access. The worst proposal is alternative one because it would destroy important nesting and wildlife habitat.

I think the existing paths near river should be planted and landscaped to enhance habitat with occasional river viewing areas.

There is no reason for a six-foot trail, according to federal guidelines and crusher-fine gravel is not wild-life friendly -- especially for frogs and salamander crossings. Hardpacked clay with mulch works as well or better with wheelchairs than crusher-fine gravel (I have experience with navigating trails pushing a wheelchair). A four foot wide trail with intermittent passing areas would work as well or better. I confess, I don't remember all of the alternatives proposed, but think, if a trail has to be cut, it should be away from the river as much as possible while still allowing glimpses of it.

I often walk in the Bosque and treasure the amazing quiet of being in a city amid nature. The greatest difficulty I encounter is mountain bikers who race up and down the narrow paths without warning. I don't think multi-use trails work. They become bike trails. We have enough bike trails in this city, we need pedestrian only trails.

Thanks for your consideration
Kathleen Davies

(81)

From: Alma Olavarria Gallegos

Sent: Saturday, January 09, 2016 10:16 AM

Subject: NO ACTION in our Bosque

Mr. Schrader:

The best option for existing wildlife is NO ACTION because wildlife has already adapted to existing trails and paths of compacted soil, and new trails and new materials will be disruptive to the natural environment.

The best option is NO ACTION because the underlay for a crusher fine trail is synthetic material that will disturb the ecological balance of the area.

NO ACTION is the best option because shamefully, the only trail design being considered by the City is 6 feet wide and takes a 7-foot cut. This is way too wide for the purpose of pedestrians and wheelchairs and would encourage too much pedestrian and bicycle traffic. This would be disruptive to wildlife.

NO ACTION is the best option because stabilized, natural soils consistent with the bosque's level of development can be used instead of crusher fines which are foreign to the bosque, and the City is not considering this better option.

NO ACTION will still allow wheelchair accessibility since the wheelchair study by Sarita Streng found that there are lots of trails in the Bosque that are already accessible and simply require repair and maintenance.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City has backed out of its Agreement with interested parties, and this abbreviated process is not sufficient to provide meaningful public and scientific input.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City is rushing this through, and there is no need to rush this through.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City is disingenuous since it is not planning for sufficient restoration and re-vegetation in tandem with its trail proposals.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City has failed to take into account the coyote den and the porcupine habitat along the trail.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City has failed to monitor any mammal life or to create a scientific impact statement prior to creating its trail design.

NO ACTION is the best option because there are already five trails from I-40 to Campbell Road.

NO ACTION is the best option because the City's plan for a creating a new trail will require that wildlife will have to re-adapt or disappear.

NO ACTION is the best option because the bosque is one of the longest wildlife corridors through an urban center in North America.

Perhaps at a future time, the City can repair and stabilize the existing paths. But for now, NO ACTION.

(82)

From: mnolan87110 .

Sent: Saturday, January 09, 2016 12:06 PM

Subject: Bosque Nature Trail

Dear Sir:

An improved trail would be nice, but not at the expense of the very habitat and its denizens. A trail by definition should allow the passage of people and animals, but what is wrong with single file? We don't need the wide path that is the point of contention. If you want to widen a path, how about widening the bike trail?

thank you.

Mark Nolan

(83)

From: Luna Olavarria Gallegos

Sent: Saturday, January 09, 2016 1:37 PM

Subject: BOSQUE

Mr. Schrader:

The best option for existing wildlife is NO ACTION because wildlife has already adapted to existing trails and paths of compacted soil, and new trails and new materials will be disruptive to the natural environment.

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NO ACTION is the best option because the bosque is one of the longest wildlife corridors through an urban center in North America.

Perhaps at a future time, the City can repair and stabilize the existing paths. But for now, NO ACTION.

Best,

Luna Olavarria Gallegos

(84)

From: Holly Harrison

Sent: Saturday, January 09, 2016 1:52 PM

Subject: Extension of Bosque Path from I-40 to Campbell Road

I support plans for Bosque Trails that are well thought out and researched to determine the environmental impact on the wild and bird life and that in general limit the environmental impact on the Bosque. If one of the plans must be implemented I choose Alternative 3 but suggest the trail be no wider than 4 feet and use a more environmentally appropriate surface than crusher fines.

Since I utilize the trails for both walking and horse riding (at a slow pace) I am concerned about the bikes on the same trails since they travel at a much faster speed and often are difficult to hear

them approaching. In addition, in the recent past I have had a few confrontations with bicyclists who have aggressively confronted me on horseback declaring horses were not allowed in the Bosque. Thus I recommend that appropriate signage be added that designates the usage and appropriate behavior.

I hope that the trails will remain accessible to horses since we have no other place to ride. The path beside the paved bike trail is primarily gravel and not conducive to horses hooves.

Also, I hope all these suggestions will be considered next year when you plan to extend the Bosque trails to Montano.

Another issue that needs to be reexamined is the Montano underpass. If the Bosque trails are extended to Montano the city needs to review the design of the underpass. It is extremely dangerous for multi-use (walkers, baby carriages, bikes, roller bladders, horses and wheel chairs). Several years ago a friend had an accident in the underpass when a man on roller blades pushing a baby stroller met her horse in the underpass. Luckily her horse was a very calm one and no one was seriously hurt. Since then we don't attempt to travel under Montano. With increased traffic in this area there is certain to more incidents like this. The city would not listen to our complaints about the design of the underpass stating it was too expensive to fix. I think a law suit by injured parties would cost the city more money.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my opinions.
Holly Harrison

(85)

From: Christa R

Sent: Saturday, January 09, 2016 2:10 PM

Subject: Proposed 6 ft wide trail in the Bosque

I am a voter and I oppose the current plans for putting a 6ft wide crusher fine 'trail' from I-40 to Campbell road. I believe the City's claim that the 'trail' needs to be 6ft wide to accommodate wheel chairs is false. Federal standards state 3ft is adequate with periodic widening for passing.

I have reviewed all of the proposed 'trail' paths and am concerned that they will be very disruptive to the environment including existing and migratory wildlife. Have any significant environmental impact studies been done?

Considering the current amount of bicycle and pedestrian traffic on the existing levy asphalt trail and adjoining dirt path, why not spend the money to improve this existing adjacent dirt path with crusher fine or other appropriate surface so that there can be more separation between cyclists, pedestrians, wheelchairs and strollers (not to mention the roller blade folks). Perhaps include a few offshoot **3 to 4 foot trails (not 6ft)** to go down to the river. Why build a parallel trail separate from the levy trail and divides the Bosque further? I don't understand what benefit this serves and it seems to me that it would be very detrimental to the 'wild side' of the Bosque that we all enjoy.

Christa Romwalter

(86)

From: Rebecca Belletto

Sent: Saturday, January 09, 2016 9:10 PM

Subject: keep the bosque "wild"

Dear Mr. Schmader:

Thank you for soliciting and considering public comments on the proposed bosque path/trail/hard surface between I-40 and Campbell Road.

I will be brief. One, I am disappointed with the Mayor's lack of regard for the public's deep love for a "wild" bosque, an accessible place of refuge within our sprawling city. The public has repeatedly stated, written, demonstrated, and drawn its desire to maintain or improve the habitat for all living beings. Mayor Berry has made a mockery of democracy.

Two, I am a mother and often take my three year old son to the bosque. It is terrifying to walk on the new crusher fine trail north of central due to high speed bike traffic. That trail is also too close to the river and destructive of wildlife habitat. Rather than consolidating previous trails, trails seem to be proliferating, further fragmenting this tiny and imperiled habitat. I am opposed to further path/trail/hard surface extension.

Lastly, Albuquerque should be for those of us who live here, not redesigned in pursuit of imagined tourist dollars. If the Mayor wants to attract more people to visit, invest or live here, he needs to address crime, employment and our public schools. Further eroding our unique cottonwood ecosystem is not going to contribute in any way to the long term economic vitality of our city.

Thank you,
Rebecca Belletto

Talking points from the Bosque Action Team below:

**Protecting our Bosque and Improving Access
One doesn't have to come at the cost of the other**

What's the big deal about the trail from Central to I-40 and now this second phase of the trail from I-40 to Campbell Rd.? The trail from Central to I-40 does do some good things, in particular, providing good access for wheelchairs, which the Bosque Action Team (BAT) fully supports. But there are lots of ways to provide good access that don't impact the Bosque's wildlife and habitat as this trail's width, surface and alignment do. A long portion of the trail

follows the river bank, which is the area most used by birds and other wildlife and where wide trails and fast moving bikes and horses can have a big impact. A trail that is mostly sited away from the river bank is much less disruptive to wildlife and habitat. Drop downs to the river are a lower impact alternative to help people reach the river. Additionally, a narrower trail made of stabilized, natural materials would strike a better balance for wildlife and all users of the Bosque. In any project in the Bosque, we must balance the protection of nature and connecting people through access. But when we put human priorities before ecological considerations we all lose the chance to see what makes the Bosque so special.

The City says that a 6-foot-wide crusher fine trail is necessary to facilitate wheelchair access. Is this true? The United States Access Board offers accessibility standards for federal outdoor developed areas, which can be found at <http://www.access-board.gov/attachments/article/1637/outdoor-guide.pdf>. The guidelines for trails in natural areas include 3-ft-wide trails with periodic 6-ft-wide take outs for passing. The Access Board also approves of soils treated with stabilizers to maintain a natural appearance and expressly recommends that the materials be consistent with the site's level of development. A six-foot-wide, crusher fine trail is an obvious developed feature that is out of place in an otherwise natural area, and it has a greater impact on the porcupines, great horned owls, and other species that we all want to see in the Bosque. A narrower, natural surface trail can provide access for wheelchairs consistent with character of the Bosque as a natural area, giving people in wheelchairs an equal opportunity to experience the Bosque in all of its glory.

What happened to the Future Works Agreement between the City and the Bosque Action Team? After the City short-circuited an ongoing public process and built the first leg of the trail in February, with no notice to other agencies or the public, the Sierra Club and Bosque Action Team (BAT), at the behest of the City Council, worked with the City to come up with a future works agreement that would provide procedures for public input for future projects in the Bosque. The agreement was presented to City Council in April and the City Administration agreed to follow these procedures. Nonetheless, last month, the City backed out of that agreement. They are now using a highly abbreviated public process for the second phase of the trail, so they can build before nesting season in April. They are building phase II without the results of scientific monitoring of the effects of the phase I trail.

I'd like to submit written comments. Is it too late to do that? No. Please submit your written comments as soon as possible, but no later than January 15, 2016, by emailing mschmader@cabq.gov. We've provided a comment guide on the back of this sheet for your reference.

I don't know the Bosque well, but I'd like to visit. Here's a list of the Bosque Action Teams' outings. Please feel free to join in on any outing. Also there are points of access to the Bosque at every place a road crossed the river but there is almost no signage letting the public know what's already there. You'll find unmarked parking areas before and after each bridge crossing on both sides of the river leading to great trails.

(1) **1/16/15**, 10am, Bosque by Wheelchair - See the Sandhill Cranes at Los Poblanos Fields. Contact: Colston Chandler ccent@swcp.com, [505.343.9498](tel:505.343.9498) (2) **2/6/16**, 12:00-2:00 pm, Poetry in

the Bosque: Winter, Contact: M.J. Zimmerman, mjzim@hotmail.com (3) 2/13/16, 1:30pm - 3:00pm, Bosque by Wheelchair - Tingley Beach to the Viewing Platforms, Contact: Fred Houdek <fjhoudek@gmail.com>. (4) 3/12/15, 1:30pm - 3:00pm. Bosque by Wheelchair - Discover the wood carvings at Pueblo Montaña Picnic Area and Trailhead on the Westside. Contact: Billy Meyer, williammeyer4@yahoo.com. (5) 2/21/16, 1:30pm, Bosque on the Westside - Exploring Calabacillas Arroyo Contact: Richard Barish, richard.barish@gmail.com, [505-232-3013](tel:505-232-3013).

I'd like more information information on accessibility issues related to the Bosque: Well before the mayor's trail was built, a member of the Bosque Action Team, Sarita Streng, did a study of wheelchair accessibility in the Bosque as part of her Occupational Therapy studies. Her study is published on our website at <http://www.savethebosque.org/resources/>. The main conclusion from that report, which is consistent with what we've seen on our wheelchair outings, is that there are lots of trails in the Bosque that are "accessible" but not maintained well by the City and other agencies. Sarita made this point on the City's initial walks in the Bosque last Fall, before the first phase of the trail was built, and she was the person who brought wheelchair access to the attention of the City. Please feel free to join our monthly wheelchair outings which are listed above. And please always write to the Open Space Department when you see areas that need work.

GUIDE FOR WRITING YOUR COMMENTS:

Below is a review in detail of the issue with the trails. For it to make sense you should look at the alternatives that the City has posted:

<https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/events/bosque-multi-use-accessible-path-project-phase-ii-i-40-to-campbell-road>

Here are some critical issues and critical points that need to be made.

1. GENERAL COMMENTS - **At the outset of your comments, please specify that environmental considerations should guide any decision that is made. Any plans should be flexible and adapted to the conditions on the ground, for instance, so that they avoid areas that are known to be used by wildlife.** The Bosque is first and foremost a natural space, and nothing should be done that degrades nature in the Bosque. All visitors to the Bosque should have the opportunity to see and enjoy its wildlife and have the most natural experience possible.
2. SURFACE AND WIDTH - Except for the "no action" alternative, the City's alternatives all call for a crusher fine trail. The width is not specified, but we have been told by City officials that the plan is for a six-foot wide trail, the same as the trail south of I-40. The alternatives should have included alternative materials and trail widths. These are important considerations that will affect the experience of the trail and about which there are different opinions. **Please specify that any trail that is constructed should be made of the soil in place, stabilized and contoured to make a firm surface that will not pond water. Please also specify that the trail should be three or four feet wide, with periodic wider areas for**

passing. Such a trail would both provide access for wheelchairs and at the same time be more in keeping with the natural character of the Bosque. There is no need for a six-foot wide trail.

3. TRAIL ALIGNMENT - The City presents various trail alignment alternatives. The current alignment of the I-40 to Campbell Rd. stretch hugs the river bank after the first quarter mile or so north of I-40. Alternative 1 simply creates a crusher fine trail along the existing alignment. **Alternative 1 should be specifically opposed because of the serious impact it will have on the riparian environment and wildlife.**

Alternatives 2A, 2B, 2C, and 2D move the new, multiuse trail away from the alignment of the existing trail and into the center of the Bosque at points progressively further north. In each of these alternatives, the trail along the bank would be left open, and there are no "drop-down" trails to provide access to the river bank.

Alternative 3 moves the greatest length of trail into the center of the Bosque and away from the river bank and, in addition, has two other features. First, it has "drop-down" trails to provide periodic access from the new, multi-use trail to the river. Second, it would close the existing trail along the bank and revegetate it.

To the extent that the City is insisting on a six-foot-wide, crusher fine trail, please support the alignment of Alternative 3 with the drop-down trails. Tell the City that the multiuse trail should be moved away from the river bank. The river bank is the area that is most utilized by birds and other animals. Creating a wide, multi-use trail along the existing alignment creates an unacceptable risk of disturbance of these birds and animals. You do not need to support the closure of the existing trail, but this maybe important to assuring this area isn't impacted by a 6-foot-wide trail, and may be the best move for Bosque habitat and wildlife. The trail should also be designed so as to slow down bicycle traffic.

(87)

From: Thomas Hopkins

Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2016 7:57 AM

To: Schmader, Mathew F.; jsamp@cabq.go

Subject: Comment on the phase 2 travesty proposed by your department along the RIo Grande River

Mr. Schmader, Ms. Samp, and anyone else involved with this travesty of a trail plan, I am writing to comment on your proposals and lambast them. I am a frequent user of this section of trail you propose to F up and regard it as my favorite along the Bosque. I have observed all sorts of wildlife along this section including coyotes, a bald eagle, porcupines, cranes, and more. The current trail is serene and pleasant. Especially, the section through the wooded areas, where unfortunately beaver activity has damaged some of the trees. I often encounter other users who seem to be enjoying this section as much as I. I have spoken with many bicyclists who call this one of the best sections of single track in the area. I usually run it and have experienced your trail "improvement" south of I-40.

All your proposals will degrade the trail that I love for no clear purpose whatsoever (maybe the greater glory of Mayor Berry). There is no need for 8-10 ft wide trail (i have measured

phased 1 in a few places and it exceeds 6 ft). Arguments about access and stopping side trails made by your department are a farce. In fact, I do not follow the entire rationale for this project. A narrower, cheaper, and better! trail is the option I choose. The existing surface is entirely adequate. There is no need for a mass gravel dump. Any bobcat activity right next to the river will harm the Riparian zone. I am user of Park and Rec facilities city wide. It seems to me there is a huge maintenance back log. The trail project money should be used to maintain and repair current sites (I have not done a full survey but would be more than happy to offer some ideas). Outside your office, Mayor Berry, and the ABQ Journal (your PR arm?) I know of no one who supports this project.

The fact your department has pushed this through without considering the concerns of users like me speaks loads to your departments character. I am not attacking individuals but your organization as a whole. Why is your initiative more important than the citizens who love this trail. We pay your salaries by the way. I will remember this action from Mayor Berry and plan make well known if he tries to pursue statewide office. Please let me know if you decide to do another PR stunt with the journal so I can show up and heckle you and get my views across. I will email Mayor Berry to express my disapproval personally. Since it is not attached to a campaign donation I am sure he will ignore me.

As for my preferences,

1. Do nothing, save the money, anyone pushing the initiative should resign from Parks and Rec. I understand that hard working employees could get fired for opposing this which speaks of the Mayor's character.
2. Keep you bobcats away from right next to the river. It will damaged the riparian zone.
3. I will continue to use the existing trail despite anything your office does, but I have spoken to many other who would like to keep the single track open for cyclists.
4. In general, your proposed options are so bad I will not choose one to give the illusion you are seeking input.
5. Personell in your department should ask themselves exactly who they work for. Mayor Berry or the citizens of Albuquerque.

Sincerely,
Thomas Hopkins

(88)

From: sally condon
Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2016 10:31 AM
Subject: Protecting the Bosque

I am deeply disappointed in the way the city has pushed through the first phase of the trail and looks like again the second phase. Each meeting there is tremendous opposition to what the city wants to do and you still go right ahead with the way you want to do it. I oppose the 6-ft wide trail made of crusher fine material. The Bosque is foremost a natural space and should remain that way. Make the trail 3 or 4 feet wide at most and use the soil that is there that is stabilized and hard packed. Make the trail naturally curve and not what you have planned. Be aware of

where animal dens are and the Labyrinth that was built after the fire of only burnt pieces of wood. It is walked by many people and is a sacred spot to the people who use it. Make a few drop down trails that are wheelchair accessible. There are many trails in the Bosque that are accessible but not maintained well.

My hope is you will rethink your plans and take seriously the peoples wishes. You don't have to do it this spring!

Sally Condon

(89)

From: Julie Kutz

Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2016 2:39 PM

Cc: Richard Barish; Mayor Berry; Benton, Isaac; Camilla Feibelman

Subject: Comments for Proposed Bosque Trail - Ph II

After studying the various alternative proposed for the bosque trail, watching this process over the last couple years starting with the first meeting where hundreds of people attended to express outrage at the plans for development of the bosque, reading and commenting on the bosque environmental monitoring plan, attending the public meeting on January 7, 2016, providing preliminary comments on the alternatives for this latest segment of trail, I sadly but strongly believe that at this point in time, the City should implement the No Action alternative. This does not mean that I want to deny access by people to the bosque or that a trail should not ever be built, I support the No Action alternative for the following reasons:

INCOMPLETE WORK ON FIRST PHASE. As someone else pointed out at the public meeting, the City has not followed through with the remaining work on the first trail phase, from Central to I40. There was remediation to be done, the trail was to be fixed to reroute it back to being away from sensitive habitat and a bridge was to be constructed as part of the trail.

MAINTAIN WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN DEVELOPED. There is currently a backlog of maintenance work that is being neglected on parts of the existing development of the bosque. Handicap accessible lookout points south of Central have fallen into disrepair and what should be handicap accessible is not because it seems that the trails and decks overlooking the river were built and then forgotten by the city in its quest to move on and develop ever more.

INEXCUSIBLE TO NOT CONSIDER ANYTHING OTHER THAN 6-FOOT WIDE TRAIL PAVED WITH CRUSHER FINES. As evidenced by the January 7 public meeting, the majority of people do not want a straight, six-foot wide trail paved with crusher fines instead of a narrower, meandering trail built with native soils treated with stabilizing material. If I understand it correctly, based on the City's explanation at the meeting, the reason the City doesn't want to consider anything other than a 6-foot wide trail paved with crusher fines is because they don't know how to build anything else? That is a surprising admission and simply inexcusable. The City needs to take a step back, read federal trail building standards, look at how other cities have done it, and find a better contractor who is more competent and able to work with different materials and knows how to construct a more natural trail that works with nature, not against it.

INCOMPLETE EVALUATION OF IMPACTS. Much planning that needs to be done prior to building this trail has not been done. There has been no evaluation of impacts from the trail development on:

- **Mammals** as evidenced by the trail design just bowling right over an existing coyote den and disturbing porcupine habitat,
- **Cultural resources** as evidenced by the labyrinth viewed as sacred to some that the trail is going right over,
- **Safety issues** all of the trail alternatives call for a wider, paved with crusher fines, and straight trail yet there has been no mention in any of the proposed alternatives of how to address conflicts with speeding bicycle riders who it seems would be able and more inclined to speed on the proposed trail. The safety of pedestrians, wheelchair bound citizens and equestrians would be a serious issue with the proposed alternatives yet the issue is not addressed in any of the alternatives.
- **T&E species** how the trail will impact at least 2 known special-status species has not been evaluated for the current alternatives. It appeared to me that all the development alternatives pass right by the willow swale constructed by the USACE for SW willow flycatcher habitat. Will the trail be closed off during nesting season? Other alternatives have the trail traveling right by the bank lowering project for the Rio Grande silvery minnow. I did not see how the City would be addressing those issues, in fact those areas were not even identified on the maps! Only by going to the meeting were those areas pointed out. Has there been coordination done with the US Fish and Wildlife Service or NM Department of Game and Fish? I did not hear the City say anything about coordination with any other agencies on the current alternatives.
- **Parking** The alternatives presented showed no proposal for parking to get to the bosque to access any of the proposed alternative trails. Has parking been evaluated? As it is now, parking is very limited since no parking is allowed on the streets of Candelaria, Campbell or other neighborhoods. There is only limited parking at the far south end by the freeway and at the Nature Center. I am assuming that the purpose of the trail is to get more people into the bosque, so where are extra cars going to park?
- **Increased traffic in the bosque.** Has the City evaluated the impact of increased usage of the trail? What are the impacts of more people? Does it increase trash, crime, spread of noxious weeds, erosion (just because there is a big trail doesn't necessarily mean people will stay on it) or other impacts? I did not see that any of those issues are addressed in any of the current alternatives.
- **Update environmental monitoring plan.** Now that there are alternatives in place, the Draft Rio Grande Valley State Park Central to Montaña Project: Environmental Monitoring Plan and Baseline Data Report should be updated. That plan was vague at best and only addressed very general project ideas of development. As well, I believe the plan was never finalized anyway or addressed any of the comments that were made.

•
WHAT IS THE HURRY? This has never been explained as to why this administration is in such a hurry to develop the bosque. Why not allow for the studies and evaluations to be done over this spring and summer and have a well-thought out trail design that meets the purpose and intent of the Rio Grande State Park ready to go in late September or early October, after bird-nesting season.

ALTERNATIVES APPEAR RUSHED. The alternatives presented are not well-thought out except to provide what the current City administration wants. There was no consensus from people on any of the alternatives presented judging from the comments made at the meeting other than objecting to the width and trail material.

ALTERNATIVE TO SUPPORT. I believe we can achieve the purpose and intent of the Rio Grande State Park's legislation and the principals set forth by the founding Aldo Leopold to appreciate the wildness of the bosque in an alternative IF

1. Work is finished as promised on existing development south of I40 and maintenance is completed on existing structures south of Central.
2. all the evaluation of impacts is completed and design modifications to mitigate all impacts are incorporated
3. the trail is constructed 3 or 4 feet wide with pull outs and a native soil material with stabilizers is used. In addition, any trail should be meandering, making it a safer and more enjoyable nature experience.

What I want to experience when I go to the bosque is Nature, pure and simple. We are so fortunate to have this beautiful natural treasure flowing through our great city – no other city has what we have right in our back yard: a little taste of wild. I want everyone to enjoy our beautiful bosque – through educational programs in our schools that include field trips to the bosque, accessibility to the river for everyone including handicap people, equestrians, pedestrians – and I believe it can be done in an environmentally sensitive manner that does not include a 6-foot wide trail paved with crusher fines. One cannot truly appreciate the beauty of nature on a straight, 6-foot wide trail paved with crusher fines – it would be much more conducive to appreciate our treasure if the trail is narrower, meandering and uses native materials.

Thank you for taking my comments.
Julie Kutz

(90)

From: ANITA MCDONOUGH

Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2016 2:53 PM

Subject: Bosque Path Extension; I-40 to CampbellRoad

Attached is my proposal for keeping the Bosque.....using PATH extensions, modified Alternative 3.

Anita McDonough

After reviewing my findings of the presentations made at the Bosque Trail Extension Public Meeting , January 7th ., at the Duranes Community Center, I have come up with the following observations.

A strong majority of participants are STILL concerned that the City of Albuquerque has totally lost the meaning of Bosque. Many of us have attended previous meetings, and are disgusted

with the handling of Phase One, and are understandingly fearful that future phases will be handled with the same disregard as the first.

The Bosque wants nothing to do with cyclists, large groups, total accessibility, convenience, family socialization and anything else that's primary focus is on mankind. The Bosque is about the Rio Grande River, the animal habitats and the natural vegetation of this River Forest. Any suggested amendments should be focused on the restoration and preservation of this natural wonder, and, not on convenience. As humans, we are the guests in somebody else's home. The animals and the vegetation surely don't need us. We are the ones in need of realignment. We are the ones in need of a more respectful attitude, in need of learning how to approach the Bosque, not challenging the Bosque as to how it will adjust to us. The greater our human footprint, the more likely the reason we SAY we are visiting this unique environment, will desist.

All the proposals made at Wednesday's meeting harolded the benefits to mankind. Wider paths, easier access, convenience. Nothing was directed towards accommodating the natural habit of this sanctuary. Crusher fine does not speak to nature. It is a sadness that our City can't investigate and become more knowledgeable about the usage of stabilized soil as a path construct alternative. It is outrageous that a 6' wide corridor would be considered unobtrusive in such a rural environment. There has been NO review or consideration as to where habitat and nesting areas, and animal dens reside; There has been NO environmental design consideration as to stabilized soil paths, winding, looping, routing and the rounding of areas of natural significance, that are in need of protection.

It has been said over and over again, that the crusher fine trail proposal along the river edge would be the worst thing that could be done. It would cause serious impact to the riparian environment wildlife.

Isn't that why most of us come to see the Bosque? What good is a 6' road with NO wildlife, and a view of a dirty, dying river? So what was the City's first Phase initiative.....to do exactly that.

Alternative 3 would at least give animals and vegetation time to reinvigorate with a minimum of human presence. By closing the existing trail, and providing "drop-down" trails to the river, this would respect wildlife and appeal to those seriously interested in seeing natural habitat. Soil stabilized paths, respectful of the environment, 3' in width, with occasional passing areas of wider width might be the most appropriate approach.

Please "slow down Albuquerque".....where have we heard this before? When it comes to nature, doing less, is actually helping more. Can we once, think first, and get this right?

Anita McDonough

(91)

From: Sallie McCarthy

Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2016 2:57 PM

Subject: peace

Dear Matt,

I'm sure you are swamped right now about the Bosque path. Here is a suggestion: small signs along the footpaths throughout the Bosque which say - ENJOY THE PEACE OF THE BOSQUE.

Although the 3ft. wide would be better, if we proceed with the 6 ft. wide, perhaps this would ameliorate those who so want wildlife to survive in the bosque.

Just a thought. Best to you,
Sallie

(92)

From: smithfoto

Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2016 3:16 PM

Subject: Comments on bosque trail alternatives

Matt,

Attended the big meeting Thursday evening and was disappointed by one item - mountain bikes being excluded from the old dirt trail along the river as in Alternative 2A.

The northern half of the dirt trail is narrow with lots of turns. Novice mountain bikers want to ride this sort of trail but no way can they speed along this section. If mountain bikers want to go fast they'd ride the levee or paved trails. And big time mountain bikers are off in the foothills, on the east side of the Sandias, or out of town.

Over the summer and fall months I've seen numerous mountain bikers on this river trail. Usually they're a family group riding and enjoying it. Rarely did I see a 'flyer' biker. An example - on the guided walk you and Jim lead on 5 December we were talking under a tree next to the trail when a family group rode by.

After years of riding this trail and its variations, pre and post fire, I'd hate to see it closed to mountain bikers. You could also post it as pedestrians and "slow bikes only".

I was at the river Friday afternoon and chatted with ol' John who lives in the Mathew Meadows area - see attached. He says he rides this trail regularly; it would be unfortunate for the city to close this riverside trail to folks like him.

So my push - 2A but with the riverside dirt trail - as it is and open to slow mountain bikes. South of I-40 there are still some remnants of the old dirt trails; though discontinuous, they are still a kick to ride - slowly.

With Regards,
Carl Smith

(93)

From: Penina Ballen

Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2016 9:35 PM

Subject: Bosque trails

Dear Mr. Schmader,

The visionaries that created the Rio Grande Valley State Park did so to protect the area from further development. Although severely altered by channelling the river and damming it, we all know that it is still a bit of 'wild' in the middle of a big city. The bike path is well used and provides transportation routes and recreation space. The Nature Center is already there and has a good network of foot paths through the bosque to the river. During the past 35 years, I have never seen these paths at over capacity, except for the occasional special event like a bike or foot race.

Why destroy what is so precious : habitat for wildlife and a place apart from much human presence? A natural area is not the same as a city park. The City of Albuquerque would do better to 'groom' its parks and leave the bosque alone. Improvements could be made by eliminating salt cedar and stimulating more willows and cottonwoods , hiring more rangers and training docents.

Because of the existing bike path and adjacent gravel foot path, there is no need to develop new paths from Central Ave north. Public opinion is against the path proposals, especially those that are 6 ft. wide at the edge of the Rio Grande!

I appreciate the opportunity to comment and hope my views are considered.

Sincerely,

Penina Ballen

(94)

From: Naomi Julian

Sent: Monday, January 11, 2016 6:44 AM

Subject: Bosque trails

Dear Mr. Schmader,,

Restoration not Development!

I have attended "public input " meetings from the first one at the Albuquerque Museum. It was clear then that the public, who use the Bosque on a regular basis, want it to remain as natural as possible.

The first priority should be protecting and restoring the ecosystem and the wildlife it supports.

That is, after all what makes it special and why we want to protect it!

Public input has been a sham from the start. The city seems determined to go ahead with the Mayor's "vision" no matter what the public wants. The so called alternatives that the city is presenting are not substantially different from each other as regards width and materials and scientific studies have not been done.

My preference is No Action! However, if the city's plan goes forward, I support a trail as far as possible from the river and the closing of the pedestrian trail so as not to hem in wildlife between the two trails. We will find another place to walk.

Sincerely,
Naomi Julian

(95)

From: Bob Madison
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2016 9:43 AM
Subject: Bosque trail extension

The crusher fine bosque trail is a great enhancement. I fully support the extension, in fact I would love to see it go all the way to Alameda Blvd.

Robert Madison

(96)

From: Marcia Walton
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2016 10:48 AM

Subject: extension of Bosque path

First, I would prefer it if nothing were done in the bosque: no trail. Environmental considerations are of utmost importance. If a trail must be done, 3 or 4 foot wide would be better than 6 feet. I don't understand the need for 6 feet and it should not be next to the river where most wildlife abound. I opt for making it more natural with a stabilized surface. There are already some asphalted trails in the bosque. Why do we need more constructed trails especially a 6 foot wide trail that will have to remove some trees and vegetation?

I also don't think bicycles should be allowed in the bosque. I like bicycles but not in the bosque. They're disturbing to wildlife and they whiz by people and horses and some of these bicyclists are rude! There are bicycle trails all over this city already. They have the road on the clear ditch which equestrians opposed before that was put in, but it was done anyway. Wildlife don't mind horses. They look at the equestrian/horse and go 'oh, it's a horse'. Coyotes sometimes even follow the horse.

If the city is adamant about a 6 foot crusher fine trail, then alternative 3 is my vote. I'd like to know where the money is coming from to do this. I voted for the BioPark so I hope it's not coming from that. I'd like to see the money going to clean up the river and its area. The more people down there, the more trash.

Marcia Walton

(97)

From: Pat Belletto
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2016 3:04 PM
Subject: Re trail on the Bosque

Dear Mr. Schmader,

Thank you for taking the time to read these letters from community members regarding the proposed trail expansion on the Bosque between I40 and Campbell road.

I want to start by stating I am against any improvements/expansions on the trail, we should only maintain what we currently have. My reasons are threefold;

1. We are the only city in the United States with a wild river running right through our city. One can step off a busy city road and immediately relax in nature. Any type of construction disturbs the existing fragile habitat and limits any type of relaxing experience.

2. I have walked the wider paths and shared these paths with bikers and strollers. The bikers love to go fast and they scare me.

3.. The city has not followed established environmental impact protocols instead rushing this process over loud, researched opposition.

As a grandmother, I want to leave future generations areas of open river that they can enjoy as I have had the opportunity to do.

Patricia Belletto

(98)

From: Sharon Gross

Sent: Monday, January 11, 2016 6:07 PM

Subject: Extension of Bosque trail

I signed up to speak at the January 7, 2016 public meeting, but time ran out before I could.

Per Mr. Riordan and Mr. Hamman's presentations at the meeting protection of the Bosque and well planned actions are objectives. To achieve these objectives we must assure that all work preserves the very unique Bosque environment – its trees, plants and wildlife and our plans must address many parameters not just people's access. Do alternatives 1-3 achieve these objectives? I believe No.

A few personal experiences that relate to the proposed multiuse trail:

- Cyclists whiz by on multiuse trails leading walkers like me fearing for my safety.
- On a narrower dirt trail by the river I saw a pheasant and other birds. I almost never see or hear any wildlife when on the wider multiuse trails.
- On one of your walks you pointed out many rogue trails and your desire to close them. When I walk with responsible adults in other places, they do not hesitate to take or make a rogue trail when it suits them. Only physical barriers and safety concerns seem to preclude this temptation.

At the meeting maintenance and education concerns seemed very significant. Both are needed to assure public benefit from installation. Education programs, walks and signage and adequate ongoing maintenance are essential for fuller appreciation of our Bosque as well as reduction of rogue trails and other negative impacts.

For 2016 the no action alternative is desirable. It is premature to construct additional trail before addressing parking lot access to existing accessible trails, evaluating the Phase I trail, more carefully planning trail options and providing for maintenance and education of what already exists.

Of the construction alternatives proposed number 3 appears the most desirable as it better protects the sensitive bird and wildlife area along the river and critical habitat.

Finally, I hope the City will reconsider its vision of one primary multipurpose trail with access for all for the entire length of City Bosque area. For the vast bulk of our population, including myself, four or five mile trails that are accessible to parking are the most that we will use. Limiting trail construction to certain selected areas and complementing it with restoration, education and maintenance would offer the Bosque experience meaningfully to most of us and help achieve the overall objective of Bosque preservation. For cyclists a bike trail that does not impact the Bosque environment like the proposed multiuse crusher fine trail needs to be considered.

Sharon Gross

(99)

From: Miya King-Flaherty
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2016 10:55 PM
Subject: Public comments on Bosque extension trail

Dear Dr. Schmader,

Firstly, thank you for presenting the City's proposed alternatives for the Bosque extension trail. However, as a voter and tax paying citizen, I am extremely disappointed at the City's clear lack of engagement with the public and other stakeholders. The public should have been consulted and included in the City's plans to extend the Bosque trail. Thanks to the Bosque Action team, the public is aware of the existing plans...

Despite that baseline environmental monitoring was conducted, the results, which are still to be released and disseminated to the public, have not conclusively determined the potential effects of this trail on sensitive habitats, nor do they consider any ecological concerns--for example, the coyote den. It appears the City is moving forward with their plans, despite widespread opposition, so I urge you to consider the environment and the Bosque's ecology to guide all the City plans.

If pressed, I support Alternative 3, but demand that you follow recommended guidelines for how wide a crusher fine trail should be, which is not 6-foot wide rather 3 or 4-feet. I vehemently oppose repurposing the restoration trail and closing the current trail. The current trail should be

used. It should be moved away from the river bank ensuring the safety of wheelchair users. Furthermore, the river bank is most often used by the migratory bird population. What about the effects of fragmentation? I am concerned by the effects of fragmentation on wildlife, which appears not to have been addressed in detail within the monitoring report. Why not?

A public meeting should serve as a vector and guide what and how something takes place, not decide for the public. Aside from alternative trail options, the City should have provided alternative materials demonstrating how the trail blends into the natural landscape, which affects the natural experience. Therefore, this trail should be made from the materials that already exist, stabilized and contoured so it is not susceptible to ponding. As you know, crusher fines are highly susceptible to washouts from running water, particularly if they become saturated by heavy precipitation.

Matt, I urge you to listen to public demand. It's part of the democratic process this country was founded on. The City does not need to expend funds on this trail, rather funnel them into necessary projects.

Thank you.

Aldo Leopold quote: A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.

(100)

From: SAML SNARK

Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 7:39 AM

Subject: our bosque

Mr. Schmader,

I hike the bosque once or twice a week every week of the year. I have been doing this for over thirty years. When I saw the road-like trail being plowed through the bosque north of Central, it sickened me. Doesn't the city know anything about the bosque, don't they care? I went to the Jan. 7 meeting and the "alternatives" proposed by the city were all just plans for the wanton destruction of the bosque environment. These options were like asking someone what they would prefer, cancer, polio or AIDS. The crowd at the meeting (people who love the bosque) was overwhelming opposed to the road-like trail through the bosque. The city seems to be ignoring these people. This points to the most disturbing aspect of the whole process-it is undemocratic. The destructive project should postponed and hopefully cancelled. The people need to be listened to!

cordially,

Sam Karns

p. s. Cooper's Hawks nest in February.

(101)

From: Mary Carter
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 10:30 AM
Subject: Support for Bosque Trail

Hi,

I walk frequently on the new bosque trail from Central Ave to I-40. I enjoy the new path so much and find it so much more accessible than the meandering previous paths. The picnic area is lovely too. I am a senior and appreciate the wide and smooth path. I often see city workers planting trees and removing brush with also lends a feeling of confidence that the path is being cared for.

Thank you for proposing this extension. I support it.
Mary Carter

(102)

From: Byron Lindsey
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 1:51 PM
Subject: Bosque Trail

To all concerned:

I came away from the meeting at Los Duranes firmly convinced that any further construction by the city in the Bosque would damage its delicate ecology and harm the wildlife still remaining there.

I strongly urge the city to do more study of the project. It is not clear what the rush is all about. I live near the Bosque and walk in it frequently.

Concretely, I specifically oppose the proposed crusher fine paving of the trails and its huge (6') width. Wheelchair access could be made available on the river walk area just west of Campbell Rd. Bicycles should be strictly limited. Speakers at the meeting made numerous important points against the project and you have them in the minutes.

Even Alternative #3 needs more study. Note there are no stopping points for observation and meditation incorporated in the proposal.

Please slow down this project, so pushed by the Mayor, and let's re-examine all the possibilities.

Byron Lindsey

(103)

From: G Campos
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 2:05 PM
Subject: bosque trail

Hello Mr. Schmader,

I live and work downtown and visit the Bosque on a weekly basis. I wanted to extend my support for continuing to improve the trail like you have done from the section starting at Central. My preference would be to use the existing trail. I am sure you will not cut down any trees in the process and will do what you can to make it accessible. I suspect there may be sections that will have to be narrow but if it is at least wide enough to allow wheelchair passage that would be ideal.

Thank you,
Gabriel Campos

(104)

From: Cameron S Crandall

Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 3:54 PM

Subject: Public comment: Bosque trail extension

Mr. Schmader-

I live in the downtown area and use the Bosque trail system 2 to 3 times per week. I am pleased with the current improvements of the trail system. There are several benefits to an improved trail system: 1) increased accessibility to the trails by a broader community, including those with limited mobility; 2) improved poor weather access (e.g., currently the improved trail is dry and not muddy while the unimproved trail is muddy, slick and potentially dangerous; 3) cut down on rogue trail use.

I believe that the extension will continue the above listed benefits with very little adverse impact. Improved access to the Bosque for a broader number of citizens will improve the overall health of the community and the Bosque.

Thank you-
Cameron Crandall, MD

(105)

From: Lisa Broidy

Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 4:25 PM

Subject: Bosque trail improvements

Dear Mr. Schmader,

As a regular user of the Bosque trails for running and walking, I am impressed with the recent improvements to the trails and encouraged to hear there is talk about extending the upgrades further into the trail system. That would be great!

Thanks for all your efforts to make the trails more accessible and inviting for all.
Best, Lisa

(106)

From: CATHERINE T HOGAN

Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 5:34 PM

Subject: Bosque Trail I-40 to Campbell

Please do not develop a trail on the Bosque between I-40 and Campbell Road. It is a very small and fragile sliver of the Rio Grande River Basin which should be protected by conservation measures, not destroyed by building a treated crusher fine trail.

The Rio Grande riparian ecosystem supports many species of birds and other wildlife. It should not be an Outdoor Developed Area or Recreation Facility. There are places we can provide accessible trails, but we still need to protect the unique characteristics of the natural setting of outdoor trails.

“Trails for Everyone” means we need all kinds of trails, from pavement to remote tracks. “Trails for Everyone” does not mean destroying fragile wildlife habitat. The existing dirt trail provides a place for solitude in nature. The dirt trail could be maintained to control runoff and for easier accessibility.

A National Council on Disability report to the President stated that managers of National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) units estimated that a total of 16,767 people with disabilities use the NWPS each year. Though it was impossible to verify the accuracy of the estimates, it is obvious that some persons using wheelchairs do enjoy the natural setting and the rugged physical challenges of wilderness areas where the terrain is not provided any form of special treatment, accommodation or modification.

I am missing a leg (above knee) and do not happen to be one of the Olympian type of disabled persons. I find the dirt trail to be a risky challenge as I tend to fall down a lot on uneven terrain, but if I do take on such a challenge, it is because of the natural setting and feeling of being a part of nature that I would do it. There are accessible places I can go to enjoy the river and the Bosque. I, for one, do not want an accessible trail built on this small riparian ecosystem, in the name of disability access. Don't make accessibility a scapegoat for an ill-conceived project.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sandra Raun

(107)

From: Dan Hart

Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 7:44 PM

Subject: Bosque trail

Anyone that has taken the trail through the bosque on the portion that has been completed will realize that it is not intrusive to the environment. It is quite the opposite from the bush-wacked trails that people will make on their own if there are not designed trails for them to walk on. I

have always regarded myself as a proponent for the environment and I just do not see this as an issue. It allows people access to the bosque that people will just make on their own anyway. On a recent walk along the completed portion of the trail, many birds could be heard and seen in the underbrush along the trail and in the vegetation along the portions that run adjacent to the riverbank - very pleasant, thank you for that experience.

Dan Hartkemeyer

(108)

From: Danielle Albright

Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2016 9:15 AM

Subject: Public Comment Bosque Extension

Mr Schmander,

I am writing in support of the city plan to make improvements to the Bosque trail. I live and work in the downtown area and visit the Bosque two to three times per week. Since improvements were made to the trail in the Central area, I have noticed that both myself and others are much less likely to deviate from the designated path. Further, the levelness of the trail provides a safe terrain for everyone, including those with mobility issues.

I believe that having a designated and identifiable trail not only improves the experience for visitors to the area, but also prevents the destruction of the off trail terrain. I hope that new trail improvements will use existing pathways and avoid carving out new trails in previously undisturbed areas whenever possible.

Thank you for your time,
Danielle Albright

(109)

From: Jen Duvall

Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2016 9:43 AM

Subject: public comment, bosque trail

Dear Mr. Schmader:

I am a regular user of the Bosque trail system and I am pleased with the current improvements of the trail system, and am excited to hear that more improvements are in store. Making the trail accessible for those with limited mobility is huge for our city. Continued improvements would be so valuable. Thanks you so much for your work.

All the best,
Jennifer Duvall

(110)

From: Tom Jameson

Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2016 10:23 AM

Subject: Bosque Trail comments

Greetings.

Here are my comments regarding the proposed Bosque trail project.

First, I am a regular user of the area in question. It is important to me and has been for the 34 years I have been a resident of the city.

My overriding concern about any changes to the area is that minimizing environmental impacts, including impacts on wildlife, should be the priority. This is true for all proposed alternatives considered. Alternative 1 seems to have the most potential impacts and therefore I do not favor it. In any changes made to the trail should use the existing soil in place, stabilized and contoured to make a firm surface that will not pond water.

Also, the width should be less than 6 feet with periodic wider areas for passing. I am not opposed to wheelchair access in the least but do not feel that wheelchairs require a minimum of 6 feet of trail width.

Slowing bike traffic should be a priority. Bikes have other ways to enjoy the area and do not mix well with wildlife, foot traffic nor wheelchairs.

The river bank is extremely sensitive and important to wildlife, protect it, and consider not making the main trail run too close to it.

Thank you for your consideration. I would also like to ask that you give great weight to the citizen based organizations who have formed to protect the area and guide the City in making careful decisions on the area's development. The organizations have spent a great deal of time and effort in thinking about the issue and bring great expertise to the matter. They represent my voice and the voices of much of the City, do not ignore them nor minimize their viewpoints. The City needs their input and should welcome it. I insist that you do so.

Sincerely,

Thomas Jameson

(111)

From: Michael D Lipkan

Date: January 9, 2016 at 2:12:25 PM MST

Subject: Bosque Trail Extension

We are living in a global mass extinction event.

We need to increase the amount of land on the surface of this earth that is dedicated to protecting biodiversity. The Bosque trail that roughly parallels the Rio Grande River through Albuquerque is a riparian zone that needs as much protection as we can give it. It should be enlarged as much as we can.

That means moving homes farther away from the river. In fact, I believe we should move homes

out of the 500 year flood plane. Then, the riparian region would become much more of a bio park than it is now. Most trails should be kept the width of one wheelchair and made using only natural materials such as stabilized dirt paths (caliche makes a very strong and durable path). Of course stones and drainage systems will need to be installed to help protect the trail and the plants that surround it.

Wider trails encourage motorized travel which is not something that will help preserve the riparian zone. Bicyclists are unable to really observe the nature around them. In fact, their movements at high speeds disturbs the animals that live there.

To further the goal of enlarging and protecting the riparian zone, on both sides of the river banks, I suggest building trails that lead to lookout towers in carefully planned places. These trails would lead from parking areas to look out towers that are some distance away from the river and yet close enough to allow visitors to get close-up views of the river habitat. These trails would be roughly perpendicular to the river and each one would be separated by some distance, say, a mile, or half-mile. Of course the parking areas would be outside the 500 year flood plane.

Telescopes that are permanently mounted on the tower platform near the roof provide 360° views of the habitat around the tower. Of course visitors can bring their own binoculars if they prefer them to the telescopes. Nature lovers can go to these towers to view from a distance, the variety of nature that will be encouraged when we have minimal intrusion by people on their habitat.

(112)

From: Becky

Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2016 12:29 PM

Subject: Bosque trail extension

Dear Dr. Schmader:

The natural, undeveloped Bosque, with the additional benefit of the river, right in the city, is what makes this area so unique and spectacular and that is what people love about it. Therefore, I vote for "No Action" regarding the proposed trail development in the Bosque. As was brought up at the recent public meeting, there is no parking access north of I-40 and I seriously doubt that wheelchair bound folks will travel a trail all the way from I-40 north to Campbell Road and back again in a day. The wide, crusher fine trail installed last year provides plenty of opportunity for wheelchairs in the Bosque. As was also mentioned in the public meeting, existing coyote, porcupine and other wildlife "homes" should not be disturbed by putting in a new trail.

In addition, no existing Bosque trails need to be closed. The existing, undeveloped, natural trails have been there for decades and have not caused any detriment in the Bosque. People rarely go off the trails; they don't "wander" off the trails or go "tramping" all over the Bosque, damaging it. It is very rare to see people off the trails in my experience.

There is no need to rush through to any proposed change to the Bosque as was done, without proper notice and process, with the crusher fine trail last year.

So, again, I vote for the "No Action" option. At the very least, there should not be any additional 6' wide, non-natural surfaced trail in the Bosque.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Becky Johnston

(113)

From: sarita streng

Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2016 12:36 PM

Subject: Re: comments regarding trail construction set for Feb 2016

January 11, 2016

Dear Dr. Schmader,

I am writing regarding the trail construction that the City of Albuquerque is planning on starting on February 1 in the Bosque area on the east side of the river from I-40 to Campbell Road. My biggest concern regarding this trail is the impact on wildlife. I think that at this point any of the trails you have presented are not really based on caring about wildlife or the health of the ecosystem. Truly I was so disappointed to learn that some of your trail designs go through one of last coyote dens in the area and important habitat for porcupines. I do have some questions for you: 1) who designed the trail? 2) is there anyone on involved in your design committee that has an understanding and knowledge of the wildlife in the area where you are planning on constructing a trail? You said that Bill Pentler was informing you about wildlife in the Bosque. Has he been consulting you about the wildlife in this area and for this trail? If so, how did he not know about these habitat issues if so many other people who frequent that area of the Bosque do?

What I would really like for this trail is that it is designed in a way that creates least damage to the animals who live there – that is their home – and that restores ecological health of the area. I am unconvinced that your design team has been sufficiently informed by wildlife biologists or ecologists for the design. How about consulting with biologist Dave Parsons who lives in the area? Or biologist Brian Hanson who has been studying the wildlife in the area?

At this point I would like for you to not go any farther with this trail until you can show the public that you have worked with a wildlife biologist and ecological expert to base this design on science. I firmly believe that the Bosque should be primarily a nature space not an outdoor trail primarily for exercise, fast biking, and park amenities without deep regard for the nature around it.

So I really prefer the option of no trail for now because I don't believe that your team has designed this has not done a mindful enough or based on respecting nature enough. I would like to see wheelchair accessibility improved. As an occupational therapist (I work with people with physical injuries and disabilities) and someone who has put some thought into this issue, I believe that the most important aspect for accessibility is actually maintaining the trails. I also think that a 6 foot wide trail is too wide because I think that that width of trail encourages

speed at this time unless you restrict bikers from the area and I believe this causes safety issues for pedestrians. This also means creating a smooth surface – a prefer a soil stabilizer as opposed to crusher fine – and doing your best to adhere to ADA standards regarding gradient changes. I hope that the trail construction is put off for a year to really review and make a more wildlife and nature friendly trail.

As the moderator suggested at the January 7 meeting suggested, playing fair is best done when people are hard on the issues not the person. I love his idea and would like to support it. However, I feel that the ethics and morals of the Berry administration have been very deceptive and undemocratic in the process of trail development and that this is very important to point out because it has greatly affected the entire process.

Unfortunately the whole motive of this trail has never been publicly disclosed. Most people are under the impression that the whole purpose of this trail is because the mayor believes that it is important for him to build a trail in the Bosque and be known for it – a “legacy project.” I am not sure what that actually has to do with the Bosque but really it seems to have more to do with the Mayor’s ego. Let’s please do the right action as a community and do the right thing for the Bosque and the community not just a Mayor’s ego if that is the motivation behind this project. That is not good enough of a reason.

For Mayor Berry and your administration, I find your behavior in this affair to be un-democratic, deceptive, non-transparent, and greedy with nature and your own personal desires as opposed to representing the community or caring for our planet at all. Your not following through on multiple commitments and not responding to public commentary has felt very distressing to me and extremely unethical for a government agency that is supposed to represent and serve the community.

Some other suggestions that I have for the future of trail construction and maintenance in this area include:

1. Publish a) scientific and ecologic studies and b) design rationale regarding this project publicly. Include information about wildlife in the area and projected impact on the wildlife including population numbers. So far I believe the impact studies have been inadequate.
2. I do not have anything against having a trail or trail system. I believe that having a trail system is actually the best approach to keeping the Bosque healthy and managing visitor impact on the area. I just want the trail to be well designed with regard to already mentioned factors.
3. If the City really wants to make trails more accessible for people who use wheelchairs, make sure that getting from the parking lot to the trail is accessible.
4. Create some educational signs that explain a) what is in the Bosque and b) how to treat the Bosque in a respectful way.

Examples of signs:

- The Bosque is a very unique place and home to wildlife such as sandhill cranes, porcupines, coyotes, velvet ants, beavers, and ... then there can be some individual

signs about individual animals. Then you could have some signs about the plants including the cottonwoods and other plants. Another sign could be about the invasives vs native plant species. Let people know how unique this place is and its natural value: You can see and hear and experience things here that you cannot experience in most of the rest of the world!

- Here are some ways to help take care of this special place:
Do not litter – carry your trash out
Do not disturb wildlife. Stay out of nests, dens, and be as quiet as possible.
Pick up after your dog. Dog feces (poop) is very hurtful to the fish in the river and can be harmful to other animals as well.
- Do not smoke, use fireworks, or start fires in the Bosque. This is an area that is very vulnerable to fire.
- Please call this number _____ if you have concerns about the Bosque or activities in the Bosque

Dr. Schmader, these are my suggestions for now. I implore you to advocate on behalf of the Bosque, its wildlife and the people who care about the health and well-being of the area's ecology.

Sincerely,
Sarita Streng

(114)

From: Christine Darrow
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2016 7:10 PM
Subject: No Action

Dear Mr. Schmader,
Please do not propagate the expansion of more and unnecessary trails in the Bosque. The existing trails are more than enough and already disturb the natural habitat and ecosystem. Why do humans want to keep encroaching on nature in the name of conservation? Please stop and take No Action!

Christine Darrow, concerned citizen

(115)

From: Feliz Madrugada
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2016 7:19 PM
Subject: Save the bosque - public opinion on river trails

To whom it may concern,
Hello and thank you for your sincere time and consideration on the critical issues and opinions of the majority of bosque users considering the new river trail construction.

The first and most important factor to consider when designing/building these trails should be protecting the unique and valued wildlife and natural area that is the Albuquerque Cottonwood bosque. I, along with many others, strongly believe everything should be done to protect this one of a kind stretch of Cottonwood bosque, along with all native plants, the multitude of migrating birds, the coyotes, porcupines and many other species that inhabit the area. It is of utmost importance that we as a city and community research extensively the impact the new trail will have on all of these animals and their natural surroundings to not discourage their visits, or destroy their homes. They were here before us and it is our duty to respect and learn from them.

Bosque plans should thus be researched, well-planned, and flexible to meet the needs of the species who live there and do nothing to create them harm.

I firmly support NO ACTION. Instead of creating new trails- why not put money into rehabilitating the existing area, cleaning up the river, and establishing the basic necessities much needed by all bosque users along the established pavement routes- bathroom access and water stations.

If the city is determined to go ahead with the trail construction plan, not heeding to the wishes of the public for no action, then I strongly support the following:

1. Conduct adequate research, take the time to truly find the best methods to create these trails and do not rush into construction before nesting this spring.
2. Use natural soil - not crusher fine or any other foreign substance.
3. Minimize the width of the trail to 3-4 feet with occasional pass zones. I work for students with multiple disabilities and therefore am a very strong advocate for accessibility. However I have seen wheelchair users able to use some of the existing trails- and there are additional spots at the Nature center and between Central & 1-40 already established as more accessible zones. The entire bosque does not need to be accessible. We must respect the wildlife first and foremost and that means not intruding on their space. Especially in consideration of the coyote den and porcupine refuge that will be disturbed with the stretch from 1-40 to Campbell Rd.
4. From the very limited alternatives provided, I would prefer at the very least Alternative 3 with drop-down trails to the river. I feel the trail should neither follow the river bed due to the impact on riparian environment and wildlife. Additionally a trail that wide through the middle will impact the other species previously mentioned (coyotes etc). Thus, ultimately a better solution should be researched. At no cost should Alternative 1 be considered.

Again I thank you for a heart-felt listening to these valid and well-supported concerns.
Feliz Madrugada

From: Geri Martinez
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2016 9:50 AM
Subject: Bosque issue

Please take NO ACTION on this issue.
Thank you,
Geraldine Martinez

(117)

From: Sue or Don Norton
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2016 10:21 AM
Subject: Bosque Multi-Use Accessible Path Project (Phase II) I-40 to Campbell Road

Mr. Schmader

I took a walk with you on Dec 5, 2015. If still timely my comment would be to take no action this Spring. Wait to get more input and consensus on action to take.

Whatever and when action is taken do not mix pedestrian and horse usage.
Please no horses in area being considered.

Thank you
Past experience managing a Rails-to-Trails project in South Carolina.
Donald Norton

(118)

From: Kathleen Gygi
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2016 12:32 PM
To: Schmader, Mathew F.; Camilla Feibelman
Subject: Comments on Bosque Path Extension

Dear Dr. Schmader:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this project. I am a regular visitor to the Bosque, on foot and on bike. I participate in a local birding group, join guided Open Spaces and Sierra Club walks, and do sound walks on my own. I am grateful that this unique resource is being protected and access will be enhanced. In addition to the intrinsic rewards of getting people out into nature, experiences in the Bosque provide the opportunity to cultivate stewardship. I endorse the Bosque Action Team's position that environmental considerations should guide any decision that is made, and that plans should be flexible and adapted to the conditions on the ground, for example, to avoid current habitation by wildlife.

Given the options, **I support Alternative 3**. Closing sensitive areas along the river while providing drop down trails for access will balance human access needs with protection for habitat and wildlife. I completely reject **Alternative 1** because of the impact on wildlife, habitat, and current restoration projects.

In addition, I urge the city to:

- Build a narrower trail with some wider cutouts and open areas on the river.
- Use stabilized naturalized materials.
- Consider excluding bike traffic altogether or include other features to slow bike traffic; bikes have multiple other trail options.
- Provide at least one signed access point to the levee trail mid-way (the current power line path is not obvious from the river trail).
- Provide signage and lighting at trail access points, particularly around and under the I-40 bridge and adjacent parking lot.

The first phase of the trail from Central to I-40 has a number of wonderful features, notably habitat restoration and access to the river at selected points. However, it does not provide sites to stop, rest, and contemplate. Except for the curves at the north end, the trail does not provide features to slow bike traffic. These enhancements should be implemented in Phase II. In addition, access points to the levee trail should be provided in the middle of the trail. Since I go out after work, it often gets too dark to be in the trees and I have wished to be able to get onto the open, lighter, more safe feeling levee trail. I also have concerns about safety at the I-40 bridge access points.

Please keep me informed about project plans and modifications. The public meeting was very informative about the build alternatives but did not cover operations, maintenance, or safety issues.

Regards,

Kathleen Gygi

(119)

From: kimkaufman

Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2016 4:51 PM

Subject: Please don't extend the multi-use trail in the bosque from I-40 north to Campbell Road

Dear Matt:

I am not a scientist, biologist or someone with an environmental sciences background. I was an attorney for 27 years here in Albuquerque and I live near the bosque at Campbell Road. However, I was present several years ago when a crowd of several hundred people converged at the Albuquerque Museum to speak against the commercialization and development of the bosque. I was present for the entire meeting, and I was extremely impressed with the people who stood up to speak out against changes to the natural pathways and beauty of the existing bosque. These speakers WERE scientists, biologists and people who were trained in environmental sciences. They spoke eloquently against the City's plans to pave the bosque and "improve" its accessibility. Do you have any recordings of the comments that were orally made

that night? If not, why not? You were present that night and I think you remember as well as I do, how articulate these individuals were in laying out the many reasons that changes to the existing bosque would damage it and the birdlife, animal life, plant life, etc.

Please, please do not commercialize or "improve" the bosque. Albuquerque is famous for having this marvelous riparian natural river environment that runs through our city. Don't destroy it by "improving" it. The majority of people in Albuquerque do not want the bosque touched. You and the other people who are in charge of this project will have it on your consciences, if the birds, animals and plants that are living together as nature intended, are destroyed through "manmade" changes, such as Mayor Berry is forcing down the throats of our citizens. Please do not abet this crime against nature.

The people of Albuquerque spoke, that night several years ago. They were almost unanimously against the City's plans. Please don't let politics and commercial interests ruin our bosque.

I am heartsick over this.

Kim Kaufman

(120)

From: Renzo Del Frate

Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2016 5:49 PM

Subject: Comments on Extension of Bosque Path from I-40 to Campbell Road

Dear Parks and Recreation Dept,

I attended the Public Meeting at Duranes Community Center on January 7, 2016 on the referenced topic. I heard the complete presentation and most of the verbal public commentary. I have been living the Bosque area for over 40 years and frequent it often year round with my children on foot and bike from Downtown to Alameda, but mostly in the referenced corridor. I do not support any of the improvements proposed. The only improvements I would suggest is better signage to keep people on the present trails, more trash pickup, and continued reforestation due to the fires years ago. I believe there is ample and easier wheelchair access to the Bosque in many other parts of the city. As for wildlife protection with the suggested new trails away from the river banks, the construction process and subsequent added people would likely harm the wildlife overall since the river bank would not be very far away in this narrow strip of Bosque.

I will emphasize that the continuing efforts should be made to reforest the Bosque and create natural habitats for the wildlife. It should be kept clean and well patrolled by law enforcement. People accessing the river should tread lightly to keep it natural and wild as possible.

Respectively,
Renzo Del Frate

(121)

From: Natural

Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2016 9:45 PM

Cc: Harris, Don

Subject: Comments on Bosque Multi-Use Accessible Path Phase II

Dear Mr. Schmader,

I am submitting comments on the Bosque Path Extension, I-40 to Campbell Road.

I am disappointed that it is so difficult to find any information about this project on the City website. I found maps, but not much else. Given the popularity and concern people have for the area, I expected to easily find more information about the project.

Regardless of the option chosen, user-created trails should be closed and rehabilitated. Monitoring should be done to ensure that old trails are not re-opened and new trails are not created.

The mayor has said that work would not take place during nesting season for birds. Owls start courting and nesting as early as February, but I'm sure the city's wildlife biologist has told you that. If not, you need a new biologist. Owl surveys should be done before work starts; areas with nesting pairs or signs of nest from past years should be avoided. Better yet, wait till autumn to commence work.

I have not done much hiking in the bosque, mainly short walks while birding. I am dismayed by all of the user-created trails; the lack of design has resulted in adverse environmental effects throughout the area. I expect that the new trail is designed to prevent or reduce ruts and erosion.

Finally, please post more information about future projects on the city website and make it easy to find. And post more than maps and offer a weekend meeting or open house. I finally found it by using the search term "Campbell Road". That is pretty sad. The bosque is a jewel and projects that promote conservation and protection of the area should be highlighted, not buried. It is possible that my concerns are addressed in the plan, but how it is impossible to know that.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit written comments. Please acknowledge receipt.

Regards,

Patricia Cohn

(122)

From: Colston Chandler

Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2016 11:14 PM

Subject: Phase 2 comments

Dear Matt,

With regard to the proposed trail from 140 to Campbell Road NW, my preference by far is that the city not build a crusher fines trail at this time. This is not because I oppose trails in principle, but because I find the City's piecemeal approach to building in the Bosque so odious. A distant second choice will be described below.

What is so bad about the City's approach? The much reviled Rio Grande Vision document that the Mayor pushed (and paid thousands for) cautioned against such an approach. That document, which once was so important but is now not posted on any City web site about the Rio Grande Vision, urged formation of a committee whose main purpose was to vet proposed projects to that things were not done in a piecemeal way. That document warned how much damage the piecemeal approach could do both to the Bosque and to the public confidence that the City was working in the public interest. It is time to halt trail construction until other parts of the project, like educational signage, accessible parking, and real Bosque rejuvenation are moving forward.

More specific complaints follow.

1. The environmental knowledge of the area reported so far is inadequate. The post-construction environmental monitoring report of the phase 1 sites is, I understand, not yet available. The preliminary data that have been posted are woefully inadequate to understand the effect of the phase 1 building because it reports the different bird species observed but not their numbers. Moreover the effect on the porcupine population is not mentioned, even though porcupines used to be popular with the public and observed in the Phase 1 area. I have the impression that the proposed trails for Phase 2 were drawn in ignorance of the porcupine and coyote populations of the Phase 2 area, as well as of the labyrinth (a cultural artifact). No trail should be built anywhere in the Bosque until such ignorance is eliminated.

2. The Rio Grande Valley State Park was created to preserve the natural environment in the Bosque. Planning a trail so to avoid cutting down trees is not sufficient. A trail should protect the most environmentally sensitive parts of the Bosque, which means avoiding the river bank as much as possible, respecting important vegetation, and respecting the resident wildlife. A trail should be designed to allow people to observe the important natural features in a minimally invasive way. My observation is that the Phase 1 trail has become a high-speed thoroughfare for bicycles and that groups of pedestrians mainly talk and are not attentive to the surrounding nature. There is virtually nothing about that trail that causes people to stop and look at their surroundings. The same sort of trail for Phase 2 will be even more of a challenge because a large part of it will be through a former burn area.

In my view, none of the Phase 2 trail proposals have any component that promotes appreciation of nature in the Bosque (which is an important matter given the founding legislation of the park). Until such features (including unobtrusive educational signage) are part of the trail plan, I cannot support the trails. Since there is no indication the City plans to add such features to the Phase 1 trail, I do not trust the City to do so for Phase 2 unless they are in the published design.

3. The nature of the trail surface itself is an issue if a goal is build a trail that looks natural. During the past week I have walked through the Phase 2 area four times. Some places were muddy and in need of help, but a surprisingly large part of the present riverside trail was not muddy and provided pleasant walking and was firm enough to support wheelchair traffic. The issue of surface needs to be reopened to public discussion. It is not enough just to state, without reasons and no discussion of those reasons with the public, that all other alternatives have been found to be inadequate. This stance of the city is particularly strange in the face of various published guidelines that suggest surfaces other than crusher fines might work well in certain circumstances.

4. The uniform width of the proposed trail needs to be open for discussion. It looks very unnatural if a trail has uniform width. In addition, because of the nature of the bicycle traffic I have observed in the area, it is unsafe for a pedestrian to stop to look at something and stay on the trail. I have not observed cyclists slowing down as they approach pedestrians, and most do not even give a courtesy alert as they approach. This is almost universally true for cyclists in groups. I also almost never have observed a cyclist stop, or even slow down, to actually look carefully at anything in the environment. There need to be refuge areas for pedestrians (and cyclist who are so inclined) to get out of the traffic pattern. This problem is acute for pedestrians who are unsteady on their feet and for wheelchair users. What is a wheelchair user to do when meeting a horse or a rapidly moving bicycle?

The psychology of the wheelchair user needs to be considered with a horse or a speeding bicycle passes just inches away. The protocols for who yields are not even posted for people encountering wheelchairs.

There are safety issues that the proposed multiuse trail has not addressed at all. Now is the time to have a thorough discussion, before Phase 2 is built.

5. In the early days of discussion of Phase 1, much more extensive restoration work in the Bosque was promised. I understand a study has been commissioned to ascertain what to do. This study should be completed and a schedule for restoration published before there is any further trail building. Trail planning would be acceptable, but no building until the City commits publicly to some specific restorations (compared to committing to the general idea of restoration, like politicians do when they want to avoid an issue).

6. Much has been made about the fact the the Phase 1 trail and the proposed Phase 2 trail are accessible. Yet the ramps at the north and south ends of the Phase 1 trail and at the siphon are, according to wheelchair users I know, way too steep. The same is true of the proposed ramp at the south end of the Phase 2 trail. This means that there is no truly accessible connection from the trail to accessible parking. The Campbell end of the Phase 2 trail will not need a ramp, but there is also no accessible access to parking. I have asked several people, including you, about plans to provide accessible access to parking and have heard only vagaries about how difficult it is but it is being worked on. I consider this matter a much higher priority than building the Phase 2 trail now. Don't start Phase 2 construction until you solve this problem for the Phase 1 trail and publish a time schedule for building the access.

7. The attempt to obtain public input was pathetic, though better than the nothing that was offered for Phase 1. At the public meeting where the City presented its alternatives, there was no time allotted for questions. The one woman who persisted to ask for clarification was met with hostility from the moderator. There was inadequate time for the oral comments from the public, and there was no time allotted for responses to those comments. The one week allotted for written comments is absurdly short by any reasonable standard. The fact that the public will have no chance to comment on the adopted design, not even to suggest a small tweak that might significantly improve the trail, is, again, pathetic. The whole thing looks like something done to be able to say the public were invited to have their say though without intent to incorporate any of what the public says. There should be a much more extended public process, such as the one the city agreed to last March, before any further construction is done.

The Bosque is precious to me and almost all of the people I know. Even the Mayor used to say it is a jewel of Albuquerque. What has been done in Phase 1 and is proposed for Phase 2 is too base a material to enhance a jewel. Just for once, let's do something that is truly world class. No more construction until there is a viable complete plan for protecting as much of the nature as possible, educating the public about what they are seeing, planning the trail to be minimally invasive, to slow people down, and to focus their attention on the important natural and cultural features of the Bosque. And let's have a meaningful public process in which there is an actual discussion in which the city thoroughly explains its reasons for its decisions and is willing to listen with an open mind.

I do not, of course, believe the Mayor will agree with anything I have written above and that he will insist that a trail be built. So I offer the following comments on what I believe to be the least inadequate plan.

1. Let the multiuse trail be built along the lines of Alternative 3 without the spurs to the river. The route should avoid the coyote den, the porcupine habitat, the labyrinth, and all present or planned restoration projects by any agency.
2. Make a narrower spur along the existing river trail that starts where the multiuse trail leaves the existing trail. The spur continues to the tree where you made the first stop on your informative hikes. There are a couple of logs sent on end for sitting there, and on the east side of the trail there is a dead tree. Make the trail narrower, say four feet wide, and of a more natural surface that would yet be hard packed enough for wheelchairs. At the tree with the upended logs improve the area around the tree so that it can serve as a safe observation area for wheelchair users. Close and re-vegetate the existing trail to the north all the way to the next riverside observation area. Thus, this spur has, importantly, a dead end where people can look at the river and all that goes on there. (Many geese and ducks and five cranes last Tuesday afternoon.)
3. Make a narrower spur, of much the same design, that leaves the multiuse trail roughly where the Alternative 3 map shows the southernmost spur. The spur should end at the tree where you made the second stop in your hike, roughly the southern end of the trees that didn't burn in the large fire a decade or so ago. Enhance the area under the tree to be a safe observation area for wheelchair users. The existing river trail to the south should be closed and re-vegetated all the way to the other spur.
4. Make no other spurs.
5. Do not construct the east-west trail shown on the Alternative 3 map at the northern end of the multiuse trail. That trail should connect with the viewing area at the river, and that viewing area should be made nicer. It should also connect with the Paseo del Bosque bike path with an acceptable accessible grade for wheelchair users.
6. The existing river trail from the river end of the spur proposed in item 3 above should be left open and unimproved with one exception.

That exception would be trail obstacles that would cause a bicycle to have to stop but would allow a pedestrian (or a cyclist carrying his/her bicycle) to continue. A log across the trail might work if placed at points where vegetation crowds the present trail. An obstacle every 50 yards or so might do the trick. The goal is to encourage cyclists to go slow or to go elsewhere. About a week ago I encountered a total of about 15 cyclists on this stretch of trail. None slowed down. None announced themselves. None even said hello. It was a good thing that I was watching and listening for them, because they ignored the general custom of yielding to pedestrians. On that same afternoon I encountered about 8 pedestrians, all of whom claimed that such cyclists were routine. The trail is popular, but the presence of high speed cyclists is making the trail unsafe for others. Keep the trail open but put obstacles that slow bicycles without significantly impeding pedestrians. This trail is not, of course, intended to be accessible. (Though my wife and I managed it in her wheelchair a couple of years ago and later with her rollator when she no longer needed the wheelchair. This is not to say it was easy, but we are old backpackers who are not easily deterred.)

Again, this trail should not draw attention to itself but should appear as if it had been there for years. It should encourage people to look at nature (just as Japanese garden masters design their paths). It should be minimally invasive with respect to nature, and should certainly avoid sensitive areas.

Such a trail would be the least odious to me, assuming the City simply must build a trail now instead of pausing so that world class design can be implemented as I would prefer. Thanks for reading this far Matt. Good luck with trying to summarize all the responses you receive.
Colston

(123)

From: Virginia Seiser

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 7:13 AM

Subject: Bosque Multi-Use Path

This is in response to the Bosque Multi-Use Path alternatives presented at the January 7, 2016 public meeting at Los Duranes. The Bosque is a natural area and important wildlife corridor. Any "improvements" should be guided by environment concerns and should include scientific monitoring of impacts.

The routing of the trail should move human impact away from the river edge, since the river is the focus of wildlife activity. The width of the trail should be the minimum that meets ADA requirements. The surface of the trail should disturb natural conditions as little as possible.

A three-foot wide trail with turnouts will meet ADA requirements. NONE of the alternatives offered use this standard. The proposed six-foot wide trail is needlessly intrusive.

A stabilized-soil surface will meet concerns about trail maintenance and ADA accessibility. Crusher-fine introduces a foreign material that is unnecessary. NONE of the alternatives offered propose stabilized-soil.

In terms of routing, Alternative 3 is the least intrusive and the best choice for reducing human impact on wildlife.

Virginia Seiser

(124)

From: Sara K

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 8:21 AM

Cc: j.p.kellymrgcd@gmail.com

Subject: input on bosque multi-use accessible Path Project Phase II

Dear Mr. Schmader,

On January 7 I attended the community meeting for input on the Bosque Multi-use Accessible Path Project, Phase II. I was prepared to support Alternative 3 because it had the most trail away from the river edge, yet allowed spurs to access the river.

At the meeting serious concerns arose that cause me now to advocate that the city postpone action on the new trail section for one year, while conducting a study on impact of the trail section south of I-40.

- The map shows how narrow this fragile section of bosque is. A larger and more used trail will create more disruption to this unique habitat treasure of Albuquerque.
- There are wildlife habitats that were not accounted for in the trail design—coyote and porcupine were mentioned.
- Lack of a parking plan will create a problematic situation on Campbell Road.

At the meeting I spoke to one of the officials about the dramatically lowered number of birds after Rio Rancho installed a path in their section of the bosque. The response was that the birds may have just moved across the river. To me this exemplifies the lack of interest in scientific involvement among proponents of this project. I recently learned that the BioPark education program—on which the city spends a certain amount of money to promote conservation to park visitors—has a goal of “teaching about interdependence and diversity.” Yet the city sends a contradictory message with the expanded trail plan. The bosque is a habitat in which all organisms have a special role—a bosque with out birds would change in many ways—distribution of plants by seeds that travel in birds’ digestive systems, numbers of insects that are not eaten by birds, plants that are not pollinated, and many other ways that a trained biologist could explain better than I can.

Having an area of the bosque that is accessible and inviting is important for the city, and I ask the city planners to consider the equal or greater value of having a bosque that is as close to its natural state as possible after years of intervention—not a park but a nature preserve of an

ecosystem that only exists in New Mexico. Surely, taking time to balance needs wisely is worth a wait of one more year.

Thank you for your consideration of citizen input,
Sara Keeney

(125)

From: Timothy Lee Ward
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 9:42 AM
Subject: comments on bosque path extension

Hello,

I attended the public meeting on January 7, 2016 regarding the bosque path extension. I would like to share my personal comments on this issue.

I regularly walk the section of the current river path south from Campbell road, and believe any intrusion of a six-foot wide crusher fines path into that narrow corridor will be a detriment to the wildlife and what still remains of “wildness” along the river there. I believe that a couple of ADA accessible drop down paths down to the river from the levee, with viewing stations at the river edge to control damage, would be far better. A continuous wide path will promote much more high-velocity mountain bike traffic that will undoubtedly impact the wildlife and impact other users as well (I am a mountain biker myself, but it does not mix well with lots of walkers, birdwatchers, etc). All that said, if a new continuous path cannot be avoided, I would encourage a 4-ft path with pullouts over 6 foot – this will be plenty wide, and reduce speeds and impact.

Among the alternatives presented at the meeting, I would say the following:

My preferred option is the do nothing option.

But, if a new path must happen...

I favor keeping any wide path as far from the river as possible for as long as possible – that would be alternative 2a or 3.

I personally favor keeping a pedestrian-only footpath along the river in at least the northern portion – this would be **alternative 2a**. While it would be better for wildlife to eliminate the river edge path, this narrow, quiet path where you can hear the river is the whole reason I go there in the first place.

I hope the city does the right thing here and does not rush into a poor decision. The whole timeline seems artificially forced – I cannot see any urgent reason to force this project to happen so quickly. It was also apparent at the meeting that there had been little if any examination of the actual wildlife present in the area and the impact. I urge taking another year and doing a more thorough assessment.

Thank you for considering my views.
Sincerely,
Timothy L. Ward, Professor Emeritus

(126)

From: Rebecca steele

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 10:14 AM

Subject: Bosque trail

Hello, Matt:

My husband and I attended the meeting last week at Los Durance Community Center. We would like to urge the City to put off the trail project for a year so that it can be planned more carefully, to include viewing blinds, parking and any other needed amenities. If the City insists on proceeding with the project right now, then we both feel that Alternative 3 is the best of the alternatives, with the trail moving away from the river bank, with periodic "drop-down" trails to access the river bank. Also, for the minimum disruption to wildlife, we think that the trail should be only 3-4 feet wide and made of stabilized rather than crusher fines.

The lady who pleaded for more wheel-chair access did not address any of the concerns about minimally disturbing wildlife habitat, as if human access should take precedence. The City should be primarily concerned with preserving this jewel of natural habitat through Albuquerque.

We should not try to increase pedestrian access so much that it becomes like one of the great river bank parks in large cities of the world--think of the Seine in Paris, the Volga in Moscow, the Mississippi through St. Louis, all paved, for bikes, skaters, etc. Let's save our Bosque before it is too late.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Steele

(127)

From: Shannon Jones

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 10:21 AM

Subject: Bosque trail

Dear Dr. Schmader,

I was born and raised in Albuquerque and I currently reside in the North Valley, very close to the Nature Center. I utilize the bosque several times per week. I very much enjoy the trails that are currently in place and I believe that they are sufficient for meeting the needs of the public, including people in wheel chairs. My mother-in-law uses a wheel chair and we are able to arrive to the river bank with her on the trail that begins at the Nature Center.

I would like to see that the bosque remain in it's most natural form. Please keep in mind that this is a unique ecosystem and not a man-made park, and thus requires special attention for it's preservation. There is a delicate balance that needs to be maintained in order to remain habitat to the wildlife that brings so many to the bosque (coyotes, birds, we've recently seen a bald eagle in the area). Disturbing this balance by developing it with unnecessarily wide trails lined with crusher fine will affect the wildlife and this is unacceptable to me.

I outline my STRONG PREFERENCE to your proposed development options below:

- My preference is for the "NO ACTION" option to leave this section of the bosque as-is
- If a trail must be developed, I prefer the option that has the SMALLEST IMPACT ON WILDLIFE and riparian ecosystem. An environmental impact assessment must be completed to determine this. Please HALT any ACTION before a proper impact assessment has been completed.
- I am in favor of bosque preservation and restoration, NOT DEVELOPMENT
- A 6-foot wide crusher fine path is excessive and ugly and will disturb the peace of the bosque. A 3 foot wide trail is sufficient and it should be made of dirt, NOT CRUSHER FINE.
- AVOID DISTURBING THE COYOTE DEN (this issue was raised by several concerned citizens during the Los Duranes meeting)

The Bosque is a community resource and the public are stewards of it. I have been to two public meetings on this issue. The overwhelming majority of attendees share the sentiments I do about keeping the Bosque as-is and doing all that we can to preserve it, not develop it.

This is our community resource- please respect the democratic process and empower the people to make these decisions, rather than satisfying the agenda of a few.

Thank you,
Shannon Jones

(128)

From: Birk Jones

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 10:37 AM

Subject: Bosque trail

Dear Dr. Schmader,

I am writing to express my preference for the "NO ACTION" option for the proposed Bosque trail development. The NM Legislature established the Bosque as a State Park for, "The preservation, protection, and maintenance of the natural and scenic beauty of the state park". The proposed 6' wide crusher-fine trail goes directly against this intention.

I agree with the overwhelming majority of citizens who have attended the public meetings on this topic that:

- The new trail development is unnecessary, as there are plenty of places to walk, bike, and wheel which allow ample enjoyment of the Bosque. It is better to focus on maintaining existing trails and restoring the Bosque to it's natural form.
- Any trail development or maintenance should cause the smallest disturbance to wildlife. One of your proposed options runs right into a coyote den. This trail should be removed from consideration entirely for this reason. A full environmental impact assessment should be made before any trail development.
- A 6' wide crusher fine trail is excessive and does not complement the aesthetic of the Bosque. A 3' wide trail line with natural material (dirt) is preferred.

Please respect the democratic process and empower the people to decide what happens to this shared natural resource. The Albuquerque community has made it clear that we want to see the Bosque preserved, not developed.

Thank you,
Christian Jones

(129)

From: Kathleen Rhoad
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 11:58 AM
Subject: Phase 2 Comments

Dear Matt,

I would like to comment on the northern terminus of the Phase 2 trail at Campbell Rd. Improvements to the access from Cambell Road to the river need to be made to enable wheelchairs to view the river if entering from the Campbell end. The ramp that goes up to the levee from Campbell Rd might need to be made less steep. And the trail going down the slope near the ramada might also need to be made less steep and smoother. Plus, at the top there is a 3 - 4" drop off at the edge of the asphalt that needs to be made level so wheelchairs can pass over it. This addresses safety in that it would allow wheelchairs to enter and exit at Campbell rather than return to the Gabaldon end of the trail if that is where they started..

Additionally, handicapped parking spaces need to be built at the end of Campbell Rd. Right now the closest parking is on Trellis with no parking allowed on Campbell Rd.

Thanks for your attention.
Kathleen Rhoad

(130)

From: Martha Heard
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 12:11 PM
Subject: Bosque trails I-40-North to Campbell Road

I have enjoyed living near the Bosque for over twenty years and have enjoyed walking through it frequently. It is indeed restorative and enhances living in Albuquerque.

I hope that any changes to the Bosque trails north of I-40 should take environmental concerns in account. I believe it would be best to wait until these concerns can be addressed so that everyone can benefit from the wildlife living there.

In the event that the City proceeds without addressing these concerns, I recommend the trail be built from the soil in place, stabilized and contoured to make a firm surface that will not pond water. It should be three to four feet wide with periodic wider places for passing. It should not go through areas where wildlife are known to dwell.

I hope the City will pause and listen to those who use the bosque frequently and make a trail amenable for all including the wildlife residents.

Martha Heard

(131)

From: mardell18

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 12:26 PM

Subject: proposed Bosque Trail alternatives

1. First of all, our Bosque is a protected habitat for birds and wildlife. That reality needs to be our primary concern in making decisions regarding trails in the Bosque. A multi-use trail that allows for speeding bikes has no business running through the Bosque. Not only does that disturb the ecological environment we're purporting to protect, but it is a serious safety hazard to all other users of the path. Bikers need to use the levee road or the paved road that parallels the levee on its east side or seek other city trails where protected habitat is not at risk. (are speeding bikers really there to experience the beauty of the Bosque??)
2. A 3-4 foot wide compacted soil trail should make up the 1st third of the proposed trail as illustrated on plan3. It is closer to the river and thus needs to be as minimally intrusive as possible in width and surface.
3. The concept of being MINIMALLY INTRUSIVE needs to be the guideline for the rest of the trail headed north (plan 3). A narrower trail (4-5 feet) with compacted soil spurs to the river would be less impactful yet allow for accessibility. Prior to starting the actual digging with bobcats, a close assessment wildlife dens and nests needs to be done and steps taken to circumvent disrupting these special places. We can at least do this for our resident wildlife, given that the city insists on doing this make-over at all !)
4. Finally, it begs the question why do any of this at all? The Bosque mission is to protect, respect and educate - not to displace, disrupt and degrade or destroy.
5. The mayor's budget for this project needs to allocate money for the following:
 - a) Restoration following Phase 1 as well as this next phase. There is plenty of destruction of habitat that occurs implementing these changes. Who and when will restoration occur?
 - b) Monitoring of the project area for environmental impacts to birds and wildlife.
 - c) Education and purposeful signage so all of us can learn to respect, protect and support this very special place.

Thank you.

Margaret DeLong

(132)

From: robertson.david
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 12:41 PM
Subject: Bosque Trail

Hi, Matt,
I have been walking in the North Valley bosque since the 1970s.

I have given careful thought to the extension of the trail to Campbell. I attended the meeting at Los Duranes CC. I read the materials. I walked the trail from Central and I-40 and back. The trail is very nice.

Here are my comments:

- The trail is too hard. It is hard on my "old bones".
- The trail is too wide. It is basically a highway for bicycles. I am concerned about the danger for pedestrians posed by bicyclists. A narrower trail will encourage them to slow down. My experience with bicyclists in the bosque is that they expect pedestrians to get out of their way. I am glad to do so, but they rarely ask, and they almost never say thank you.
- The trail is unnecessary for bicyclists. They have at minimum 2 or 3 trails parallel to the proposed trail, ranging from paved to gravel to dirt. I was at the meeting until 7pm, the scheduled timeframe. During that period, I did not hear any presentations from bicyclists who intended to use the trail. Apparently it is not an important improvement for them.
- Wheelchair users will almost certainly be driving to any trailhead, so the existing Central to I-40 trail should be more than adequate to serve their needs, and the trail north of I-40 would be unnecessary for them.
- The trail would negatively affect wildlife, and the natural state of the Bosque, such as it is.
- Horse users don't need the trail.
- I'm sure you are fully aware that maintenance of public sector infrastructure is a big issue. We do not need another improvement that will be minimally maintained, or not at all.
- The rush to do this before nesting season is an unnecessary burden on the process. Why not wait another year? Based on the public comments I listened to, the public is overwhelmingly opposed to a hard 6' trail. I would like to see a summary of all public comments: verbal, written, email, in person, etc.
- This apparently is an important project for the mayor. If so, why did he not attend the meeting?
- I believe you think you are doing the right thing by constructing this trail. I believe you are misinformed.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.
Sincerely,
David Robertson

(133)

From: Fred Houdek
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 1:04 PM
Subject: Re: Bosque Multi-use Accessible Path Project

Hi Matt,

This is to follow up on my comments at the public hearing. It wasn't until I viewed the presentation boards that I realized Alternative 3 included closing the existing trail. After looking at that Alternative again I offer these suggestions as I stated at the Hearing.

- Keep the Existing trail open for pedestrian/equestrian use. That section of the Bosque is very well liked as stated by many at the Hearing. I have seen back in Illinois and Wisconsin where bicyclist are a problem on walking paths. To mitigate the problem and discourage bikers from using trails designed for walkers/hikers, tree logs and old railroad ties across the trail are used to cause riders to slow down and dismount.

- In the location just north of where the planned closure of the existing trail, the new trail should continue to the area close to the river for viewing. I am speaking of the place you stopped to talk on the two walks I attended. This area is very inviting and should be accessible to all.

- If the above access is made, I would only make the southern most and northern most spurs to the river and not build the two center spurs. This would leave adequate access in this track and cause less impact on the wildlife etc.

- I would like to see a narrower 3-4 ft wide trail using compacted/treated earth rather than crusher fine, as I stated in my comments. I have bicycled and hiked extensively in the midwest and know that such surface material is available and easily maintained. Having a narrower trail would require wider areas at regular intervals for passing.

- There needs to be significant improvement in the access signage and along the trail the educate the public on trail etiquette and safety. This is also true for the Central/I-40 corridor.

- I don't have a suggestion, but parking and wheelchair access at Campbell Rd is a problem.

Thank you for considering these comments. I hope the City will adopt the Future Works Agreement so there will be more adequate public input as the further trail extension to Montano Rd is planned.

Fred Houdek

(134)

From: William Croft

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 1:24 PM

Subject: Comments on Phase II, Bosque Multi-Use trail project

Dear Mr. Schmader,

I am writing to comment on the Alternatives for Phase II of the Bosque Multi-Use Accessible Path Project, I-40 to Campbell Road.

The Bosque in Albuquerque is a unique and precious natural and recreational resource. It is the only continuous riparian forest in any city in the United States. It is a riparian ecosystem in the desert, and as the major source of water for wildlife, is necessary for their survival. In fact, the Bosque and the river are home to a number of

endangered species. Although the Bosque ecosystem has been impacted by human activities including urban development and upstream dams, the Bosque remains a critical resource for flora and fauna of the New Mexican desert. This natural treasure in turn attracts people who value the natural scenery and the wildlife that can be observed in the Bosque. The Bosque is one of the finest things about living in Albuquerque.

The top priority of any development in the Bosque should be to preserve this natural ecosystem for the enjoyment of all residents of and visitors to Albuquerque, and to restore it to the greatest extent possible given the constraints on human development around the Bosque. The public has been asked to comment on four alternatives. Three alternatives—1, 2A-D, and 3 all involve bulldozing a 6 foot wide trail with crusher-fine surface through the Bosque; the alternatives represent different routes through the Bosque. Alternative 4 is the no action alternative. Alternatives 1-3 are all inappropriate and destructive development in the Bosque. No milder action alternatives were available for me to comment on, despite efforts by the public to add such alternatives to the proposal. Therefore I oppose Alternatives 1, 2A-D and 3, in that order, for reasons described below. I must support Alternative 4, the no action alternative, as the only alternative offered to us that does not destroy the resources and values of the Bosque.

Research on the crusher-fine trail built in the Rio Rancho portion of the Bosque demonstrates that the effect of the trail is a dramatic decline in wildlife in that portion of the Bosque (see letter from Hawks Aloft to Mayor Berry, 9/2/13). In other words, the effect of a trail as developed as a crusher-fine trail is to defeat the purpose of visiting the Bosque, namely the experience of a vital natural ecosystem. The argument in favor of a crusher-fine trail is to provide wheelchair access to the Bosque, in particular the river edge. The guidelines provided by the United States Access Board recommends for natural areas 3 foot wide trails with takeouts for passing, and stabilized soil surfaces to maintain a natural appearance. In other words, a 6 foot wide crusher fine trail is not necessary to provide wheelchair access. Also, in my observations on actual use of the Bosque, almost the only visitors who walk the length of the trail in the Bosque on the proposed route are bikers and horseback riders. Pedestrians, including wheelchair users, tend to take short walks from access points, typically to the river's edge. Hence the side spurs in Alternative 3 would satisfy that need—if only they were 3 foot natural surface, and not 6 foot crusher fine trails.

Another argument that has been made for building a highly developed trail in the Bosque is to eliminate informal trails. However, in the section from I-40 to Campbell, there is basically only one trail, mostly on the river's edge, with the remains of a restoration road that is away from the river's edge. In other words, there is no web of informal trails. Developing the river-edge trail to a 6 foot crusher fine trail is the most destructive alternative with respect to the natural habitat and wildlife, and I very strongly oppose Alternative 1 for that reason. Alternatives 2A-D also have significant river-edge portions. Only Alternative 3 is away from the river. Alternative 3 is the least-bad option, and I might have been able to support it if it proposed a 3 foot stabilized natural surface trail with turnouts. But since a 6 foot crusher fine trail is part of Alternative 3, I also oppose Alternative 3 as it stands, and support Alternative 4, the no action alternative, as

the only one presented to us that preserves the natural and recreational values of the Bosque.

It is instructive to observe patterns of use on the crusher fine trail that was put in the Bosque in Phase I of this project. The main effect of the crusher fine trail was to transfer much of the bicycle traffic from the Bosque Trail into the Bosque. The bicycles move very quickly and do not give way to pedestrians. (There are no signs as there are on other multiple-use trails that indicate that cyclists should give way to pedestrians and both give way to horses.) I have difficulty imagining a wheelchair user sharing a trail, even a wide trail, with bikes speeding by them every few minutes. The same is true of ordinary pedestrians. Some of these issues were discussed on the information walk in the Bosque that I attended on November 13, 2015. I learned that in fact, the City intends to retain the other trails in the Bosque in order to allow for trails for pedestrians only. This essentially vitiates the argument that the purpose of the crusher fine trail is to eliminate the existing informal trails. Also, there is already significant bicycle use of the existing trails—even in the section between Central and I-40 where the crusher fine trail has already been built.

A final concern I must raise with Phase II of the project is that one needs to consider the cumulative impact of a 6 foot wide crusher fine trail all the way from Central Avenue to Montaña Road. This is a very large segment of the Bosque in the City—the only continuous riparian forest in any city in the United States. Phase I is already built. It was clear from the discussion on the information walk in the Bosque on 11/13/15 that the City intends to built a similar trail from Campbell Road to Montaña Road. The project is not just for the approximately one to one and half miles of riparian habitat from I-40 to Campbell Road; it is part of a project impacting over four miles of the riparian zone. The impact of over four miles of crusher fine trail through the middle of the Bosque, or worse the river's edge on the riparian ecosystem as well as human enjoyment of the Bosque is enormous and possibly irreparable.

I support the effort to limit informal trails where there are too many of them (which is not the case in this section of the Bosque). I support the effort to allow all users, including wheelchair users, access to the Bosque. These goals can be achieved in ways that do not seriously damage the Bosque as a natural habitat whose natural beauty attracts all of us to use it, as many concerned Albuquerqueans have tried to communicate to the City. Unfortunately Alternatives 1, 2A-D, and 3 are far too destructive of the Bosque for me to be able to support any of them. For this reason, I can only support Alternative 4.

Sincerely,
William Croft

(135)

From: Richard Barish

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 2:58 PM

Cc: Mayor Berry; Riordan, Michael J.; Taylor, Barbara L.; Isaac Benton; Sanchez, Ken; Pena, Klarissa J.; Winter, Brad D.; Lewis, Dan P.; Davis, Pat; Gibson, Diane G.; Jones, Trudy; Harris,

Don

Subject: Sierra Club and BAT comments, I-40 to Campbell project



Central New Mexico Group P.O. Box 25342, Albuquerque, N.M. 87125 505/243-7767

City of Albuquerque, Parks and Recreation Dept., Open Space Division
P.O. Box 1293
Albuquerque, N.M. 87102

Re: Comments of Sierra Club and Bosque Action Team, I-40 to Campbell trail extension

Dear Dr. Schmader:

I am writing to submit the following comments on behalf of the Sierra Club and the Bosque Action Team (BAT) on the City's planned extension of the Bosque trail from I-40 to Campbell Road. Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

The Sierra Club and the BAT are deeply disappointed that the City is proceeding with construction of a new section of trail at this time. The City breached its agreement with the Sierra Club and the BAT on process and has employed an abbreviated and inadequate process in its effort to rush through this trail; it does not appear that it will be possible for science to adequately inform the City's decision with the process being employed; and the rushed planning does not appear to be taking into consideration the principal purpose for which the Rio Grande Valley State Park was established and the purpose that guides the applicable ranked plan, the Bosque Action Plan, which is the preservation and appreciation of nature. There is no need to rush to complete construction of the I-40 to Campbell Road section of the trail this winter. We believe that it would be highly preferable to engage in a more considered planning process and, in the meantime, place resources into completing the planning process for the City's unfulfilled restoration commitment.

Nonetheless, we recognize that the City has stated that it will proceed with trail construction this winter. While we believe that this is ill-advised at this time and will likely result in less than optimal decisions, in order to constructively engage in the planning process, we offer the following comments based on what we know at this time.

The Sierra Club and the BAT strongly believe that what makes the Bosque special is that it is a wonderful place to enjoy nature in the middle of the City. In the Bosque, Albuquerque residents can enjoy the cottonwoods, the river, and the multitude of birds and other animals that are found in the Bosque – the Cooper's Hawks, the cranes, the Great Horned Owls, the porcupines, and the

coyotes, among many others. It is clear from the public comments that the overwhelming majority of the public values the Bosque, and is passionate about protecting the Bosque, because of the experience of nature to be had there. They want to preserve the Bosque as a place to enjoy nature. We believe that any management strategy should prioritize helping people enjoy nature in the Bosque and enhancing habitat, so that the birds and animals will be there for people to enjoy.

We also are in complete agreement with the point that the City has emphasized, that the trail should provide the opportunity for everyone to enjoy nature in the Bosque, regardless of abilities. Prior to the time that this issue was ever mentioned raised by the City, one of the member of the BAT, Sarita Streng, did a study of wheelchair access in the Bosque as part of her occupational therapy studies (the study is available on our savethebosque.org website under "resources"). We have monthly wheelchair outings to the Bosque. We agree with the goal that the trail should provide wheelchair access.

We believe that preservation and access for all Albuquerque residents are not irreconcilable goals in a well designed trail. As discussed in more detail below, we believe that the following principles should guide trail development:

1. Science should guide all decisions.
2. The trail should blend in with the natural surroundings so that it does not diminish the experience of being in a natural setting in the Bosque.
3. A multiuse trail should be sited away from the river bank, and the existing trail along the bank should be closed in part, so as to limit disturbance of wildlife.
4. A multiuse trail should be sited so as to avoid other areas that are sensitive because of use by wildlife or otherwise.
5. The City should ensure that wheelchairs can access the trails.
6. The trail should be designed to slow down bicycle traffic so as to provide a safe experience for all users.

1. Science-based decisions. In order to make decisions that will provide the best possible experience of nature for visitors to the Bosque, science should inform decisions about the design and routing of the trail. Issues such as proximity of the trail to the river bank, denning areas, nesting trees, and foraging and hunting areas; fragmentation of habitat and the effect of trail width; and other issues inherent in the design and routing of trails should be made in consultation with qualified and knowledgeable individuals so that informed decisions can be made and habitat will be preserved and improved.

We are also concerned that the City has formulated alternatives and is moving forward with this project prior to knowing the results of SWCA's environmental monitoring. We are pleased that the City committed to do environmental monitoring, but in order to get value from that

investment, the monitoring results should be available and utilized to inform what happens in the Bosque. These results should also be available to the public so that they can inform the public's evaluation and input into the project. In addition, GeoSystems' site characterization work would provide information that would be valuable to know in advance of deciding where the trail will be located. It would also be very helpful for future decision if the monitoring were expanded to include mammals and reptiles.

We urge the City to ensure that its decisions are based on an adequate gathering and consideration of the science and the facts, even if it means delaying this phase of construction until the fall. Such actions are simply a common-sense approach to ensuring that we do what is best for this resource that we all value so highly, the Bosque.

2. Trail route. Based on what we presently know, the Sierra Club and the BAT support a modified version of the trail route shown in Alternative 3. We believe that the option described below would both address the desire to present enjoyable experiences to visitors and the desire to protect sensitive areas of the Bosque. We accordingly propose the following trail plan.

Proceeding from the south end, the trail should diverge from the existing trail as shown on the Alternative 3 map. The multipurpose trail should then proceed along the Alternative 3 route, subject to adjustments on account of features that should be avoided as discussed below. At the point where the trail diverges, there should be constructed a narrow, but accessible spur trail along the course of the existing trail or moved a bit east to what I believe is the first place along the river where you, Dr. Schmader, stopped in your trail walks late last year. This is a well-established place where people stop to enjoy the view of the river. There is what I believe is an elm tree there, along with some upturned log sections that probably serve as seats. This spur trail would provide excellent river views for everyone.

There should also be a second spur trail from the multiuse trail to access the river. This spur should reach the river south of where the existing trail enters the area where there are trees arching over the trail. It is difficult to identify where that is with respect to the spur trails shown on the Alternative 3 map, but it might be in the location of the middle spur or between the middle spur and the southern spur. This spur trail should, again, be a narrow, but accessible trail. The area of the existing trail between first and second river view spots should be blocked off at both ends and revegetated. This stretch of the existing trail is adjacent to a very narrow portion of the ISC's restoration project, and closing this section of the trail minimize disturbance and make this area much more useful habitat.

It is our view that the existing trail north of second viewing spot could be left open, but not developed in any way. Closing this trail would have substantial habitat benefits. However, this is also a section of the trail that people enjoy because the narrowness of the trail and the overarching vegetation create a pleasant, intimate space. On balance, we would support keeping this section of the trail open, provided that it is not widened. Widening this section would change the character of this area and damage what people like about it, and widening the trail would create additional disturbance to animals that might otherwise utilize the sensitive river bank area. In addition, this is an area that has many exotic plants that could benefit from a future restoration project. It is my understanding that the ISC has expressed an interest in possibly

expanding its restoration project in the future. A developed trail in this area as described in Alternative 1 might create a disincentive for such restoration in this area.

Finally, the two other drop-down spur trails in Alternative 3 should not be built so as to limit fragmentation of habitat in the Bosque, which for some animals creates a barrier to passage and may result in small, fragmented populations that are not big enough to sustain themselves. This is a relatively short stretch of Bosque trail, and one drop down trail should be adequate.

The foregoing plan has the advantage of moving the trail away from the most sensitive area and limiting the environmental impacts of a multiuse trail, while still keeping open the most popular portion of the riverside trail. The argument has been made that there are many miles of Bosque, so a multiuse trail along the river bank in the location of the existing trail throughout this stretch should not be objectionable. However, people should not have to go to special places to see cranes in winter, colorful Tanagers and Grosbeaks in summer, and other animals. By limiting disturbance and impacts, that experience will remain available to visitors to this reach of the Bosque.

3. Trail design. As noted above, the Bosque is so highly valued by Albuquerque residents because it is a place where you can experience being in nature within a few minutes of anywhere in the City. Obvious, developed features diminish the feeling that you are out in nature. The accessibility standards of the United States Access Board, speaking of soils, note the desirability of not "changing their appearance" and of having trails "that are consistent with the site's level of development," which here is largely undeveloped.

The City has stated that the trail will be a six-foot wide, crusher fine trail. A six-foot wide, crusher fine trail provides wheelchair access, but it has downsides for the experience of nature in the Bosque. A wide trail fragments the Bosque and has adverse affects for wildlife. In addition, the crusher fines are different than the surrounding soil, and together with the wider, uniform width, it is an obvious, developed feature that stands out in the natural setting of the Bosque.

The Sierra Club and the BAT urge the City to consider designs that would allow the trail to blend in more with the Bosque surroundings so as to retain the feeling of a natural space. As the Access Board notes, some soils can be treated with stabilizers to provide a firm surface for wheelchairs. If that is possible in the Bosque, we urge you to consider that option. Also, a narrower trail with periodic wider stretches to provide easier passing would stand out less. Trails as narrow as three feet are consistent with the Access Board's standards.

Other design features could also result in a trail that appears more natural and blends in better. Varying widths would make the trail seem less constructed. The existing trial varies in width, and there is no reason that a constructed trail needs to be a uniform width, either. Widths could vary depending on the location – wider in open areas, narrower where surrounding vegetation presses in. The trail could also be more sinuous and less straight. We urge the City to have more vegetative plantings on the border of the trail, including grasses and forbs as well as shrubs, to better integrate the trail into the Bosque. Finally, the trail would stand out less with a precise color match, if available.

The above suggestions will not result in a worse alternative for wheelchair users, but is in fact a superior alternative, since it would provide wheelchair users the greatest opportunity not just to be in the Bosque, but to see the wildlife and experience the natural setting that makes the Bosque a truly special place. Trails designed as described above will allow everyone to experience what truly makes the Bosque a treasure in our City, the ability to experience the undiminished beauty of nature in the middle of the City.

4. Avoidance of sensitive areas. We urge you to be cognizant of sensitive areas of the Bosque and to implement the trail in a manner that avoids such sensitive areas. Avoidance of such areas is imperative if the things that make the Bosque special and that cause people to visit the Bosque are going to continue to be present. Sensitive areas would include coyote dens, trees where Cooper's Hawks, Great Horned Owls, or other birds of interest nest, areas that are particularly favored by foraging porcupines and coyotes, cultural areas like the labyrinth, and native trees and shrubs (including restoration plantings). These areas need to be identified, but there are members of the public and, perhaps, Open Space employees, who have an intimate knowledge of the area who can help identify such areas. We urge Open Space to be involved in laying out the route of the trail so as to avoid these sensitive features.

5. Access. It is our understanding that the ramps over the levee remain too steep for many wheelchair users. This should be a priority issue to be addressed. In addition, the City should ensure that there is wheelchair access to the Corps of Engineers intended viewing platform at Campbell Road. Handicapped-only parking spaces at the end of Campbell road would facilitate access to the viewing platform.

6. Safety. Fast-moving bicycles are a frequently expressed and serious safety concern. This is problem under the existing conditions, and it will only get worse with a wider, groomed trail. We urge you to design the multiuse trail so as to slow down bicycle traffic in order to prevent accidents. Choke points, sinuosity, and logs or other features that cause cyclists to have to slow down in order to move around the feature, would all help to accomplish this goal and could also serve to promote the goal of making a more natural appearing trail that fits in better with the Bosque surroundings. Although we do not generally advocate development of the existing trail, Open Space might include features to slow bicycles on the existing trail, as well.

7. Restoration. Finally, we want to emphasize our continuing concern about moving forward with Phase II of this project while only very limited progress has been made on the Phase I restoration work. We are pleased and appreciate that the City agreed to do restoration work as part of this project and that the City has now hired GeoSystems to conduct site characterization work. We understand that the City has committed to move forward with the restoration work in tandem with the Phase II trail construction. However, we are concerned that the City has not committed to any time frame within which the restoration work will actually be done. This is especially troubling in light of the fact that the Mayor's term in office is winding down. Restoration is an important part of the overall project, not only to provide habitat for animals, but to provide an attractive and interesting environment for visitors. The Phase I restoration should have been completed prior to moving on to Phase II; in the absence of that, however, we urge the City to give priority to restoration and to commit to a firm schedule that will ensure that the restoration work is funded and completed in the next year.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We look forward to continuing to work with you on Bosque matters in the future to ensure that the Bosque is a place where all Albuquerque residents and visitors can go to enjoy the beautiful natural setting of our City.

Very truly yours,
THE SIERRA CLUB and THE BOSQUE ACTION TEAM
By: Richard D. Barish

(136)

From: cloudsandwater
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 4:21 PM
Subject: Bosque Trail Plan Phase 2

Dear Dr. Schmader,
I couldn't make it to public meeting, but have reviewed the city's trail proposals for what is called Phase 2 of the Mayor's plan for the Bosque and I'm sure there is a phase 3 in the works. I hope Phase 3 will be presented in a timely fashion for public input meetings and comments and not a rush job like Phase 2.

I'm sure you have heard repeated times that the Bosque is a special place and should be preserved as such with limited development and I know you must feel that way. I'm not saying it should be off limits for the recreational benefits of the people of Albuquerque, people need to experience what the natural world has to offer and particularly the unique qualities of our Bosque ecosystem, with its diversity of plants and animals and how they interact. It's a great opportunity for our children and their children to have access to a natural system unlike what most American cities still enjoy.

The Mayor's original plan, conceived without any public input was a PR disaster and has left many of us not trusting his motives. I give him credit for seeing the good sense in pulling back from many of his "development" ideas in the "Bosque Vision Plan" and I salute your effort to get more citizens involved in the process. However, having such a limited time for public input for phase 2 has an odor about it, not unlike the careless and impulsive action of last February. I have no doubt that phase 2 will be acted upon and alternative #1 will not be considered. Why even offer it? If I have to choose one of the alternatives it would be #3. Get some of the trail away from the river and its rich habitat for plants and wildlife. The portion of the trail that will still lie along the river is a concern to me. The plan requires a new 6' wide crusher fine trail along the existing trail, this is a sensitive area and I feel damage would be done. The new trail away from the river, along what is described as an old access road, should be carefully laid out so that existing wildlife habitat and native plants will be honored and avoided.

I also feel there should be a follow up study implemented to review the effects of these projects on the Bosque habitat.

Sincerely,

Peter Kelling

(137)

From: Mindy Grossberg

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 4:35 PM

Subject: bosque trail plans

Dear Mr. Schmader,

I am writing to give you my feedback about the proposed trail in the Bosque from I-40 to Campbell Road.

I have lived in ABQ for over 15 years. For many years, on and off, I have spent time in the Bosque. But, it has really been since more discussion on the future plans of the bosque have surfaced, that I have spent much more focused time in this wild place. When I am in the bosque, I know what season we are in, where birds are migrating and which birds are staying. I realize that I do not always have to drive to the mountains or to other outdoor destinations, such as Santa Fe, Taos and beyond, to feel connected to the natural world.

What I noticed recently is that I have been more interested in walking south of Tingley beach and even south of Bridge toward Rio Bravo. I realized it was because the path is very narrow and the walk through the bosque feels more like a walk through a wild place vs a park. The path created north of Tingley, although is nice for the bike riders, feels very manicured and does not blend into the wild look that is the bosque. I think any trail that is constructed should be made of the existing materials presently in place on the trail, amended and contoured as necessary to make a firm, stable surface.

I understand the desire to bring more people to the bosque, making it accessible to as many individuals as possible, regardless of ability. I wonder if the 6 foot path is necessary. I read that another option is possible and that a 6 foot trail is not necessary in order to be accessible to all. One idea was to create a three or four feet wide path, with periodic wider areas, for instance, every 200 feet, so that wheelchairs, bikers and other users can pass each other. Would this be something the city would consider?

I know there is a lot of energy around the bosque right now. I understand, it is a magical place right here in the middle of the city. All I ask is that at all stages of any changes made with the environmental considerations as its centerpiece. I see the bosque as a natural space- a place that belongs to the flora and fauna who make it their home. I see myself as a lucky visitor to this home- thus, want the most natural experience. Ultimately, this means thinking of the bosque first...which, ultimately, makes the most sense for all of us- those who make it their home and the visitors.

Thank you for taking the time to read comments from the community and considering the needs of the environment while wanting to enhance access to this wild place.

Yours Respectfully,

Mindy Grossberg

(138)

From: JV Viramontes

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 4:48 PM

Cc: LDNA-Bill Herring

Subject: Bosque Trail Phase II: Los Duranes Neighborhood Association Comment Letter

Mr. Schmader -

Attached please find a comment letter on behalf of the Los Duranes Neighborhood Association regarding the proposed alternatives for Phase II of the Bosque Multi-Use Accessible Path Project.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this important project within the LDNA boundaries.

Jose Viramontes

Vice President, Los Duranes Neighborhood Association

LOS DURANES NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors/Officers

Jose Viramontes, President

William C. Herring, Vice-President

Andrea Scott, Secretary

Carolyn Stewart, Treasurer

Rod Herrera, Director

Jeff Eaton, Director

Eddie Lopez, Director

RE: Phase II of the Bosque Multi-Use Accessible Path – Proposed Alternatives

Dear Mr. Schmader,

On behalf of the Los Duranes Neighborhood Association I am writing to express our support for Alternative 2A of the proposed alternatives for Phase II of the Bosque Multi-Use Accessible Path. Alternative 2A provides for the maximum length of trail for different user groups – pedestrians, equestrians, cyclists as well as those traveling with children. Importantly, this alternative also provides the greatest level of fire protection for Los Duranes residents through creation of a fire break, and protects important wildlife habitat by consolidating the web of unofficial trails that meander through the Bosque. Finally, of all the proposed alternatives, Alternative 2A provides the greatest extent of ADA compliant access both along the Bosque, on the paved Paseo del Bosque Trail, as well as within the Bosque along the new Multi-Use Accessible Path.

This phase of the project lies almost wholly within the boundaries of the Los Duranes Neighborhood Association and residents access the Bosque daily. In fact, many residents moved here or chose to stay here because of the proximity to the Bosque. Balancing the desires of

different user groups is a difficult task. As mentioned by attendees at the recent public meeting, people visiting the Bosque do so for different reasons – some seek solitude and enjoy stopping along the way to stop, listen, and enjoy; others prefer to enjoy the trail more actively by jogging or cycling; and even others use the Bosque as a place to connect children with the great outdoors. This diversity of desired use is the same for residents for Los Duranes. Alternative 2A provides the greatest diversity of opportunity for all these user groups.

Regarding the topic of environmental impact, it is our feeling that any of the alternatives that consolidate the web of illegal trails improves the conditions for wildlife habitat. Users will be kept to a dedicated trail which will limit the occurrence of inadvertent habitat destruction or disturbance of wildlife. Furthermore, an accessible trail provides a natural fire break and will help isolate any occurrence of wildfire, and provide access for crews to respond more quickly and effectively to any wildfires. Catastrophic wildfire will have a much greater impact on sensitive wildlife habitat than will a consolidated path. Finally, it is our belief that the more welcoming and accessible the Bosque is, the more likely residents are to develop an affinity and an appreciation for natural places – this is especially important for children, who are the next generation of conservationists.

In conclusion, because of the reasons above we feel that Alternative 2A is the best alternative and urge you to adopt it as the selected course. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and for your efforts to engage the public in protecting and providing meaningful recreation opportunities for this important community resource.

Very truly yours,
Jose Viramontes, President

(139)

From: Michael Jensen

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 5:24 PM

Subject: Re: Bosque comments

Re: I-40 to Campbell RGVSP/Bosque trail extension

Dear Dr. Schmader:

Please accept the following comments on the Bosque trail extension from I-40 to Campbell Road. I am a 25-year resident of Albuquerque, but enjoyed the Rio Grande Valley State Park (the “Bosque”) visiting friends prior to moving here in 1990. I took our children from before they could walk down to the Bosque and the Rio Grande on weekends and evenings and on school field trips. For almost 10 years working for Amigos Bravos and for almost 1 year as the Middle Rio Grande Urban Waters Ambassador, I have had a growing professional relationship with the Bosque and the Rio Grande. As you well know, I have been a member of the Open Space Advisory Board (OSAB) since Summer 2014. The following comments are made as a private resident and not in my role as an OSAB member, although I will mention the Board’s role.

My comments cover a variety of topics:

- Public Process
- Materials
- Width
- Alignment
- Access
- Restoration
- Monitoring
- Use Analysis
- Agency Consultation

In general, I appreciate the effort of the City to increase access to the Bosque, but note serious and ongoing problems with public process, agency coordination, “trust”, and promised restoration, monitoring, and use analysis.

Public Process

The City of Albuquerque continues to carry out its Bosque trail planning and implementation with a deeply flawed and cynical public process. I won’t rehash the events around the February commencement of construction on the Central to I-40 trail, but that process was deeply disappointing and showed a remarkable disdain for public process (including a previously agreed to design and public input sequence) and agency collaboration.

That lack of process led to the formation of the Bosque Working Group, with members from the BAT, the Sierra Club, the MRGCD, and from the biking and accessibility communities (if I remember correctly). Early in their meetings, in April 2014, the City (through Michael Riordan) announced to the City Council that the WG had come to “consensus” on a “clearer” path forward, one that included a step-by-step process for incorporating public input and environmental monitoring information through a stepwise design process. The whole thing would have taken 3-4 months, which is an extremely short timeline for these things.

And yet, once again, the City chose to throw out its agreed-upon commitment and move forward with an aggressive schedule, only reluctantly agreeing to a public input process which does not allow for comment on a final alignment nor on any issues that a (truncated) environmental monitoring analysis might reveal. Yes, as with the Winter 2015 construction, there were some walkabouts along possible alignments and the City this time went to the trouble of mapping a variety of alternative routes based on early comments submitted by concerned residents and held one meeting to present the options that it says are on the table, but any information from the environmental consultant will come after the deadline for public comment. Construction layout is scheduled to begin the day the alignment is announced.

Materials

The City has made clear that it will not discuss material for the trail. This is unfortunate because a crusher fines trail is not the only suitable option for a firm, stable, and sustainable trail serving multiple users and appropriate for meeting accessibility needs. For example, the “National Trail Surface Survey Final Report (2014; <http://www.ncaonline.org/resources/articles/trails-surfacestudy-finalreport.shtml>) found that both an aggregate (3/4” minus) and several soil-

stabilized trail surfaces provided optimal firmness, stability, and sustainability. Unfortunately, their study had some serious constraints, which they mentioned under “future research” (p101): “Environmental factors such as rain, frost, and thaw conditions, shaded versus sunny trail segments, soil composition, and natural drainage play a critical role in the firmness and stability of a trail surface. ...

The data collected for each trail segment denotes that all of the trail surfaces meet some varying degree of firmness and stability; further research should be conducted using human test subjects to determine the accuracy of the degrees of firmness and stability. A larger sample of individuals with disabilities who use a variety of different mobility devices (manual and power wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, etc.) should be tested on these surfaces. A cost comparison of natural aggregate trail surfaces and trail surfaces that are composed of soil stabilizers should be conducted.”

In their survey of agencies from across the country, they found that 43.6% used native/natural soil without stabilizer (p105). None of the materials met with universal acceptance across the various regions, having to do with both the environmental factors mentioned above, the types of users, and the quality of the installation. For the Western States respondents, both aggregate and natural soil trails had problems (pp106-7). Therefore, the statement at the public meeting that soil stabilizers are not a good solution and that crusher fines are ideal for multiple users and those with accessibility issues is not supported by this data, at least not in such a definitive form.

In the 2008 *Rio Grande Trail Corridor Study, Trail Surfacing Report*, the consultant stated that (p2): “Improved or stabilized trail surfaces that are not hard surface but are firm, slip resistant and stable are ideal for a wide variety of non-motorized trail users including the mobility-impaired.”

This statement does not differentiate between aggregates and natural soil trails. The study looked at the results of a survey conducted by the MRGCD in the urban area for their Ditches to Trails proposal. That survey, which had 900 respondents, showed that – aside from bicyclists – users had a preference for dirt surfaces (p5):

- “80% of horseback riders preferred an unimproved or graded dirt surface”
- “Most walkers and runners/joggers preferred graded or stabilized dirt”

The really significant design decisions seemed, rather, to be about two things: grade and outslope, both of which affect erosion and impacts to whatever trail surface is used (p6). The particular material was of less concern. During the walkabouts in late 2013 and early 2014, Open Space and other experts discussed at length the ways in which existing, unstabilized, natural soil trails could be modified to serve as firm, stable, sustainable, multi-user, accessible trails. These would require only removal of intrusive roots, the addition of clay or sand in patches where necessary to balance drainage with firmness, and some contouring in some locations. Crusher fines are not a definitive solution to accessibility issues; while someone in a heavy motorized wheelchair with small wide tires might have no problems, people in cheaper hand-propelled wheelchairs with narrow tires or people pushing cheaper strollers, or people with walkers might find crusher fines difficult to maneuver.

Existing natural packed earth trails function very well. When walking such a trail near the Rio Grande Nature Center earlier this year, after a period of protracted rain, followed by a brief drying

period and then a night of light rain, I noted only two small (3-5') sections in the center of the trail that were still slightly ponded. Everybody concerned – the public, the City, other agencies – deserves a robust discussion on the question of materials.

Width

As with materials, the City chose to take trail width of the table. This is also unfortunate. Different users have different concerns about trail width. Width (and alignment) is an important tool for regulating speed, which comes up repeatedly among all non-cyclist users). The United States Access Board (material cited in the BAT handout at the public meeting) has determined that *in natural areas* a trail width of 3', with periodic turnouts of 6', is appropriate (they also state that stabilized natural soils are also appropriate).

On the other hand, The Rio Grande Trail study – looking at the Rio Grande Trail Community Survey Summary (with about 100 respondents) – found that 75% preferred trails wider than 4' in width (about evenly divided among 4-6', 6-8', and 8-10'. In addition, trail width (and material) has a clear impact on how different wildlife is impacted by the presence of a trail. Clearly, a robust discussion of trail width would be useful in weighing and balancing competing interests and needs.

Alignment

Of great relevance to the City's Bosque trail, the Rio Grande Trail Corridor Study notes the following (p3):

“If a trail lies within a critical habitat or an environmentally sensitive location, it may be less costly in the long run to relocate that section of trail to a less sensitive area if possible. Critical or sensitive habitats may include flat areas of wet or organic soils, high clay or sand content, threatened or endangered flora and fauna, and edges of water bodies prone to erosion (e.g. flood plain of a river or along a fluctuating reservoir). Designing and constructing trails in these areas often require extra design and engineering and should be closely evaluated due to their higher costs and potential impacts.”

The BAT and others have repeatedly stressed the need to keep the trail away from the river's edge because of concerns for – especially – migratory birds. It was disconcerting, to say the least, that at the same time that the City was awarded a rare Urban Migratory Bird Treaty City designation and the funds that go along with it, the City chose to build its first section of engineered trail right along the river's edge for much of its alignment (yes, there was an existing trail, but it was very narrow and natural).

The section under discussion now, from I-40 to Campbell, has some restoration project areas in it on the southern end – habitat restoration and bank lowering) – that should cause the alignment to be put further east away from those areas. This would be to minimize traffic, particularly bicycles, in restored habitat areas, but also to minimize the risk that flooding in these terraced areas will wash out the crusher fines and the base material.

Unfortunately, none of the alignments does this. Given that, I am almost inclined to call for the “No Action” option., but this is clearly a non-starter. Among the remaining options, both 2A and 3 have things to recommend them:

- 2A would move away from the river farthest south and make the current alignment pedestrian only. This will require significant impediments to non-pedestrian use, since bicyclists do not honor signage in, for example, the area around the RGNC that is posted against cycling. Keeping this alignment natural and narrow will – with, perhaps, some surface modifications where needed – allow for some more quiet and calm walking. Ideally, the alignment along the “former restoration road” would become the recipient of some good long-term restoration work as well.
- 3 would provide access to river views for people who don’t want to walk the entire I-40 to Campbell route. However, there is a really nice viewing area at the end of Campbell, which the USACE will improve further with a large viewing platform and some signage and improved access. On the other hand, 3 does not revegetate the current alignment, just close it. I think my preferred option would be combining 2A with 3 such that the current alignment north of the terracing is left pedestrian only and the central crusher fines alignment has only one turnout down to the river, rather than 3. This combination would allow for a short loop to be taken by pedestrians coming from Campbell’s viewing platform but minimize points where cyclists would venture down to the river.

Access

Access can be met in many ways *while people are on the trails*, as discussed above under material and width. The real access problem that currently exists and isn’t addressed by the current trail plans is getting from parking areas down to and then back off of the trails across the levees. What access across the levees that does exist is apparently – based on comments I have heard – too steep for many people with access issues. This is not just a City problem; the USACE did not provide adequate access to its viewing platform on the southeast side of Central Bridge at Tingley. If the City (and others) are serious about access beyond using it as a soundbite to defend their project(s), then this access issue needs to be addressed.

Restoration

The Central to I-40 trail work was supposed to come with restoration work, noted on many maps and discussed in SWCA’s report. This has not happened. Work done this past Summer by a youth corps was not restoration, but cleanup. Important, yes, but not anywhere near sufficient. We are being promised restoration with this project. The City needs to take restoration seriously. The whole point of “access” was supposed to be that it led to improvements in the Bosque. And then there is the Migratory Bird Treaty designation, which the City needs to honor.

Monitoring

The SWCA baseline monitoring was deficient in a number of ways. However, it’s what we need to use now. The City’s decision to move ahead with new trail work before the current analysis of the previous trail’s impact is inexcusable. It makes a mockery of the whole point of doing the baseline monitoring in the first place and it does not allow for any public or outside expert commentary on the findings of the analysis.

Use Analysis

The SWCA report said that the City would do a use analysis of the trail installed last year in order to assess its impacts: did it increase usage? Did it increase accessibility? Did it impact wildlife? We don’t know because there has not been a use analysis, to the best of my knowledge.

I also doubt that one could be done even if the City were serious about it because I don't believe that baseline data exists on usage prior to installation of the trail last year. Again, this is inexcusable

Agency Consultation

The City's actions in early 2014 began without consulting any of the other federal and state agencies with some authority over activities in the Bosque and/or the river. As a result, the City failed to file a required Notice of Intent under EPA's Construction General Permit (and apparently actively sought to avoid having to file by improperly splitting the Central to I-40 project into two pieces). The City also failed to get a Bureau of Reclamation permit through the MRGCD under their Joint Powers Agreement.

As far as I can tell so far, the City has failed again to consult any of the relevant agencies, with the exception of the MRGCD. Even here, the City went ahead with abrogating its promised process without consulting the MRGCD – either as an independent entity or as a member of the Bosque Working Group. This year, as last – as far as I can tell – the City has an obligation to file an NOI with EPA (the project will disturb more than an acre of land) and get a Special Use permit from the MRGCD on behalf of the Bureau of Reclamation. There may be a USACE 401 permit issue because the terracing might make that section fall within a flooded area; talking with them would be a good thing. And the US Fish and Wildlife Service might have something to say about the extended section for the trail along such a long length of the river; talking with them would be a good thing.

In conclusion, the City should have honored its commitments to its residents and to other agencies working to make the Bosque and the river a better place for themselves and for us all. There are no excuses for doing otherwise.

Regards,
Michael Jensen

(140)

From: Linda Starr

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 6:14 PM

Cc: Mayor Berry

Subject: Bosque Path Extension: I-40 to Campbell Rd Comments

I attended the public meeting on January 7 regarding alternatives and the Bosque Path Project, Phase II. I was unable to make verbal comments at that gathering due to late arrival, but I heard all of the comments after your presentation of the alternatives. I have also been on at least one walk in your presence (thank you) to discuss the Bosque Path Project. At these sessions, it seems overwhelmingly that the majority prefer NO CHANGES ALONG THE BOSQUE PATH. That is my preference as well, Alternative 4 - NO Crusher Fine Trail. I value the Bosque as a natural area in the middle of the city. The asphalt bike path can meet all needs of the fast and speedy bicyclists. Bicyclists I have seen while hiking in the bosque are moving so fast along the dirt path that they neither see nor hear wildlife, don't stop to look at a plant and

only seem targeted on moving quickly by.

When I have been on the existing crusher-fine path, my husband and I have found this path to be extremely noisy with every footfall creating a deep sound, scaring away birds and other potential wildlife. Yet, when we walk on a neighboring dirt path, we see birds, porcupines nestled high in the cottonwoods (you have to stop and look to find them), and other critters (lizards crawling by, squirrels scampering along, ducks flying overhead - now cranes. We saw zero wildlife on the crusher-fine trail.

First, these public meetings are a sham, in my opinion, since neither Mayor Berry, nor his staff, are present to hear the voices of the public, with less than 10% in favor of his plan to develop the path along the Bosque. Our Mayor obviously doesn't care about the voices of the public. If public comment was really valued, there would be more opportunities all over the city (in at least 4 quadrants) to hear the voices of the public **and Mayor Berry should be present at each one**. This is not just a North Valley issue - but an issue for all citizens of Albuquerque and the surrounding area.

If the city does care about alternatives, and we are doomed to have a crusher-fine trail, I prefer that the trail be only four feet wide (wide enough for wheelchairs and strollers), with periodic outposts and 4-foot-wide trails to these outposts to view the river in wider areas. The crusher-fine trail should be moved away from the river's edge and the existing trail into the center of the Bosque, either Alternatives 2A or 2B. I prefer that no area of the Bosque would be closed for re-vegetating, but I can understand temporary closures to allow for regrowth and renewal of certain areas.

One of the things I noticed on our walk was the lack of trash dispensers; this invites people to toss it on the ground, rather than pack their waste out with them. There is also a lack of signage. It is important that more people get into nature, without impacting the nature that exists. Crusher-fine trails are a huge impact to nature. We should be minimizing our human imprint. Money should be spent on creative signage (i.e., "Stop here, look at this plant." or Stop here, look up, porcupines may be up high nearby.") and trash dispensers and pickup. By the way, I am also a leader of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness and we have adopted the Shining River Trail. We maintain this trail and have assisted Open Space with beaver fencing. I also belong to the Albuquerque Senior Centers Hiking Group and we routinely hike along the bosque, picking up trash from other less responsible hikers, leaving the area less impacted after our visits.

Sincerely,
Linda Starr

(141)

From: Peggy Norton

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 8:37 PM

Cc: NVC Executive Committee

Subject: Bosque Phase II comments

Re: Phase II of the Bosque Trail

Dear Dr. Schmader,

The North Valley Coalition, which represents 14 neighborhood and other community groups, and numerous individuals, supports the “No Action” alternative for Phase II of the proposed Bosque Trail. One hundred seventy-five people showed up at the City’s January 7, 2016, public meeting, most of whom were from the North Valley. While not everyone had a chance to speak because the meeting was cut short, too many thoughtful, diverse and well-expressed comments against the proposal were expressed for us to support any of the alternatives for a 6-foot wide crusher fine trail.

The Rio Grande Valley State Park was established with a declared policy that “The preservation, protection, and maintenance of the natural and scenic beauty of [the state park] is in the public interest.” Many attendees expressed concerns that this policy is not being followed in the City’s designs for Phase II. At a minimum, alternatives to a 6-foot wide crusher fine trail should have been considered; there are other narrower, less impactful ways to accommodate accessibility. People who use existing bosque trails know where coyote dens, raptor nests, porcupines are located. These habitats should have been considered as factors in the City’s plans for locating the “improved” trail.

The use of existing trails also should be considered before pursuing a new trail. There are many loop trails in the bosque from Campbell Road to the Nature Center bridge that would require very little work to be made accessible. There are views of the river and benches for resting and enjoying the view that could be made accessible without a new trail. Rather than build a new trail in the bosque as called for in Phase II, we support using the trails we already have.

Most important, before even considering Phase II, Phase I should be completed. For example, the bridge over the siphon should be constructed; until it is, the second half of Phase I—from the siphon to I-40—will not be useable by wheelchairs. Furthermore, until the Phase I siphon bridge is constructed, the Phase II trail will not be accessible either. With Phase II, the only wheelchair accessible access will be from Central; there are slope and parking problems at Gabaldon and Campbell roads that are not addressed in Phase II, thus leaving Central as the only wheelchair accessible access even though it’s quite a distance away.

There are other parts of Phase I that should be completed before the planning for Phase II. The Phase I requirements for restoration, educational signage, access to the deck on the south side of Central, and parking plans should be fully met before the City moves on.

Also before designing and constructing Phase II, the City needs to complete the promised monitoring of the Phase I trail. The SWCA report stated there would be ongoing monitoring, four times a year for birds, once a year for vegetation and soil, to determine whether negative biological effects had occurred as a result of the Phase I construction. Has opening the bosque with a well-defined trail led to overuse and establishment of more informal trails (such as has occurred in the bosque north of Campbell Road and in Rio Rancho), thus damaging the entire bosque? The results of the monitoring could affect plans for Phase II; common sense and good science call for this monitoring to be done first.

There have been complaints of trail damage from bicycles in the bosque from I-40 to Campbell Road. This may be a result of the Phase I trail leading directly into that area. What is going to happen when all these cyclists feed into the bosque north of Campbell Road (which is not allowed in the

Bosque Action Plan)? This issue should be addressed in the planning for Phase II.

There is no good reason to rush the design and construction of Phase II. Phase I construction and monitoring, and all other outstanding issues and concerns, should be addressed and/or completed before the City pursues additional disruption in the bosque.

Sincerely,
Peggy Norton, President
North Valley Coalition

(142)

From: Peggy Norton

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 8:59 PM

Subject: bosque phase II comments

I have no more time to write my own. Here are the ones I submitted in December but this one includes my choice of alternatives.

Peggy Norton

I am recommending the "No Action" alternative for phase II of the Bosque Trail.

The first point I would like to make is that I do not consider the walks to be public meetings. No minutes are kept, there is no proof of discussion topics and the trail that was built in phase I had nothing in common with what was discussed on the walks.

The second point I would like to make is that the City should put money into making trails that are usable by wheelchairs accessible by wheelchairs. The whole trail from the siphon to I-40 is inaccessible. This phase II trail will be inaccessible. The deck at Tingley is still inaccessible. The many hard-packed trails in the bosque across from the Nature Center with some beautiful views of the river could be usable with very little work. However, they are inaccessible. The paved Aldo Leopold trail is inaccessible and in need of repair. The Paseo del Bosque multi-use trail is inaccessible. We have the trails, let's make them available for people to use.

The third point I would like to make is that the City should provide more restroom facilities. There is a very nice facility at Montano on the west side, one at Tingley Beach which closes early and is unavailable to dog walkers, and one at the Nature Center which is not usable by dog walkers or after hours. Why can't we provide the public with restroom facilities rather than expect them to use areas in the bosque. If I was in a wheelchair, what would I do?

My fourth point is that there are many more needs to be completed before building new trails. The trail from I-40 to the Nature Center is a rather narrow trail but is very usable - there was a steady flow of bicycles on the Friday walk. I have walked this area and the bicyclists are always friendly. I would call it gently-used. There is nothing wrong with that and nothing wrong with keeping it that way. The trail along the river is rather private and secluded and inappropriate for a wide, crusher fine trail. A trail between the river and the levee would result in a straight, fast trail which would not be safe for multi-use. Therefore, I think in terms of mosaic and recommend that

this area stay lightly used. If a trail is absolutely needed, then do a return trail from I-40 back to Central so people don't have to return on the same trail.

My fifth point is that the Future Work Agreement from March 24, 2015 and confirmed in City Council on April 6, 2015 should be honored. It is dishonest for the Administration to claim it wasn't a valid agreement and destroys any public trust in the integrity of the process in this new phase.

Peggy Norton

(143)

From: tankersleyn

Sent: Sunday, January 17, 2016 8:04 PM

Subject: Bosque Trail

Dear Mr. Schmader,

I appreciate the time you have taken to explore ideas for the expansion of the Bosque Trail.

I do not support the city's effort to expand the trail because there is inadequate parking for handicapped access.. An additional concern is the push to construct the trails. As a horse rider on the Bosque, I have experienced the consequences of poor city planning. Years ago I was riding my horse under the Montano bridge when a roller blader, pushing a stroller entered the underpass as the same time I was riding through. Seeing the speeding out of control roller blader and his child's mash into the bridge wall is a scene I will never forget. The baby was fine. The father was quite cut up. The access under the bridge is poor at best. There is an incline, darkness, and lack of visibility. The design is truly dangerous. The same issues may not be faced with the proposed trail, but concern is the rush to develop could have consequences beyond your planning.

I would ask that the city sit back this time and make sure their plans are environmentally sound and safe for pedestrians, bicycles and horses. This could mean not finishing the project until next year.

You wish additional input, feel free to call me.

Thank You,

Nancy Tankersley

(144)

From: sharon

Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2016 8:22 PM

Subject: "No Build" for the Bosque Trail

I was one of the over 175 people that showed up for the public meeting on 1-7-16, but I did not get a chance to speak.

"No Build" for the Bosque Trail is the appropriate thing to do to preserve the natural state of the bosque for the section north of I-40. The trail would ruin the fragile bio system and we need to put money and energy into improving and completing the central to I-40 section and to wait and see how it effects the fragile environment along the river.

Put the money and attention into the section south of I-40

1. Improve access ie: parking at both ends of the trail.

- There are no signs on how to access the I-40 parking lot - plus it needs expansion.
- The central parking situation is in sore need of expansion to accommodate all the people the mayor wants to enjoy the bosque.
- The bridge over the drainage pipe area needs to be completed
- There is no access for disable people to reach the I-40 parking lot from "the Mayor's trail" coming from central or I-40 !!!!!!!.
- For more of the public to enjoy, "The Mayor's Trail" desperately need educational promotion in the media and many kiosks in the bosque to inform and educate children and their families about the unique ecosystem we have and how fragile it is and how we must take care of it and preserve it.

Thank you,
Sharon J. Miles

(145)

From: susan selbin

Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2016 9:32 PM

Subject: Bosque Trail from I-40 North

Dear Mr. Schmader,

I've provided input on the trail previously by email and in writing (comments left after the presentation at Los Duranes CC). This message is about the timeline for the Bosque Trail construction.

Radio announcements note that comments are welcome until the end of January and that construction will begin February 2nd. February 2nd?! That leaves the perception that comments will have little, if any, impact on the plan. It also gives the perception that public input is a sham. This is not good PR for the Mayor and the city.

Having to start and finish the work this year before nesting season is an arbitrary deadline. Why not truly consider public input and revise options for further input? This would be welcomed by the public and demonstrate respect for the public. It would be good PR. Why not delay the work until after nesting season or a year from now?

I realize that you're in a difficult position. I sincerely hope that you can delay construction.

Thank you.
Susan Selbin

(146)

From: Joe Sabatini

Sent: Friday, January 22, 2016 3:40 PM

Subject: Bosque Trail

Hello:

I support the No Action alternative for the reasons you've already heard.

If the decision is to proceed, I support Alternative 3.

In the last few years, I have participated in the OASIS Albuquerque Walking Tours. Several of these walks have been in various bosque areas. We have encountered porcupines, coyotes, beaver activity and a wide array of birds flying, nesting or swimming in the River.

I have biked on the Bosque Trail. I believe it is sufficient for the commuter and recreational bicyclist. I would discourage bicycling on the new trail, for the safety of the pedestrians and the preservation of the wildlife habitat. A meandering path would be more effective than a straight road. I understand that people want access to the River. This should be done at a few selected locations, in a way that is least disruptive to wildlife and least conducive to irresponsible public uses.

Joe Sabatini

(147)

From: Pia Gallegos

Sent: Friday, January 22, 2016 9:54 PM

Subject: Bosque

Mr. Schmader:

I wish to draw your attention to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor Study/Trail Surfacing Report of August 2008.

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/trailbuilding/Rio-Grande-Trail-Surfacing.html>

Study link: <http://atfiles.org/files/pdf/RioGrandeSurfaceStudy.pdf>

This study (20 pages) looks at the area south of Belen, but is still quite relevant to the Albuquerque area. There are statements that support dirt trails over crusher fines scattered throughout the report. Here are some useful quotes:

"This quest has resulted in the realization that there may be no economically feasible, perfect solution in some cases or there may be several suitable options in other cases." (p1)

"Improved or stabilized trail surfaces that are not hard surface but are firm, slip resistant and stable are ideal for a wide variety of non-motorized trail users including the mobility-impaired." (p2)

"If a trail lies within a critical habitat or an environmentally sensitive location, it may be less costly in the long run to relocate that section of trail to a less sensitive area if possible. Critical or sensitive habitats may include flat areas of wet or organic soils, high clay or sand content, threatened or endangered flora and fauna, and edges of water bodies prone to erosion (e.g. flood plain of a river or along a fluctuating reservoir). Designing and constructing trails in these areas often require extra design and engineering and should be closely evaluated due to their higher costs and potential impacts." (p3)

Citing the RGT Community Survey:

"Natural surface trails with native soils ranked the highest with 51% being the most desirable surface and another 32% ranking them as moderately desirable." (p4)

MRGCD Ditches with Trails Survey

"Bicyclist and horseback riders hold opposite preferences as approximately 80% of bicyclists in the MRGCD survey preferred a paved or stabilized dirt surface and 80% of horseback riders preferred an unimproved or graded dirt surface. Most walkers and runners/joggers preferred graded or stabilized dirt." (p5)

New Mexico Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2004-2009

"Foster more collaboration and cooperation between federal, state, tribal, and local government to develop and enhance outdoor recreation and economic development opportunities." (p8)

"It must be noted that even with a firm, stable surface when dry, trails constructed of crusher fines often result in rutting and pocking by all users when travelled upon when slightly wet or when saturated conditions from snowmelt or extended periods of rain exist." (p14-15)

"It should be noted it is not recommended to surface equestrian or ATV trails" (p15)

These quotes show why trail materials (and widths) are things that need to be on the table and open to a serious discussion among a wide variety of practitioners, users, and the general public, both to make sure that we end up with the best possible compromise among aesthetics, sustainability, usability, and environmental impact and that everybody knows how and why the decision was made.

That materials and width are off the table from the get-go is a sign of how insulated and isolated the Mayor's office is when doing this project.

Pia Gallegos

(148)

From: Hazel Trabaudo

Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2016 2:16 PM

Subject: alternatives for the trail extension

My choice would be careful action.

Save the Boque from over development (aka 6ft. wide trail of crushed rock)

Eleanor Trabaldo

(149)

From: Hazel Trabaldo

Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2016 2:35 PM

Subject: The Bosque

I think this space should be kept as natural a possible.

No crushed fine trail.

Six feet wide is far to wide to maintain a natural feeling. Soil in place to make a firm surface.

Eleanor Trabaldo

(150)

From: jbelletto

Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2016 12:51 PM

Subject: Bosque Development

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for taking public comments about the extension of the bosque trail. It's important that when dealing with any development of such a fragile ecosystem that science is used to guide and inform all decisions for public use and access. I urge the City to complete the restoration project in the fall to support the ecosystem. I suggest that when making multi-use trails to make it so that bikes cannot zoom through the area so that walkers can also enjoy the trail and so the fast bikes do not disturb wildlife. Please ensure that the trail avoids sensitive areas lie animal habitat and blends into the bosque environment.

Thank you for your time,

Jennifer Edwards

(151)

From: M.J.

Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2016 7:44 PM

Subject: Comment on the Bosque trail

Hello Matt,

I have already written you and I spoke at the hearing last month, but I have been thinking about all the comments made at the hearing, so I want to give my current perspective. I strongly think the city should wait on the next section of the trail until more information is gathered about three things:

1) the impact that the already built new trail is having on the environment between Central and I-40. This should be a serious and complete study, done over time, so that the true impact can be determined.

2) the safety or lack of safety of the already built new trail, especially regarding very fast bicycle traffic, and including research into other possible trail designs, including the possibility of a narrower trail with some wide places for yielding, and the possibility of a more natural surface, anything that would help educate the public that this is a trail for experiencing nature, not for high-speed recreation.

3) a more thorough assessment of the environment from I-40 up to Campbell Road, including mammal species and numbers, a more thorough study of how the proposed trail would impact that area, and a study of what trail designs would have the lowest impact.

I think the I-40 to Campbell Road section is special in two ways: it is more narrow than much of the Bosque, so that a middle trail will impact the animals more, and it has less human traffic than some parts of the Bosque, possibly due to the burn a number of years ago, which has made it less visually appealing. The lower amount of human traffic may be what has led to higher numbers of animals in this area.

I personally would like more people, and especially disabled people, to be able to experience the richness of this ecosystem, but I fear that building the trail per the existing design will negatively impact the environment, leading to the ironic and all too common situation that we humans will lessen the beauty and richness of the place in the act of letting more people in to see it.

We have had enough decades of carelessly taking action and then studying the impacts. We have a chance in this case to do careful study first, before taking action which might be irreversible. The Bosque is Albuquerque's jewel, and much more care should be taken when making a change of this magnitude.

Please urge those in charge to slow down and do more studies so that the best possible solution can be found which can accommodate the people and also protect the environment. Slowing down, and publicizing why, would help educate the public about how special the Bosque is and would be a step towards having the public treat it as the jewel it is, and it could also be considered a political plus (if that is the mayor's motivating factor) to publicize how important a careful trail design is, and how he wants to ensure that the people who will have new access will be able to see an undamaged place. All factors point towards slowing down the process and making a more informed decision as the wisest course of action to take.

Sincerely,
M.J. Zimmerman

From: Ella Joan

Sent: Friday, January 29, 2016 10:14 AM

Subject: City's proposed extension of the Bosque trail from I-40 to Campbell Road

To whom it May concern:

I am a citizen of Albuquerque and a person who has used the Bosque trails. I have heard interviews on KUNM supporting the expansion of the trails to accommodate those with special needs. While such accessibility is important, it must be balanced so as not to rob the trails of their natural characteristics. It seems that we can agree on the design of the trails so that everyone wins. There's no reason that would prevent the City to improve wheelchair access to the trails. Access from the levees needs to be improved, and there should be access to the planned viewing platform at Campbell Road. Handicapped-only parking spaces at the end of Campbell road would facilitate access to the viewing platform.

1. I request that the City ensure that its decisions are based on an adequate gathering and consideration of the science and the facts to assess the effect of its actions on the Bosque and to prevent environmental harm. That's where the balancing comes in.

2. A multiuse trail should be sited AWAY from the river bank, and the existing trail, which follows the river bank, should be closed in part. The river bank is the most sensitive area, the area that is most utilized by wildlife. Limiting use of the river bank area will limit the disturbance to wildlife and allow all visitors to continue to experiences the birds and other wildlife of the Bosque.

3. The trail should blend in with the natural surroundings so that it does not diminish the experience of being in a natural setting in the Bosque. The trail should be narrower than the six-foot wide trail that they City has indicated will be constructed (three or four feet is adequate for accessibility issues), and it should not be crusher fines, but should be constructed of stabilized native soils. At the least, the City should employ variations in width, sinuosity, and more vegetative plantings to integrate the trail better into the Bosque surroundings.

4. Surely, any new trail should be sited so as to avoid other areas that are sensitive because of use by wildlife or otherwise, including coyote dens, nesting trees, foraging areas, and cultural areas like the labyrinth. This is obvious. Surely the City will not overlook such a provision.

5. Fast-moving bicycles are a serious safety concern. It is s problem under the existing conditions, and it will only get worse with a wider, groomed trail. Please design the multiuse trail so as to slow down bicycle traffic in order to prevent accidents. Choke points, sinuosity, and logs or other features that cause cyclists to have to slow down in order to move around the feature, would all help to accomplish this goal and could also serve to promote the goal of making a more natural appearing trail that fits in better with the Bosque surroundings.

6. In regard to the restoration timeline, I request you not move forward with Phase II of this project while only very limited progress has been made on the Phase I restoration work. The Phase I restoration should have been completed prior to moving on to Phase II. Failing that, however, please give priority to restoration and to commit to a firm schedule that will ensure that the restoration work is funded and completed in the next year.

Thank you for your consideration,
Ella Joan Fenoglio

(153)

From: Teri Neville

Sent: Saturday, January 30, 2016 9:36 AM.

Subject: bosque proposed path alternatives

Hello,

I could not make the meeting but would like to say that if a new path has to go through the bosque, overall, I would like it further from the river since true restoration can only occur when there is overbank flow. Alternatives #2 are preferred. I do not see the differences in the A-C when looking at the maps online. Again, the further from the river the better, also that there would be NO infrastructure other than the crusher fine road. Also, to make it narrow, really, we do not need it to be so wide, you can get a better sense of adventure much more with a narrow road. I prefer to think of the animals first that inhabit this narrow, vital area above our human interests, after all, we have the entire space between the river and the mountains all to ourselves since there is essentially no habitat left there.

Please consider my comments,
Teri Neville

(154)

From: Itcaudill

Sent: Sunday, January 31, 2016 4:44 PM

Cc: Winter, Brad D.

Subject: Input of Bosque Trail Construction

Matt,

My comments on the Bosque Trail Project are attached.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my input on this controversial project.

I offer the following comments for your consideration;

- 1). Doing what is best for wildlife and habitat in minimizing adverse impact should take precedence over other considerations in the design and construction of any further “improvements” in the bosque. Additional fragmentation of habitat will degrade values significantly and this impact must be avoided.
- 2). The rail segment along the river bank should be relocated AWAY from the bank as this is critical habitat. Any new construction must also avoid this area. The bank is subject to flooding and erosion and thus a particularly poor location for a trail !
- 3). The areas disturbed by previous construction should be restored before any additional construction takes place,
- 4). There is no need for new construction before the spring nesting season. A delay until summer is strongly recommended. Subjective considerations or “politics” should NOT drive the schedule.

I have read the lengthy input provided by the BAT and the Sierra Club on January 15 very carefully and find nothing with which I take exception. I find those comments to be thoughtful, constructive and reasonable. I support them in their entirety and I urge you , DMD, Parks AND the administration to follow their recommendations.

The result will be a much better project, a better bosque experience for visitors AND a lot less controversy !!

Sincerely,
Larry T Caudill

(155)

From: rodema ashby

Sent: Sunday, January 31, 2016 7:50 PM

Cc: Richard Barish, Central New Mexico Group Bosque Issues chair; Benton, Isaac

Subject: Building the best multi-use nature path

There is no need to rush to complete construction of the I-40 to Campbell Road section of the trail this winter. Instead of breaking it's prior agreements, Since the City has stated that it will proceed with trail construction this winter in spite of previous agreements, although there is no need to rush the I-40 to Campbell Rd path, and instead of completing the planning and the restorations, here are my comments.

The Bosque is the wild heart of the city, buffering one of the world's great rivers from human encroachment by preserving a margin of riverine ecosystem along it's margins. I want to see the unique treasury of wildlife preserved in the Bosque. The natural environment is why it is a place of peace & tranquil wonder. This precious place is physically close to all city residents and defines Albuquerque as a unique guardian of our historic river resources.

I'm disabled with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Though not confined to a wheel chair, wheelchair accessibility considerations helps me as well. A well designed trail can offer accessibility while preserving the natural environment. I've been disappointed & offended that the wide crusher fine path design has been pushed using an argument that it is the only way to ensure accessibility for those of us with disabilities.

Accessibility can be achieved without sacrificing the natural environment that is the reason I go to the Bosque. The trail can blend in with the natural surroundings so that it does not diminish the experience of being in a natural setting. Wheelchair access can and should be achieved throughout the trail that the city builds, but it need not destroy what we come to enjoy. Consider designs that would allow the trail to blend in more with the Bosque surroundings so as to retain the feeling of a natural space. As the Access Board notes, some soils can be treated with stabilizers to provide a firm surface for wheelchairs. I personally find packed trail surfaces much easier to use than loose road bind.

A narrower trail with periodic wider stretches to provide easier passing would appear more natural. Trails as narrow as three feet are consistent with the Access Board's standards. The existing trail varies in width. Widths can vary depending on the location – wider in open areas, narrower where surrounding vegetation presses in.

The trail could also be more sinuous and less straight which improves the natural appearance and also helps regulate the speed of cyclists. More vegetative plantings on the border of the trail, including grasses and forbs as well as shrubs would better integrate the trail into the Bosque. Finally, the trail would stand out less with a precise color match, if available.

A wider, groomed trail will encourage more dangerous fast bike use instead of the quieter, slower walking & wheelchair traffic. Slow bike riding can fit with the multi use trail. If cyclists aren't slowed the other users will be put at risk. There are many ways to accomplish slower cycling such as making the path winding and add boulders & logs that must be navigated around. This also creates a more natural appearing trail that fits in better with the Bosque surroundings.

The above suggestions will not result in a worse alternative for wheelchair users, but is in fact a superior alternative, since it would provide wheelchair users the greatest opportunity not just to be in the Bosque, but to see the wildlife and experience the natural setting that makes the Bosque a truly special place. Trails designed as described above will allow everyone to experience what truly makes the Bosque a treasure in our City, the ability to experience the undiminished beauty of nature in the middle of the City.

The Bosque is special because of the wildlife habitats that let us visit our wild friends quietly and at a respectful distance. Sensitive areas include coyote dens, trees where Cooper's Hawks, Great Horned Owls, or other birds of interest nest, areas that are particularly favored by foraging porcupines and coyotes, cultural areas like the labyrinth, and native trees and shrubs (including restoration plantings). These areas need to be identified and protected by placing the path at a distance from them.

I am disabled, however not wheelchair bound. Features like switchback climbing instead of steep ramps help me & stroller users too, as well as wheelchair users. Disabled access will be improved if the ramps over the levee were designed to not be as steep & should be a priority for improving access. There also needs to be wheelchair access to the Corps of Engineers intended viewing platform at Campbell. Handicapped-only parking spaces at the end of Campbell road would facilitate access to the viewing platform.

The Bosque is so highly valued by Albuquerque residents because it is a place where you can experience being in nature within a few minutes of anywhere in the City. Obvious, developed features diminish the feeling that you are out in nature. The accessibility standards of the United States Access Board, speaking of soils, note the desirability of not "changing their appearance" and of having trails "that are consistent with the site's level of development," which here is largely undeveloped.

The City has stated that the trail will be a six-foot wide, crusher fine trail. A six-foot wide, crusher fine trail provides some wheelchair access, but it has major downsides for the experience

of nature in the Bosque & encourages faster biking & running traffic instead of nature viewing. A wide trail fragments the Bosque and has adverse affects for wildlife. In addition, the crusher fines are different than the surrounding soil, and together with the wider, uniform width, it is an obvious, developed feature that stands out in the natural setting of the Bosque.

Because wildlife need access to the river, a multiuse trail should be sited many yards away from the river bank, and the existing trail along the bank should be closed in part, so as to limit disturbance of wildlife. Build only two or three spur trails to the water's edge for viewing with most of the river bank left wild. The route suggested by the Sierra Club would address the priority to not further degrade and fragment the ecosystem. Blocking off trails between the viewing spurs can help restore these sections.

The City committed to do environmental monitoring, but this project is plunging ahead before the monitoring results are available and so the information can't be utilized to inform what happens in the Bosque. The environmental results also need to be available to the public. In addition, GeoSystems' site characterization work would provide information that would be valuable to know in advance of deciding where the trail will be located. It would also be very helpful for future decisions if the monitoring were expanded to include mammals and reptiles which are some of the most iconic and visible residents in the Bosque.

We urge the City to ensure that its decisions are based on an adequate gathering and consideration of the science and the facts, even if it means delaying this phase of construction until the fall. Such actions are simply a common-sense approach to ensuring that we do what is best for this resource that we all value so highly, the Bosque.

The need for a natural appearance of the path leads me to ask about the restoration work that the City agreed to complete as part of this project. Has GeoSystems completed it's site characterization work? If the restoration work is to be done in tandem with the Phase II trail construction as promised, it seems the site characterization needs to be done before the trail building so a plan of how best & quickly the restoration work can be done. What's time frame for the promised restoration work? Without the Restoration work the path will be an ugly scar which will not provide the peaceful, natural experience that we seek in the Bosque.

Because the Phase I restoration hasn't been completed prior to moving on to Phase II, it seems the city has already shown its indifference to the restoration which is key to creating a path that will fit within the Bosque to provide some of the natural trail experience we go to find. The City needs to give priority to restoration and to commit to a firm schedule that will ensure that the restoration work is funded and completed in the next year.

I'm deeply disappointed that the City is proceeding with construction of a new section of trail instead of honoring its prior agreement with the Sierra Club and the BAT on adequate process to ensure scientific scrutiny & planning to retain the natural feel of the Bosque. Instead the city has employed an abbreviated and inadequate process in its effort to rush through this trail; it does not appear that it will be possible for science to adequately inform the City's decision with the process being employed; and the rushed planning does not appear to be taking into consideration the principal purpose for which the Rio Grande Valley State Park was established and the

purpose that guides the applicable ranked plan, the Bosque Action Plan, which is the preservation and appreciation of nature.

Sincerely,
Rodema Ashby

(156)

From: Peggy Norton

Sent: Sunday, January 31, 2016 10:41 PM

Cc: Mayor Berry; Isaac Benton; Harris, Don; Lewis, Dan P.; Gibson, Diane G.; Jones, Trudy; Pat Davis; Sanchez, Ken; Pena, Klarissa J.; Winter, Brad D.

Subject: bosque phase II comments

Dear Dr. Schmader:

I am concerned that this project, as well as Phase I, do not align with the Bosque Action Plan. At the northeast corner of Central, a 2200 linear feet trail was planned for wheelchairs. This has now become a 15,000 linear feet trail. There are numerous wheelchair trails in the Bosque Action Plan, including one on the southeast corner of Central. The only project recommended for the phase II area is providing wheelchair access to the Paseo del Bosque trail at Campbell Road. There is nothing in the plan that suggests an ADA multi-use, packed crusher fine trail from Central to Campbell Road. There is also nothing calling for such an intense project as a 90 foot bridge and deck over the siphon. This is the problem with doing projects without appropriate planning and approval. We are then left with projects that need to be done to fix projects that shouldn't have been done in the first place.

Additionally, Policy 20 states methods and materials used shall be compatible with the preservation of the natural character of the Rio Grande Valley State Park. Policy 11A states "Avoid locating trails in woodland with deep, loose soils". Policy 11B states "Develop stabilized trail surface and loop trails from access points into non-sensitive areas of the bosque **as identified in this document**. If Open Space desires to do projects not included in the Bosque Action Plan, then the Plan should be revised or updated.

I admire the foresight of the people who established the Rio Grande Valley State Park and the efforts of the many people who designed the Bosque Action Plan. The first seven policies of the Plan address environment and wildlife: The Goal is to protect and enhance the natural resources of the Rio Grande Valley State Park. Let us continue to be good stewards and do that.

Sincerely,
Peggy Norton

(157)

From: Terri O'Hare

Sent: Sunday, January 31, 2016 11:57 PM

Subject: Attached feedback on bosque trail alignment

To: Matt Schmader, Director, Albuquerque Open Space Division
From: Terri O'Hare, member of the Mayor's Disability Committee, City of ABQ
Re: Bosque Trail Phase 3 Alignment

Dear Matt,

I want to thank you and your staff for the superb preparation and hard work you have put into this public involvement effort. Our city is dealing with a very vocal minority in these meetings and your staff handles the comments professionally and courteously.

Simply put, my preference for this trail phase is **Alternative 1**, which follows the original, existing trail that runs along the riverbank. It makes no sense to shift the location of the trail now, when the best views and the most awesome experience is along the water. If the new trail follows a new, interior pathway, we know many able-bodied users and cyclists will still use the path along the water, thus creating two paths that cut through the site. The city will have then created one trail of superior experiences and views for able-bodied folks, and one with less than the best views for users with disabilities. This is not the spirit of inclusion, nor the intent of the ADA. Separate is not *equal*.

My focus in trail use and advocacy is for users with disabilities such as mobility, (slow walkers, cane users, elderly folks, wheelchair users) or other forms of disability, (blind walkers using guide dogs), or parents pushing young children in strollers. These trail users are the *most vulnerable and the most underserved* by the open spaces and trails in our city and county. As of this date, we have 2-3 trails that can be used by this underserved group, and one of them is the first phase Bosque trail at 1 year old. Able-bodied walkers, runners, cyclists, and equestrians can use city, state and Federal parks and trails in the area of all kinds. These may number above 100 trails in all. Disabled citizens who want natural experiences in natural places have 2-3 trails to use. We need this new Bosque trail to offer the strongest form of beauty it can, while enabling all abilities as named above, access to the expansive beauty along the trail and river.

I attended the workshop on January 7th and I heard the same arguments and voices that have attempted to stop accessibility for all trail users over the last 2 years. While attorney Richard Barish and lobbyist Camilla Feibelman have gotten savvier, they have also tried to dominate pushback from access advocates by quoting from the US Access Board's recreational trails guidance, and to claim they offer 'wheelchair outings' through Sierra Club. The city and Open Space have the assistance and superior direct, factual knowledge shared through staff at the NM Governor's Commission on Disability. Those staff, especially Hope Reed, have studied and walked these trails, and sought staff guidance from Access Board in DC a couple months ago. The trails fall into 'urban areas' and 'must meet compliance of' ADA. (Not PROWAG.) They must be built to meet or exceed ADA guidelines which are still in development for recreational features but which should be firmed up in the Rules soon. In the meantime, municipalities are advised to meet the highest level of access, so they don't need to reinvest in upgrading construction when guidelines do come down.

Example: in a flat, almost 0 cross slope site, without natural feature barriers, the best design would be for a continuous 6-foot wide path. Others have attempted to suggest a narrow 36" path

with 'passing zones' every 200 feet. If the natural features required this, (huge trees, massive boulders, soft soils, other obstructions) it might make sense. But we have a clear site in this section of the bosque and a consistently wide trail is the better solution. One other critical reason for a consistently wide trail is public safety. We will have a wheelchair user, pushing along, or a parent pushing a stroller on a narrow 36" trail, single file since it is so narrow. Cyclists will come up behind them, riding fast. Since the trail has no passing space, the cyclists will either scare other users off the path possibly creating physical injury, or they will be angry as they slowly walk their bikes behind the users in front, until all arrive at a 'passing zone'. The users in front will feel frustrated and possibly shaken, the cyclists will feel resentful and neither will be happy to share this trail. Throw in a couple of horses, a slow elderly couple enjoying the firm trail and water views, some fast runners and you have a recipe for disaster. I've experienced confrontations on the original wide Bosque trail many times in my use. This tension will be multiplied many times on a narrow trail.

Crusher fines and the stabilization process used on the first trail should be duplicated on this new trail. The trail construction vendor and Parks staff hit one out of the ballpark with the original Bosque trail. It is superb: rollable, walkable and a natural appearance and surface. It stands up beautifully after moisture like snow and rain. Those who negatively comment on crusher fine chip 'colors' need to find other things to worry about.

The people who spoke way over their allotted 2 minutes in the Jan 7th forum prevented many others who had signed up from talking. These same people make claims about 'offering wheelchair outings', etc. I have been on their 'wheelchair outings'. None of them can be rolled without assistance from other able-bodied people in the outing due to INACCESSIBLE sites they insist on choosing. We see steep, long grades impossible to roll on unassisted, rocky, unstable surfaces, and dangerous conditions for those of us who are blind, using chairs or otherwise mobility impaired. This points out at least two things. One is there are not many independent accessible trail sites built in the city/county, and two, the original Bosque trail that could show all trail users on these 'outings' the best case scenario-they refuse to include in their outings. I have been edited and blocked on the listserv for requesting that the group roll the Bosque trail so all can see what true access is. Camilla Feibelman has ignored and intentionally prevented folks who come out to experience accessible trails, from seeing the best we have. The notes that we participants provided to Camilla about the access issues/deficiencies never got shared or discussed.

The Bosque is an urban, natural space and falls under ADA compliance regulations. The meet or exceed requirements of ADA and professionals available both here in the state at the NM Governor's Commission on Disability, and staff at the US Access Board in DC have given strong, clear guidance on how these trails should look when completed. This is the overriding law that shapes the efforts and outcomes of the trails in the Bosque. My suggestion for Sierra Club folks is to go enjoy the other 97 trails nearby that they can easily hike, ride, run and cycle on. 1

Terri O'Hare