

Working Draft (10/4/16) –River Commission 2017 Priority List
Please see the following combined lists of all members.

Santa Fe River Fund

- Increase river commission control of the Santa Fe River fund.
- Current focus on rain garden projects by working with other committees and community outreach.
- Promote and help to secure funding for Rain Garden Projects along the SF River Corridor
- Increase participation in the Voluntary River Conservation Fund
- Outreach to community by showcasing rain garden projects; community field trips; advertising, etc.
- How can we use the Living River Fund, and if the money isn't being spent, can it be conservatively invested?

Upper River & Lower Watershed Issues / Management

- Enhance the presence of native species along the river corridor and limit the establishment of invasive and exotic species.
- Continue to improve and maintain the quality along the river trail
- Reduce erosion and infrastructure damage in the riverbed and arroyos.
- Eliminate all invasive species from the watershed as part of a long range vegetative management plan for the river corridor.
- Recharge the aquifers throughout the watershed to historic (pre-European presence) levels.
- Coordinate River projects between the city and county.
- Increase surface flows in the SF River riverbed. The current Living River ordinance provides for up to 1,000 cfs, we would like to see this increased to 2,000 cfs to benefit the ecology, recreation, aesthetics, and recharge.

- Further involvement with the ecologically sound management of the Municipal Watershed by increased research, monitoring, outreach, and financial support.
- Adjudication of the water rights for the Santa Fe River.

Infrastructure Issues

- Examine the physical release mechanism at the headgate of the bypass channel/restoration channel above Stone Dam. When surface water needs to be diverted into the bypass channel or restoration river channel, sandbag placement/removal should not be necessary. Is the bypass channel a part of the SFR?
- Replace the culvert under Cerro Gordo Road (construct a bridge). The culvert is not adequate to deliver flood flows. Along with this, make the area of the old sand filter building into a park that shows the river channel. Remove the hidden Two Mile Pond drainage pipe and rip-rap covering.

- Evaluate the need of additional flow monitoring and possibly gaging in the upper watershed.
- Provide strategic stream gauges along the river. Reconsider the B and G Club structure, Ricardo Road or further downstream, and even revamping the one downstream of Nichols Reservoir (after the delivery pipe to the CRWTP has been replaced).

Water Quality Issues

- Waste-watershed mapping, where does the pollution come from.
- Increase the water quality to "safe" levels from both above and below the Wastewater Treatment Plant. This would include pharmaceuticals, bacteria, and all other human introduced chemicals.

Wastewater Reuse

- Examine effluent discharge amounts (WWTP) to see if a portion could be sent to points upstream, i.e., Frenchys Field to supplement target flows that do not reach this section of the stream.

Master Planning

- Identify major issues for Santa Fe river:
 - Water supply
 - Water quality
 - Infrastructure
 - Scientific understanding of river
 - Garbage
- Revisit the management plan for the river below the WWTP.
- Place discrete signage along the river with information about the SFR watershed, i.e., bridge on Old Santa Fe Trail near the State Land Office, Bishops garden diversion, Acequia Madre headgate at E. Alameda, Moon Bridge, Water Street (used to be part of the river channel, etc.).
- How does/will the management of target flows fit into "Sustainable Santa Fe"?
- Review the River Master Plan (1990s) and get rid of the concrete channel (the concrete drop pad and pool above Moon Bridge are not aesthetically pleasing when capturing trash). Have a more accessible area to the river (on the south side by the Education building).

Increase Public Awareness

- Increase the physical connection between the people and the river by removing walls, etc. to allow increased access to the riverbed.
- Continue the efforts of the sub-committees, e.g., outdoor economy, living river, watershed revitalization, and species resiliency.
- Increase policy involvement through recommendations to the governing body and staff.
 - Meetings with council members to determine river priorities and align with broader city policy.
 - Increase public participation in river policy decisions through meetings with the public.
 - Policy recommendations based on River Commission discussion, not city government request.
- Create an Adult river day much like the fishing derby. This event can align with high flows, can have live music, and food trucks to bring awareness to this wonderful asset Santa Fe has.
- Increase public participation in Santa Fe River issues.
- Explore opening the Santa Fe River watershed to limited recreation.
- Produce educational materials for citizens.
- Create library of Santa Fe River materials (online).
- Sponsor informal meetings for water professionals, people interested in the Santa Fe River and water policy. (social)

A priority of the Santa Fe River should be to increase community interest, user numbers and accessibility. Once we have greater community buy-in, the more significant financial investments in infrastructure and ecosystem health will be met with increased support from our community. I feel that there are many ways to achieve this goal such as:

- Create a biking tour of the River with informative maps to guide users along the way (possible in coordination with local bike shops). Have stations with detailed maps and information pertaining to river and watershed health. Displays and kiosks with educational materials containing, for example, scale models of the watershed, the function and processes of a reservoir, who it serves, how it works and why the River corridor is so important. We could have bat houses, bee and pollinator displays like the one at the Rail yard, etc...,
- Make the bike path more user friendly...more concerted effort with goat head removal and overhead nighttime lights,

- Install colorful trash cans with a water theme, for example, a trout that you discard trash in the mouth of (possibly in coordination with Santa Fe School of Art and Design or high schools),
- Have community days that have a broader attraction that aren't just events to pick up trash. We could have weed picking events, water quality testing, tree health assessments, etc... and lastly,
- Stay involved in the preserve at Upper Canyon
- Increase the physical connection between the people and the river by removing walls, etc. to allow increased access to the riverbed.

River Commission's Priority List –John Buchser

Short term

- Clarify flow commitment of City to SF River Preserve, document (by 4/1/16)
- Define that the charter of the River Commission encompasses the entire watershed upstream of City of SF and all tributaries (arroyos, streets, etc) upstream
- This means our scope is beyond that of City Limits and we must interact with County (we are in fact part of the County)
- Improve dialog with County. Starting point - have Claudia Borchert speak to commission
- Identify additional metering / monitoring needs of watershed
- Daily monitoring of river preserve pond levels
- Rain Garden - promote, fund (see Dale's submission)
- River Fund - monthly monitoring of status (total \$\$)
- Report to Council and Mayor on our goals and needs
- Annual meeting with community (spring 2017 or fall 2017)
- Promote increased funding of Watershed Association's adopt-an-arroyo program
- Increase participation of public in activities of River Commission
- Increase participation of River Commissioners in activities of commission
- Stormwater RFP - encourage adoption of policies/budget by council
- Improve information flow to public (website, facebook, regular press releases, etc); make it understandable to wide range of audiences
- Continued funding of youth during summer to work on River / Watershed
- Interpretive signage

Medium term

- Expand dialog with County
- Have City report on total cost of infrastructure for delivering water, total quantity of water source and quantity delivered
- Stormwater plan - continue council engagement until adopted
- Replace Cerro Gordo bridge
- Identify flood problems (structures, exit routes for pedestrians)
- Engage citizens in 500 year flood plain in dialog on how to manage risk
- Aztec arroyo flood risk, potential flood mitigation via proper management of River Preserve
- Should City pursue \$\$ from Nature Conservancy for 'lost' (evapo-transpired) water from Preserve?
- Can we document how much water released to River recharges the aquifer?
- How much water can be 'stored' by arroyos if flow rate reduced? (A variation of Aquifer Storage and Recovery)
- Start looking at waste water management plan

- Can we plan on using treated water to provide flow (and ASR) before it all gets used on urban growth?
- Food carts or built structures to bring folks closer to the river during the summer
- Opportunities for use of state land along river between Galisteo & Don Gaspar
- Regular river tours - contract to local company?

Long term

- Can we bump up the thresholds for 1K AF/year so our typical water year has closer to 1K AF/year?
- Further decreasing catastrophic fire risk to community, homes, firefighters
- ID portions of community (homes) adjacent to watershed. Good techniques to reduce risk exist, but how widely used?
- Can FEMA do pro-active work? Identify opportunities, begin to pursue \$\$

As John requested in his e-mail of September 2nd, please find below my recommendations for our priorities.

First, I suggest that the following three questions be answered at the October 13 meeting:

Question 1: Is the commission concerned only about the Santa Fe River, or about the entire watershed?

Comment: I believe that we should focus on the entire watershed, as implied in the City's website https://www.santafenm.gov/river_and_watershed

Question 2: Should the Commission concern itself mainly with policy issues, as well as with flagging issues in design and implementation to the Mayor?

Comment: I think that we should concern ourselves mainly on policy issues which have a long-term impact on the watershed and its sustainability, and not spend time on matters which could be addressed by City staff or collaborating organizations. Our role on design and implementation could be limited to flagging major issues to the Mayor.

Question 3: How to we convey the Commission's recommendations to the Mayor ?

Comment: We should have a structured system to communicate the Commission's recommendations to the Mayor. This could for instance be in a quarterly note approved by the River Commission, and discussed with the Mayor in a formal meeting with the Commission.

Recommendations for priorities:

I suggest the following five areas around which we could structure the work of the Commission:

- Santa Fe River: how to keep it wet and healthy?
- Land use: a land use decision is a water decision. Which City policies and decisions affect land use (urban sprawl, zoning, urban agriculture)?
- Infrastructure projects: review standards for road building, parking lots and earth moving in general (see what's going on now on Cerrillos Road); require permeable pavements on parking lots, storm water management, arroyo restoration, etc.
- Education of policy and decision makers, and of the public: as water issues cut across most aspects of the City's business, we would strive to edify City decision makers and staff, as well as the public, about the concept of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). The current organization chart of the City shows a disconcerting fragmentation of responsibilities for water management in Santa Fe.
- Economic, financial and social impacts: Except for incomplete fiscal impact analyses, it seems that most decisions are taken without much consideration and quantification of their economic, financial and social impacts. The Commission itself would not conduct impact studies, but it

would identify priority areas which would warrant more in-depth analysis before decisions on policies and projects are approved by the City Council.

Each of the above subject-areas would give rise to sub-projects (2 or 3 per subject area, yielding the requested list of about 10 to 15 items). These sub-projects (some of them would have areas of overlap) would be woven into a work plan for the River Commission. We could share this plan at a community meeting with the Mayor, Councilors, the public and the press (presumably after discussing it in a smaller venue with the Mayor).

How to do it?

With working groups, each group consisting of two Commission members and volunteers.

The rules under the Open Meetings Act seem to prevent continuous and fruitful exchanges of views and collaboration between Commission members. Any attempt to modernize the rules will probably take a very long time.

A possibility would be that Commission members, individually or in teams of two, form working groups with volunteers (organizations, e.g. non-profits, and private individuals). The working groups would therefore not be bound by the quorum rules (am I right on this?). Each working group would then report to the Commission. We have to some extent tried to do this in the past, but maybe we need to be more proactive.

The Commission members would attend the meetings of other City Commissions relevant with their working group to improve cross-fertilization and collaboration.

Looking forward to a lively discussion,
FM

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