



News Release

The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

Contact: Tom Thorpe at (505) 382-9306 or (505) 247-0234

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Bosque Re-Opening Set

Albuquerque – The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District is *re-opening* the Rio Grande bosque in Sandoval, Valencia and Socorro Counties, effective 8:00 a.m. Wednesday, July 18, 2012.

“The recent rains, coupled with an increase in humidity, have created a safer environment in the bosque” says MRGCD Board Chairman, Derrick Lente.

After consultation with all County, Municipal, and other stakeholders within the district, and a changing weather pattern over the past week which brought in more moisture, a joint decision has been made that all 150 miles of MRGCD managed and owned bosque lands will be open.

“As the owners of this wonderful natural resource, it is our responsibility to the citizens of this great state to protect the bosque. We want to thank everyone for respecting the recent closure and we want to commend our law enforcement and firefighting agencies who kept watch on the bosque.” says Shah.

Normal fire restrictions remain in effect in the bosque including a ban on all open fires, fireworks, spark emitting equipment and smoking.

The MRGCD owns and manages the bosque from Cochiti Lake to the northern boundary of Bosque del Apache Wildlife refuge in four counties, Sandoval, Bernalillo, Valencia and Socorro. The Rio Grande Valley State Park is co-managed by the MRGCD, State of New Mexico and City of Albuquerque.

Bosque areas located on the six Middle Rio Grande pueblos within the district are under jurisdiction of pueblo authorities and any closures on those lands are at the discretion of pueblo leadership.

About the MRGCD: The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District has been promoting sustainable agriculture for the past 85 years. The District delivers water to about 70,000 acres of cropland in the Middle Rio Grande Valley. That water is reused time and time again to irrigate crops, sustains the cottonwood bosque along the Rio Grande, helps create and maintain habitat for the endangered Rio Grande silvery minnow and recharges the aquifer. The District owns 30,000 acres of bosque in the valley, the largest continuous cottonwood forest in the world, and a stretch of land that provides unprecedented recreational opportunities and an irreplaceable swath of greenbelt in New Mexico's largest metropolitan area. The District was formed in 1925 to alleviate flooding and to reclaim farmland in the valley. Its boundaries stretch 150 miles from Cochiti on the north to the boundary of the Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge on the south, running through Sandoval, Bernalillo, Valencia and Socorro Counties. It operates more than 1,200 miles of canals, laterals and drains, which are used to convey water to and from cropland. The District is funded by water service charges and property assessments on the benefited lands within its boundaries.

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