

Salida Tree Board

Salida City Hall
448 E. 1st Street, Suite 112
719-539-4555
www.cityofsalida.com



A town without trees isn't fit for a dog!

Board Meeting June 14, 2016

Members Present: Kathryn Hardgrave, Tom Jacobson, Marilyn Moore, Dan Osborne, Bob Salmi

Also Present: Buffy Lenth, STERP; Danielle Campbell, Community Development Intern; Rick Smith; M'Lynne Kenny

STERP: Buffy explained that the Salida Trail Ecological Restoration Project is a collaboration of the city, the county, GARNA, LTUA and SPOT for which she is the coordinator. The goal of the project is to restore riparian habitat for birds and pollinators and improve water quality in Ditch Creek. Non-native species are to be eliminated, and habitat islands of native plants have been planted in the expectation that birds will spread their seeds. The non-native Russian olives, which are not a good food source for birds, will be replaced over 20 years or so with native species such as New Mexico privet. The New Mexico privet only reaches 12 feet or less, so will not be a good replacement shade-wise for the Russian olives, and M'Lynne pointed out that it does not like wet feet. Marilyn suggested that cottonwoods would be a good replacement where the water table is high. M'Lynne reported that when Ditch Creek went dry during drought, the cottonwoods really suffered but the Russian olives were unfazed. Buffy would welcome recommendations for additional native species that would work for the restoration project.

School groups and volunteers have been enlisted to pull weeds along the trail, and the cleared ground is then seeded with a native grasses and wildflowers mix and lightly mulched. The Southwestern Conservation Corps will be working for three weeks this summer, and M'Lynne noted that they need to be better trained, as in past years they have not been able to distinguish between invasive kochia and native rocky mountain bee plant.

One issue of concern is that the county weed control agent, Larry Walker, routinely sprays along the trail and does not discriminate between native and invasive species. He also bills the city for weed control but does not itemize what or where. Bob suggested a

meeting between STERP, the weed agent, and perhaps another county representative to discuss weed concerns, and he would like to participate.

Jake commented that another issue of concern regarding the trail is the potential for development in the fields on the north side, which would really change the character of the trail. He suggested approaching the mayor about the city preserving the fields as open space and applying for GOCO grants for that purpose.

Emerald Ash Borer: Kathryn reported that EAB has been found in Longmont. The insect is unlikely make it over the mountains to Salida unless it is brought in on infested firewood. The GPS tree inventory is underway and special note will be made of the location and condition of green ash, maybe take photos of the trees, too. Danielle has been compiling information for distribution to second-home and short-term rental owners and will emphasize not bringing in firewood. The threat that EAB poses to Salida's green ash and not bringing in fire wood should be highlighted on the city, the county's and tree board's web pages.

Riverside Park: Angie Jensen of Terra Firma Forestry, an ISA certified arborist, has recommended that a 6 foot circle of grass should be killed around each of the younger trees in the park and the dead area mulched. This would minimize competition from the grass and protect the trees from mower and string-trimmer injury. In discussing the suggestion, there was concern that the mulch would just blow or get kicked around. Six foot diameter cages would be required. Jake suggested rubber mats might work better, and he will investigate them.

River Trail: There were a lot of anchoring roots cut from trees along the river trail when the trail was installed, and some of the trees may pose a public safety hazard. However, the trees are on private property, and the city cannot go onto private property to remove them. The ponderosa pines that have been planted behind Marvin Park had just been shipped in from Oregon and were damaged by freezing temperatures.

NEXT TREE BOARD MEETING: Tuesday, July 12, 8 am, River's Edge