RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Ecotourism Committee of El Paso is a group of stakeholders whose mission is to market and preserve our natural assets in the Paso Del Norte region; and

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande plays an important role in our region's splendor; and

WHEREAS, cities such as Albuquerque, New Mexico have utilized the natural and native vegetation and ecology along the Rio Grande to create a forest along the river that provides significant eco-tourism and quality of life enhancing opportunities, and a considerable economic benefit to the local economy, and

WHEREAS, current practices by the International Water and Boundary Commission (IBWC) continue to mow stretches of the Rio Grande; and

WHEREAS, the Ecotourism Committee of El Paso supports the de-mowing of certain stretches along the Rio Grande floodway for ecological restoration purposes in support of sustainable, responsible, multifaceted nature preservation; and

WHEREAS, a restored floodway would support riparian habitat for native birds and other flora and fauna; and

WHEREAS, the no-mow policy would have the potential for rapid recovery of native cottonwood and tornillo without requiring active re-vegetation efforts.

NOW THERFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

That the Mayor and the City Council of El Paso propose a two-phase, passive management (no-mow) regime, with the consent and guidance of the IBWC, along the Texas portion of both sides of the floodway between the New Mexico State line and Country Club Road, and the small section in Texas south of Country Club Road where River Elms Court dead ends off Sunset Road.

APPROVED this _____ day of August 2009.

THE CITY OF EL PASO:

_____
John F. Cook
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Richarda D. Momsen
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
Charles F. McNabb
City Attorney

#50365/1/Mayor/Reso – No Mow Policy

JOHN COOK
MAYOR

JOYCE WILSON
CITY MANAGER

CITY COUNCIL
ANN MORGAN LILLY, DISTRICT 1
SUSANNAH M. BYRD, DISTRICT 2
EMMA ACOSTA, DISTRICT 3
CARL ROBINSON, DISTRICT 4
RACHEL QUINTANA, DISTRICT 5
EDDIE HOLGUIN JR., DISTRICT 6
STEVE ORTEGA, DISTRICT 7
BETO O'ROURKE, DISTRICT 8

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Susie Byrd, City Representative, District #2

DATE: August 13, 2009

RE: Eco Tourism Resolutions

~~~~~~

Dear Mayor and Council:

I am asking for your support for the following two resolutions that have been presented to me by the Ecotourism Committee. The Ecotourism Committee is an ad hoc group of volunteers coordinated through Commissioner Veronica Escobar's office to enhance and promote outdoor attractions in El Paso and the region. They have worked with the Convention and Visitor's Bureau on a pamphlet promoting our outdoor promotions. It is called, "El Paso. Gear Up. Get Out. Explore," and is included in this packet.

They are requesting that we support through resolution two efforts:

1. Restoration of the Rio Grande riverbanks in our region. While the International Water and Boundary Committee does not currently have the funds to fully restore the river banks, they have a plan and they can discontinue mowing the riverbanks to allow for the natural restoration.
2. The development of an international nature preserve that would include the Big Bend in the United States and El Carmen in Mexico. (I have included two recent articles published in Newspapertree.com about these efforts.)

Both of these efforts would enhance El Paso's attractiveness as an outdoor destination. I urge you to support these resolutions. Members of the Ecotourism Committee will be available at Tuesday's meeting to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Susie Byrd

Susie Byrd
City Council Representative, District 2
~~~~~~

NEWSPAPER TREE

August 11, 2009

U.S.-Mexico pledge to work on giant border park

by NPT Staff

Editor's note: The following news release advances the issue described in this NPT story by Rick LoBello.

***

U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and Mexican Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Juan Elvira Decide to Strengthen Conservation Cooperation in Big Bend Area of the U.S. - Mexico Border

Washington, D.C. and Mexico, D.F.--In conjunction with the North American Leaders Summit held in Guadalajara, Mexico, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and Mexican Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Juan Elvira announced today their commitment to strengthen conservation along the U.S. - Mexico border. The Secretary and the Minister will develop a plan to enhance coordination in the Big Bend and El Carmen area of the border and report to Presidents Barack Obama of the United States and Felipe Calderón of Mexico in six months. The proposed plan will take advantage of national parks and protected areas already designated in the Big Bend and El Carmen region, without prejudice to each country's existing legislation, border security, and rights.

"Building upon our shared history of ecosystem and species conservation, the plan will develop a model of bi-national cooperation for the conservation and enjoyment of shared ecosystems for current and future generations," said Secretary Salazar. With more than 268 river miles and 3 million acres of contiguous parks and protected areas on both sides of the border benefitting under this proposal, 14 percent of the entire U.S.-Mexico border will enjoy strengthened conservation coordination.

The joint announcement marks the renewal of a bilateral process to develop one of the most significant conservation initiatives considered by Mexico and the United States at the border, while also taking into account border security. Sixty-five years ago, the Presidents of the United States and Mexico exchanged letters on the creation of the Big Bend National Park in the United States, wherein they envisioned the conservation of the shared ecosystems on both sides of the Rio Grande in the Big Bend region of Texas in the United States and Chihuahua and Coahuila in Mexico. Mexico later established Cañon de Santa Elena and Maderas del Carmen protected areas in Chihuahua and Coahuila. Over the years, park rangers, scientists, volunteers, landowners and local communities on both sides of the border have diligently conserved the spectacular landscapes, wilderness, and habitats in both countries, in one of the most biologically diverse regions of the world.

The June 2009 designation of Ocampo Protected Area by President Calderón completed a critical piece of this vision, forming a contiguous set of protected areas across from Big Bend National Park in the United States. Additional United States protected areas adjacent to Big Bend National Park include: Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River, Big Bend Ranch State Park, and Black Gap Wildlife Management Area, all in Texas.

"The U.S.-Mexico bilateral process is expected to highlight the biodiversity of the region, to consolidate environmental cooperation between the two countries, and could eventually constitute a symbol of the new era of the relation between Mexico and the United States with respect to bilateral cooperation in the conservation area" commented Mexican Minister Elvira. He added that "the Secretaries of the Interior and of the Environment and Natural Resources recognize in this mandate the vision of the Governments and trust that a proposal can be developed soon for further consideration by the Presidents."

NEWSPAPER TREE

August 8, 2009

Dream of a Giant Park on the U.S.-Mexico border breathes new life

by Rick LoBello

A giant international park project first proposed in the 1930s and last endorsed by high level officials in Washington, D.C. in 1946, received a hopeful sign of new life last week when Congressman Ciro Rodriquez of Texas introduced H.Res.695 – "supporting an international park between Big Bend National Park in the United States and the protected areas of the Coahuila and Chihuahua States across the border in Mexico." The non-binding resolution resolves, "that the House of Representatives supports an international park between Bend National Park in the United States and the protected areas of the Coahuila and Chihuahua States across the border in Mexico; and Requests that the President in conjunction with the Secretaries of Homeland Security, Interior, and State discuss with Mexico and study the probability of designating an international park."

On a visit to the proposed park area in 1936 then Assistant Director of the National Park Service Conrad Wither said that the proposed Big Bend International Park would be one of the biggest developments ever undertaken by the National Park Service and would be "one of the greatest recreational and educational ventures ever undertaken by the National Park Service. The benefits to the people of Mexico and the United States will be almost unlimited."

In a letter to General Manual Avila Camacho, President of the United Mexican States President Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote that "I do not believe that this undertaking in the Big Bend (referring to the establishment of Big Bend National Park in 1944) will be complete until the entire park area in this region on both sides of the Rio Grande forms one great international park." When in 1946 following the death of Roosevelt, President Truman tried to move the project forward in his own letter to President Camacho, support for the project in Washington soon faded when Camacho's term ended later that same year.

Much has happened since 1946, but nothing as significant as Congressman's Rodriquez's first step to get the project back on the national agenda in Congress last week. Earlier this year iloveparks.com reported on recent efforts in Mexico to restore the project back on to the agenda when President Obama visited President Calderon in April. How this new chapter plays out in the days ahead will be determined by not only by President Obama, Congress and the Mexican government, but also by the people of both countries who come forward in support of the effort. To join a network of people working to support the designation of the international park, contact Rick LoBello in El Paso, Texas at 915-474-1456 or write ricklobello@cs.com or you can also fill out a online form and write in how you want to help.

To see a historical timeline and for more information on this effort visit http://www.iloveparks.com/peaceparks.

111th CONGRESS

1st Session

H. RES. 695

Supporting an international park between Big Bend National Park in the United States and the protected areas of the Coahuila and Chihuahua States across the border in Mexico.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
July 29, 2009

Mr. RODRIGUEZ submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Supporting an international park between Big Bend National Park in the United States and the protected areas of the Coahuila and Chihuahua States across the border in Mexico.

Whereas the United States and Mexico share a common border, natural and cultural resources, and histories;

Whereas the Chihuahuan Desert region provides an opportunity for the two nations to share research and experience in managing a protected area in this unique ecosystem;

Whereas there is a desire to conserve and educate others about the significant natural and cultural resources that span the border of the United States and Mexico;

Whereas the concept is based on the existing international park at Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park between the United States and Canada;

Whereas beginning in 1935 with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, meetings and discussions have been held to explore an international park in the Big Bend National Park of Texas and the Coahuila and Chihuahua States of Mexico;

Whereas, on August 14, 1983, an agreement between the United Mexican States and the United States of America on Cooperation for the Protection and Improvement of the Environment in the Border Area was signed;

Whereas in October of 1988, an agreement of understanding between the National Park Service and the State of Coahuila was signed by Coahuila Governor Eliseo Mendoza Beurrueto, National Park Service Regional Director John Cook, and Big Bend National Park Superintendent Jim Carrico for cooperation between the two countries in research and preservation of the shared environment along the border;

Whereas a similar agreement of understanding was later signed with the State of Chihuahua; and

Whereas, on March 27, 2006, the United States and Mexico sign non-binding Joint Declaration of Sister Park Partnerships between Big Bend National Park in Texas, Maderas del Carmen (Coahuila), and Canon de Santa Elena (Chihuahua) Flora and Fauna Protected Areas: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives--

(1) supports an international park between Big Bend National Park in the United States and the protected areas of the Coahuila and Chihuahua States across the border in Mexico; and

(2) requests that the President, in conjunction with Secretaries of Homeland Security, Interior, and State, discuss with Mexico and study the probability of designating an international park.

AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 695

Supporting an international park between Big Bend National Park in the United States and the protected areas of the Coahuila and Chihuahua States across the border in Mexico.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 29, 2009

Mr. RODRIGUEZ submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

---

RESOLUTION

Supporting an international park between Big Bend National Park in the United States and the protected areas of the Coahuila and Chihuahua States across the border in Mexico.

Whereas the United States and Mexico share a common border, natural and cultural resources, and histories;

Whereas the Chihuahuan Desert region provides an opportunity for the two nations to share research and experience in managing a protected area in this unique ecosystem;

Whereas there is a desire to conserve and educate others about the significant natural and cultural resources that span the border of the United States and Mexico;

Whereas the concept is based on the existing international park at Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park between the United States and Canada;

Whereas beginning in 1935 with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, meetings and discussions have been held to explore an international park in the Big Bend National Park of Texas and the Coahuila and Chihuahua States of Mexico;

Whereas, on August 14, 1983, an agreement between the United Mexican States and the United States of America on Cooperation for the Protection and Improvement of the Environment in the Border Area was signed;

Whereas in October of 1988, an agreement of understanding between the National Park Service and the State of Coahuila was signed by Coahuila Governor Eliseo Mendoza Beurrueto, National Park Service Regional Director John Cook, and Big Bend National Park Superintendent Jim Carrico for cooperation between the two countries in research and preservation of the shared environment along the border;

Whereas a similar agreement of understanding was later signed with the State of Chihuahua; and

Whereas, on March 27, 2006, the United States and Mexico sign non-binding Joint Declaration of Sister Park Partnerships between Big Bend National Park in Texas, Maderas del Carmen (Coahuila), and Canon de Santa Elena (Chihuahua) Flora and Fauna Protected Areas: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved,* That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) supports an international park between Big

3 Bend National Park in the United States and the

1 protected areas of the Coahuila and Chihuahua
2 States across the border in Mexico; and
3 (2) requests that the President, in conjunction
4 with Secretaries of Homeland Security, Interior, and
5 State, discuss with Mexico and study the probability
6 of designating an international park.

○