



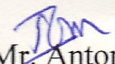
Audubon NEW MEXICO

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December 7, 2011

Tom Antonio, President
Native Plant Society of New Mexico
P.O. Box 35388
Albuquerque, NM 87176-5388

Re: Final Report for Carter Conservation Fund Grant

Dear Mr.  Antonio:

Audubon New Mexico is pleased to transmit to you and the Board of Directors the final report for the \$700 grant we received from the Jack & Martha Carter Conservation Fund pursuant to your letter of February 20, 2011.

As you can see from the report, the project has been very successful to date, and on many levels. The native New Mexico olives and velvet ash trees we planted remain alive and well. Many local people, ages 8 to 80, volunteered to help install the plants, and many more continue to volunteer their time to keep them watered.

The generosity of the NPS and the Carter Fund is much appreciated by Audubon New Mexico, State Parks, and other partners. We hope to be able to show off the plantings after they mature into important stands of native trees and shrubs – important for birds and other plants and animals as well.

If you have any questions about the project, feel free to contact me at 983-4609 x 27 or at scary@audubon.org.

Sincerely,



Steven J. Cary
Community Naturalist

Restoring Native Riparian Plants at Broad Canyon Ranch

Final Report to Native Plant Society of New Mexico

Steven J. Cary
Audubon New Mexico
December 7, 2011

Audubon New Mexico applied for a grant from the Native Plant Society's Jack & Martha Carter Conservation Fund. Notice of award of \$700 was received from Society President Tom Antonio via letter dated February 20, 2011.

What We Promised

Audubon committed to planting native New Mexico olive (*Forestiera neomexicana*) and velvet ash (*Fraxinus velutina*) at Broad Canyon Ranch (BCR), a property acquired by New Mexico State Parks in January 2009.

Rationale

The Rio Grande riparian corridor in northern Doña Ana County once sported significant stands of native trees and shrubs including Rio Grande cottonwood, Goodding willow, New Mexico olive and velvet ash. Over the past century, land, water, and vegetation management practices in the area have largely eliminated these natives from the river corridor in and around BCR. As of early 2011, we noted one mature velvet ash, three mature NM olives, one mature Goodding willow, and no cottonwoods; none of these species appeared to be reproducing. Since the property was acquired by Parks, riparian restoration efforts at the site have focused on saltcedar removal and re-establishment of cottonwoods and willows in the wettest sites. To diversify the native plantings, Audubon proposed to install NM olive and velvet ash in somewhat drier sites.

What We Did

With funds awarded by the Society, Audubon hired Robledo Vista Nursery, in Radium Springs, to grow 50 New Mexico olive and 20 velvet ash and to provide these to Audubon in 5-gallon nursery containers. Robledo Vista did as we requested. These 70 plants in pots were delivered to the Broad Canyon Ranch site on October 22, 2011, and a check in the amount of \$700 was delivered to the Nursery a few days later.

On October 23, 2011, 45 volunteers assembled in two shifts, morning and afternoon, to plant the ash and olives in areas of BCR approved by State Parks. Lisa Mandelkern, a Society member from the Las Cruces Chapter, joined the morning shift, gave planting instructions and did a fabulous job of supervising installation of the plants. We hauled water from the Rio Grande for each initial watering. One 5-gallon plastic drip bucket was placed next to each plant, a small holed drilled in the bottom, and a larger hole cut into the lid to allow a hose to fill the bucket up. Wire cages 4' high and 3.5' diameter were staked around each of the ash trees to discourage herbivory. Each bucket was filled once at the end of the planting day.

Outcomes

All 70 plants were successfully installed with drip irrigation buckets. Volunteers visit the site weekly to re-fill irrigation buckets and to ensure each plant is getting what it needs. In light of early December arrival of significant precipitation and cold temperatures, watering has been scaled back to once every two weeks. As of this date, all 70 plants remain alive. Regular watering will continue until May or June 2012, when arrival of irrigation season will raise local water tables and the plants will be expected to carry on without supplemental water.

Partners

The Society is now one of a growing list of partners involved in riparian ecosystem restoration at Broad Canyon Ranch. The ash/olive planting effort alone received financial support from National Audubon Society and Toyota Corporation through TogetherGreen (togethergreen.org), as well as Wells Fargo. Volunteer support for the planting effort came from the Las Cruces Public Schools National Honor Society, Friends of the Organ Mountains, Mesilla Valley Audubon Society, the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting, and the NMSU Wildlife Society.

Friday, October 28, 2011 Las Cruces Bulletin Homes & Southwest Living | E5

Planting for the future at the TogetherGreen Volunteer Day

Photos by Nicolas Bañales



Alex Cervantes and Lauren Salas from Las Cruces High School National Honor Society pose next to the New Mexico olive tree they planted during the TogetherGreen Volunteer Day Sunday, Oct. 23, at Broad Canyon Ranch.



Steve Cary, a community naturalist, made sure the hole is the proper size before planting a tree at its new home at Broad Canyon Ranch.



Zoe Dinger used the handle of a shovel around the soil of the newly planted New Mexico olive plant with Tommy Tomlin, an active community volunteer.



Christopher Pendleton, volunteer from the Audubon Society, places the New Mexico olive plant into its new location at Broad Canyon Ranch along with 50 other plants and shrubs planted that day.