



EDD

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION

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2021 Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant Awardees Announced

Through a competitive grant process, the Outdoor Recreation Division is investing \$506,736 in 25 organizations to build trails, trailheads, signage, river access, and more throughout New Mexico

SANTA FE, N.M. – Today, the Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) of the Economic Development Department (EDD) announced the awardees of the Outdoor Recreation Trails+ grant.

ORD administers this infrastructure program (formerly called the Special Projects and Outdoor Infrastructure grant) to improve access to outdoor recreation, while simultaneously bolstering the state's outdoor recreation economy, which made up 2.5% of GDP in 2019. The grant funds conservation-centric, shovel-ready projects that are open to the public and demonstrate a clear benefit to the community, either by attracting and retaining businesses and residents and/or attracting visitors. Eligible projects include trail systems, trailheads, signage, outdoor classrooms, river access, and more.

Tribes and Pueblos, municipalities, counties, other political subdivisions of the state, and nonprofits are eligible to apply. The grant requires a 1:1 match (in-kind accepted) from other funding sources. Funding is split between tribal, rural, acequia/land grant, and urban communities.

This year, 25 organizations were awarded a total of \$506,736.17, with the projects bringing in an additional \$1.628 million in matching funds. Sixty-four percent of this year's awarded projects are located in rural counties. This is a 316% increase from 2020, when six organizations were funded with just over \$77,000. The growth in funds is due to the leadership of Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham and EDD Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes, as well as support from state lawmakers. That said, ORD could still only fund 42% of the total ask. In 2021, 60 organizations applied for Trails+ funding, with a total request of \$1.2 million.

“These outdoor recreation infrastructure projects will help connect the state’s incredible landscape with local businesses and across New Mexico. These initiatives from Eddy to Mora County increase the quality of life and well being in New Mexico, while creating jobs and boosting economic growth” said Secretary Keyes.

“The response this year to the Outdoor Recreation Trails+ grant was overwhelming positive,” ORD Director Axie Navas said. “We’re proud to support these 25 amazing organizations all over the state who are developing trails, encouraging stewardships, building boat ramps, improving outdoor classrooms, and so much more with the goal of increasing sustainable access to the state’s landscapes.”

"Funding projects like this brings the best adaptive mountain bike technology to New Mexico and initiates inclusive adaptive trail projects," Dustin Berg, founder and executive director of Global Opportunities Unlimited and one of the 2021 Trails+ awardees said. "It enables wheelchair users with compromised mobility to truly enjoy the natural beauty of our states great outdoors and participate side-by-side with their cycling peers in a healthy, fun, and rewarding outdoor activity."

Visit the [ORD website for a complete list of 2020 and 2021 Trails+ awardees](#), as well as complete program guides (in English and Spanish) for the grant.

A big thank you goes to the amazing volunteer review committee that spent countless hours reviewing, scoring, and commenting on the 60 applications from all over the state. The ORD is especially grateful to the reviewers:

- Shannon Glendenning - Active Transportation Programs Supervisor & Bicycle/Pedestrian/Equestrian Coordinator, New Mexico Department of Transportation
- Jennifer Myers - Statewide Disaster Recovery Coordinator, NM Economic Development Department
- Olivia Jensen – Administrative Director, Nuestra Tierra Conservation Project
- Felicia DePaula - Program Specialist, NM Economic Development Department
- Christy Tafoya - Former New Mexico State Parks Superintendent
- John Winscott - Economic and Energy Diversification Coordinator, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resource Department
- Lancing Adams - Tourism Development Director, NM Tourism Department
- Ricardo Dow y Anaya - Special Projects Coordinator, Consumer Protection, Civil Rights Bureau; Member, Attorney General’s Environmental Equity Council

Awardees:

Asombro Institute for Science Education

The “Gateway to the Desert” project will increase and improve the public's access to outdoor recreation and education opportunities at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park in Doña Ana County. The project will include an entry kiosk, a new parking area, a new trail, interpretive signs along the trail, a restoration project, interactive photo monitoring sites, benches, and fencing.

Location: Las Cruces

Award: \$20,000.00

Bayard Public Library

This project will transforming a 2,004-square-foot empty lot adjacent to the library into a public park and outdoor learning space. The space will consist of native, drought tolerant trees and shrubs; a gazebo; a children's musical instrument section; a rain garden; recycled

sculpture art; a picnic shelter; benches of mosaic tile made by local artists; and a mural on a large section of the library wall overlooking the lot.

Location: Bayard

Award: \$7,500.00

Carrizozo Works, Inc.

In partnership with the Town of Carrizozo, this project plans to install 6 (six) outdoor benches, 10 (ten) interpretive signs and 2 (two) welcome signs along the town's 2.25-mile nature walk (formerly the golf course path of the Valle del Sol golf course). The signs will be hand-painted tile by a local artist and will include descriptions of some of the plants, birds, reptiles, and mammals indigenous to the area.

Location: Carrizozo

Award: \$5,333.00

Cibola County

The Quartz Hill Trail project is a 25-mile non-motorized recreational amenity that establishes Cibola County's first designated trail within the Zuni Mountains. The trail will provide residents and visitors access to the national forest where they will be able to engage in various forms of outdoor recreation such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross country skiing, show shoeing, hunting, camping, etc.

Location: Cibola County

Award: \$25,000.00

City of Carlsbad

This project includes installation of two cantilever-style structures with fabric tops to provide maximum unobstructed shade and protection from the sun during events at the Halagueno Arts Park located in the Pearl of the Pecos Arts and Cultural District. This project will help increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and events in Carlsbad during warm weather months.

Location: Carlsbad

Award: \$25,000.00

City of Gallup

The Neighbor Trails Project (NTP) is intended to build trail infrastructure, add signage, and execute mapping and map creation for trail systems that tie neighborhoods, schools, and the hospital campuses into existing outdoor recreation infrastructure. This project includes four components: trail building, trail signage, trail mapping, and creating both a print and digital map of both the new and existing outdoor recreation assets within the Gallup community.

Location: Gallup

Award: \$25,000.00

City of Socorro

This project will take place at the trail located east of the Socorro Rodeo & Sports Complex and will consist of trail improvements including signage to enhance both the experience and usage of the trail. Trail improvements will support an increase in events held utilizing the trail such as 5ks, mud runs, motocross, etc.

Location: Socorro

Award: \$25,000.00

Commonweal Conservancy, Inc.

Improvement and expansion of the three trailheads at the Galisteo Basin Preserve (GBP), a 9,000-acre, publicly accessible open space project, located 20 minutes outside Santa Fe.

Funding will help to expand the parking areas at each of the trailheads, improve safety and

utility by grading parking lots, install wildlife-friendly perimeter fencing to keep cars from over-reaching the lot and damaging adjoining grasslands, improve the circulation and flow of traffic at each trailhead; and enhance the safety and navigability of the Preserve's 41-mile trail network by installing new trailhead signage with updated trail maps.

Location: Santa Fe

Award: \$15,000.00

Continental Divide Trail Coalition (CDTC)

The CDTC will partner with other organizations on six volunteer trail work projects within the Gila National Forest of southern New Mexico. These projects will focus on trail re-treading, restoration, construction, and clearance that will increase safety for trail travelers. In total, these projects will aim to engage volunteers in the maintenance or construction of 13 miles of trail. Along a popular route for trail enthusiasts, Continental Divide Trail (CDT) thru-hikers, and locals alike, these projects will increase access to outdoor recreation and continue to boost visitation to southern New Mexico by driving foot traffic into neighboring towns and communities. By keeping the CDT alternate route and CDT itself open and accessible, hundreds of CDT travelers will support the tourist economy between Silver City and Gila Hot Springs.

Location: Grant, Sierra, and Catron Counties

Award: \$25,000.00

Gila Chapter Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico (Gila BCH)

This project centers on restoring and improving over 25 miles of neglected recreation trails in the Gila National Forest and connecting its recreation opportunities with surrounding communities. Activities include: trail work restoring neglected, overgrown trails and reopening connections to existing trail networks; making and installing trail wayfinding signs; disseminating reliable, updated, current trail information to the public, communities, and local businesses; improving the Gila Visitor Center Trailhead by installing a self-serve trail information kiosk that is regularly updated.

Location: Silver City

Award: \$15,655.17

Global Opportunities Unlimited

This project will help the expansion of the dirt trail cycle programming in New Mexico for wheelchair users and people with other mobility limitations. This funding will help increase the number of adaptive dirt trail cycles available to the public through the program and will also support low impact trail work and maintenance to increase the number of adaptive-cycle trails available.

Location: Bernalillo County

Award: \$21,250.00

Incorporated County of Los Alamos

The project will improve access for equestrians, mountain bikers and hikers into Bayo Canyon trail system from the North Mesa stables trail. The project will widen the trail to equestrian trail standards that allow for multiple users and provide better access for youth and adults with disabilities who participate in programs with the Gifted Horse and Pony Club programs from the nearby stables. The Bayo Canyon trail system covers 7-plus miles of the canyon floor and allows users to explore the geology, ancient history and wildlife of the area.

Location: Los Alamos

Award: \$19,300.00

Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, Town of Bernalillo, New Mexico Paddlers Coalition

The project will develop river access to the Rio Grande on the northeast side of the Highway 550 bridge allowing boaters, birders, and anglers to access the river. The project will also provide for picnicking and nature study near the river. The 550 River Access will involve construction of 2 boat ramps (upstream and downstream of the bridge), gates and pipe rails to control vehicle access, a parking area, five picnic tables, and redirection of the NMDOT storm water pump station outflow to create a riparian area on the south side of the bridge.

Location: Sandoval County / Town of Bernalillo

Award: \$25,000.00

Mora Creative Council

This project is part of a larger overall MainStreet project and will include mapping out local hiking trails, which will be available on the digital kiosk to be installed within the MainStreet District, which will allow tourists and locals alike to connect to local outdoor spaces.

Location: Mora

Award: \$6,200.00

New Mexico Wildlife Center

This project aims to increase access to their outdoor experiential conservation and wildlife education programs to mobility impaired individuals by installing a paved pathway to replace a section of earthen pathway extending from the visitor center building to the Cactus Garden, Flight Arena, Native Plant Garden, and covered sitting area. This loop is approximately 525 feet in length and is the most heavily used section of visitor pathway.

Location: Espanola

Award: \$25,000.00

Ramah Navajo Chapter Fitness Cultural Nature Trail

Funding will support building a nature trail that allows safe terrain for running, walking, mountain biking and snow tubing in the winter. The trail will have a lower and upper loop, with name/use markers for indigenous plants, two picnic shelters with all-weather tables, rest benches, fitness stations, one group shelter with a cooking grill/fire pit and a parking area. Navajo Nation Unhealthy Food Tax Funds will be leveraged as well to help support the project.

Location: Ramah

Award: \$19,320.00

Rio Grande Return

The project will restore the ecological integrity of a one-half mile stretch of the Santa Fe River Park and Trail by replanting native cottonwood and various willow species, -- vegetation that was nearly entirely washed out in the 100-year flood event of July 2018. This habitat restoration and enhancement project supports several complementary improvement efforts designed to promote the trail as one of three primary urban trail spines serving the Santa Fe area, along with the Rail Trail and Arroyo Chamisa Trail. The parkway provides open space corridors, trails for walking and exercise, a series of parks and public greenspaces, as well as a way for bicycle commuters to get to and from downtown safely.

Location: Santa Fe

Award: \$25,000.00

River Reach Foundation, Inc.

This signage project will promote a network of recreational and economic opportunities along the Animas and San Juan River trails by not only developing them as recreational destinations, but also providing the opportunity to enhance river access and educate users about proper water safety and appropriate skill levels in various areas of the two rivers. The signage will define river information and rules, mapping information that clarifies river miles between access points, areas where egress is and is not permitted, hazard zones and rapids,

length of segments with recreational skill levels, and areas where floating and/or tubing is or is not appropriate.

Location: Farmington

Award: \$19,074.00

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC)

RMYC will work in partnership with the Enchanted Circle Trails Association (ECTA) and local governments to install at least six sign kiosks at public locations located throughout the Enchanted Circle trail system with the goal of helping to better promote the trails to both tourists and local residents to improve public health, recreation, and alternative transportation. The signs will include maps and descriptions of the existing and planned trail network as well as trail etiquette information about sharing the trail with other users, preventing litter, and trespassing.

Location: Taos

Award: \$25,000.00

Silver City MainStreet

The Lion's Park/San Vicente Trail Enhancement Project (LPE) outdoor recreation/trails project will transform an underused and underdeveloped section of the Big Ditch Park and San Vicente Trail system in the heart of downtown Silver City. The LPE will create permanent enhancements to the park including trail improvements, a family-friendly picnic area, nature interpretative signs, native plantings, retaining wall improvements, and fencing to guide foot traffic. The project will enhance resident and visitor experience by creating a beautiful and welcoming space that is easily accessed from historic downtown a block away.

Location: Silver City

Award: \$21,754.00

Southwest New Mexico ACT (swnmACT)

This project will implement and install the Silva Creek Nature TrailHEAD, located on the banks of Silva Creek, between the Silva Creek Botanical Gardens and the Historic Waterworks Site, as an initiation point for the Silva Creek Nature Trail, connecting the international Continental Divide Trail (CDT) to businesses, schools, trails, and open spaces in downtown Silver City. Efforts will include installing an inviting trailhead with seating, water access, and interpretive signage; initiating the Silva Creek "re-wilding" project, removing invasive plants, and installing native, drought-tolerant landscaping; and designing and installing wayfinding signage, connecting trails and green spaces in Silver City, along with cultural/historical/environmental educational information pertinent to Silva Creek, Silver City, and Grant County.

Location: Silver City

Award: \$11,350.00

Tajique Land Grant

The Land Grant-Merced Regional Outdoor Recreation Project is a collaboration of seven land grants (the Tajique, Chililí, Manzano, Town of Tomé, Torreón, Cañón de Carnué and San Antonio de las Huertas Land Grants) located around the Manzano and Sandia Mountains that seek to collectively create a land grant-merced youth conservation crew to work on several projects in seven land grants across four counties. The projects include trail creation and improvement (including trail improvements around a fishing lake, recreation and camping area, and community playground), creating and improving community parks and playgrounds, and building erosion controls at community centers and playgrounds and at a popular spiritual and pilgrimage site.

Location: Tajique

Award: \$25,000.00

Taos Land Trust

This project will improve infrastructure for recreation and outdoor education via an Outdoor Learning Center at Rio Fernando Park, a 20-acre parcel located one mile from the center of the town of Taos. The Outdoor Wash Station and Outdoor Learning Center augment pre-existing land-based agricultural and stewardship programming and will serve hundreds of Taos students every year. These infrastructure improvements will support an increase in formal training and education related to long-term ecological monitoring, food production, distribution, cooking, and creating value-added products. The facilities support the distribution of fresh produce into the community and will provide an educational training opportunity for young agricultural interns who will learn how to take produce from the ground to the market.

Location: Taos

Award: \$25,000.00

The Nature Conservancy

This project will support efforts to increase accessibility and usability to the Santa Fe Canyon Preserve (SFCP), a 525-acre nature preserve that is open to the public and includes a 1.5-mile interpretative loop trail. Years of restoration and conservation work has turned what was once the center of the city's hydroelectric industry into an oasis with wildflowers, willows, deer, and beaver. Funding will support trail improvements to existing trail, building a new ADA compliant pathway, replacing the current 20-year-old illegible interpretative signage with multi-lingual signage that includes English, Spanish and Braille and build a new educational gathering space for students and families.

Location: Santa Fe

Award: \$25,000.00

Zuni Youth Enrichment Project

This project will improve trail appearance, access, connectivity, safety, and visibility of the 60-mile Zuni trail system for all Zuni residents and promote healthy recreation and transportation. The project will include adding a 12th trail, approximately two miles in length to the current trail system, including adding trailhead, mile marker, and safety signage. This new trail will increase the connectivity of multiple trails on the north sided of Zuni Pueblo, giving trail users in this area six miles of connected trails. Additionally, installation of animal proof trash bins at four popular trailhead locations and signage that directs trail users how to properly dispose of their waste and installation of four trail benches along popular trail locations ideal for wildlife viewing will occur.

Location: Zuni Pueblo

Award: \$25,000.00

To stay informed on these and other ORD programs, visit NMOutside.com and sign up for the ORD newsletter.

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Zuni Youth Enrichment Project - Zuni trail system (courtesy of Andrea Pepin)



Photos courtesy of Global Opportunities Unlimited

The New Mexico Economic Development Department's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive.

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