



EDD

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION

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Gov. Lujan Grisham Approves Strategic Funding for Outdoor Recreation

\$10 Million Will Target New Trails and Youth Recreation Programs

Santa Fe, N.M. –Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham signed a bill today that will boost New Mexico’s outdoor recreation economy by investing in local outdoor recreation access with new trails, programming, and infrastructure.

The funding was [allocated to the Outdoor Recreation Division through House Bill 2](#), which was introduced in the December 2021 special session. The bill appropriates \$7 million to the ORD Trails+ infrastructure grant and \$3 million to the ORD Outdoor Equity Fund. The special session was convened to decide on redistricting actions and appropriate federal funds from the federal stimulus law, the American Rescue Plan Act.

In total, House Bill 2 allocates \$43.5 million for conservation and outdoor recreation. It includes \$20 million to the State Parks Division, \$10 million to the Environment Department, and \$3.5 million to the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department for orphan wells.

Gov. Lujan Grisham has identified Outdoor Recreation as a target industry to better diversify and grow the economy and has promised additional state investment. In April 2019, the governor signed a law that created the state’s first Outdoor Recreation Division and New Mexico is now a national leader for outdoor recreation and responsible stewardship.

“Gov. Lujan Grisham has been a champion for building the outdoor recreation economy in New Mexico,” Economic Development Department Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes said. “She knows this is an important industry that can grow jobs in all corners of the state, but especially help rural communities as they identify outdoor recreation businesses and invest in these assets to benefit families and create jobs.”

“This funding is a long-term investment in the state’s people and landscapes,” ORD Director Axie Navas said. “Over the next two years, it will enable the office to increase the reach of the Trails+ grant by a magnitude of 14 and triple the reach of the Outdoor Equity Fund, supporting communities throughout the state.”

The signing today comes a week after Gov. Lujan Grisham [announced another major conservation and outdoor recreation funding initiative: A \\$50-million general obligation bond proposal that would fund the ORD grants with an additional \\$9.5 million](#), if approved by lawmakers and voters. The GO bond initiative will be decided on during the legislative session that begins in January 2022.

In 2019, lawmakers created the Trails+ grant (formerly known as the Special Projects and Infrastructure Fund) to develop outdoor infrastructure in New Mexico communities, buoying the outdoor economy and quality of life for residents. The program supports projects that enhance communities' outdoor recreation opportunities. Trails, river parks, wildlife viewing areas, and more contribute to economic development, prosperity, and wellness. In fall 2021, ORD [awarded over \\$506,000 to 25 organizations to fund outdoor infrastructure projects](#). The grant will reopen in early 2022 with the additional funding.

The Outdoor Equity Fund was created in recognition that access to the outdoors is a basic human right – yet one that has often been denied to many New Mexican youth. As a result, youth from underserved communities haven’t had the chance to experience some of the best of the state: its outside world. In 2020, the [Outdoor Equity Fund opened to applications for the first time, awarding \\$270,000 to 25 applicants](#). On August 19, 2021, the ORD announced the [57 recipients of the second round of the Outdoor Equity Fund, who together will get more than 22,000 young New Mexicans outside](#).

The 2022 Outdoor Equity Fund grant cycle will open later this winter to support transformative outdoor experiences that foster stewardship and respect for lands, waters, and cultural heritage.

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Gallup-based Silver Stallion was awarded a 2020 Outdoor Equity Fund grant to repair bikes on Navajo Nation. To date, they’ve



Hermit’s Peak Watershed Alliance (HPWA) in Las Vegas was awarded an Outdoor Equity Fund grant to take kids birding and

repaired over 500 bikes. (Photo Credit: Shaun Price)



Santa Fe Conservation Trust (SFCT) used a Trails+ grant to build the Chili Line trail in the La Tierra trail system in Santa Fe. (Photo courtesy of SFCT)

fly-fishing along the Gallinas River. (Photo courtesy of HPWA)



SWNMACT was awarded a Trails+ grant to construct a pavilion in Silver City that will serve as an outdoor business incubator and a southern trailhead of the Continental Divide Trail. (Photo courtesy of SWNMACT)

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.

New Mexico Economic Development Department
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