

Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor
Sarah Cottrell Propst, Cabinet Secretary
Todd E. Leahy, JD, PhD, Deputy Cabinet Secretary
Toby Velasquez, State Parks Division Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham dedicates new ADA-compliant trail
at Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park in Carlsbad**
Chevron Corporation donates \$100,000

SANTA FE – Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) State Parks Division proudly celebrated the renovation of the pedestrian trail at Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park in Carlsbad on Wednesday.

The native wildlife zoo exhibits more than 40 animal species and hundreds of species of plants native to the Chihuahuan Desert. The park provides an up-close experience for visitors, with a variety of family-friendly and fun interpretive programs for every season. The Park has beautiful hiking trails, picnic areas, and group facilities.

The ribbon cutting for the \$200,000 project on Wednesday comes just in time for National Trails Day on June 4 and included presentations by the Governor and Ryder Booth, Vice President Chevron-Mid Continent Business Unit, which generously donated \$100,000 toward construction.

“Our state parks are true treasures for New Mexicans and visitors to our great state, and this administration is committed to continuing to invest in them,” said Gov. Lujan Grisham. “I was extremely proud to celebrate the completion of a new trail at Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park, a place that is enjoyed by the community and Carlsbad visitors.”

“Chevron is proud to support the Living Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park, and we’re excited that the renovations to the walking trail from our \$100,000 donation will make the park’s rich educational experiences more accessible to New Mexicans and tourists,” said Ryder Booth, Vice President of Chevron’s Mid-Continent Business Unit. “I’d like to thank the Friends of the Living Desert for their dedicated care for one of southeast New Mexico’s treasures.”

The project brings the trail into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Association of Zoos & Aquariums accreditation standards. The upgrade was accomplished through a public/private partnership between Chevron, the non-profit group Friends of Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park, and the State Parks Division. The State Parks Division matched Chevron's donation with \$96,600 from two different state funding sources to complete the project.

The trail updates at Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park is just the beginning of a major investment by the state for future construction that will include new infrastructure, animal exhibit renovations, and other and upgrades. Funding will come from \$20 million dollars in federal stimulus money from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Infrastructure Bill. This funding will also address deferred maintenance needs and future upgrades to [New Mexico's 34 other State Parks](#).

For information about Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park, including hours of operation and entrance fees, go to <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SPD/>.



(Figure 1: Center L to R) Ryder Booth, Vice President of Chevron's Mid-Continent Business Unit, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, EMNRD Cabinet Secretary Sarah Cottrell Propst, and State Parks Division Director Toby Velasquez, are joined by the Friends of Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park to cut the ribbon for the renovated pedestrian trail. Photo courtesy Michelle Robertson, Carlsbad Local.



(Figure 1) Workers install new handrailing. (Figure 2) Check dams installed across the swale will assist with slowing water runoff and erosion control. Photos courtesy of NM State Parks.



New trail overview.

*The pedestrian trail at Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park is 1.3 miles roundtrip from the visitor center.
Photo courtesy of NM State Parks.*

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