

From: [Sackett, Nora, GOV](#)
To: [Sackett, Nora, GOV](#)
Subject: Gov. Lujan Grisham creates new Outdoor Recreation Division
Date: Tuesday, April 2, 2019 5:35:37 PM
Attachments: [IMG_3393.jpg](#)
[IMG_3376.jpg](#)
[IMG_3466.jpg](#)
[Gov Header transparent.png](#)



Office of the Governor **MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nora Meyers Sackett
nora.sackett@state.nm.us
(505) 690-7313

April 2, 2019

Gov. Lujan Grisham creates new Outdoor Recreation Division

SANTA FE — Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham has signed into law a new initiative to boost the marketing of New Mexico's outdoor recreation industries and create a division in the Economic Development Department to grow outdoor businesses.

The Legislature has appropriated an initial \$200,000 to launch the Outdoor Recreation Division as well an Outdoor Recreation Advisory Committee. The money will be used to hire a director who can move forward with a plan on ways to expand New Mexico's outdoor economy.

"I'll take New Mexico's great outdoors against any in the country," Gov. Lujan Grisham said. "No longer will we sit back and allow other Western states to take the lead in promoting and galvanizing these exciting growth industries. Launching the Outdoor Recreation Division is a first and essential step in prioritizing this segment of our economy and putting more New Mexicans to work."

Outdoor recreation is one of the areas targeted for additional investment by Gov. Lujan Grisham, who is working to diversify New Mexico's employment sectors and economy. Both Utah and Colorado have statewide offices of outdoor recreation.

The bipartisan bill was sponsored by Sen. Jeff Steinborn, Sen. Steven P. Neville, Rep. Nathan Small, Rep. Angelica Rubio, and Rep. D. Wonda Johnson. It passed the Senate 38-0 and the House 52-14.

"Outdoor recreation touches all corners of the state, and it goes beyond partisanship," Sen. Jeff Steinborn said. "There's a high sense of enthusiasm about the opportunity we have to really grow these jobs and teach stewardship to our next generations."

"I want to thank the governor for her leadership and the sponsors and advocates for their work," Rep. Nathan Small said. "This legislation ensures every opportunity to go enjoy our great

outdoors and ensures New Mexicans have jobs connected to our wonderful natural spaces.”

“Every young person in New Mexico should have opportunities to enjoy the natural beauty and public lands that this state has to offer,” said Rep. Angelica Rubio. “As we grow our outdoor economy, we also want to ensure young New Mexicans can thrive in this industry, and we are encouraged by the positive response of foundations and retailers who have pledged contributions to the outdoor equity fund and we invite others to invest in New Mexico’s sustainable future.”

“I want to thank the governor for taking measures to protect indigenous lands and ensure that tribes have a seat at the table,” said Rep. D. Wonda Johnson. “We’ve worked so hard to protect what we leave behind for our children, and this legislation will make sure that we have adventures all over the state while taking care of our sacred sites.”

Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes of the Economic Development Department said the bipartisan support is an indication there are business development opportunities in the industry throughout the state, especially in underserved rural and tribal communities.

“The Outdoor Recreation Division is the initial instrumental step for New Mexico that will allow us to identify and harness economic growth opportunities in some of the most beautiful and rural areas in our state,” said Keyes.

The Tourism Department reports that visitors spent \$846 million on recreation in the state in 2017 and spending supports 13,000 direct jobs. The state also has a higher percentage of visitors who choose outdoor recreation activities.

Game and Fish reports there are 160,000 anglers who fish in New Mexico, spending \$268 million and 87,600 hunters who spend \$345 million on their activity annually.

Surrounded by advocates, business-owners and sponsors, the governor signed the bill Monday at Hyde Memorial State Park in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains above Santa Fe, one of the parks managed by the Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department.

“With 34 State Parks and 5 million visitors per year, we are excited to be a keystone in the outdoor recreation economy of New Mexico,” said EMNRD Cabinet Secretary Sarah Cottrell Propst. “We look forward to expanding current partnerships and cultivating new relationships with federal, state, municipal and private entities to increase opportunities for all New Mexicans.”

The \$200,000 goes to the Economic Development Department to create the division. Duties include increasing outdoor business development, marketing recreational events and opportunities, and recruiting new outdoor businesses to the state.

The bill also appropriates \$100,000 to the Youth Conservation Corps to pay for infrastructure and trail projects. Another \$100,000 was allocated from the junior budget bill by Rep. Rubio of Las Cruces as a grant program so low-income children can participate in outdoor programs.

####