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## **NM MainStreet & Outdoor Recreation Division Partner on “Outdoor Recreation Asset Atlas” Pilot to Identify Outdoor Recreation Projects in MainStreet Districts**

*McKinley, Sierra, San Juan, Colfax, and Lincoln Counties Selected for Initial Study*

**Santa Fe, N.M.** – The New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD) announced the launch of an innovative New Mexico MainStreet (NMMS) and Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) collaboration to connect communities’ downtowns with their natural resources. NMMS and ORD will create the “Outdoor Recreation Asset Atlas” to study five counties; the end result will identify up to five trail creation or improvement projects connected to MainStreet districts. Outdoor recreation development, when connected to MainStreet community downtowns, has great potential to support local, asset-based economic development.

“Growing the outdoor recreation economy is especially important in rural corners of New Mexico and this innovative collaboration will assist these communities as they strive to both protect their quality of life and create jobs,” Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham said.

“The ‘Outdoor Recreation Asset Atlas’ will help the State make informed decisions on priority outdoor recreation projects to benefit the economy,” Economic Development Secretary Alicia J. Keyes said. “By working together, the NM MainStreet program and the Outdoor Recreation Division will identify high-impact, sustainable outdoor recreation projects that will make the highest and most beneficial impact on local MainStreet communities.”

Five counties (McKinley, Sierra, San Juan, Colfax, and Lincoln) were selected for the pilot because they demonstrated at least one of the following characteristics: outdoor recreation supports a significant portion of their current economy, there is at least one active/previous MainStreet community, they need to diversify the economy through outdoor recreation, at least one outdoor recreation project was identified, and/or they coordinate with statewide outdoor recreation development.

“2020 saw record visits to New Mexico’s outdoor recreational resources, creating many opportunities and challenges for local communities,” Outdoor Recreation Director Axie Navas said. “The ‘Outdoor Recreation Asset Atlas’ will help MainStreet districts be prepared to meet those changes head on, as well as benefit from the fast-growing outdoor recreation economy.”

“New Mexico MainStreet’s Urban Design Revitalization Specialist, Amy Bell ([Groundwork Studio](#)), is helping us create the ‘Outdoor Recreation Asset Atlas’ in a GIS platform to house information on each county’s recreational opportunities, infrastructure needs, and capacity to support outdoor recreation development,” New Mexico MainStreet Director Daniel Gutierrez said. “I’m proud that we’re able to partner with Outdoor Recreation on this unique project to better serve our communities.”

NMMS & ORD will provide a final report with project recommendations by the end of June 2021. The report will contain recommendations for up to five trail creation and/or improvement projects with the most beneficial impact in MainStreet communities, a SWOT analysis, gaps in outdoor recreation infrastructure and data, and recommendations for how to expand and improve the atlas in future funding cycles.

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**About New Mexico MainStreet (NMMS):** NMMS develops local capacity to engage people, rebuild places and grow the entrepreneurial, creative & business environment resulting in economically thriving downtowns, greater business & employment opportunities, and a higher quality of life. NMMS was founded in 1984 and currently serves 31 affiliated MainStreet Districts, 12 state-authorized Arts & Cultural Districts, 7 Frontier & Native American Community projects, and 9 Historic Theaters.



Learn more about NMMS's programs at [nmmainstreet.org](http://nmmainstreet.org). NMMS is a program of the New Mexico Economic Development Department, [edd.newmexico.gov](http://edd.newmexico.gov).

**About The New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD):** ORD works to ensure that all New Mexicans gain from the public health, environmental, and economic benefits of sustainable outdoor recreation. Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signed New Mexico's Outdoor Recreation Division into law on April 2, 2019. At the time, ORD joined a dozen other states committed to growing and championing the outdoor recreation economy, which is an immensely powerful engine to grow wealth and job opportunities in our state. Written into the law was the first-ever Outdoor Equity Fund, a grant intended to help disadvantaged youth get outside.



Learn more at [nmoutside.com](http://nmoutside.com).