

EDD

ECONOMIC
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DEPARTMENT

OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION

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ORD Announces Five New Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant Projects

*The Outdoor Recreation Division has now funded 90 Trails+
projects across the state*

SANTA FE, N.M. - Economic Development Department Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes announced today that five communities across New Mexico will receive new outdoor recreation grants through the Outdoor Recreation Trails+ grant program.

The Outdoor Recreation Trails+ grant is a program of New Mexico's Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD), a division of the New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD). ORD works to ensure that all New Mexicans gain from the public health, environmental, and economic benefits of sustainable outdoor recreation. The division was created in 2019 when Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham identified the outdoor recreation industry as a key target sector to diversify the state's economy. Since then, a total of 90 projects and over \$7 million have been awarded under the program.

The outdoor recreation industry employed 28,475 New Mexicans in 2021 and contributed \$2.3 billion to the state GDP, ranking New Mexico 5th in the nation for outdoor recreation employment growth. The 2022 Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) report showed a substantial increase in industry employment of 18.2 percent.

"Everyone deserves access to New Mexico's greatest treasure – our great outdoors. Investing in outdoor access through infrastructure projects is sustainable economic development," EDD Secretary Keyes said. "We are thrilled to announce this round of awards for the New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division Trails+ grant program."

Over \$378,000 in funding will go to five projects and create 33 jobs. Three projects are located in rural areas, one on a Land Grant, and one is based in a smaller urban area.

"This set of grantees spans the broad geography of the state, from the City of Aztec in the far northwest, to the southeast community of Carlsbad, to a project in Albuquerque that highlights the value of acequias by educating trail users of historical and cultural traditions," ORD Outdoor Recreation Planner Carl Colonius said. "These grants include community planning efforts and trail construction, improvements to a shooting range, and motorized access along a scenic stretch of the Pecos River. ORD is excited to work with these new partners as we continue to work to ensure that all New Mexicans feel the benefit of having more active communities, equitable access to public lands, and sustainable economic development."

Outdoor recreation activities that will be supported by these five projects include: acequia irrigation, archery, backpacking, bicycling (road, mountain, and gravel), birdwatching, boating, camping, conservation/restoration/trail work, fishing, flora and fauna identification, gardening, hiking, horseback riding, off-highway vehicles, mushrooming, nature study, paddling (kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding, etc.), rafting, trail running, swimming, and snowsports.

Meet this round of Outdoor Recreation Trails+ awardees:

Center of Excellence

Center of Excellence (CEHMM) seeks to enhance public outdoor recreation and foster greater appreciation for nature within the Carlsbad community through the “Six Mile Improvement Project.” The project will include the improvement of a 1.5-mile stretch of road and the development of eight picnic sites along the Pecos River in the Six Mile public day-use area. This project will not only enhance the accessibility of this area, but it will also improve natural habitat through strategic road closures, allowing for native landscape restoration. Additionally, severe ground erosion issues will be addressed through the construction of erosion-control structures.

Location: Carlsbad, NM

Grant amount \$99,363.44

Center for Socially Sustainable Systems

The Center for Socially Sustainable Systems (CESOSS) Acequia Education Trails Project seeks to increase accessibility, connectivity, safety, and visibility to the Pajarito Acequia and to promote the area as an educational open space through interactive signage. The Acequia Education Trails Project will enhance physical activity, intercultural acequia education related to cultural history, outdoor accessibility, ecological benefits, and natural and cultural connectivity for the Pajarito community.

Location: Albuquerque, NM

Grant amount \$39,000

City of Aztec

The City of Aztec will utilize its funding for a Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan for the Aztec community. This planning document will guide future development of recreational facilities, parks, and trail development over the next twenty years. The City of Aztec recognizes that a robust parks and recreation system is essential to the livability and quality of life of a community.

Location: Aztec, NM

Grant amount \$39,999

San Juan College

San Juan College (SJC) is a two-year higher education institution with 133 acres of open space designated for non-motorized hiking and biking. SJC will design and construct a restroom facility along the bike park and trailhead located on the main campus adjacent to Mesa Verde Elementary School in Farmington. Having restrooms onsite will significantly increase the user experience and support local and regional programming, events, and competitions. The project will support healthy communities in San Juan County while contributing to New Mexico’s outdoor recreation access and economy.

Location: Farmington, NM

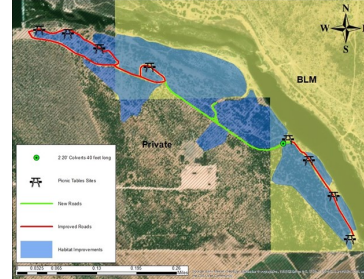
Grant amount \$99,999

Sydney Paul Gordon Shooting Range/Otero County

Sydney Paul Gordon Shooting Range, operated by Otero County through a Special Use Permit on BLM land, will expand the capacity of the shooting range by adding a 100-yard multi-purpose shooting bay for advanced firearm courses and other events open to the public, such as Project Appleseed and the 4-H organization. They will also construct four additional general purpose shooting bays to increase the capability to hold large-scale events and lengthen one of the original rifle bays to better serve the needs of the rifle-shooting community and to promote educational courses and competition matches to the public.

Location: Otero County

Grant amount \$99,999



Photos courtesy of CEHMM: Six-Mile day-use overlook near Carlsbad, example of picnic tables to be added, project map.



Photos courtesy of Sidney Paul Gordon Shooting Range

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The Outdoor Recreation Division aims to increase the overall mental and physical well-being of New Mexicans through the power of outdoor recreation, enabling residents throughout the state to hold jobs that afford them dignity, joy, and stability. We strive to commit to all residents to protect their state's natural heritage - its lands and waters, flora and fauna - and find a future on that path. We aim to parlay this commitment into long-term, sustainable investment, both in infrastructure and education.



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