



# NEW MEXICO

## OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION

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Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Acting Cabinet Secretary Mark Roper  
Director Karina Armijo

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### **ORD Announces 12 New Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grants** *134 projects in New Mexico funded since the program's inception*

**SANTA FE, N.M.** – The Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) of the New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) announces the round 3 Trails+ Grant recipients. Projects awarded will expand equitable access to the outdoors and grow New Mexico’s outdoor recreation economy.

Round 3 awards total \$1,611,743 for 12 projects, bringing in an additional \$1,567,237 in matching funding. Of the awarded projects, 75% are supporting rural and Tribal communities with grants ranging from \$38,700 to the Southern New Mexico Trail Alliance to \$500,000 to the City of Las Cruces.

The Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant program was created in 2019 by Gov. Lujan Grisham and lawmakers to support projects that enhance outdoor recreation opportunities for communities, including trail systems, signage, outdoor classrooms, wildlife viewing areas, and more.

This vibrant sector continues to diversify the state’s economy as New Mexico’s outdoor industry employs over 28,000 people and contributes \$2.4 billion annually to the state GDP, according to 2022 data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

“Since the establishment of Trails+, a total of \$13,243,478 has been awarded to 134 projects in 26 counties across the state,” Acting EDD Cabinet Secretary Mark Roper said. “Trails+ exemplifies what can be achieved with our state’s visionary investment in the outdoor recreation economy and the power behind collaborative partnerships tied to each funded project. Together, we are strengthening our state and enhancing access to New Mexico’s exquisite outdoors.”

Fiscal year 2024 funding remains available for Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant projects and ORD encourages organizations and communities to apply for round 4 by March 31, 2024. Round 5 applications must be submitted by May 31, 2024.

During this year’s legislative session, an additional \$10 million was designated for FY25 Trails+ Grants and ORD wants to see this impressive level of funding reach every community in New Mexico.

“We are thrilled to support these 12 new projects that foster connections between residents and visitors in the great outdoors,” ORD Director Karina Armijo said. “ORD remains steadfast in elevating awareness of the Trails+ Grant program, ensuring its significant funding bolsters outdoor recreation accessibility and fuels economic growth across all corners of New Mexico.”

Funded Trails+ infrastructure projects reflect the variety of ways New Mexicans connect

with the outdoors in each unique county. Trails+ awardees are not only building recreation paths and trail networks but also connections within communities that sustain access to the state's diverse landscapes.

“Our Trails+ Grant provides support for a connector trail between Tortugas Mountain and Soledad Canyon Road multi-use path. This connector was identified in the Doña Ana County Trail Summit as the number one trail priority,” Southern New Mexico Trail Alliance (SNMTA) President Dan Carter said. “It will provide trail connectivity between Las Cruces, New Mexico State University, Organ Mountains Desert Peaks National Monument, and the neighborhoods and public lands in between. SNMTA is very excited to realize the community's vision for a better-connected trail system in Doña Ana County.”

“Receiving the Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant will enable New Mexico Wildlife Center (NMWC) to extend its paved DePonte Family Wildlife Walk pathway and add trailside seating for visitors,” New Mexico Wildlife Center Executive Director Matthew Miller said. “We're extremely excited about this trail addition increasing accessibility to our wildlife education areas and Ambassador Animals to the over 7,000 general public visitors and K-12 students that visit NMWC annually.”

“Keshet Dance Company is thrilled to be a recipient of the Trails+ Grant to support the creation of an outdoor classroom and performance space at the Keshet Center for the Arts in the heart of the Midtown Arts and Entertainment District, located at a main artery access point for the Embudo Channel Trail,” Founder & Artistic Director Shira Greenberg said. “Keshet's work over the past three decades using dance as a catalyst for community connectivity will be truly enhanced by this project, bringing the arts, artists, and audiences into accessible outdoor spaces for learning and engagement within an urban setting.”

Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grants are awarded in two tiers: Tier one for local projects up to \$99,999 and tier two for regional projects up to \$500,000.

FY24 Round 3 Trails+ Grant applications were reviewed and scored by the following individuals. ORD is grateful for the incredible investment of their time and the passion they brought to the process.

- Carl Colonius, ORD Outdoor Recreation Planner
- Jim Glover, endeavOR Director
- Holly Kelley, New Mexico Tourism Department Development Director
- Jen Merino, BLM Recreation, Travel Management, and National Scenic and Historic Trails Lead
- Maria Trevino, National Park Service, Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance, Outdoor Rec Planner
- Glenn Simpson, Bureau of Land Management Branch Chief for Planning, Recreation, and Cultural Resources
- Donna M. Stumpf, ORD Marketing & Business Outreach Coordinator

### **FY24 Round 3 Trails+ Grant Awardees Include:**

**City of Albuquerque, Parks and Recreation Department** (\$130,000, Bernalillo County): City of Albuquerque proposes to expand and improve disc golf facilities by installing a new 20-hole championship disc golf course at the Puerto del Sol Golf Course, rehabilitating and improving Brent Baca Memorial Disc Golf Course, and installing a new 12-hole disc golf course at Westgate Park in an underserved area of the city.

**City of Las Cruces** (\$500,000, Doña Ana County): The City of Las Cruces' project includes the design and construction of a recreational trail that will connect the community of Tortugas and Doña Ana County with the university campus, Las Cruces High School, and other destinations within the metropolitan area.

**City of Socorro** (\$370,020, Socorro County): This project includes constructing the Box-Enterprise trail network, climbing areas, and adjacent camping to benefit local and regional users as well as planning activities related to the revitalization of the USFS Cibola National Forest Magdalena Ranger District trail network and the flagship 27-mile Baldy-

to-Bosque trail, traversing the Magdalenas to Box Canyon and the Socorro Valley.

**Keshet Dance Company** (\$99,000, Bernalillo County): Keshet will create an outdoor classroom and performance space in Midtown Albuquerque within the existing footprint of the Keshet Center for the Arts property, bringing the arts, artists, and audiences into outdoor spaces for learning and engagement.

**Mt. Taylor Winter Quadrathlon** (\$90,000, Cibola County): The Mt. Taylor Quadrathlon will acquire a new snowcat that will groom snow routes to Mt. Taylor. This enhanced grooming capacity will create extended access to the greater Mt. Taylor winter recreation area, allowing the race to continue for many years.

**Nambe Pueblo** (\$99,999, Santa Fe County): Grant funds will focus on improvements to the trail to Nambe Falls to increase safety and ease of use.

**New Mexico Wildlife Center, Inc. (NMWC)** (\$60,000, Santa Fe County): NMWC will build an enhanced ADA pathway to provide outdoor access to a live animal education presentation area, Ambassador Animal enclosures, and a picnic area. Added pathway amenities include picnic tables, seating, and waste receptacles.

**Sandia Nordic Ski Club, Inc. (SNSC)** (\$38,677, Bernalillo County): SNSC designs, constructs, and maintains groomed cross-country ski trails at the top of the Sandia Mountains and provides cross-country ski instruction to the public free of charge. SNSC will improve and expand the network of groomed trails that the club maintains.

**Southern New Mexico Trail Alliance** (\$38,700, Doña Ana County): The project focuses on creating non-motorized trail connectivity between the existing Tortugas Mountain trail network and Soledad Canyon Road multi-use path, and greater connectivity between the City of Las Cruces and the Organ Mountains Desert Peaks National Monument.

**Town of Silver City** (\$85,347, Grant County): The Town of Silver City will design an ADA accessibility ramp within the San Vicente Creek Big Ditch Park, in historic downtown Silver City. The project includes planning and designing small-scale drainage, retaining walls, erosion control, engineering an ADA-compliant ramp to the Big Ditch Trail and Park to improve accessibility from the Main Street Plaza, installing wayfinding signage with historical and environmental information pertinent to San Vicente Creek, and removing invasive species.

**Village of Logan** (\$50,000, Quay County): The Town of Logan will build a walking/jogging path to serve as a connecting point between the lake and the town area, benefiting both residents and the visiting population and offering an additional community-accessible option.

**Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary** (\$50,000, McKinley County): Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary's project focuses on campground improvements including the construction of RV Hookups, yurts, and other basic amenities that expand camping access to those with RVs and without tents.

To begin your Trails+ Grant conversation, email ORD Outdoor Recreation Planner Carl Colonius at [carl.colonius@edd.nm.gov](mailto:carl.colonius@edd.nm.gov) or call 505-570-7846 and visit [NMOutside.com](http://NMOutside.com) for a complete grant program guide (in English and Spanish).

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*The mission of the Outdoor Recreation Division, a division of the New Mexico Economic Development Department, is to increase equitable access to the outdoors for all New Mexicans, ensuring healthy outcomes, environmental stewardship, and economic prosperity.*

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