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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 8, 2025

EDD awards \$2.3 million to improve outdoor access across NM

SANTA FE — Today, the New Mexico Economic Development Department announced \$2.3 million in grants were awarded to improve access to the outdoors and boost economic opportunity across 14 counties.

EDD's Outdoor Recreation Division is closing out FY25 with a fourth and final round of Trails+ Grant funding that will create an estimated 169 jobs and support a diverse range of projects statewide.

"These projects will stimulate our outdoor economy and enhance our quality of life through expanded access to nature," EDD Cabinet Secretary **Rob Black** said. "From public safety and ADA trail enhancements to fire-damaged trail restoration, this funding will benefit communities in every corner of the state."

The Trails+ Grant enhances outdoor access while promoting stewardship of New Mexico's natural resources. Since its inception in 2019, the program has invested \$28.7 million across 30 counties and 11 Tribal communities.

The awardees are:

- **Arroyo Seco Community Center** in Taos County was awarded \$88,515. The project will build an ADA-accessible fitness and nature trail with native plants and exercise stations around the community center, as well as educational signage to highlight local botany and pollinators.
- **Boy Scouts of America (dba Scouting America), Philmont Scout Ranch** in Colfax County was awarded \$99,999. This project will restore and enhance the footpath built for the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe Trail, connecting the Philmont Scout Ranch and Museum to Old Town Cimarron.
- **Cavern City Trail Keepers** in Eddy County was awarded \$36,924. The group will add two new trailheads, upgrade two existing trailheads, and provide trail signage, including wayfinding signs, to be installed along nearby highways on the La Cueva Ridge Trail.
- **City of Albuquerque, Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency** in Bernalillo County was awarded \$500,000. The Central Crossing project will replace unsafe tunnels with a wide, at-grade crossing for pedestrians and cyclists, and connect the planned seven-mile rail trail to nearby recreation amenities.
- **City of Clovis** in Curry County was awarded \$500,000. The city will construct a 140-space parking area at Ned Houk Park, add drainage infrastructure, and improve signage and access near the trailhead.
- **Global Opportunities Unlimited** in Colfax and Taos Counties was awarded \$97,000. They will design a multi-use trail and develop infrastructure to support trail connectivity across Questa, Red River, Eagle Nest, and Angel Fire, especially at Eagle Nest Lake State Park.
- **Jemez Enterprises** in Rio Arriba County was awarded \$238,394. They will develop the Jemez Adventure Park with a mountain bike and hiking trail, disc golf course, and a family pavilion to boost access to outdoor recreation opportunities.

- **Las Placitas Presbyterian Church** in Sandoval County was awarded \$99,999. The church will collaborate with the community and the County Sheriff's Office to design and build a rerouted segment of the Hike and Bike Trail on NM165 to improve user safety.
- **Los Senderos de Guadalupe** in Guadalupe County was awarded \$99,999. This group will plan, design, and begin construction on a mountain bike jump/skills park as part of the Santa Rosa trail system, positioning the town as a biking destination.
- **Nuestra Tierra Conservation Project** in Doña Ana County was awarded \$75,000. The project will protect the La Mancha Wetlands ecosystem, restore trails, enhance public access to the wetlands, and provide community programs focused on conservation education.
- **Otero County, Sidney Paul Gordon Shooting Range** was awarded \$99,999. Upgrades to the shooting range include ADA firing lines, ADA facility improvements, and shaded outdoor classrooms.
- **San Isidro Farm, Southwest Indian Foundation**, in McKinley County was awarded \$45,667. They will create a master plan for future outdoor recreation at the farm, including publicly accessible trails, a campground, and a mountain bike park.
- **Santa Fe Botanical Garden** in Santa Fe County was awarded \$99,999. Funding supports the creation of a children's discovery garden and outdoor learning pod to provide immersive nature experiences and programs for youth.
- **Taos Mountain Bike Association** in Taos County was awarded \$94,800. In partnership with the BLM Taos Field Office and the Carson National Forest, Phase 2 will improve access to the Horsethief Mesa Trailhead by stabilizing existing roads, addressing drainage and grade issues, and providing access to develop a full-service trailhead.
- **Wild Arizona** in Catron and Grant Counties was awarded \$99,892. This project will restore key sections of the Gila National Forest Trail System affected by flood and fire damage and improve connectivity and access to over 100 miles of the Gila Centennial Trail and over 50 miles of connector trails.

"The Jemez Adventure Park will give Tribal members, New Mexico residents, and tourists access to a safe place to enjoy new outdoor activities, increase healthy habits, and will create economic opportunities," **Chaz Rose** of Jemez Enterprises said.

Elias Quin of Los Senderos de Guadalupe expects the Trails+ project to play a major role in helping to revitalize Santa Rosa.

"Being right off of I-40, this bike park will draw countless cyclists who will eat, stay, spend money, and present the town with new business opportunities," Quin said."

"Funding will support critical safety and accessibility improvements to Central Crossing in Albuquerque and better connect downtown communities to the future Rail Trail and surrounding recreational opportunities," **Jennifer Jackson** of the City of Albuquerque Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency explained.

The first round of FY26 Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant applications will open on **July 1, 2025**, with \$11.6 million in funding. Interested applicants can visit www.NMOutside.com for more information.

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Backcountry Horsemen Gila Chapter volunteer works to restore a fire damaged trail.



Volunteers plant native species at Insights Science Discovery's DinoTracks in Sunland Park.

EDD's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive. EDD's programs contribute directly to this mission by training our workforce, providing infrastructure that supports business growth, and helping every community create a thriving economy.

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