

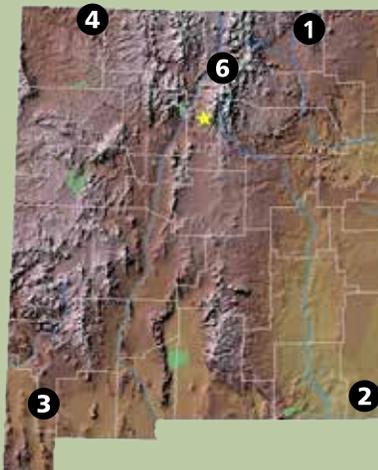


New Mexico News



San Juan River in New Mexico. Photo: Marcel Bieg

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2014



■ NPS Unit
★ State Capital

CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Colfax County Trails, Open Space and Rec.
Grow Raton! Beautification and Pride Task Force
2. Jal Walking Trail
City of Jal
3. Silver City NM La Cienega Park Connectivity
Gila Conservation Education Center
4. Four Corners Paddle Trails
San Juan County
5. Mescalero Apache Rio Tularosa Discovery Trail
Sovereign Nations Service Corps
6. Taos Trails del Norte
Del Norte Trail Coalition

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

Recent Successes

Tularosa Creek Discovery Trail

Increasing physical activity among adults, teens, and children at the Mescalero Apache Indian Reservation is the principle goal of the Tribe's Community Transformation Grant. A number of initiatives are underway including healthy eating campaigns and improving walkability within the dispersed residential neighborhoods and the Mescalero Village area.

One of the most important projects is expanding on a trail idea created by the Sovereign Nations Service Corps (AmeriCorps and tribal members) and managed by the Mescalero Fish Hatchery. The initial Headstart Trail provided a safe way for Headstart School students to take fieldtrips to the Fish Hatchery. The success of that project has inspired other tribal members to extend the trail to the skatepark, tribal store, and the Mescalero Community Center.

In preparing a stakeholder working group to consider community health in trail design, the NPS introduced the Parks, Trails, and Health Workbook. This workbook guided the partners through a process whereby they better understood the critical health issues facing the Mescalero Apache community, and learned about trail design that could address physical, social, and psychological well-being.

In addition, the Sovereign Nations Service Corps, along with community members completed Rural Active Living Assessments and Physical Activity Resource Assessments to determine the condition of sidewalks, paths, parks, and playgrounds in and near Mescalero Village.

Current Projects

1. Colfax County/Raton Trails, Open Space, and Recreation

Project Partner: Grow Raton!
Beautification and Pride Task Force
NPS Contact: Hugh Osborne
Location: Colfax County
Congressional District: NM - 3

Project Goal

Include approximately three miles of non-motorized trail in Climax Canyon, a natural-setting park on the edge of Raton. Later phases will include about 2 miles of connecting trails in town, and a 7-mile trail connection to Sugarite Canyon State Park.

NPS Role

Assist with public involvement activities and the planning process. Provide technical assistance in the planning, design, and construction of trails and other support facilities.

2. Jal Walking Trail

Project Partner: City of Jal
NPS Contact: Attila Bality
Location: Southeast corner of New Mexico (3-hour drive from Roswell)
Congressional District: NM - 2

Project Goal

Develop a two-mile walking path connection between the municipal golf course and Jal Lake park. A one half-mile section of the trail will become a linear park with a fitness and natural play area theme. Improve three miles of sidewalks for prescription trails walking loops.

NPS Role

Assist the Jal Health Clinic in exploring healthy recreation opportunities to address local health challenges and facilitate community dialogue for agreement on trail design and construction.



NPS and Truth or Consequences city leaders dedicate the Healing Waters Trail. Photo: Sherry Fletcher

3. Silver City New Mexico La Cienega Park Connectivity

Project Partner: Gila Conservation Education Center
NPS Contact: Cate Bradley
Location: Silver City
Congressional District: NM - 2

Project Goal

Community partners intend to identify a 7-mile trail corridor to link La Cienega Park greenway in the Town of Silver City with Gila National Forest land and a connector trail to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST). Project partners include local conservation and trails organizations, Western New Mexico University, community health staff, and elementary school educators to promote physical activity, involve youth in the planning process, and encourage long-term stewardship values for outdoor recreation.

NPS Role

Assist in convening partners to establish an action agenda and help build the organizational capacity needed to create the connecting trail from the Town of Silver City, and brand Silver City as a gateway community to the CDNST.

4. Four Corners Paddle Trails

Project Partner: San Juan County
NPS Contact: Attila Bality
Location: Four Corners Region
Congressional District: NM - 3

Project Goal

Increased river recreation opportunities on 80 miles of the Animas and San Juan Rivers in Colorado and New Mexico. Cooperative management of river access areas, user information, and education that could lead towards a National Water Trail designation.

Current Projects

NPS Role

Support the Four Corners Paddle Trails working committee in its development of a river recreation access and management plan that follows the best management practices of National Water Trails. Provide facilitation skills, develop civic engagement strategies, and provide technical expertise for river recreation planning.

5. Mescalero Apache Rio Tularosa Discovery Trail

Project Partner: Sovereign Nations Service Corps

NPS Contact: Attila Bality

Location: Mescalero Apache Reservation

Congressional District: NM - 2

Project Goal

Develop a one-mile discovery trail that connects several important community destinations and aims to increase physical activity levels among tribal residents. An additional 5 miles of sidewalks and walking paths will see improvements in and around the Mescalero village center.

NPS Role

Support the Community Transformation Grant Coordinator in the final development of the Rio Tularosa Discovery Trail Plan and help secure Tribal Council approval for implementation. Provide trail construction training for AmeriCorps members in spring 2014.



Sovereign Nations Service Corps members install concrete blanket for demonstration trail.
Photo: Andrew Moser

6. Taos Trails del Norte

Project Partner: Del Norte Trail Coalition

NPS Contact: Attila Bality

Location: Taos County

Congressional District: NM - 3

Project Goal

Support a newly formed Del Norte Trail Coalition that addresses the lack of safe and accessible bike paths in Taos. The highest priorities are construction of a 10-mile Arroyo Seco to Taos multi-use path and construction of the 1.5-mile Kit Carson to Fred Baca park

connector trail along the Rio Fernando. Some key partners include Taos Pueblo, NM Department of Transportation, Taos County and the Town of Taos.

NPS Role

Support the Del Norte Trail Coalition through the development of civic engagement strategies that broaden the coalition's reach. Provide technical expertise in the areas of project mapping and trail layout and design.

“The NPS has provided guidance, support and great knowledge to our project in Mescalero. Their knowledge of trails and health opportunities has really strengthened the ideas of our Tularosa Creek Discovery Trail.”

- Aimee Bennett, Health Promotions Specialist, New Mexico Department of Health

We're Here For You!

Could your project benefit
from NPS Staff Assistance?
Contact us to find out.



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2013 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,357 Miles of Trail Developed

736 Miles of River Conserved

20,270 Acres of Open Space and
Parkland Protected

Find more information online
at
www.nps.gov/rtca



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Recent Successes cont.

In addition to extensive resource assessment work, the Sovereign Nations Service Corps has reached out to the community through focus groups, surveys, and interviews to get local perspectives on the trail idea. Tori Marden, Community Transformation Grant Coordinator and a Mescalero native, considers it a success that elderly tribal members and young people have given her ideas and positive comments about the proposed trail. One idea is to have natural play areas along the trail such as rocks for climbing, logs that children can crawl through, and teepee frames. "People really bought into the idea because of our culture and how as young kids those were things we played with when there were no playgrounds," she said.

Using local talent and materials to construct the Tularosa Creek Discovery Trail, the Mescalero Apache envisions multiple generations using the trail, where there will be designated fishing areas, natural playscapes for children and shady oases for adults, connecting people to nature and to each other.

Connecting National Historic Trails to Parks

A Connect Trails to Parks grant was awarded to Aztec Ruins National Monument to help the City of Aztec and the National Park Service tell the story of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail along the planned North Main Trail. The North Main Trail, scheduled for construction this year, connects the Aztec Downtown National Historic District to Aztec Ruins National Monument.

New Mexico Outdoors Champions

New Mexico Outdoors Coalition recognized 12 "Engaged Citizens" who have devoted time and energy to connecting people with the outdoors. The following individuals were recognized for their enduring impact and scope of accomplishments: *John Olivas* for public engagement in conservation - nominated by the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance; *Roberta Salazar* for environmental education efforts and advocacy for the new Rio Grande del Norte National Monument - nominated by the Sierra Club; *Gila River Festival community volunteers* for 10 years of conducting an annual outdoors conservation and education event - nominated by the Gila River Festival organization; *Verne Huser* for lifetime achievement in outdoors leadership and conservation education and advocacy - nominated by the New Mexico Outdoors Coalition.

Healing Waters Trail Ribbon Cutting

On June 8, 2013, the Healing Waters Trail partners held a reception and ceremony at the Geronimo Springs Museum in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico thanking all the volunteers, sponsors, and partners who made the new Healing Waters Trail a reality. The 2.5-mile trail connects the town's Hot Springs District, the Rio Grande, wetlands, and Veterans Memorial Park.

ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. Program staff provide technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects they initiate.