



# 25<sup>TH</sup> RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION MEETING

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**NEW MEXICO**  
OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION



Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department



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# COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA – 04/10/2026

## MEETING INFORMATION

Friday, April 10, 9AM to 12PM in the Doña Ana County Commission Chambers  
845 N Motel Blvd, Las Cruces, NM 88007.

## MICROSOFT TEAMS CONFERENCING OPTION:

Link to join the meeting on-line: <http://bit.ly/3MVJzXe>

Meeting number (access code): 258 762 905 021 6 / Meeting password: vv78uk7U

## CALL IN OPTION:

If you would like to attend the meeting by telephone, please call: +1 888-506-1357 Toll Free.  
When prompted, dial event number: 703772697#

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

During the meeting, please mute yourself unless you would like to speak. This will minimize background noise.

## AGENDA:

1. Call to Order
  2. Roll Call
  3. Approval of Agenda
  4. Approval of Minutes from the 24th Río Grande Trail Commission meeting
    - > [Attachment A](#)
  5. Public Comment
  6. New Business
    - a. [Updates From the Chair \(Chair Bajema\)](#)
    - b. [Subcommittee Reports](#)
      - i. [Tribal Subcommittee \(Commissioner Chacón\)](#)
        1. Discussion: Combining the Tribal and Legislative Subcommittees
        2. Review: New language for the Río Grande Trail Website
      - ii. [Alignment Subcommittee \(Commissioner Carter\)](#)
        1. [New Trail Segment Considerations](#)
          - a. [Santa Fe Taos Connection, Update](#)
            - i. [Survey results and next steps](#)  
> [Attachments B, C](#)
        2. [Trail Segment Designation](#)
          - a. [Sunland Park River Trail](#)  
> [Attachments D, E](#)
          - b. [Río Grande Riverpark Trail; El Paso, TX](#)  
> [Attachments F, G](#)
    - c. [Bosque/Tijeras Canyon Connection](#)  
> [Attachments H, I](#)
  3. [Other Trail Segment Updates, Doña Ana County](#)
    - a. [IBWC Levee Roads](#)  
> [Attachments J, K](#)
    - b. [Southern Gateway \(Dinotracks\)](#)  
> [Attachments L, M](#)
    - c. [Village of Hatch Campground](#)
    - d. [Paso del Norte Trail: Implementation plans](#)  
> [Attachment N](#)
  - iii. [Legislative Subcommittee \(Commissioner Davidson\)](#)
    1. [2026 Legislative Session update](#)
  - iv. [Non-Profit Subcommittee \(Chair Bajema\)](#)
    1. [Non-profit subcontractor progress report \(Fundraising for the Future\)](#)  
> [Attachments O, P, Q](#)
    2. [Program Management Plan: Draft Review](#)  
> [Attachment R](#)
- c. [Miscellaneous](#)
7. [Announcement of Next Meetings](#)
  - a. [Fri, September 18, 2026 – Socorro](#)
8. Public Comment
9. Adjournment



# ATTACHMENT A: MEETING MINUTES - JANUARY 16TH, 2026

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## **24<sup>th</sup> Rio Grande Trail Commission Meeting – Minutes**

**Friday, January 16, 2025 // 9 AM – 12 PM**

**Vincent E. Griego Council Chambers  
1 Civic Plaza NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102**

### **Commissioners Present, In-Person:**

- Ben Bajema – OFS Senior Advisor, EMNRD (Chair)
- Karina Armijo – Outdoor Recreation Division Director, EDD
- Michael Chacón – Tribal Environmental Justice Specialist, IAD
- Dan Carter – Continental Divide Trail, Trail Mgmt.
- Shannon Glendenning – Traffic Safety Division Director, DOT
- Tucker Davidson – Audubon Society, Bird Eco
- Toby Velasquez – SPD Division Director, SPD
- Myron Temchin – Temchin Environmental Planning, Public 2

### **Commissioners Present, Online:**

- Steve Harris – Rio Grande Restoration, River Eco
- Howard Gross – HG Conservation Solutions, Public 1

### **Commissioners Absent:**

- Shanna Sasser – Deputy Cabinet Secretary, TD

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Bajema called the meeting to order.

#### **2. Roll Call**

All Commissioners introduced themselves.

#### **3. Approval of Agenda**

**Chair Bajema requested a motion to approve the agenda.**

Commissioner Davidson made a motion.

Commissioner Velasquez seconded the motion.

### **Roll Call Vote:**

Commissioner Velasquez – YES; Commissioner Davidson – YES; Commissioner Glendenning – YES; Commissioner Carter – YES; Commissioner Chacón – YES; Chair Bajema – YES; Commissioner Armijo – YES; Commissioner Temchin – YES; Commissioner Harris – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

#### **4. Approval of Minutes from the 23rd Rio Grande Trail Commission meeting**

**Chair Bajema requested a motion to approve the minutes from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Rio Grande Trail Commission Meeting.**

Commissioner Velasquez made a motion.

Commissioner Chacón seconded the motion.

##### **Roll Call Vote:**

Commissioner Velasquez – YES; Commissioner Davidson – YES; Commissioner Glendenning – YES; Commissioner Carter – YES; Commissioner Chacón – YES; Chair Bajema – YES; Commissioner Armijo – YES; Commissioner Temchin – YES; Commissioner Harris – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

#### **5. Public Comment**

**Chris Marsh:** I am Vice Chair of the Rio Rancho Parks and Recreation Commission, and I have attended roughly half of the Rio Grande Trail Commission Meetings but have missed the last few, as I was unaware of them.

**Chair Bajema:** Do you have any suggestions on how we might improve our public outreach outside of our current means?

**Chris Marsh:** I was on the email list before, and I think that list got lost somehow.

**Kerry Wood:** I work for the regional office of the US Forest Service. I would love to work with the Commission to implement more comprehensive and robust strategies for providing advanced notice of these Rio Grande Trail Commission Meetings to my agency. The Rio Grande Trail could potentially affect three National Forests, and the US Forest Service would like to be looped into the discussion better. Because of current USDA staffing issues, earlier notice given to the Forest Service of these meetings would be better.

#### **6. New Business**

##### ***a. Updates From the Chair (Chair Bajema)***

***i. Review and approval of the FY27 Rio Grande Trail Commission  
Special Appropriation Recommendation***

**Summary:**

- For Fiscal Year 2026, the Rio Grande Trail Commission has a budget of \$225,000. The recommendation for the upcoming fiscal year (2027), starting July 1 of 2026, is \$280,000, an increase of \$55,000.
- Chair Bajema requests that the commission discuss the priority order and dollar amounts listed on the budget.
- The four budget categories are as follows: 1. NPO Staffing Contract (\$150K), 2. Ground Truthing and Action Cost Estimate Plan (Amount left blank), 3. RGTC Meeting Administration (\$70K), 4. Maintenance of Existing Sections (\$60K).

**Commissioner Temchin:** Now that the FY26 Program Management Plan has been completed, could we take the existing plan and, from it, create an FY27 plan that could be attached to the budget sheet?

**Chair Bajema:** My concern with that is the timeline. The Legislative Session starts next Tuesday, so the sooner we can get this budget into the hands of appropriators, the better. I'm not sure the appropriators need that narrative either.

**Commissioner Temchin:** I could deliver a draft to you this Saturday for you to review on Sunday, then if questions about the justification of the special appropriation come up, you could rely on the FY27 Program Management Plan to answer them.

**Chair Bajema:** That would be great, thank you.

**Commissioner Glendenning:** Have we identified existing sections of trail for maintenance, or are they to be determined as we designate them and incorporate them into the State Trails system?

**Chair Bajema:** We have an idea of what sections we might want to use this funding to maintain, but we are intentionally omitting those specifics in this budget. We don't want it to seem as if we are trying to add or subtract funds to or from places that legislators have not appropriated those funds to.

**Commissioner Carter:** I will be discussing maintenance and how we are identifying segments for maintenance in the alignment subcommittee later in this meeting. Also, you mentioned that the contract hasn't been signed yet. Does that delay impact our timeline?

**Chair Bajema:** Potentially. We are two weeks behind due to administrative challenges on the contracting side of the NPO, but we did build a cushion into the RFP timeline for the

work that's taking place in fiscal year 26. So, I think we are doing okay as far as timing is concerned, but our built-in cushion is diminishing.

**Commissioner Velasquez:** The NPO will be staffed by means of a temporary contract. These contracts will be for specific periods of time and for specific scopes of work. The NPO will act as a force multiplier for the commission, and I think it is wise that we are investing the majority of our budget into staffing it. Additionally, I believe the ground truthing section of this budget is also very important. If we want to see progress in this trail, we need to pivot away from focusing on areas that have been challenging to try to build a trail in. Overall, I believe that \$280,000 is a modest, reasonable, and appropriate increase.

**Chair Bajema:** I would like to add that we are on track to spend the entirety of our \$225,000 for this year, which demonstrates that we can appropriately spend the money appropriated for us and that we will be able to spend the \$280,000 as well.

**Commissioner Armijo:** How much of this year's budget is going to the nonprofit contractor?

**Chair Bajema:** \$100,000

**Carl Colonius:** ORD has had a recurring contract for \$100,000 with Pland Collaborative for the last four years. Due to procurement rules, ORD is required to put out a new RFP or sole-source procurement. ORD is considering providing that \$100,000 to the nonprofit and introducing the idea of contracting with Pland to the nonprofit. A nonprofit is not subject to the same procurement rules as the government is, so there is more flexibility in this. If ORD were to craft a new RFP, advertise for the scope of work, select a contractor, and get them under contract, a lot of time would be lost. In the interest of efficiency, utilizing the functionality of the new nonprofit partner as a mechanism to put money into play quickly and effectively is ideal.

**Commissioner Temchin:** The funding to support our alignment subcommittee is crucial.

**Chair Bajema requested a motion to approve the FY27 Rio Grande Trail Special Appropriation Recommendation.**

Commissioner Velasquez made a motion.

Commissioner Temchin seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Commissioner Velasquez – YES; Commissioner Davidson – YES; Commissioner Glendenning – YES; Commissioner Carter – YES; Commissioner Chacón – YES; Chair Bajema – YES; Commissioner Armijo – YES; Commissioner Temchin – YES; Commissioner Harris – YES; Commissioner Gross – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

**b. Subcommittee Reports**

**i. Tribal Subcommittee** (Commissioner Chacón)

**Summary:**

- The Tribal subcommittee has had a hard time making progress as the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department has been lacking capacity. However, they have recently filled their Tribal Relations Specialist position, and we hope to get them extremely involved with reaching out to Pueblos, Nations, and Tribes, particularly those along the Rio Grande, on behalf of the Rio Grande Trail.

**ii. Alignment Subcommittee** (Commissioner Carter)

**Summary:**

- Alignment subcommittee meetings have continued to occur every two weeks.
- The Alignment subcommittee has continued to look at sections of trail that can be considered “low-hanging fruit”, mostly in the northern part of the state, to build on the momentum of the recent designations in the Taos area.
- Efforts have also concentrated on the Santa Fe to Taos alignment, which will be discussed later. We have put together three informed conceptual alignments from our conversations with stakeholders and landowners in that area, like the BLM.
- The subcommittee has also been discussing implementation of the Rio Grande Trail Signage Plan and how we might be able to use it to improve existing segments. This will also be discussed in detail later. Identifying segments for maintenance has also been a priority, with some of the most obvious candidates being sections of trails through State Parks. Commissioner Velasquez has helped guide that conversation and identify the needs of specific parks.
- Now that a lot of the easiest segments of trail to designate have been designated, we are working towards a system of prioritization that will help us pick sections of trail for new development.
- Some of our Southern partner cities (Las Cruces and Truth or Consequences) have been improving and maintaining existing segments of the Rio Grande Trail, which we are very grateful for.

**1. New Trail Segment Considerations** (Dan Majewski)

**a. Santa Fe Taos Connection, Update**

**Summary:**

- We have put together three conceptual alignments from Santa Fe County to Taos County, each starting at the Santa Fe County line on NM-14 and ending at the Taos Gorge Bridge.
- The Alignment subcommittee has had productive targeted meetings with stakeholders, including Santa Fe County, BLM, and the US Forest Service.
- All alignment options follow NM-14 from the Santa Fe County line to Los Cerillos. From there, the western alignment utilizes some BLM and USFS land and cuts through the Caja del Rio before meeting with the Santa Fe River Trail. The central alignment (the 2018 Rio Grande Trail Master Plan alignment) continues north/south on NM-14 before connecting to the Santa Fe River Trail. And the eastern alignment utilizes highway rights-of-way to connect to the Santa Fe Rail Trail, which then connects to the Santa Fe River Trail at a later point than the other alignments.
- North of Santa Fe, the alignments take three different paths again. The west alignment attempts to stay as close to the Rio Grande as possible and takes a lower route through the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo wilderness area. The west alignment then utilizes BLM and State Trust lands to work its way north of Cordova towards the Rio Grande Gorge, where it meets up with the already designated West Rim Trail. The central and east alignments take higher elevation trails through the Sangre de Cristo mountains, further from the Rio Grande itself. The central alignment is very similar to the Plaza-to-Plaza concept trail, while the east alignment takes a slightly lower elevation and a more direct route northward. Both the central and eastern alignments pass through Taos and utilize right of way on US-64 to take them to the Taos Gorge Bridge, where they meet up with designated sections of the Rio Grande Trail.
- The most refined route is the western alignment, which has been informed by the most conversations, particularly with the BLM.

**Commissioner Carter:** Are there future opportunities for public input on these routes?

**Dan Majewski:** We have had a lot of targeted stakeholder meetings up to this point, and we are going to continue to target stakeholders that we have not been able to engage for future meetings, specifically tribal stakeholders. We've also put together a page on the Rio Grande Trail website that is going to host the interactive map of these alignment options and a survey about them that will be open to the public. This page will be live sometime soon after this commission meeting, and the survey will be advertised in our newsletter.

**Chair Bajema:** Which of these routes has the least amount of highway interaction?

**Dan Majewski:** We will get those numbers to inform future discussions.

**Commissioner Gross:** For alignment discussions around the Caja del Rio area, it is imperative that we engage the Caja Del Rio Coalition, which is comprised of a very diverse community, including the traditional communities that abut the Caja and representatives from tribally led NGOs. The coalition has reached out to me asking to be included in discussions about trail alignment through that area.

**Commissioner Temchin:** The community of Placitas is a very united community and would like to know when the commission is going to discuss the old proposed alignment of the Rio Grande Trail, which goes east from Bernalillo on NM-165 through Placitas and to the Turquoise Trail. There are a lot of things going on around that highway right now.

**Commissioner Carter:** That alignment along NM-165 to the Turquoise Trail is one that is harder to tackle. As the commission begins to run out of trail segments that are easy to designate, conversations about areas like that, which are harder to designate, will begin to ramp up.

**Commissioner Temchin:** The community around Placitas just wants to know if they're in the queue for trail consideration or not. I will send a contact list to Pland Collaborative so that those voices can be integrated into our outreach and discussions.

**Dan Majewski:** Adding those contacts to our list would be a great first step. We can cover this topic now, even though we had planned to discuss it later in the agenda. We have had recent meetings about connecting some state trust and BLM land from NM-14 west to Placitas. We are staying very involved with all the nonprofit groups that are responsible for trail development in the East Mountains. In terms of phasing, we're really focused on the Santa Fe to Taos connection currently. Our thinking is that once we've agreed on that alignment, the next step would be to connect it to Albuquerque.

**Commissioner Temchin:** Then I believe the commission should state our plan to those East Mountain communities and keep them apprised of our plan.

## **b. Realignment proposal**

### **i. Albuquerque: Bosque Trail-Tijeras Canyon Connection**

#### **Summary:**

- We are proposing a realignment of the proposed trail through Albuquerque. The 2018 master plan alignment through the city was comprised primarily of Lead, Coal, and Zuni. Those streets are not ideal candidates for a through trail.
- The Bosque Trail through Albuquerque is an isolated segment, as it is surrounded by Tribal lands on both the north and south ends. We've had meetings with Sandia Pueblo, Santa Ana, Pueblo, San Felipe Pueblo, and many

other Pueblos along the Rio Grande corridor, and they've expressed that there is a lot of distrust in their communities due to the Rio Grande Trail's lack of consideration for them in the past. We are going to continue working to engage those tribes, but as it stands right now, there is no near-term solution where the trail could be allowed to go along the river north and south of Albuquerque.

- The new proposed alignment is comprised mostly of multi-use trails that are separated from the roadway and non-motorized. The new alignment utilizes the in-development Albuquerque Rail Trail, the Embudo Arroyo Trail, and the multi-use trail along Tramway Blvd.
- We have had several meetings with the City of Albuquerque Parks and Recreation and Municipal Development departments, and as of now, there is some opposition to this proposal. The city is opposed not to the specific new route proposal, but to any Rio Grande Trail alignment through the city of Albuquerque, which steers the trail away from the river. For that reason, the city has not endorsed this proposal.

**Commissioner Carter:** It is worth pointing out that even though this proposal does take the Rio Grande Trail away from the river, there are a lot of opportunities that are unlocked with such an alignment. There is a lot of value in connecting the Rio Grande Trail to the Rail Trail, to the City of Albuquerque, and to the Sandia Mountains and its trail systems. Connecting the river trail to its watershed mountains is notable.

**Chair Bajema:** Are we to understand that this new proposed alignment through Albuquerque would dramatically improve user experience and safety along the trail compared to the old 2018 alignment?

**Dan Majewski:** That is correct. And our partners at the City of Albuquerque agreed that our new proposal is an improvement to the old one. They are just opposed to supporting a Rio Grande Trail that is not along the Rio Grande.

**Chair Bajema:** Are we to understand that those from the government of the City of Albuquerque who oppose this alignment are different from the Bernalillo County Commission, who approve of it?

**Dan Majewski:** There is a lack of administrative support. The Bosque Trail, for example, was approved by both the Albuquerque City Council and the Bernalillo County Commission. This realignment would require the same support from the Albuquerque City Council.

**Chair Bajema:** To clarify, even if the Rio Grande Trail Commission approves this realignment, it may not be designated due to the Albuquerque City Council's opposition to it.

**Dan Majewski:** That is correct.

**Commissioner Temchin:** Adjacency to attractions to our trail is very important. This proposed alignment brings the Rio Grande Trail two miles closer to one of Albuquerque's biggest attractions: the tram.

**Commissioner Gross:** What are the opportunities for further dialogue with the partners you've been working with at the City of Albuquerque, who would prefer to see the alignment stay along the river?

**Dan Majewski:** We don't have letters of support today, but we are going to continue trying to get them. There is an opportunity for the alignment subcommittee to meet with the administration that opposes our proposal, and we are going to pursue that.

## **2. Trail Segment Designation**

### **a. NM-14: Tijeras to San Antonito**

#### **Summary:**

- The commission has discussed at length the idea of using parts of NM-14 to begin the connection from Albuquerque to Santa Fe. This section from Tijeras to San Antonito is comprised of a newly rebuilt and repaved multi-use trail.
- This alignment is along an NMDOT facility, and NMDOT maintains it. We have reached out and connected with NMDOT and have had some positive conversations with them. However, we have not yet received a letter of support from the District Engineer, who would need to approve this.
- This section of the trail is already listed in the NMDOT Bike Master Plan as a tier one facility, and there is language in that Master Plan about the fact that this segment is part of the Rio Grande trail alignment. We are moving in a positive direction, but need more time to work out letters of support.

**Commissioner Carter:** This alignment is crucial in getting us closer to the Santa Fe County line and the Santa Fe to Taos alignments. Also, it is great that there is existing infrastructure in place that we can utilize.

### **b. NM-333/Route 66: Albuquerque to Tijeras**

#### **Summary:**

- This alignment picks up at Tramway Blvd in Albuquerque, where our proposed realignment through Albuquerque ends, and ends in Tijeras, where the NM-14 Tijeras to San Antonito alignment we just discussed begins.
- We are proposing that this segment be designated for cycling only, as it is aligned to the hard shoulder of NM-333 (old Highway 66), which is not currently

an acceptable pedestrian route. However, this section is a popular and well-established cycling route.

**Commissioner Gross:** What user groups in the East Mountains have been engaged, and would it be possible to get a letter of support from them?

**Dan Majewski:** We felt that it was most important to get the NMDOT letter of support before anything else, but getting a letter of support from our other stakeholders in that area is a great idea that we will pursue, thank you.

**Commissioner Carter:** Mike Madden has been our main point of contact in the East Mountains and has been helping us spearhead our efforts. Ruben Cedeno, with the Turquoise Trail Regional Alliance, has also been contributing. They have been our biggest supporters and have helped us connect with community groups in that area.

**Commissioner Gross:** The more support we can show and the more we display that we are not just working with governments but community organizations as well, the better.

**Commissioner Carter:** It is worth pointing out that having alternate routes designated for specific user types (like designating this segment for cyclists only), is a very common practice in long-distance trail creation, especially in the early stages.

**Chair Bajema:** To clarify, the reason we were unable to receive the letters of support was not because of a lack of support from NMDOT, but due to time constraints?

**Dan Majewski:** We talked to an individual at NMDOT who was very supportive, and our request was sent up the flagpole to their superior, whom we made multiple attempts to connect with, but we were unable to do so.

**Chair Bajema:** Do you think designating these trails along NM-333 and NM-14 that are adjacent to Albuquerque might strengthen our argument with the Albuquerque City Council that our realignment proposal should be approved? Also, if some of the alignments we are hoping to designate are interim alignments, have we approached conversations with the Albuquerque City Council with that in mind?

**Dan Majewski:** Absolutely. Our case would be strengthened by the designation of nearby trails, and detailing the interim nature of some of our proposals could be beneficial as well.

**Commissioner Carter:** A lot of long-distance trails start with whatever alignment they can and refine that alignment over time. Having the alignment subcommittee meet with the opposition from the City of Albuquerque will help, as would bringing our other supporters to that discussion. Having a larger-scale conversation with multiple parties at the table is a great next step.

### 3. Other Trail Segment Updates, Bernalillo County

#### a. Grand Enchantment Trail

##### Summary:

- The Grand Enchantment Trail is a long-distance trail between Arizona and New Mexico and terminates in the Sanda Mountains. The trail is a natural continuation of the NM-14 corridor to the south. The Grand Enchantment Trail is less formal and less used than other long-distance trails like the CDT and therefore lacks a proper management structure.
- We reached out to the informal management of the trail and asked them to collaborate with us. They expressed reluctance to do so. They did not feel that their alignments had the capacity for a potential increase in users.
- The Grand Enchantment alignment is mostly on public land or follows public right of way, so we are still able to use their alignment as a starting point to inform our own decisions about the Rio Grande Trail alignment south of Albuquerque.
- The Grand Enchantment Trail alignment is attractive as a starting point to inform the Rio Grande Trail alignment, as it provides a route around Isleta Pueblo south of Albuquerque and opportunities to connect back to the river after those Tribal lands have been avoided.

**Chair Bajema:** If I am to understand correctly, something like this Grand Enchantment Trail alignment is our best option as far as the Rio Grande Trail alignment goes if we are unable to resolve our issues with the special districts and irrigation districts, correct?

**Dan Majewski:** Yes, because the Grand Enchantment Trail alignment goes through National Forest or relies on public rights-of-way for much of its length. The people who have created The Grand Enchantment Trail have also laid a lot of groundwork for us as far as identifying this route, so it is a great starting point.

**Commissioner Carter:** The Grand Enchantment Trail also co-aligns with a popular bike packing route called the New Mexico Off-Road Runner. So, this route also has viability as a bike-only route in the future.

**Commissioner Velasquez:** The Grand Enchantment Trail alignment provides the Rio Grande Trail with the opportunity to engage Manzano Mountains State Park. This provides camping opportunities and a stopping point for through-hikers. There is a pretty developed network of trails around the State Park as well.

#### b. NM-14 - Placitas Connection

##### Summary:

- This section of trail spans from Bernalillo to Placitas on NM-165 and passes through a mix of City Open Space lands, BLM lands, and State Trust land.
- Trail advocacy groups in the East Mountains have been helping us to find a way to connect the Rio Grande Trail through this area. These conversations have recently restarted, and we are staying engaged in them as they happen.
- This alignment is very conceptual currently and will be harder to designate in the future, so it is not our focus yet, but we are keeping up to date with the conversations that are happening there.

**Commissioner Velasquez:** Along this alignment, there is the opportunity to engage Cerillos Hills State Park, which has its own network of trails.

**Dan Majewski:** We looked at going through Cerillos Hills State Park in our initial conversations about Santa Fe to Taos alignment options, but we decided against it, as north of the State Park, there is a lot of private ranch land. All the Santa Fe to Taos alignments go through the town of Los Cerrillos, which gets trail users a lot closer to the State Park.

### iii. *Legislative Subcommittee (Commissioner Davidson)*

#### 1. Update on proposed legislation

##### Summary:

- The legislative subcommittee has been focusing on limiting liability for the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD), because doing so would unlock a massive area for potential alignment and designation.
- Originally, the legislative subcommittee tried to amend the recreational use statute that's within the state trails act, but that only applies to private landowners. After that, the committee attempted to create a contract between EMNRD and MRGCD, but it proved unconstitutional.
- The subcommittee found out that the special districts are governed by the Tort Claims Act. So, our current strategy is to amend the Tort Claims Act, but this strategy is not supported by the governor's office for this legislative session.
- So, for now, we believe that there may be another route through which we can approach MRGCD about amending their charter.

**Chair Bajema:** That's correct. The best answer we have right now is the amendment to the Tort Claims Act, which would allow EMNRD to take on liability.

**Carl Colonius:** I made the recommendation to the legislative subcommittee to look to the Southern Sandoval County Flood Control Association (SCAFCA), which has incorporated recreation into its charter. This is something we could approach MRGCD

with this year. At the moment, MRGCD is not concerned with recreational use, whereas SCAFCA has adopted a quality-of-life master plan, which recognizes recreation as a use within its flood control responsibilities. I recommend that the legislative subcommittee meet with SCAFCA to learn where their master plan came from and take a similar plan to MRGCD as a potential option.

**Chair Bajema:** Our intent is to pursue the amendment to the Tort Claims Act in 2027, but in the meantime, we should absolutely pursue changes to the charters within the special districts along the Rio Grande corridor.

#### ***iv. Non-Profit Subcommittee***

##### **1. RFP update (Commissioner Gross)**

#### **Summary:**

- We are feeling upbeat about the commission's progress regarding the effort to establish a Rio Grande Trail nonprofit organization. A nonprofit partner will be a major boost for both the long-term viability of the trail and for our efforts to engage the trail's many stakeholders and community groups.
- The Non-Profit subcommittee has revised the scope of work that the commission reviewed at our September meeting based on that discussion and input received. EMNRD posted the RFP for that scope of work at the end of November. This included a breakdown of the selection criteria to be used in scoring proposals.
- Also in November, the subcommittee hosted a public information webinar so prospective bidders and the public could learn more about that scope of work and ask questions. By the RFP deadline, the subcommittee received seven generally strong proposals. In early December, the subcommittee met to discuss the proposals, and the EMNRD scoring committee scored each of them.
- The EMNRD scoring committee met and reviewed these proposals for two weeks and then met and scored each of the eligible RFP respondents, four of which were disqualified.
- Of the three remaining respondents, one was selected, but the commission is not at liberty to disclose that information until their contract is finalized.

**Commissioner Temchin:** I just wanted to reiterate a recommendation that we made in strategizing the RFP, is that the contractor will be totally independent to make their own decisions in accordance with the scope of work. The commission will see that they're complying with the contract terms, but we are not going to be giving them direction, to my understanding.

**Chair Bajema:** That is somewhat correct. There are points throughout the contract where the nonprofit subcommittee is required to give feedback to the contractor. Also, from EMNRDs perspective, we will be scrutinizing their work.

## **2. Program Management Plan Draft Review (Commissioner Temchin, Commissioner Gross)**

### **Summary:**

- With the help of each of the subcommittees, we now have a complete Program Management Plan for FY26
- There was a motion to change the current language used in section 3.1 of the Program Management Plan: “Primary Challenge #1: Tribal Considerations Banning Trail Development Through Its Lands”, as it leaves much to be desired. Alternative language was proposed for the section, but some commissioners wished to review and rewrite the section further.
- Some commissioners urged the commission to have these changes made over the weekend so that the Program Management Plan could be ready for the upcoming Legislative Session. Multiple commissioners disapproved of that proposed time frame, given that it did not provide enough opportunity for the proper review of the proposed changes.

Commissioner Gross made a motion to approve the proposed alternative language within section 3.1 of the FY26 Program Management Plan.

Commissioner Temchin seconded the motion.

No action was taken regarding this motion.

Commissioner Temchin made a motion to approve the proposed alternative language within section 3.1 of the FY26 Program Management Plan, contingent upon receipt of new proposed alternative language from the Tribal Subcommittee.

Commissioner Davidson seconded the motion.

No action was taken regarding this motion.

Commissioner Temchin made a motion to have the appropriate changes to the language within section 3.1 of the FY26 Program Management Plan drafted, reviewed, and approved by the end of February 2026, and for the FY27 Program Management Plan to be adapted from the FY26 Program Management Plan by that date as well.

Commissioner Davidson seconded the motion.

No action was taken regarding this motion.

**Commissioner Harris made a motion to have the appropriate changes to the language within section 3.1 of the FY26 Program Management Plan drafted by the end of February 2026, to be reviewed and finalized by the end of March 2026, and to be voted on at the next Rio Grande Trail Commission Meeting in April 2026.**

Commissioner Carter seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Commissioner Velasquez – YES; Commissioner Davidson – YES; Commissioner Glendenning – YES; Commissioner Carter – YES; Commissioner Chacón – YES; Chair Bajema – YES; Commissioner Armijo – YES; Commissioner Temchin – YES; Commissioner Harris – YES; Commissioner Gross – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

**c. Miscellaneous**

- i. Signage Update (Dan Majewski)**
- ii. Logo Redesign Review (Dan Majewski)**

**Summary:**

- The current Rio Grande Trail logo does not meet the National Trail Standards, and a new logo which does meet these standards is being proposed. The new logo is flipped so that the point of the reuleaux triangle shaped frame points upwards rather than down. Other minor changes include the addition of text reading “New Mexico” to the bottom of the frame and the change of an internal accent color from yellow to dark red.
- The flipping of this logo would allow the Rio Grande Trail to be more easily integrated as a National Scenic Trail in the future.
- It was noted that making this change as soon as possible would be beneficial in terms of signage as well, as the commission is about to print a new set of signage for the trail.
- This change has been discussed at length in alignment subcommittee meetings, and it is the recommendation of that subcommittee to make this change.

**Commissioner Temchin:** If we were to change the logo, do we have the capacity to undertake the effort of replacing the old logo with all new documents?

**Dan Majewski:** Yes, absolutely. It is a cost but not necessarily a burden; we are certainly capable of making those changes and will prioritize doing so.

**Commissioner Armijo:** It seems the accent on the “l” in the word “Río” was left off in the new logo. Is there a reason for that?

**Commissioner Velasquez:** The word “Río” should absolutely be accented in the new logo.

**Commissioner Velasquez made a motion to approve the new Rio Grande Trail logo proposal contingent upon an accent being added to the “I” in the word “Río”.**

Commissioner Carter seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Commissioner Velasquez – YES; Commissioner Davidson – YES; Commissioner Glendenning – YES; Commissioner Carter – YES; Commissioner Chacón – YES; Chair Bajema – YES; Commissioner Armijo – YES; Commissioner Temchin – YES; Commissioner Harris – YES; Commissioner Gross – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

**iii. 2025 Year in Review (Dan Majewski)**

**Summary:**

- We have put together a one-page year-in-review document that discusses the Rio Grande Trail Commission's achievements throughout 2025. This document will be a helpful reference for the commission and a useful tool that can be used to summarize our work.

**7. Announcement of Next Meetings**

- a. **Fri, April 10, 2026 – Las Cruces (new date)**
  - b. **Fri, September 18, 2026 – Socorro**
- 8. Public Comment**
- 9. Adjournment**

Updated Rio Grande Trail logo:



# ATTACHMENT B: SANTA FE TO TAOS SURVEY RESULTS

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## Santa Fe to Taos - Survey Findings

*Dates of Survey: 2/13/26 - 3/28/26; Responses: 90*

*Project webpage: <https://riograndetrailnm.org/sf-t/>*

### **Background**

While the 2018 RGT Master Plan established a proposed alignment throughout most of the state, a critical gap remains between Santa Fe County and Taos County. Additionally, some of the master plan alignments in Santa Fe County are being reconsidered, especially within the context of identifying a connection to Taos County.

The Santa Fe/Taos connection is a critical link. Identifying a route for the trail between these areas will strengthen regional connectivity between two of New Mexico's most visited and culturally rich areas.

For this evaluation, all three proposed alignments begin at the Santa Fe County line along New Mexico Highway 14 (NM-14) and continue north. This starting point is the proposed alignment as identified in the master plan. From there, the various options continue north, and all three terminate at the southern end of the West Rim Trail along the Rio Grande Gorge.

## Survey Responses

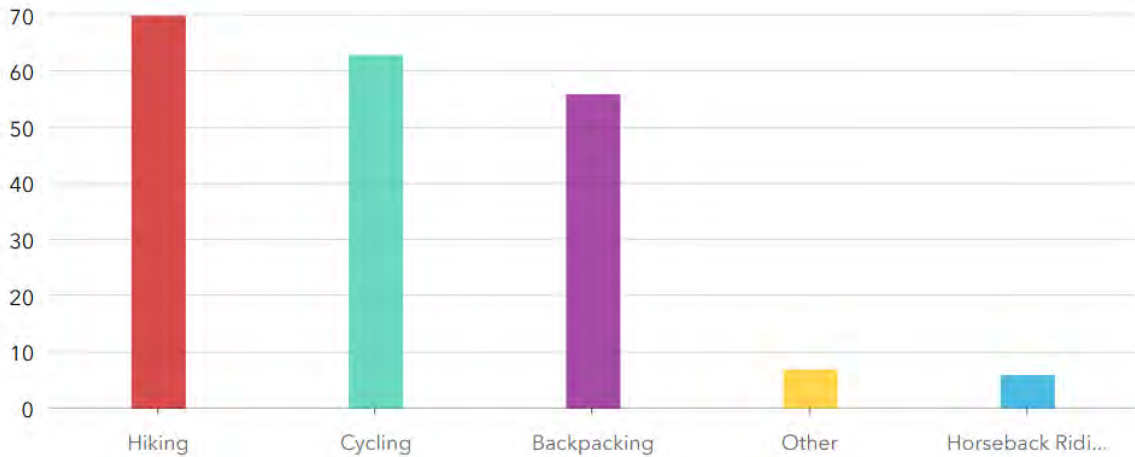
### **What is your Zip Code?**

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (64%) were from Northern New Mexico, followed by 28% from Central New Mexico, primarily the Albuquerque metro area. Six percent of responses came from Southern New Mexico communities, with a small number from out of state.

### **How would you recreate on the Rio Grande Trail?**

Most respondents said they would use the trail for **hiking (77.8%), cycling (70%), and backpacking (62.2%)**, while a notable minority said they intended to use it for Horseback Riding (6.7%) and other purposes (7.8%). Some users intend to recreate on the trail in multiple ways, splitting their time between activities like hiking and cycling.

● How would you recreate on the Río Grande Trail? Column Bar



[Hide table](#)

Other response  Empty categories

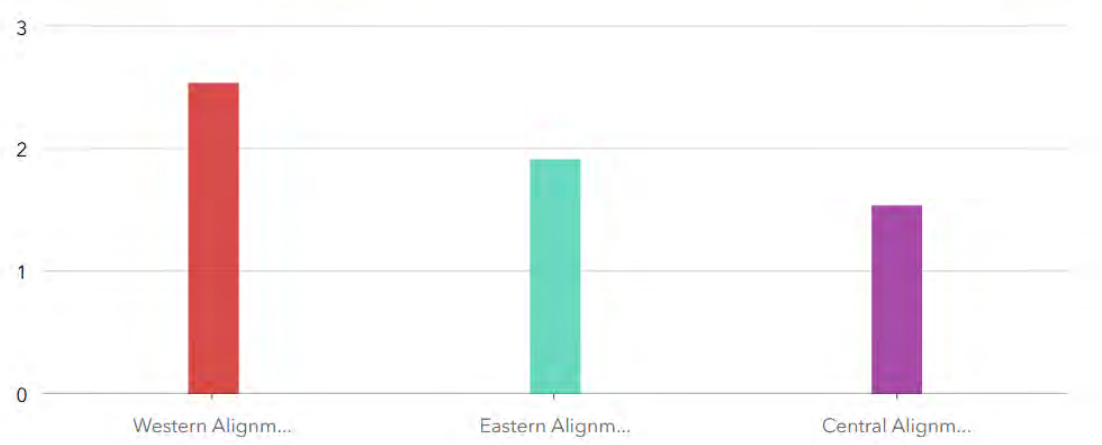
Answers	Count	Percentage
Hiking	70	77.78%
Cycling	63	70%
Backpacking	56	62.22%
Other	7	7.78%
Horseback Riding	6	6.67%

Answered: 90 Skipped: 0

### Rank the alignments from 1-3

Respondents ranked the Western Alignment most highly, with the Eastern Alignment coming in second place, and the Central Alignment trailing in third. **Over 70% of respondents ranked the Western Alignment as their first choice**, demonstrating a clear preference for this option. Voters were split when it came to the ordering of their second and third picks. ~45% picked the Central Alignment as their second choice, while ~42% chose the Eastern Alignment. Only ~13% picked the Western Alignment second.

Rank the following alignments from 1-3 Column Bar



[Hide table](#)

Show/hide choices Sort

Rank	Answers	1	2	3	Average score
1	Western Alignment (Purple)	70.59% 60	12.94% 11	16.47% 14	2.54
2	Eastern Alignment (Teal)	24.71% 21	42.35% 36	32.94% 28	1.92
3	Central Alignment (Orange)	4.71% 4	44.71% 38	50.59% 43	1.54

Answered: 85 Skipped: 5

**Explain your ranking from the last question**

*Notes and themes pulled from responses, grouped by which alignment they support. Numbers in parenthesis indicate the number responses which mentioned the associated topic.*

Western Alignment

- Stays in the Rio Grande Corridor/Ecological zone and maintains proximity to the river itself. (23)
- The northern portion of this alignment is more accessible, approachable, and inclusive compared to the alignments that take high lines through the Sangre de Cristos. (11)
  - o This route can be hiked in all four seasons, depending on the weather.



- This route is closer to outside assistance.
- There are more cultural and historical enrichment opportunities along this alignment. (3)
- This alignment uses more trail rather than road. (2)
- This alignment encourages development in new areas. (10)
  - There are already 1+ routes and connecting trail systems that allow people to get from Santa Fe to Taos. A new route provides new opportunities and increased recreation.
  - The high alpine wilderness of the other alignments already sees a lot of traffic, which is destructive to that environment; this alignment encourages recreation in other parts of the state.
- This is the most bike-friendly alignment (14)
- This alignment has a unique identity and provides something new when compared to other through hikes that spend much of their time in the high mountains. (3)
- This alignment connects to other amenities. (9)
  - The Caja del Rio
  - Dale Ball Trails
  - Santa Fe River Trail
  - Old Spanish NHT
  - Picuris Mountains
  - Borrego Mesa
  - The Camino Real
  - Las Golondrinas
  - La Bajada Ranch
  - Tres Rios Ranch
  - HIPICO
  - Could connect to Valles Caldera
  - Many small towns and municipalities
- This route has built-in resupply points in nearby towns. (1)
  - This provides an economic boost for those communities
- This alignment is beautiful in its own right, providing great views of New Mexico. (2)

### Central Alignment

- This alignment takes the most direct route through areas that people would not want to spend a lot of time recreating in. (1)
- This alignment best avoids some of the recent burn zones in the Pecos Wilderness. (1)



### Eastern Alignment

- The Sangre de Cristo mountains and Pecos/Carson National Forests are incredibly beautiful, and the trail should take advantage of that. (6)
- This alignment seems to give users the most solitary experience away from populated areas. (3)
- This alignment provides for the most interesting and variable user experience. (2)
- A lot of the infrastructure for this alignment already exists along the Rail Trail and in the Sange de Cristos. (1)
- This alignment provides users with amazing views from some of the highest peaks in New Mexico. (1)
- The higher elevation of this alignment provides cooler weather during the hottest parts of the year. (2)
- This alignment provides the best backpacking and backcountry experience in the high country of NM. (1)
- This alignment connects to many other trails in the Pecos Wilderness. (1)

### Other

- None of these alignments are close enough to the Rio Grande. (2)
- Using the shoulder of major roads should not be considered. (3)
- All 3 alignments should be developed to provide more options and entry points for the RGT. (1)
- Are there other alternatives that may be better for cycling than the alignments provided? (1)
- Some people like one alignment for the section south of Santa Fe, and another for the section north of it. (3)

### **Key Findings and Takeaways:**

#### Western alignment:

- Most supported alignment by far because:
  - o The Rio Grande Trail should be by the Rio Grande
  - o The alignment is approachable, accessible, and more inclusive
  - o The alignment provides connections to underappreciated trail systems, communities, and other amenities, and opens an underutilized area of the state up to development
  - o This alignment provides educational opportunities in a historically rich environment
  - o This is the most bike-friendly alignment



- Trails already exist in the Sangre de Cristos; this alignment provides a new and exciting opportunity that is different from other existing trails

Central alignment:

- Least supported by far because:
  - Users do not want to recreate by the road, especially along NM-14
  - The Eastern Alignment does everything this alignment does as good or better

Eastern alignment:

- Respondents like this alignment because:
  - The Sangre de Cristo mountains are incredibly beautiful, and this alignment takes advantage of that
  - The high elevation parts of this alignment stay much cooler in the hottest parts of the year
  - This alignment gives users the most solitary experience

**Consolidated Key Points:**

Western Alignment: Most unique, most accessible, closest to the river, most bike-friendly, and most new opportunities.

Central Alignment: Least supported, most criticized, most issues.

Eastern Alignment: Very beautiful, most existing trail, most solitary, most backpacker friendly.



### **Preferred Alignment: Western**

Not only was the Western Alignment favored heavily by respondents in the Santa Fe to Taos Alignment Survey, two-thirds of whom selected it as their favorite option, but it also presents the most unique and name-appropriate route forward for the Río Grande Trail. The most prevalent comment on the survey was that the Río Grande Trail should be as close to its namesake as possible.

Many comments from the survey also pointed out the novelty of this alignment compared to the other two. Where the Central and Eastern alignments mostly follow popular existing trails through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the Western alignment proposes a new and interesting option through distinct areas of New Mexico that currently lack recreational infrastructure and could greatly benefit from new development.

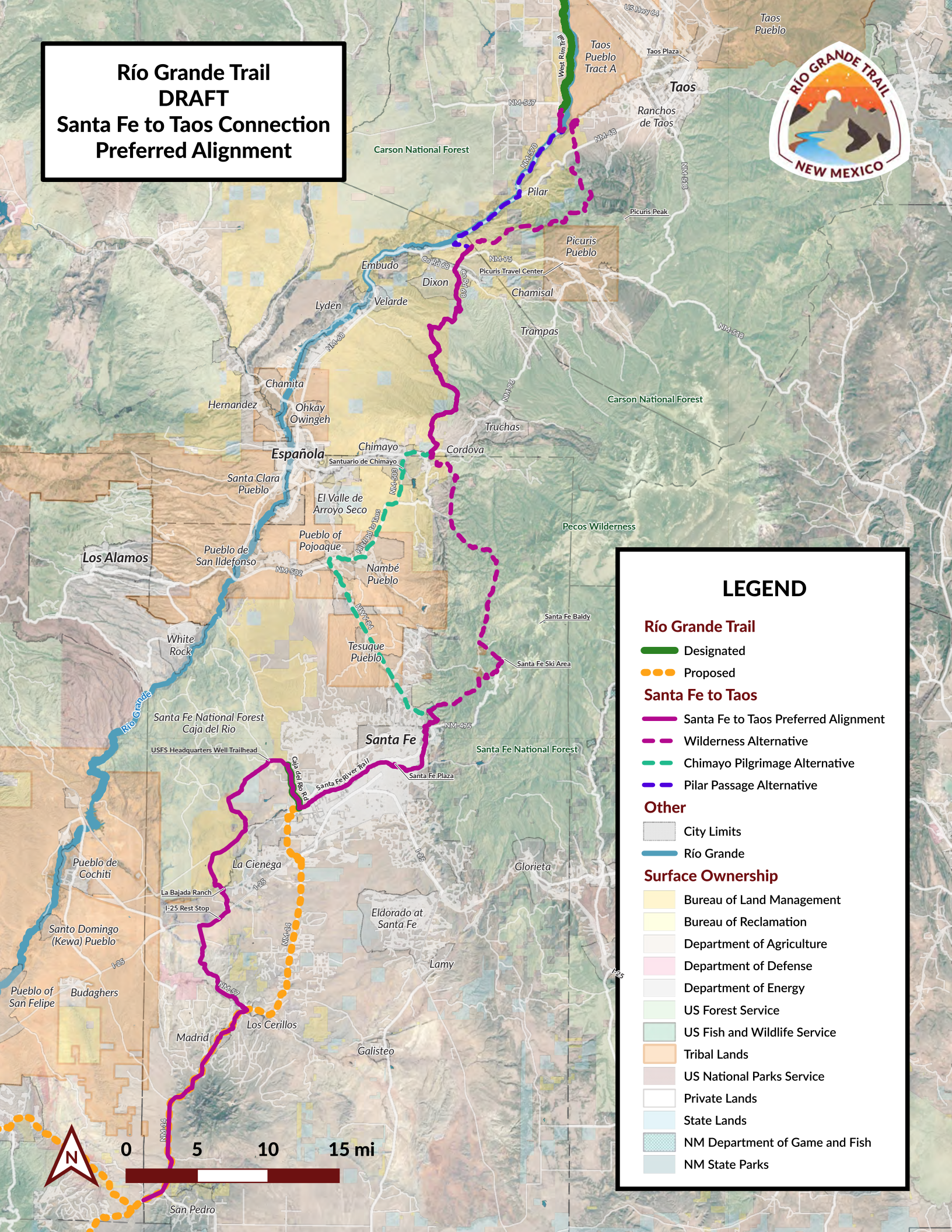
The small communities of Northern New Mexico have a rich history and identity. Traversing them via the Western Alignment presents educational opportunities and contributes to the trail's identity. Survey respondents also found this alignment to be the most bike-friendly, allowing for diverse types of recreation and sticking to the RGT's vision of being "A long-distance, multi-use trail". Furthermore, respondents found this to be the most accessible route, as it can be easily accessed from the many communities it crosses through. Overall, the western alignment is the most exciting, logical, and true to the vision of the Río Grande Trail.

# ATTACHMENT C: SANTA FE TO TAOS PREFERRED ALIGNMENT MAP

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# Río Grande Trail DRAFT Santa Fe to Taos Connection Preferred Alignment



## LEGEND

**Río Grande Trail**

- Designated (Green line)
- Proposed (Orange line)

**Santa Fe to Taos**

- Santa Fe to Taos Preferred Alignment (Purple line)
- Wilderness Alternative (Pink dashed line)
- Chimayo Pilgrimage Alternative (Green dashed line)
- Pilar Passage Alternative (Blue dashed line)

**Other**

- City Limits (Grey outline)
- Río Grande (Blue line)

**Surface Ownership**

- Bureau of Land Management (Yellow)
- Bureau of Reclamation (Light Yellow)
- Department of Agriculture (Light Green)
- Department of Defense (Pink)
- Department of Energy (Light Blue)
- US Forest Service (Light Green)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service (Light Blue)
- Tribal Lands (Orange)
- US National Parks Service (Light Green)
- Private Lands (White)
- State Lands (Light Blue)
- NM Department of Game and Fish (Light Blue)
- NM State Parks (Light Blue)



# ATTACHMENT D: SUNLAND PARK RIVER TRAIL DESIGNATION APPLICATION

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## TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-18-B

**Date of Submittal:** 04/10/2026  
**Submittal to:** RGT Commission

**Approval Date** (RGT Commission):

### Applicant Information

**Name/Title:** Mario Juarez-Infante/ City of Sunland Park, City Manager  
**Name/Title:**

**Email:** Mario.juarez-Infante@sunlandpark-nm.gov>

Land Owner /  Land Manager (Check which applies) /  Other

**If additional applicants:**

**Name/Title:**

**Email:**

Land Owner /  Land Manager (Check which applies) /  Other

### Access

**Public Access:**

Yes /  No /  With permit

**User Groups** (if not open to all the below groups, note alternate accommodation for those groups in the "Connectivity" section of the application):

Hikers /  Bikers /  Equestrians

**Surfacing:**

Paved /  Unpaved /  Blue (water)

**Universal Design/ADA Accessible:**

Yes /  No /  Partial

**Difficulty:**

Easy (mostly flat & smooth) /  Moderate (some elevation change) /

Difficult (significant elevation change)



## TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-18-B

**Traffic Flow:** The paved multi-use trail along the Rio Grande experiences light traffic and is separated from vehicular routes. It runs parallel to the levee road, which has low traffic volumes. The trail also passes beneath Sunland Park Drive and Racetrack Drive, both of which carry significant traffic, particularly during peak hours and events.

**Barriers:** This segment would serve as the southernmost designated trail, approaching the borders of Mexico and Texas. The nearest designated segment before transitioning into proposed and undesignated sections is located along the Rio Grande in Mesilla. Therefore, this segment is currently isolated.

**Signage:** No signage exists. However, signage is planned, and funding for it has been identified. A site plan for sign locations is also being developed.

**Features:** This segment runs directly along the Rio Grande, offering convenient water access and scenic views of the river and surrounding wildlife. The paved surface enhances accessibility, creating user-friendly conditions and accommodating a wide range of trail users.

### Designation Type

Proposed /  Full Designation of through trail /  Full Designation of spur trail (Check which applies)

*(Note: Proposed Designation is for proposed future trail segments; Full Designation is for existing/constructed trail segments.)*

### RGT Segment for Designation (for future identification purposes)

County	Jurisdiction	Segments	Existing Facility	Existing Facility Name	Miles	Application Type
Doña Ana County	City of Sunland Park	DA-18-B	Shared Use Path	N/A	1.33	Designation
				<b>Total</b>	<b>1.33</b>	

### Location/Description



## **TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION**

RGT Segments: DA-18-B

*Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.*

The segment runs directly along the northeastern side of the Rio Grande for a total of 1.33 miles. It begins at Racetrack Road and proceeds northwest within the river channel. It is located across the river from McNutt Road, Sunland Park's primary arterial. Just north of this trail is Western Playland and Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino, key destinations and economic generators within the community. Access from the trail is via Racetrack Drive. A trail facility with a parking lot is located there, along with benches and tables.

### **RGT Vision**

*How does this segment support the vision of the Rio Grande Trail?*

This segment embodies the core vision of the Rio Grande Trail: creating meaningful connections between communities and the Rio Grande. Sunland Park currently has no designated trail segments, presenting a valuable opportunity to expand community access to the river through formal designation and its associated benefits. The existing path already accommodates users who rely on it for recreation and access to the Rio Grande.

### **Ownership**

*Is the segment in public ownership, or are necessary easements or agreements in place? If not, describe the plan for obtaining and/or managing the trail right-of-way.*

The segment (DA-19-B) is within the jurisdiction of the City of Sunland Park.

### **Public Support**

*Please indicate whether there has been any public outreach and whether there are any groups, organizations, or individuals that have demonstrated support for this trail segment.*

While public support hasn't been sourced through engagement, the City of Sunland Park has been a collaborator in the advancement of the Rio Grande Trail. Their support in seeking designation of their trail network has pushed the project forward, and is aiding in the expansion of the Rio Grande Trail further into southern New Mexico.



## TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-18-B

### **Connectivity**

*Describe how this trail segment would provide continuity and/or connectivity within the overall Rio Grande Trail system.*

Doña Ana County currently has few designated segments of the Rio Grande Trail. Although the existing multi-use path experiences visitation, formal designation could increase access to additional resources for enhanced signage and other amenities. The site's proximity to the Rio Grande presents an opportunity to strengthen connections to this important natural resource.

Additionally, there is an opportunity to connect this segment to the Insight El Paso Dino Track site. This site, located just 1 mile southeast of the eastern terminus of this Sunland Park trail on the opposite side of the river, could serve as the southern terminus of the Rio Grande Trail. The Dino Track site has received funding for various amenities. Connecting these assets should be a high priority.

Looking northwest, the river crosses back into Texas approximately 4 miles from the terminus of this Sunland Park trail. At the Texas border, a paved trail, called the Rio Grande River Park Trail, already exists and continues for 11 miles. Connecting the Sunland Park trail to the Rio Grande River Park Trail should also be a high priority.

### **Impact Studies**

*Have environmental impact studies and/or cultural surveys been conducted to understand the potential impacts of trail designation? How may the impacts support existing efforts, community visions, or regional planning? (Required for full designation, optional for proposed designation)*

Segment DA-18-B will travel along existing trail facilities. Therefore, this requirement is not applicable.

### **Capacity to Maintain**

*How will the trail segment be maintained, and by whom?*

This segment is actively maintained by the City of Sunland Park.



## **TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION**

RGT Segments: DA-18-B

### **Public Safety**

*Indicate how public safety will be addressed.*

The trail is managed by the City of Sunland Park, providing the City of Sunland Park's police department with jurisdiction over the space.

### **Additional Documentation**

*Please provide any supporting documentation that would help the Commission evaluate your request as a separate attachment. This could include maps of the proposed route for designation, letters of support, resolutions from the respective municipality or county, existing planning studies, easement documentation, pictures of the trail, etc.*

Attachment A: Map of Trail Segment

Attachment B: Sunland Park Resolution of Support

**CITY OF SUNLAND PARK  
RESOLUTION 2026-14**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO PURSUE DESIGNATION  
OF A SEGMENT OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL.**

The City Council is informed that:

**WHEREAS,** the City Council of the City of Sunland Park met in a duly noticed regular meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026 at City Hall, Sunland Park, New Mexico; and,

**WHEREAS,** pursuant to applicable New Mexico statutes, the City Council is authorized to exercise the powers necessary to promote health, safety, and general welfare of the community; and,

**WHEREAS,** the City of Sunland Park recognizes the importance of outdoor recreation, trail connectivity, and access to natural resources in enhancing quality of life, public health, and sustainable tourism; and,

**WHEREAS,** the Rio Grande Trail Commission has expressed support for designating a segment of a City Rio Grande Trail; and,

**WHEREAS,** such designation will not alter the physical condition, alignment, or public access of the roadway, but will formally recognize its recreational value and may allow for future trail-related signage or wayfinding; and

**WHEREAS,** this designation aligns with the City's goals to promote outdoor recreation, environmental stewardship, and community connectivity.

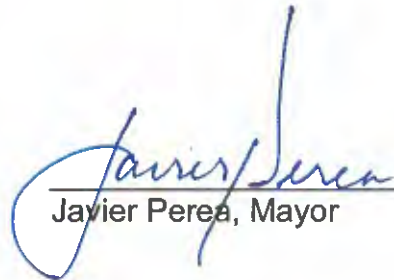
**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Sunland Park that the City supports the designation of a segment of a City Rio Grande Trail; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Manager is hereby authorized to coordinate with the Rio Grande Trail Commission, and other relevant stakeholders, and to take all necessary administrative actions to pursue and support this designation.

**PASSED, ADOPTED AND APPROVED** this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March 2026.

ATTEST BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Karla Herrera, City Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Javier Perea, Mayor

SEAL



Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Mili Sandoval	Aye
Councilor Armando Mata	Aye
Councilor Bertha Salmon	Aye
Councilor Alberto Jaramillo	Absent
Councilor Maria Burciaga	Aye
Councilor Raul T. Telles	Aye

# ATTACHMENT E: SUNLAND PARK RIVER TRAIL MAP

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Rio Grande Trail  
Segment DA-18-B  
Sunland Park  
River Trail  
1.33 Miles

## LEGEND

### Rio Grande Trail

— Undesignated

••• Proposed

### Other

— Rio Grande



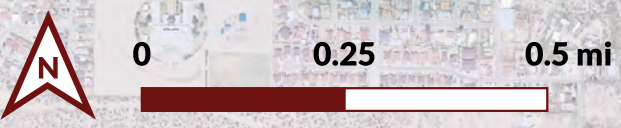
NEW MEXICO

TEXAS

Sunland Park Dr

Racetrack Dr

McNutt Rd



# ATTACHMENT F: RÍO GRANDE RIVERPARK TRAIL DESIGNATION APPLICATION

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## TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-17-B

**Date of Submittal:** 04/10/2026  
**Submittal to:** RGT Commission

**Approval Date** (RGT Commission):

### Applicant Information

**Name/Title:** Tim Fulton, Director, City of El Paso Parks & Recreation  
**Name/Title:**

**Email:** t.fulton@epcounty.com

Land Owner /  Land Manager (Check which applies) /  Other

**If additional applicants:**

**Name/Title:**

**Email:**

Land Owner /  Land Manager (Check which applies) /  Other

### Access

**Public Access:**

Yes /  No /  With permit

**User Groups** (if not open to all the below groups, note alternate accommodation for those groups in the "Connectivity" section of the application):

Hikers /  Bikers /  Equestrians

**Surfacing:**

Paved /  Unpaved /  Blue (water)

**Universal Design/ADA Accessible:**

Yes /  No /  Partial

**Difficulty:**

Easy (mostly flat & smooth) /  Moderate (some elevation change) /

Difficult (significant elevation change)



## TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-17-B

**Traffic Flow:** The paved multi-use trail along the Rio Grande experiences light traffic and is separated from vehicular routes. It runs parallel to the levee road, which has low traffic volumes. The trail crosses several high-traffic roads at street level, including Vinton Rd, Canutillo La Union Ave, and W Borderland Rd. It also passes underneath Texas SH-178 (Artcraft Rd).

**Barriers:** This segment is the first proposed for designation outside New Mexico and may face challenges associated with official designation processes. It is also currently isolated from other designated trail segments.

**Signage:** Some signage noting permitted uses and park rules is located at major road crossings. Partner signs from IBWC and NPS (El Camino Real) are also available at these locations.

**Features:** This segment runs directly along the Rio Grande, offering river access and unobstructed views of the surrounding landscape. The segment is paved to increase accessibility and accommodate a wide range of trail users. The multi-use path is separated from roadways except for at the road crossings at W Vinton Rd, Canutillo La Union Ave, and W Borderland Rd. The adjacent and parallel levee roads provide emergency and maintenance access.

### Designation Type

Proposed /  Full Designation of through trail /  Full Designation of spur trail (Check which applies)

*(Note: Proposed Designation is for proposed future trail segments; Full Designation is for existing/constructed trail segments.)*

### RGT Segment for Designation (for future identification purposes)

County	Jurisdiction	Segments	Existing Facility	Existing Facility Name	Miles	Application Type
El Paso County, TX	City of El Paso	DA-17-B	Shared Use Path	Rio Grande Riverpark Trail	10.62	Designation



## TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-17-B

County	Jurisdiction	Segments	Existing Facility	Existing Facility Name	Miles	Application Type
				<b>Total</b>	<b>10.62</b>	

### Location/Description

*Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.*

The Rio Grande Riverpark Trail runs along the east bank of the Rio Grande from the Texas border, just south of Washington St, to W Vinton Rd, where it crosses over the bridge to the west side of the river via a protected walkway. From here, it continues south along the Rio Grande to Canutillo La Union Ave. It continues south across this road and then continues to W Borderland Rd. It continues south underneath TX-178 (Artcraft Rd). This trail segment terminates at the Texas-New Mexico border located at Country Club Rd.

South of County Club Rd, there are plans to continue the trail south for approximately 3.8 miles through Sunland Park, NM, to connect to the existing trail in Sunland Park.

While there are no formal trailheads, there is evidence of trail users parking along the road or at adjacent parking lots to access the trail, specifically at Borderland Rd and Vinton Rd.

### RGT Vision

*How does this segment support the vision of the Rio Grande Trail?*

This segment supports the greater vision of the Rio Grande Trail in that it serves as a valuable connector between adjacent communities and the Rio Grande, allowing for recreation alongside the river. This section is unique in that it passes through Texas to connect sections of the Rio Grande corridor in New Mexico. In order to have a continuous trail from the Texas/Mexico border, this is an essential connection.

### Ownership

*Is the segment in public ownership, or are necessary easements or agreements in place? If not, describe*



## **TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION**

RGT Segments: DA-17-B

*the plan for obtaining and/or managing the trail right-of-way.*

The segment (DA-17-B) is within the jurisdiction of the City of El Paso, Texas. Construction of this trail was partially funded by the Paso del Norte Health Foundation, but it is fully maintained by the City of El Paso's Parks & Recreation Department.

### **Public Support**

*Please indicate whether there has been any public outreach and whether there are any groups, organizations, or individuals that have demonstrated support for this trail segment.*

The City of El Paso has been a collaborator in the advancement of the Rio Grande Trail. Their support in seeking designation of their trail network has pushed the project forward and is aiding in the expansion of the Rio Grande Trail further into southern New Mexico. Sunland Park, which this trail is adjacent to, has also been a strong supporter of the trail.

### **Connectivity**

*Describe how this trail segment would provide continuity and/or connectivity within the overall Rio Grande Trail system.*

This segment of trail allows further connectivity between Sunland Park and the RGT's southern gateway to El Paso, allowing the Rio Grande trail to bridge state borders and for improved cross-state recreation. This segment also plays a key role in the effort of connecting the southernmost portions of the Rio Grande Trail to its most prominent southern City, Las Cruces.

The Rio Grande Riverpark Trail connects multiple urban hubs from Anthony, New Mexico, to the Sunland Park metropolitan area.

### **Impact Studies**

*Have environmental impact studies and/or cultural surveys been conducted to understand the potential impacts of trail designation? How may the impacts support existing efforts, community visions, or regional planning? (Required for full designation, optional for proposed designation)*



## **TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION**

RGT Segments: DA-17-B

Segment DA-17-B will travel along existing trail facilities. Therefore, this requirement is not applicable.

### **Capacity to Maintain**

*How will the trail segment be maintained, and by whom?*

This segment is actively maintained by the City of El Paso, TX.

### **Public Safety**

*Indicate how public safety will be addressed.*

The trail is managed by the City of El Paso, giving the City of El Paso's police department jurisdiction.

### **Additional Documentation**

*Please provide any supporting documentation that would help the Commission evaluate your request as a separate attachment. This could include maps of the proposed route for designation, letters of support, resolutions from the respective municipality or county, existing planning studies, easement documentation, pictures of the trail, etc.*

Attachment A: Map of Trail Segment

# ATTACHMENT G: RÍO GRANDE RIVERPARK TRAIL MAP

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Anthony



**Rio Grande Trail  
Segment DA-17-B  
El Paso - Rio Grande  
Riverpark Trail  
10.62 Miles**

### LEGEND

**Rio Grande Trail**

- Undesignated
- Proposed

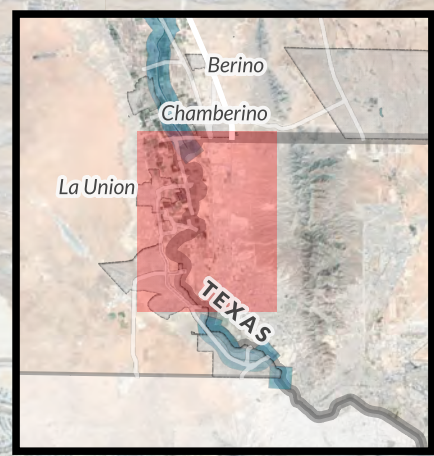
**Other**

- Rio Grande
- NM City Limits

**Surface Ownership**

- Bureau of Land Management
- State Lands

La Union

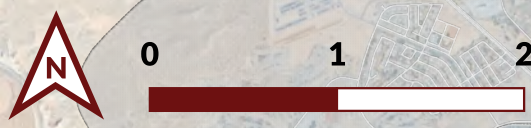


TEXAS

NEW MEXICO

Santa Teresa

Sunland Park



# ATTACHMENT H: BOSQUE/TIJERAS CANYON CONNECTION REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

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## TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments:  
Bosque Trail-Tijeras Canyon Connection

**Date of Submittal:** 04/10/2026  
**Submittal to:** RGT Commission

**Approval Date** (RGT Commission):

### **Applicant Information for Proposed New Alignment**

**Name/Title:** City of Albuquerque, Open Space Division, Parks and Recreation Department

**Name/Title:** City of Albuquerque, Department of Municipal Development

**Email:**

Land Owner /  Land Manager (Check which applies) /  Other

**If additional applicants:**

**Name/Title:**

**Email:**

Land Owner /  Land Manager (Check which applies) /  Other

### **Accessibility**

**Public Access:**

Yes /  No /  With permit

**User Groups** (if not open to all the below groups, note alternate accommodation for those groups in the "Connectivity" section of the application):

Hikers /  Bikers /  Equestrians

**Surfacing:**

Paved /  Unpaved /  Blue (water)

**Universal Design/ADA Accessible:**

Yes /  No /  Partial

**Difficulty:**

Easy (mostly flat & smooth) /  Moderate (some elevation change) /

Difficult (significant elevation change)

**Traffic Flow:** Utilizes multi-use trails and low-speed, low-volume streets.



## TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments:  
Bosque Trail-Tijeras Canyon Connection

**Barriers:** Occasional crossings of high-speed/high-volume roads could lead to potential user safety concerns and obstacles.

**Signage:** Some signage exists on sections of the existing trail, but additional wayfinding information will be needed to provide the trail with a more seamless connection between the Bosque Trail and Tijeras Canyon.

**Features:** Views of the Sandia Mountains; connection to the Bosque River Trail; connection to key regional destinations, including parks and Uptown.

### Designation Type

Proposed /  Full Designation of through trail /  Full Designation of spur trail (Check which applies)

*(Note: Proposed Designation is for proposed future trail segments; Full Designation is for existing/constructed trail segments.)*

### RGT Segment for Designation (for future identification purposes)

County	Jurisdiction	Segments	Existing Facility	Existing Facility Name	Miles	Application Type
Bernalillo	CABQ	BN-05-A	Multiuse trail	Multiple trails and on-street facilities	14.2	Realignment & full designation
				<b>Total</b>		

### Location/Description of Current Alignment

*Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.*

The purpose of this segment is to connect the Bosque Trail, which has been designated as the Rio Grande Trail, to the NM-14/East Mountains through route via Tijeras Canyon. North and south of Albuquerque, there is no viable short-term option for a continuous connection due to challenges with opposition from landowners and managers.



## **TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION**

RGT Segments:  
Bosque Trail-Tijeras Canyon Connection

This segment begins at the intersection of I-40 and Tramway Blvd, and travels west, utilizing the I-40 Trail between Tramway and Eubank. Beyond Eubank, the route utilizes on-street facilities such as Zuni, Lead, and Coal. The route incorporates existing bike lanes and multi-use paths along these corridors.

### **Location/Description of Proposed New Alignment**

*Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the proposed new alignment of this trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.*

The proposed alignment will shift approximately 1.5 miles north to better leverage existing multi-use trails and create a more seamless connection between Tijeras Canyon and the Bosque Trail.

While this new alignment still uses some on-street bicycle lanes and bicycle routes along corridors such as Indian School Road, Edith Blvd, and Mountain Road, it utilizes trails for over half of the route. This is a much higher percentage than the previous alignment. Trails to be utilized include Paseo de las Montañas, Embudo Arroyo, and Tramway. By using trails more than on-street facilities, this realignment maximizes accessibility and safety while still offering a relatively direct connection between the Bosque Trail and Tijeras Canyon.

### **Reason for New Alignment**

*Please describe the reasons for realigning this trail segment.*

This new alignment makes greater use of existing trails and paths instead of on-street bicycle facilities on corridors that often have narrow sidewalks and generally inadequate pedestrian infrastructure. The new alignment greatly improves the accessibility and safety of this important connection.

### **RGT Vision**

*How does this segment support the vision of the Rio Grande Trail?*

This realignment advances the RGT vision by improving access to the Rio Grande for residents of Albuquerque and Tijeras. It creates a vital connection across major roads that currently discourage pedestrian and bicycle travel, encouraging more people to reach the river using active transportation. Additionally, the realignment maximizes the use of existing trails and paths within the city, aligning with the RGT's commitment to leverage existing facilities and infrastructure.



## TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments:  
Bosque Trail-Tijeras Canyon Connection

### Ownership

*Is the segment in public ownership, or are necessary easements or agreements in place? If not, describe the plan for obtaining and/or managing trail right-of-way.*

This trail segment is located within the City of Albuquerque's limits, giving them full jurisdiction of the segment.

### Public Support

*Please indicate whether there has been any public outreach and whether there are any groups, organizations, or individuals that have demonstrated support for this trail segment.*

Public support for this segment is evident in the strong and consistent use of the existing trail sections that will be incorporated into the new alignment. The current paths and bike lanes along the corridor are already popular for both daily travel and recreational activity. The City of Albuquerque's continuous improvement and maintenance of these segments reinforces support for these trails as an essential community resource in Albuquerque.

### Connectivity

*Describe how this trail segment would provide continuity and/or connectivity within the overall Rio Grande Trail system.*

Realigning this trail designation would make use of several existing bike and pedestrian facilities that already form a continuous route between Tijeras Canyon and the Bosque Trail. By formally designating this alignment, the corridor would become a clearly identified, end-to-end connection between the two areas, unified through consistent signage, improved wayfinding, and a more seamless experience for all users traveling along the trail.

### Accessibility

*What level of access/accessibility is anticipated for the general public and different user groups?*

The trail will offer proper accessibility through the inclusion of level, stable surfaces; designated bike lanes; and multi-use paths that accommodate a wide range of user groups. Access for all types of users will be further supported through the application of universal design principles, such as clear and consistent wayfinding, accessible trailheads, adequate turning space, and features that support



## TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments:  
Bosque Trail-Tijeras Canyon Connection

individuals with mobility, visual, or sensory challenges. Together, these elements will ensure the segment is welcoming, safe, and usable for the entire community.

### **Impact Studies**

*Have environmental impact studies and/or cultural surveys been conducted to understand the potential impacts of trail designation? How may the impacts support existing efforts, community visions, or regional planning? (Required for full designation, optional for proposed designation)*

This realignment exclusively utilizes existing trails, on-street bicycle facilities, and other existing infrastructure. This infrastructure, which is in an urban environment, is already well utilized.

### **Capacity to Maintain**

*How will the trail segment be maintained, and by whom?*

This trail segment exclusively falls within the jurisdiction of the City of Albuquerque. They will continue maintaining the facilities.

### **Public Safety**

*Indicate how public safety will be addressed.*

The Albuquerque Police Department is responsible for responding to public safety concerns along this corridor.

#### **1. Additional Documentation**

*Please provide any supporting documentation that would help the Commission evaluate your request as a separate attachment. This could include maps of the proposed route for designation, letters of support, resolutions from the respective municipality or county, existing planning studies, easement documentation, pictures of the trail, etc.*

# ATTACHMENT I: BOSQUE/TIJERAS CANYON CONNECTION REALIGNMENT MAP

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# ATTACHMENT J: IBWC PROJECT APPLICATION

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UNITED STATES SECTION  
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION  
REALTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
4191 N. MESA STREET  
EL PASO, TX 79902  
MAIL TO: REALTY@IBWC.GOV

# PROJECT APPLICATION

Permit # \_\_\_\_\_

INSTRUMENT TYPE:	<input type="checkbox"/> Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> Right of Entry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> License	<input type="checkbox"/> No Objection Letter
	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> Easement	<input type="checkbox"/> Lease	<input type="checkbox"/> Modification to existing outgrant

Prior to beginning any project, 24 hour notice must be given to the USIBWC. If applicable, upon completion of project you must also provide final deliverables to the commission.

Instrument holder shall notify applicable area utility/safety offices prior to executing granted privileges, construction, or drilling

We hereby agree to replace said premises satisfactory to the United States Federal Government at our own expense, and to hold the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) harmless from any and all damages or expenses caused by, or in any way connected with the use of said property or restoring the same to its original condition. USIBWC specifications shall be met unless otherwise authorized by the United States Government or their authorized representative. If work cannot be completed by expiration date, applicant must re-submit an application to the USIBWC Realty and Asset Management Division.

Printed Name/Business State of New Mexico EMNRD	Applicant Signature _____	Date 2/10/2026
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## SITE INFORMATION

LOCATION: Doña Ana County, New Mexico	COUNTY/STATE: Doña Ana County, New Mexico
LAT & LONG COORDINATES: See "Request Description Continued"	
PROJECT NAME: The State of New Mexico Rio Grande Trail - <a href="https://riograndetrailnm.org/">https://riograndetrailnm.org/</a>	
INTENDED START DATE: N/A	INTENDED END DATE: N/A
REQUEST DESCRIPTION: <i>(For Additional Remarks Utilize Page 3)</i>	The purpose of this application is to receive written confirmation from the IBWC for permission to use their existing levee roads throughout Doña Ana County for use by the Rio Grande Trail. This trail project is being led by the State of New Mexico, which will be responsible for maintenance of all Rio Grande Trail segments within the IBWC. Desired user groups include hikers, bikers and equestrians. Additional details on the trail and its history will be provided in following pages. This particular application is intended to streamline future infrastructure projects related to the trail. At this time, no physical changes to the levee roads are being proposed.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME: Benjamin Bajema	PHONE NUMBER: +1 (505) 394-2581	EMAIL: benjamin.bajema@emnrd.nm.gov	
MAILING ADDRESS: 1220 South St. Francis Drive Santa Fe, NM 87505			
APPLICANT:	<input type="checkbox"/> CONTRACTOR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REPRESENTATIVE	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____

## FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

PROJECT AREA: _____
------------------------



## PROJECT APPLICATION CONTINUED

### SUPPLEMENTAL

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY	CHECK APPROPRIATE BLOCK	
I - APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS	ATTACHED	N/A
a. Application Cover <b>(Required Attachment)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Letter of Application <b>(Required Attachment)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Vicinity map/USGS <b>(Required Attachment)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Technical drawings <b>(Required if Applicable)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Surveying material/metes and bounds <b>(Required if Applicable)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Plans and specifications <b>(Required if Applicable)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. If application is to amend an existing license or lease identify previous application and attach instrument copy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. If application is for an oil or gas pipeline, describe any related right of way or temporary use permit applications, and identify previous applications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
II - PROJECT CERTIFICATES AND REVIEWS <b>(See How To Apply) (<a href="https://www.ibwc.gov/Permits_Licenses/boundary_realty.html">https://www.ibwc.gov/Permits_Licenses/boundary_realty.html</a>)</b>	ATTACHED	N/A
a. Historical Preservation Office <b>(Required Attachment)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service <b>(Required Attachment)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. United States Army Corps of Engineers <b>(Required Attachment)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Texas Parks & Wildlife <b>(Required for Texas Project Only)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) <b>(Required for Texas Projects Only - For Air, Land, and Water Quality)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. State Water Commissions <b>(Required if Applicable in State)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Department of State, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs <b>(Land Based Crossings)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Bureau of Energy Resources <b>(Liquid-Petroleum Based Crossings)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## PROJECT APPLICATION CONTINUED

### REQUEST DESCRIPTION CONTINUED:

The Rio Grande Trail is New Mexico's cross-state recreational trail for hiking, biking, and horseback riding along the Rio Grande. Trail users explore, learn about, and connect with a tapestry of diverse natural habitats, rich history, striking landscapes, and vibrant communities. The trail contributes to cultural and environmental awareness, healthy lifestyles, spiritual growth, and economic prosperity for New Mexico and its visitors.

The New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division supports the project by fostering partnerships, managing consultants, securing funding, promoting the trail's recreational and economic benefits, and engaging with communities to align the trail's development with regional priorities and needs.

While this particular application does not include any physical improvements, signage and trail head facilities are planned for the future.

The phase of the RGT project discussed within this application includes most of the designated trail segments through Doña Ana County. Throughout Doña Ana County, the USIBWC levee roads could serve as the alignment for the Rio Grande Trail. The levee road would connect to the existing designated and proposed RGT segments. Below are the latitude, longitude, and mileage of each of the proposed trail segments on the USIBWC levee road:

Segment	Name	Mileage	LatLongNorth	LatLongSouth
1	HatchWest	13.69	32.694482,-107.238826	32.6345533,-107.0455908
2	MesillaEast	12.08	32.4675611,-106.9060064	32.327602,-106.832219
3	MesillaEast	14.56	32.264564,-106.823090	32.11402924,-106.66790197
4	CanutilloEast	9.40	32.11402924,-106.66790197	31.9902529,-106.6285413
5	SunlandParkEast	1.20	31.8459188,-106.6047173	31.8292331,-106.6049738
6	SunlandParkEast	2.16	31.82493261,-106.60132646	31.8029061,-106.5763124

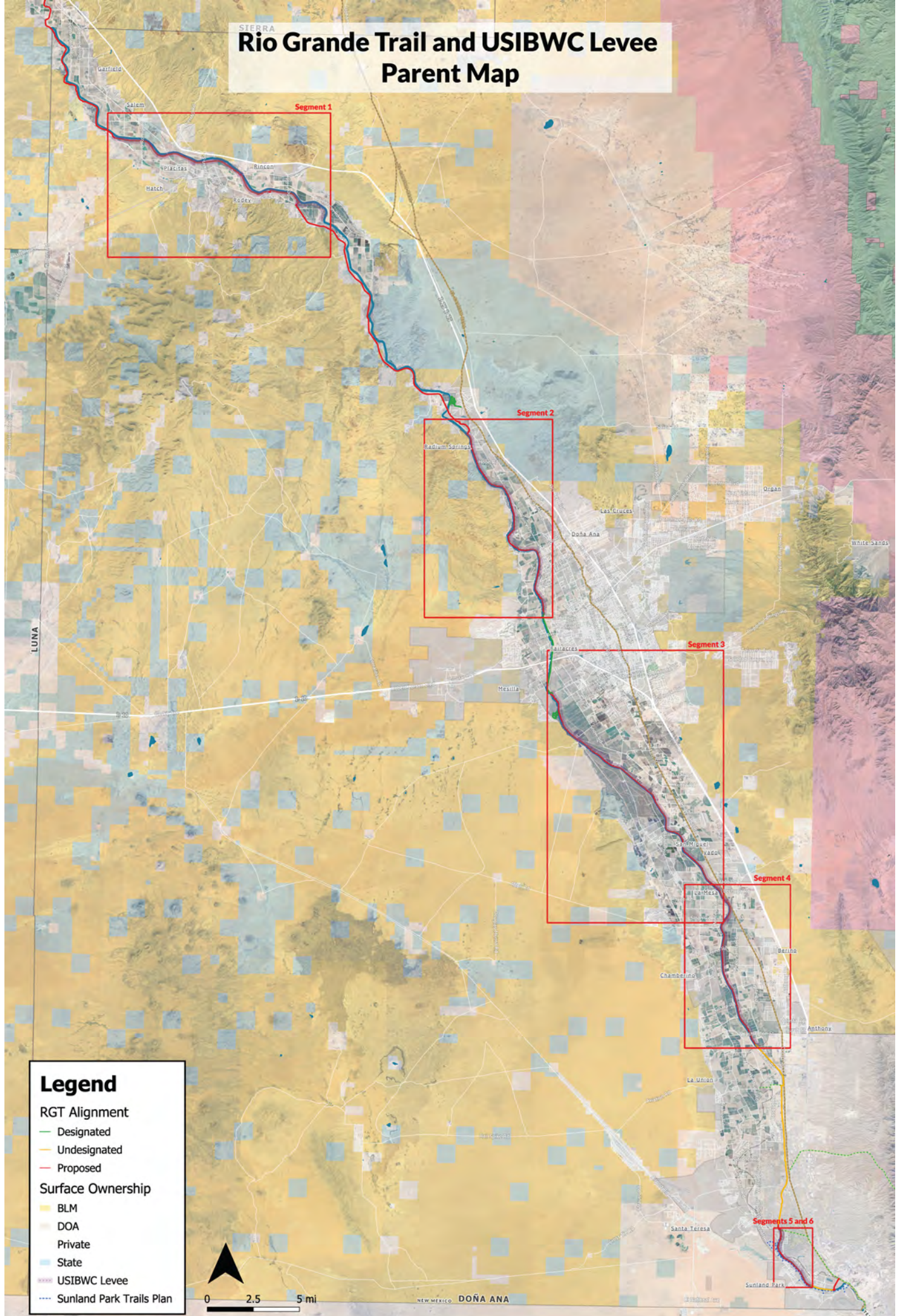
Attached are maps which indicate the various segments being proposed for use by the Rio Grande Trail.

# ATTACHMENT K: IBWC LEVEE APPLICATION MAPS

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# Rio Grande Trail and USIBWC Levee Parent Map



**Legend**

**RGT Alignment**

- Designated
- Undesignated
- Proposed

**Surface Ownership**

- BLM
- DOA
- Private
- State

USIBWC Levee

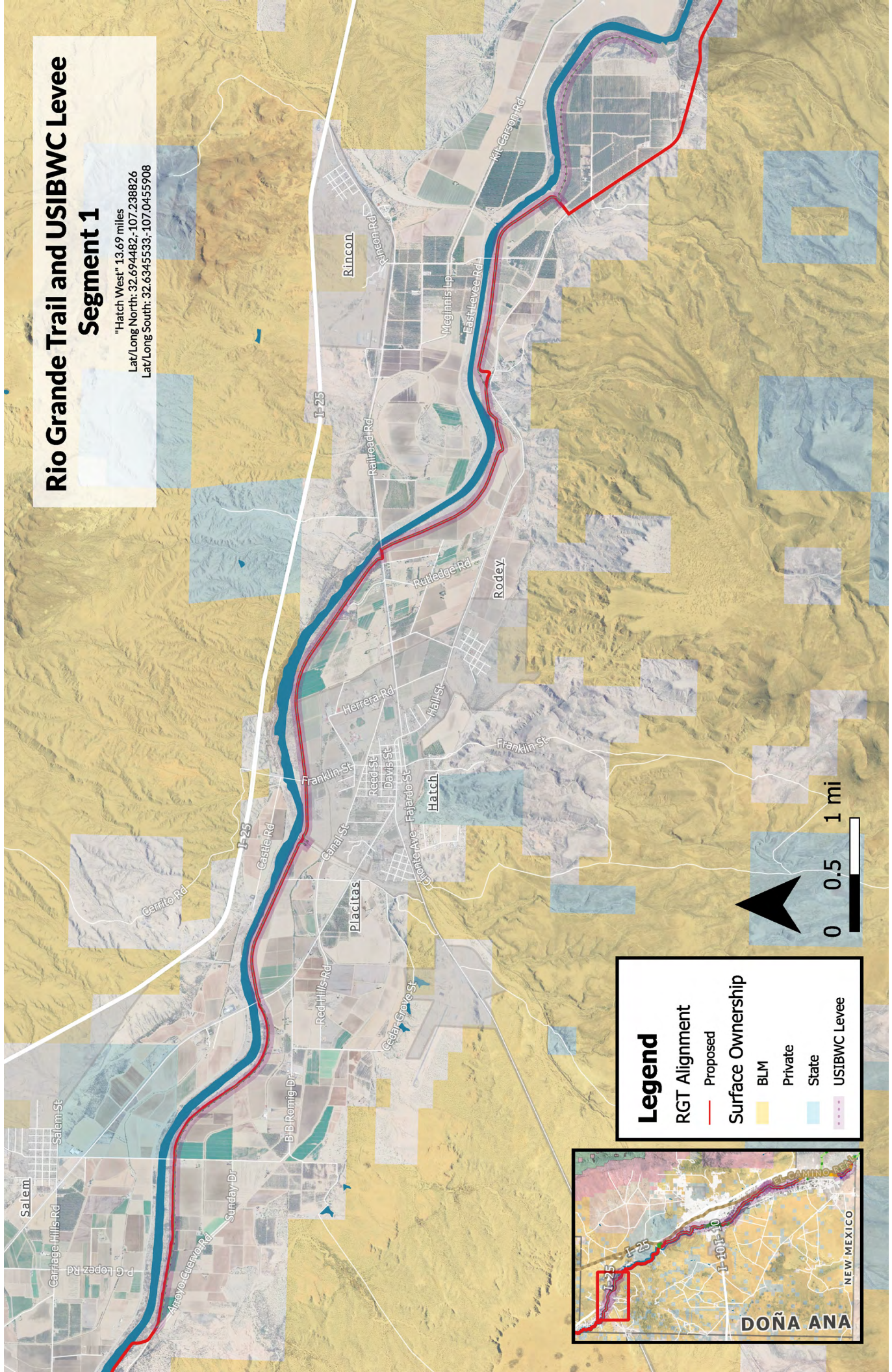
Sunland Park Trails Plan



NEW MEXICO DOÑA ANA

# Rio Grande Trail and USBWC Levee Segment 1

"Hatch West" 13.69 miles  
 Lat/Long North: 32.694482, -107.238826  
 Lat/Long South: 32.63455533, -107.0455908

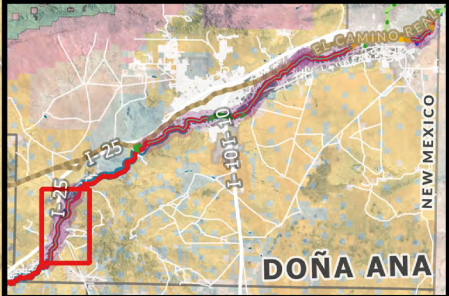


**Legend**

**RGT Alignment**  
 — Proposed

**Surface Ownership**

- BLM
- Private
- State
- USBWC Levee



DOÑA ANA

NEW MEXICO

# Rio Grande Trail and USIBWC Levee Segment 2

"Mesilla East" 12.08 miles  
Lat/Long North: 32.4675611,-106.9060064  
Lat/Long South: 32.327602,-106.832219



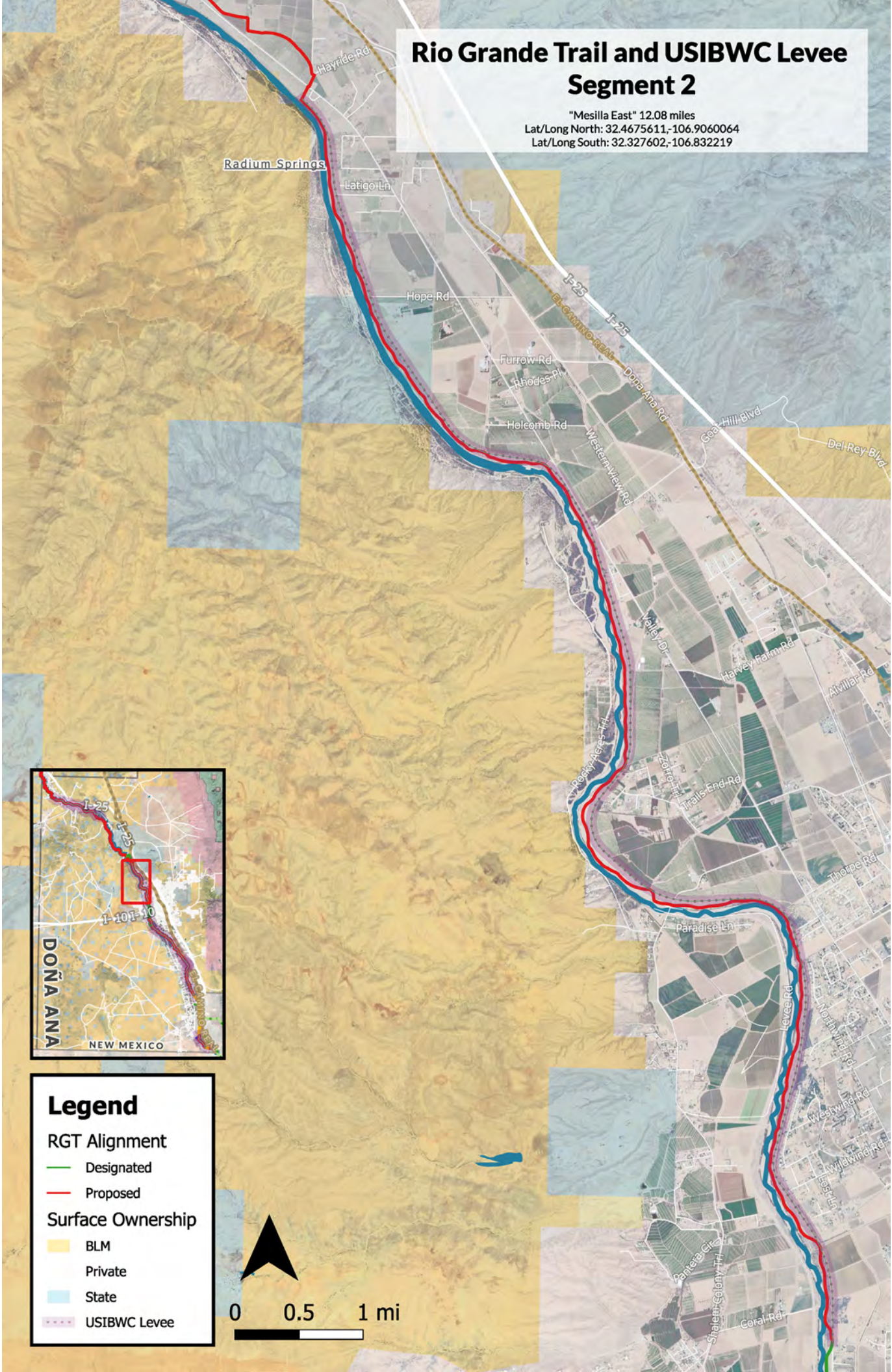
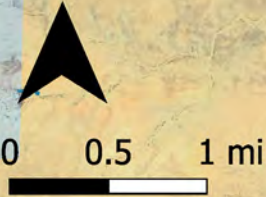
### Legend

**RGT Alignment**

- Designated (Green line)
- Proposed (Red line)

**Surface Ownership**

- BLM (Yellow)
- Private (White)
- State (Light Blue)
- USIBWC Levee (Dashed Purple line)



# Rio Grande Trail and USIBWC Levee Segment 3

"Mesilla East" 12.08 miles  
Lat/Long North: 32.4675611,-106.9060064  
Lat/Long South: 32.327602,-106.832219



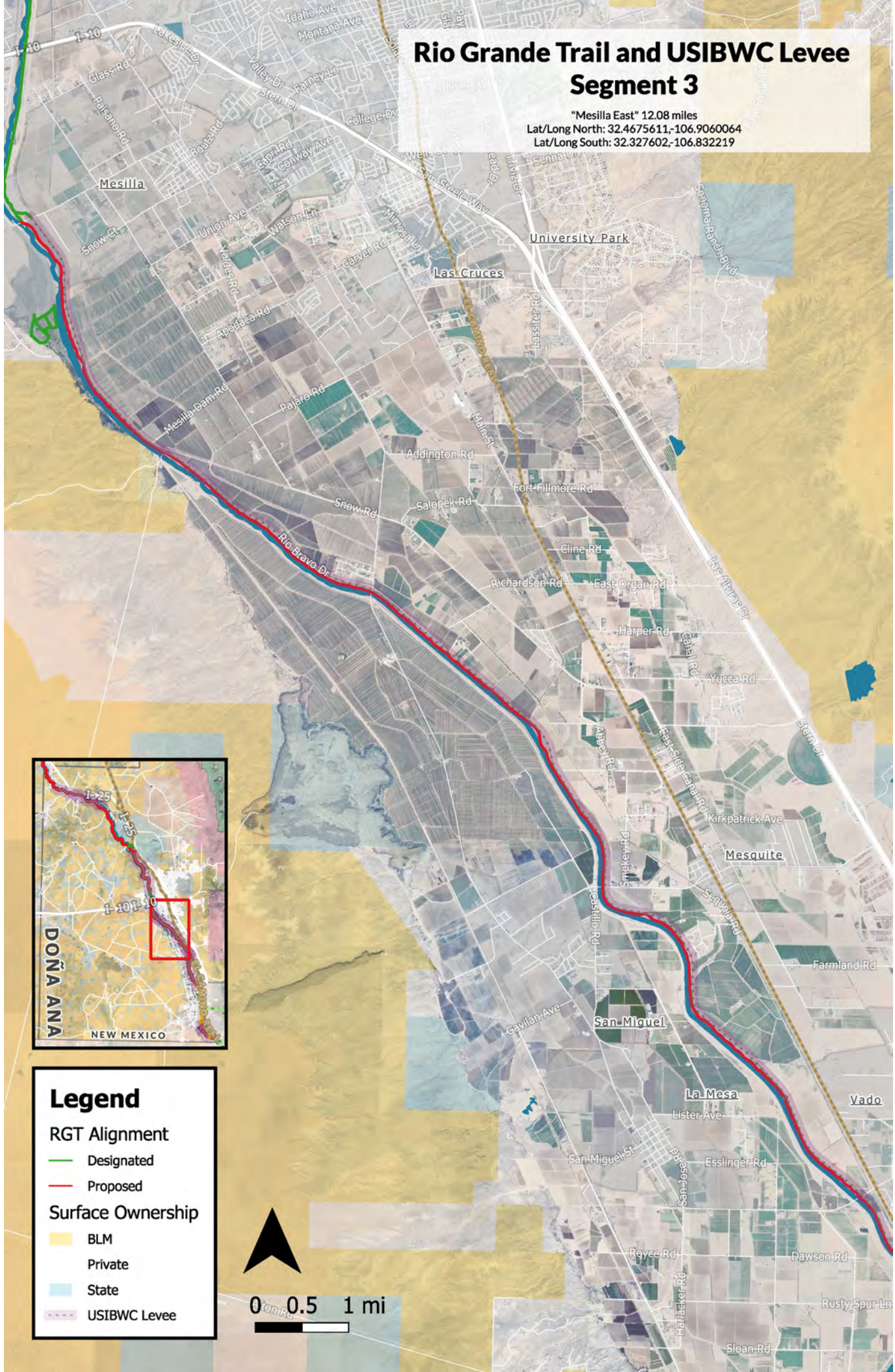
### Legend

**RGT Alignment**

- Designated (Green line)
- Proposed (Red line)

**Surface Ownership**

- BLM (Yellow)
- Private (White)
- State (Light Blue)
- USIBWC Levee (Dashed line)



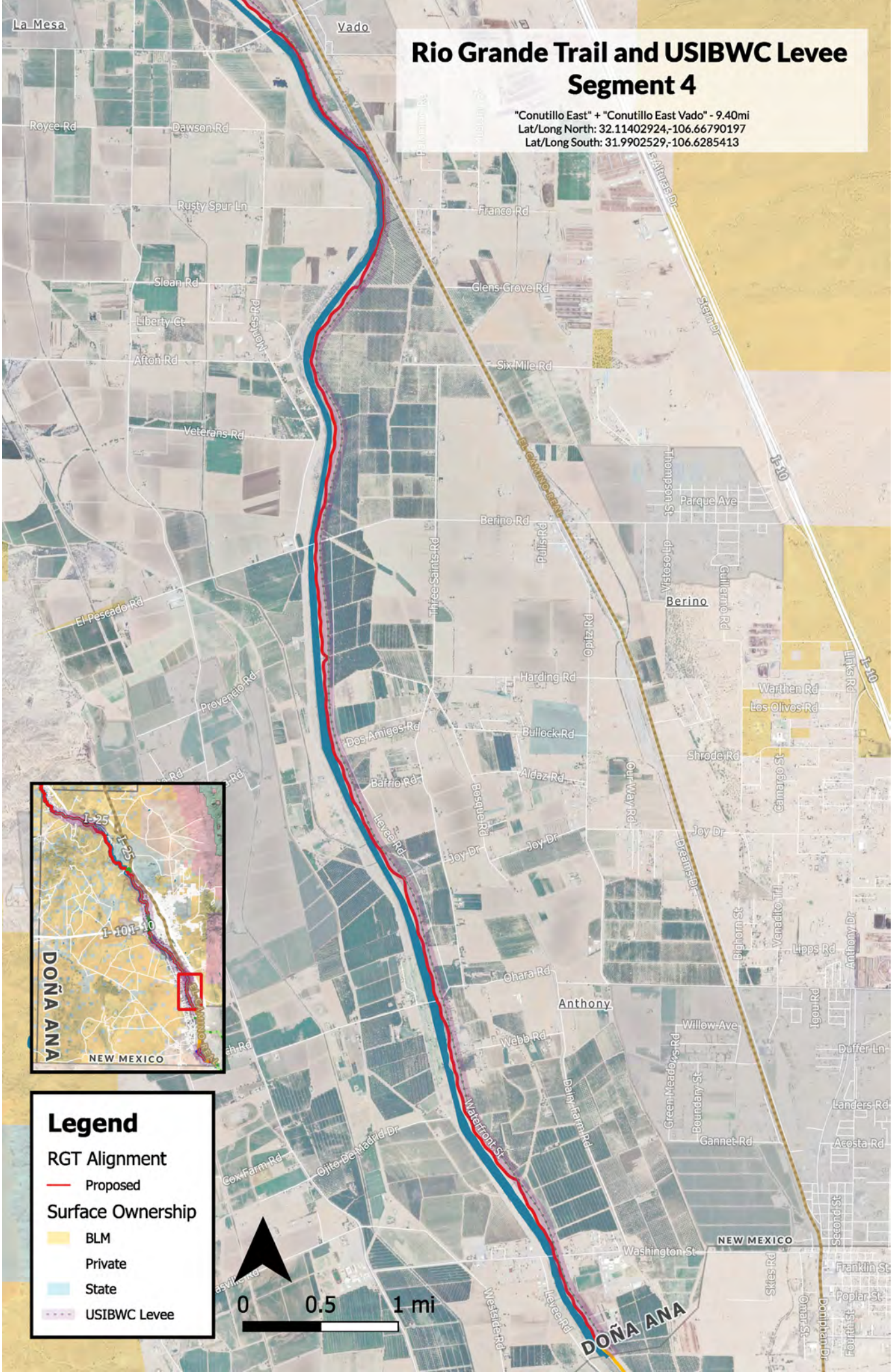
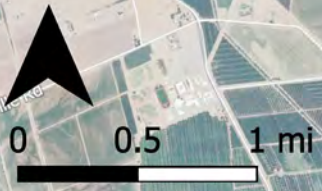
# Rio Grande Trail and USIBWC Levee Segment 4

"Conutillo East" + "Conutillo East Vado" - 9.40mi  
Lat/Long North: 32.11402924,-106.66790197  
Lat/Long South: 31.9902529,-106.6285413



### Legend

- RGT Alignment
  - Proposed
- Surface Ownership
  - BLM
  - Private
  - State
- USIBWC Levee



# Rio Grande Trail and USIBWC Levee Segments 5 and 6

Segment 5: Sunland Park East - 1.20  
 Lat/Long North: 31.8459188,-106.6047173  
 Lat/Long South: 31.8292331,-106.6049738

Segment 6: Sunland Park East - 2.16  
 Lat/Long North: 31.82493261,-106.60132646  
 Lat/Long South: 31.8029061,-106.5763124



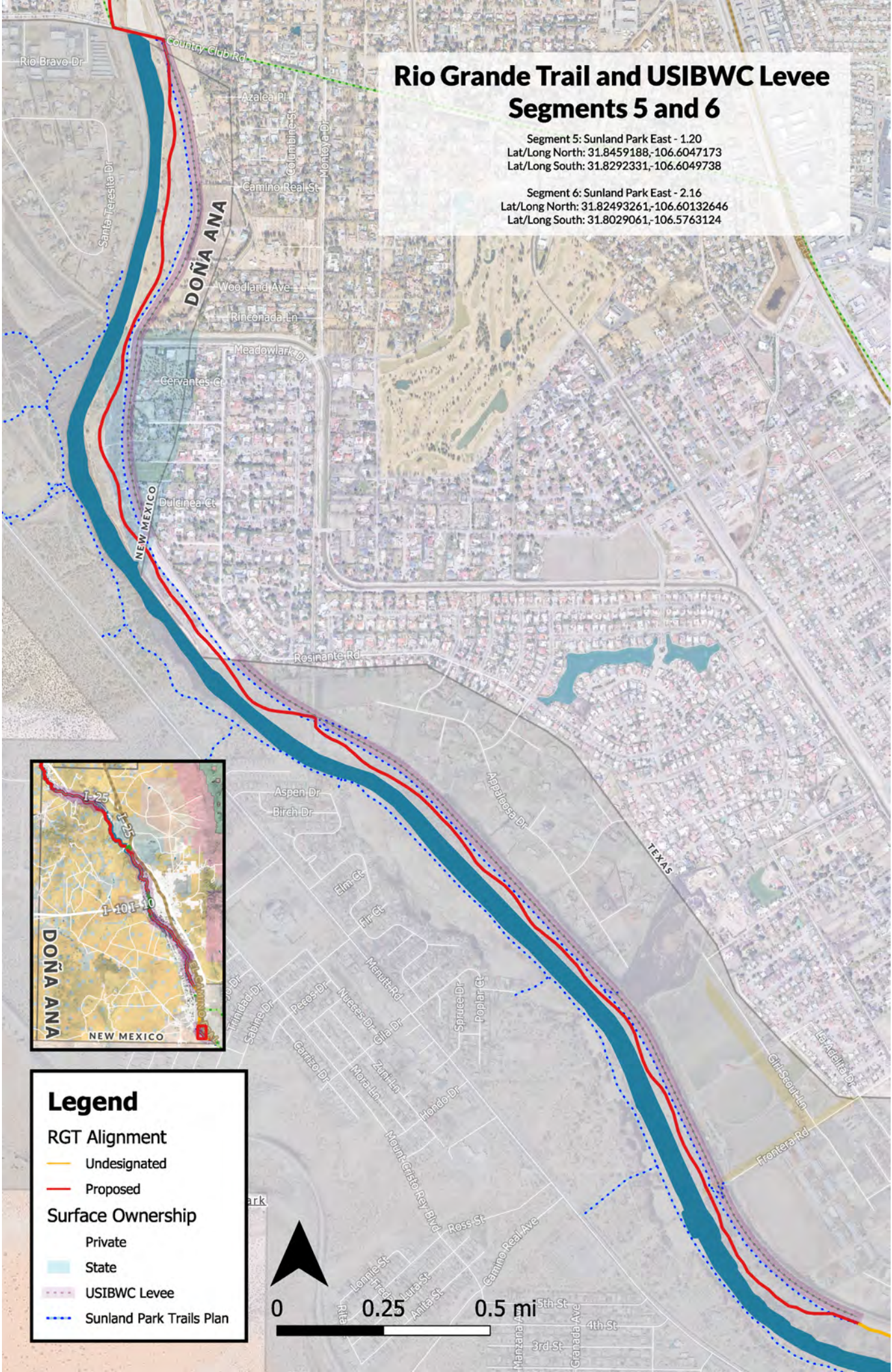
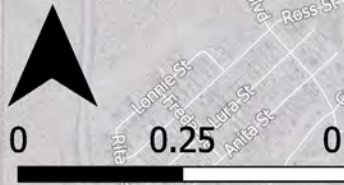
**Legend**

**RGT Alignment**

- Undesignated
- Proposed

**Surface Ownership**

- Private
- State
- USIBWC Levee
- Sunland Park Trails Plan



# ATTACHMENT L: SOUTHERN GATEWAY (DINOTRACKS) REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

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## TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-18-C

Date of Submittal: 04/10/2026  
Submittal to: RGT Commission

Approval Date (RGT Commission):

### Applicant Information

Name/Title: Mario Juarez-Infante/ City of Sunland Park, City Manager  
Name/Title:

Email: [Mario.juarez-Infante@sunlandpark-nm.gov](mailto:Mario.juarez-Infante@sunlandpark-nm.gov)

Land Owner /  Land Manager (Check which applies) /  Other

**If additional applicants:**

Name/Title: Kimberly Calkins

Email: [kimberly@insightselpaso.org](mailto:kimberly@insightselpaso.org)

Land Owner /  Land Manager (Check which applies) /  Other

### Access

**Public Access:**

Yes /  No /  With permit

**User Groups** (if not open to all the below groups, note alternate accommodation for those groups in the "Connectivity" section of the application):

Hikers /  Bikers /  Equestrians

**Surfacing:**

Paved /  Unpaved /  Blue (water)

**Universal Design/ADA Accessible:**

Yes /  No /  Partial

**Difficulty:**

Easy (mostly flat & smooth) /  Moderate (some elevation change) /

Difficult (significant elevation change)



## TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-18-C

**Traffic Flow:** The short-term realignment follows Racetrack Drive for a short segment, a low-traffic roadway. It then continues along McNutt Road, a connector with moderate traffic volumes. The alignment turns onto Cristo Rey Road for a portion of the route before arriving at the future trailhead and campground. The long-term realignment would diverge from Racetrack Drive on the south side of the river and follow the river into Texas until it reaches McNutt Road. From there, the alignment would proceed along the shoulder until turning onto Cristo Rey Road and proceeding to the future trailhead and campground site.

**Barriers:** Using McNutt Road could pose safety concerns due to heavy vehicular traffic. The long-term realignment spends more time near the river and further limits exposure to traffic.

**Signage:** No signage currently exists.

**Features:** These proposed realignments connect the urban Sunland Park area with the planned trailhead and campground at the Insight El Paso DinoTracks site. Its termination at the proposed campground creates an opportunity to establish a trailhead for the southern terminus of the New Mexico portion of the Rio Grande Trail.

### Designation Type

Proposed/  Full Designation of through trail /  Full Designation of spur trail (Check which applies)

*(Note: Proposed Designation is for proposed future trail segments; Full Designation is for existing/constructed trail segments.)*

### RGT Segment for Designation (for future identification purposes)

County	Jurisdiction	Segments	Existing Facility	Existing Facility Name	Miles	Application Type
Doña Ana County	City of Sunland Park	DA-18-C	Shared Use Path	N/A	1.06 (short term) 1.56 (long term)	Realignment
				<b>Total</b>	<b>1.06 - 1.56</b>	



## **TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION**

RGT Segments: DA-18-C

### **Location/Description of Current Alignment**

*Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.*

The current southern terminus of the Rio Grande Trail, as proposed in the 2018 master plan, travels east along Racetrack Drive until it reaches Doniphan Road at the Texas border.

### **Location/Description of Proposed New Alignment**

*Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the proposed new alignment of this trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.*

The realignment includes one short-term and two long-term alignment options.

The proposed short-term realignment travels south along Racetrack Drive before turning east onto McNutt Road. It continues along McNutt Road, then heads south on Cristo Rey Road to the planned campground.

The long-term alignment also follows Racetrack Drive south, crossing the Rio Grande before continuing along the river's southern/western bank. It then wraps around an existing neighborhood and connects to McNutt Road. From there, the route heads south along Cristo Rey Road to the planned campground.

Another variation of the long-term alignment uses Mender Park to connect more directly to McNutt Road. This option is preferred because it spends less time on McNutt Road and remains in New Mexico, reducing approval complexity.

### **Reason for New Alignment**

*Please describe the reasons for realigning this trail segment.*

The current alignment location is not an ideal terminus for several reasons. There is



## TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-18-C

limited land available for a trailhead facility. It does not connect to any other regional trail facilities. It is a highly industrialized area with high traffic volumes and speed. Racetrack Drive itself lacks sidewalks and bike facilities. An active rail facility parallel to Doniphan Drive further increases the complexity and the challenge of creating any trailhead facility here. There is hardly any space for a sign, much less other desired amenities.

### **RGT Vision**

*How does this segment support the vision of the Rio Grande Trail?*

These new segments, as proposed in this realignment application, enhance connectivity to the Rio Grande by linking to existing recreational resources. The alignments also remain closer to the river, supporting the trail's overarching goal of following the Rio Grande and expanding public access to this resource.

### **Ownership**

*Is the segment in public ownership, or are necessary easements or agreements in place? If not, describe the plan for obtaining and/or managing the trail right-of-way.*

The segment (DA-18-C) is primarily within the City of Sunland Park's jurisdiction. A small portion of one of the long-term options goes through Texas. Additionally, a portion of this realignment is within the jurisdiction of Insight El Paso's DinoTracks.

### **Public Support**

*Please indicate whether there has been any public outreach and whether there are any groups, organizations, or individuals that have demonstrated support for this trail segment.*

The City of Sunland Park has been a strong collaborator in advancing the Rio Grande Trail. Their support in seeking designation of their trail network has pushed the project forward and is aiding in the expansion of the Rio Grande Trail in southern New Mexico. Insight El Paso is also a strong supporter of the Rio Grande Trail.



## TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-18-C

### **Connectivity**

*Describe how this trail segment would provide continuity and/or connectivity within the overall Rio Grande Trail system.*

Doña Ana County currently has few designated segments of the Rio Grande Trail. Formal designation could increase access to additional resources for enhanced signage and other amenities. The site's proximity to the Rio Grande presents an opportunity to strengthen connections to this important natural resource.

Additionally, there is an opportunity to connect this segment to the Insight El Paso Dino Track site. This site, located just 1 mile southeast of the eastern terminus of this Sunland Park trail on the opposite side of the river, could serve as the southern terminus of the Rio Grande Trail. The DinoTracks site has already received funding for various trailhead amenities. Connecting these assets should be a high priority.

Looking northwest, the river crosses back into Texas approximately 4 miles from the terminus of this Sunland Park trail. At the Texas border, a paved trail, called the Rio Grande River Park Trail, already exists and continues for 11 miles. Connecting the Sunland Park trail to the Rio Grande River Park Trail should also be a high priority.

### **Impact Studies**

*Have environmental impact studies and/or cultural surveys been conducted to understand the potential impacts of trail designation? How may the impacts support existing efforts, community visions, or regional planning? (Required for full designation, optional for proposed designation)*

Segment DA-18-C will travel along existing roadways. Therefore, this requirement is not applicable.

### **Capacity to Maintain**

*How will the trail segment be maintained, and by whom?*

This segment would primarily be maintained by the City of Sunland Park. However, a co-management agreement needs to be made with the Insight El Paso DinoTracks site.



## TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments: DA-18-C

### **Public Safety**

*Indicate how public safety will be addressed.*

This trail would be primarily managed by the City of Sunland Park, providing the City of Sunland Park's police department with jurisdiction over the space.

### **Additional Documentation**

*Please provide any supporting documentation that would help the Commission evaluate your request as a separate attachment. This could include maps of the proposed route for designation, letters of support, resolutions from the respective municipality or county, existing planning studies, easement documentation, pictures of the trail, etc.*

# ATTACHMENT M: SOUTHERN GATEWAY (DINOTRACKS) REALIGNMENT MAP

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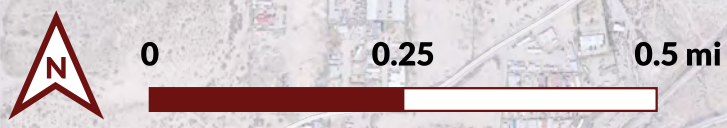
**Rio Grande Trail  
DRAFT  
Segment DA-18-C  
Southern Gateway**

Alignment 1 (Short Term): 1.06 Mi  
Alignment 2a (Long Term): 1.56 Mi  
Alignment 2b (Long Term): 1.09 Mi



### LEGEND

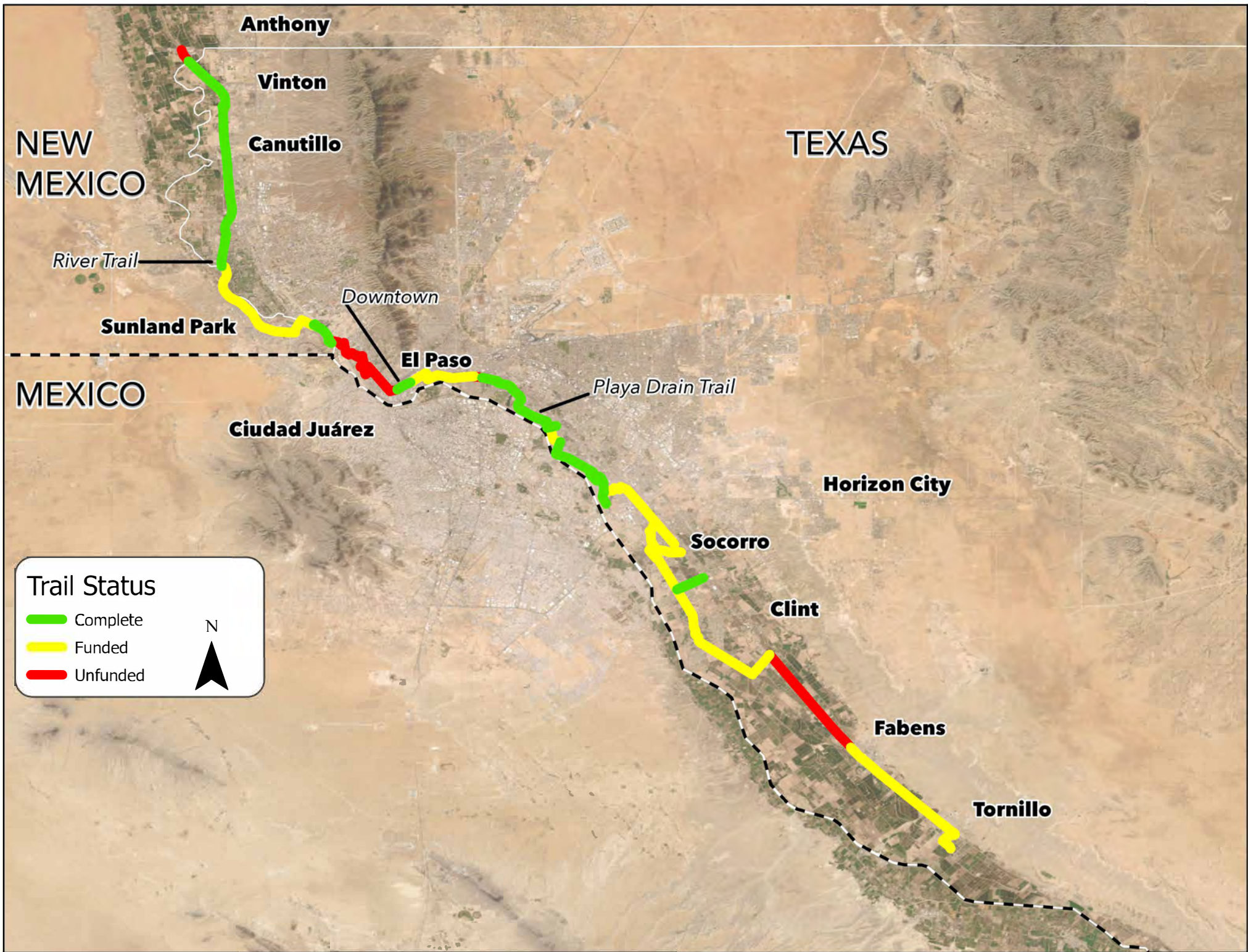
- Rio Grande Trail**
  - Undesignated
  - Proposed
- Southern Gateway Realignments**
  - 1 (Short Term)
  - 2a (Long Term)
  - 2b (Long Term)
- Other**
  - Rio Grande



# ATTACHMENT N: PASO DEL NORTE TRAILS MAP

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# ATTACHMENT O: FUNDRAISING FOR THE FUTURE POWERPOINT SLIDES

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NEW MEXICO



Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department



**Fundraising  
for the Future™**

# Building the Rio Grande Trail Association

A Community-Led Future for New  
Mexico's Cross-State Corridor

FFTF – Building the Rio Grande Trail  
Association

# Who is FFTF?



- New Mexico-based consulting firm offering expert grant writing and fundraising strategies to help nonprofits deepen their program impact
- Established in 2017; over \$40M raised
- Hired by EMNRD to form the RGT NPO
- For this RGT NPO effort, partnering with Dillon Osleger (bottom right), nonprofit strategist specializing in large-scale trails



# Why a Nonprofit Partner?

- Provides stability that outlasts political cycles and leadership changes - ensuring that commitments made to farmers, Pueblo leaders, and residents are honored over many years regardless of changes in state government.
- Acts as a bridge to local communities and serves as a single point of contact for stakeholders.
- This structure allows for fundraising agility through private grants and philanthropic funds.
- Serves as a central hub for managing volunteer trail crews and coordinating Trail Town programs.
- Holds the institutional memory of the trail corridor.



# Scope of Work & Timeline

Goal: Set up a community driven non-profit organization to support and sustain the long-term stewardship of the Rio Grande Trail.

This goal will be accomplished through the following steps:

**MARCH:** Public & Stakeholder Engagement (completed)

**MARCH:** Prospecting for potential funding sources (completed)

**APRIL:** NPO Formation (Articles and Bylaws drafted)

**APRIL:** Establish a full Board of Directors (in process)

**APRIL – MAY:** Document roles & relationships of RGT partners

**MAY – JUNE:** Board Orientation and Strategic Planning

**JUNE:** Prepare Report for RGTC

**JUNE 30:** current completion date (pending IRS processing)

# Progress Update



Task	Hours Expended	Budget Expended	Percent Complete
A. Initiate Project	22	\$3,700	95%
B. Engage Public	174	\$29,725	93%
C. Form NPO	19	\$3,325	41%
D. Establish Board	14	\$2,450	31%
E. Strategic Planning	87.5	\$12,150	38%
F. Final Report	0	\$0	0%
G. Admin	20	\$3,500	50%
<b>Totals</b>	337	\$54,850 of \$99,985	55%

# RGTA Funding Prospects



- 67 ranked prospective funders identified (1=priority; 2=good future fit; 3=conditional/ narrow angle; 4=back pocket)
- Completed research includes:
  - Contact information
  - Focus areas
  - Application processes
  - Funding cycles
  - Recommended \$ ask range
- Almost half of these funders evaluated as a priority or good future fit for the NPO

# NPO Formation Status

Secured 3 founding board members and drafted Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, which will be submitted to the IRS by the end of April.

Three founding board members:

1. **President:** Loren Bell, Executive Director, Enchanted Circle Trails
  2. **Secretary:** Katrina Arndt, Certified Planner, Dekker
  3. **Treasurer:** Kimberly Calkins Executive Director, Insights El Paso
- Articles and Bylaws will be updated in June 2026 as needed after full board is established and strategic planning completed
  - Goal to receive IRS Determination Letter by June 30 (dependent on IRS processing time)

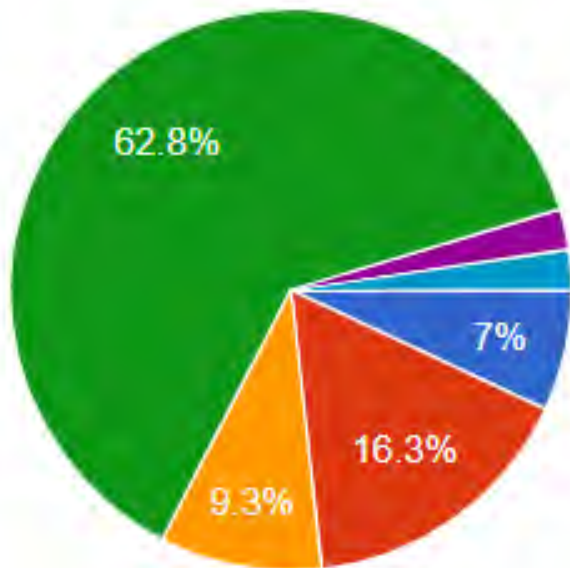
# Survey Questions

- Which of the following best describes your relationship to the Rio Grande Trail?
- Which section of the Rio Grande Trail are you most interested in or connected to?
- Which elements would you like to see reflected in the mission of the Rio Grande Trail Association?
- Are there any additional elements you would like to see included in the mission of the Rio Grande Trail Association?
- In its first two years, which of the following should be the Rio Grande Trail Association's top priorities? Which approaches would help ensure the trail respects local communities and traditional land uses?
- What structure would best help the Rio Grande Trail Association work collaboratively with communities and local governments along the trail?
- How might you be interested in supporting the Rio Grande Trail Association as it gets started?
- What experience or expertise could you contribute to the Rio Grande Trail Association?
- If you are interested in serving on the Board, an advisory group, or helping the organization in other ways, please provide your contact information: Email, Organization, City / Community
- Do you know of businesses, foundations, or funding sources the Association should contact regarding potential partnerships?
- Is there anything else you would like to share about the formation of the Rio Grande Trail Association?

# Survey Results:

## What structure is best for the Rio Grande Trail Association?

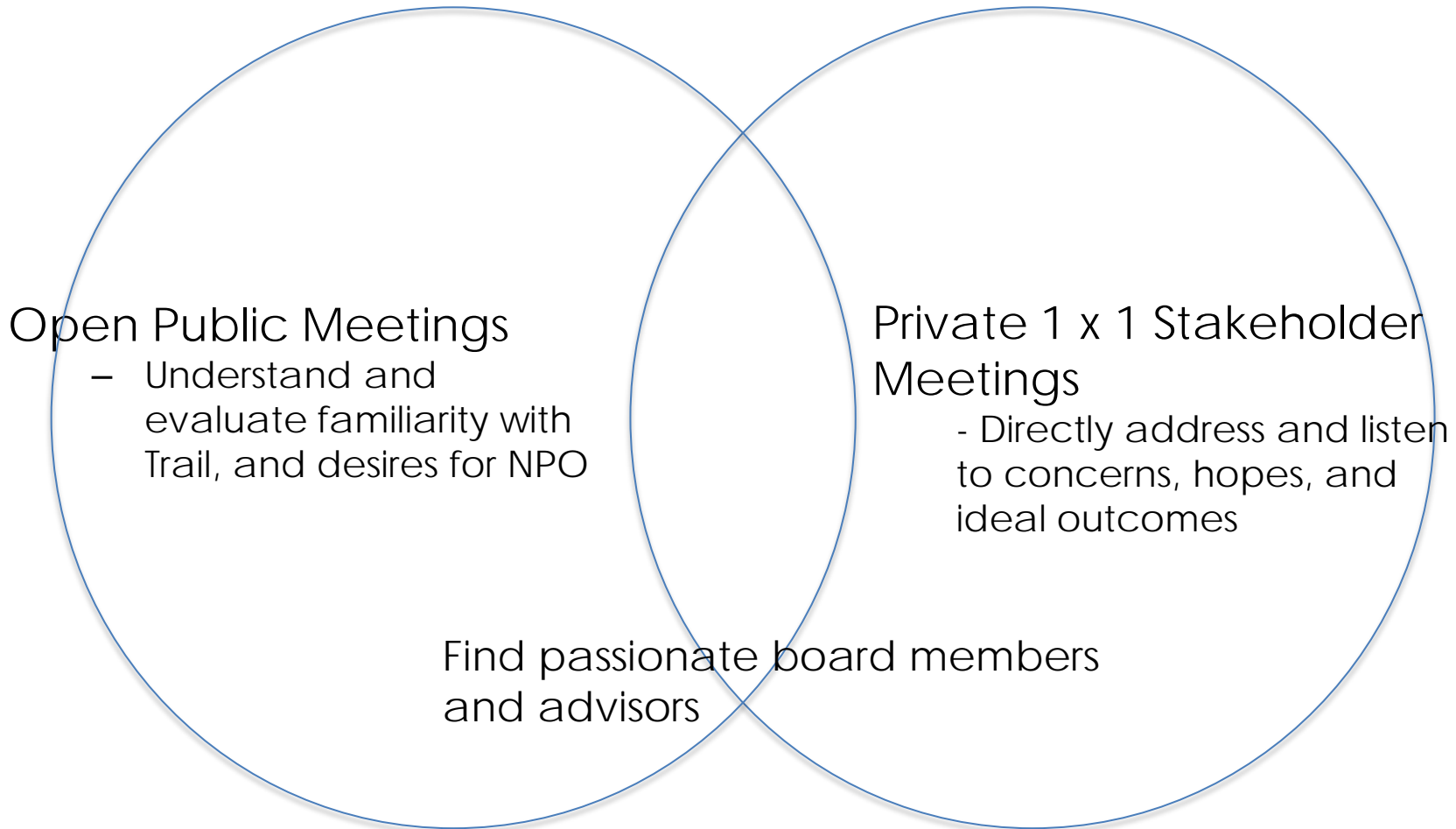
Goal: Create a board that is agile, professional, and deeply representative of the entire 500-mile corridor.



- Regional representation on the Board (north, central, south)
- Stakeholder representation (agriculture, Tribal communities, conservation, eco...)
- County or regional advisory committees that provide input to the Board
- A hybrid approach combining regional and stakeholder representation
- Get local cycling clubs to be a part of i...
- No private organizations are responsibl...

# Stakeholder Outreach

## Two Types of In-Person Engagements



# Outreach Strategies

- **Email announcements and invites:** RGT list, stakeholders, tribal contacts
- **Flyer:** distributed thru targeted public information areas, retail stores, agencies, businesses, and NPO subcommittee
- **Public Notices:** newspapers
- **Consultant personal contacts and network:** trail-relevant and industry contacts

# Public Meetings

March 23 – April 1: 9 meetings, 40 attendees

County	Date	Location	# of Attendees
Rio Arriba	March 23	Española Public Library	2
Taos	March 24	Taos Public Library	8
Santa Fe	March 25	Santa Fe Public Library	7
Sandoval	March 27	Martha Liebert Public Library (Bernalillo)	1
Bernalillo	March 27	Albuquerque Special Collections Library	4
Valencia	March 30	Los Lunas Public Library	2
Socorro	March 30	Socorro Public Library	2
Sierra	March 31	Truth or Consequences Public Library	2
Doña Ana	April 1	Thomas Branigan Memorial Library (Las Cruces)	12

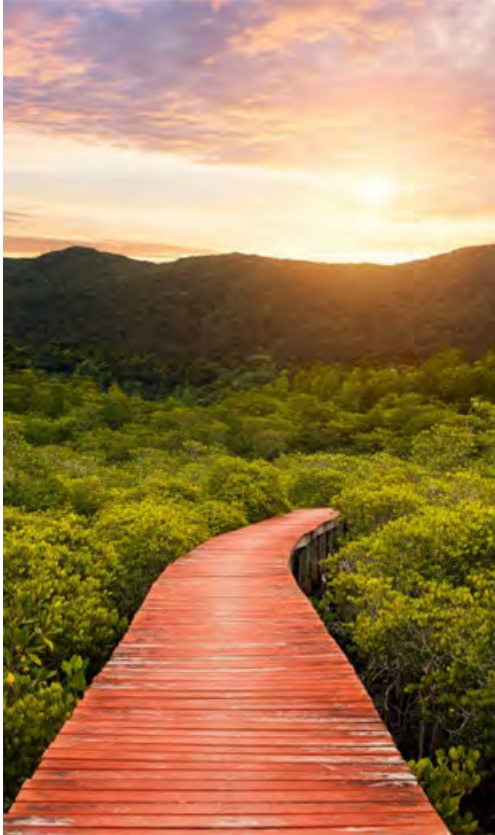
# Key Take Aways from Public Stakeholder Meetings

- Board should be pro-active & passionate
- Trail should highlight stories of people and place
- Youth should be a major focus for engagement and jobs
- Climate and lack of river flow down south need to be a part of the story
- Cultural identity is key – place names / environment presented in multiple languages (Spanish, Indigenous, as well as English)
- History of places along route is essential
- Attention and economic benefit to unincorporated / rural communities
- Necessity for local Job Opportunities
- A school curriculum / education opportunities
- Potential for seasonal closures for cultural or environmental



# Discussion: RGTC Input

# Purpose (Bylaws)



The Corporation supports, promotes, develops, coordinates, enhances, maintains, and sustains the Rio Grande Trail and related corridor initiatives; advances conservation, land stewardship, outdoor recreation, and cultural and environmental education; and collaborates with public, tribal, nonprofit, and community partners, including gateway communities along the trail corridor, to support coordination across jurisdictions.

# Purpose (Articles)

Specifically, the corporation is organized:

- To support, promote, plan, develop, coordinate, establish, enhance, maintain, steward, and ensure long-term public access to the current and future alignments of the Rio Grande Trail in New Mexico and connected trail corridors, including related facilities and amenities;
- To connect and support gateway communities along the trail corridor;
- To advance conservation, land stewardship, public access, outdoor recreation, cultural recognition and education, environmental education, and community resilience; and
- To collaborate with federal, state, tribal, regional, and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and community partners in cooperative stewardship, coordination across jurisdictions, and responsible management of public lands and trail resources.

A scenic landscape photograph of a river flowing through a deep canyon. The river is in the center, reflecting the sky. The canyon walls are rocky and have some sparse vegetation. In the background, there is a large, dark mountain range under a clear sky. The lighting suggests it might be late afternoon or early morning.

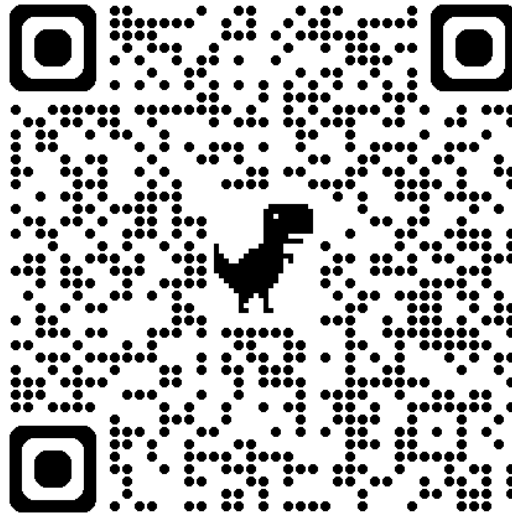
# Key Input:

## Discussion and Questions

- We will now open the floor for discussion and take questions. We are interested in hearing what success looks like for this Association in your county over the next decade. Please feel free to share your thoughts and concerns.

# How to Stay Involved

- Please scan the QR code on this slide to complete the online survey and provide detailed feedback. Throughout the spring of 2026 we will synthesize your input and use it throughout the strategic planning process.
- Survey Links: <https://forms.gle/SMuzDJTnzD8oYaEr6>



# Next Steps

- Prepare Stakeholder Engagement Report
- File the Articles of Incorporation and IRS Form 1023
- Seat the full Board of Directors and commence orientation and strategic planning
- Amend Articles and Bylaws based on Board direction (post strategic planning)
- Thursday, June 18 Public Meeting: Present final report to RGTC

# Closing and Contact

- Thank you for participating in the future of the Rio Grande Trail Association. You can find more information and project updates at [riograndetrailnm.org](http://riograndetrailnm.org). We look forward to working with you to create a lasting legacy for the state of New Mexico.



# ATTACHMENT P: FUNDRAISING FOR THE FUTURE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

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**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**  
**OF**  
**RIO GRANDE TRAIL ASSOCIATION**  
*A New Mexico Nonprofit Corporation*

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**ARTICLE I**  
**Name**

The name of the corporation is: Rio Grande Trail Association

---

**ARTICLE II**  
**Type of Corporation**

This corporation is organized as a public benefit nonprofit corporation under the New Mexico Nonprofit Corporation Act.

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**ARTICLE III**  
**Duration**

The duration of the corporation shall be perpetual.

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**ARTICLE IV**  
**Purpose**

This corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code").

Specifically, the corporation is organized:

- To support, promote, plan, develop, coordinate, establish, enhance, maintain, steward, and ensure long-term public access to the current and future alignments of the Rio Grande Trail in New Mexico and connected trail corridors, including related facilities and amenities;
- To connect and support gateway communities along the trail corridor;
- To advance conservation, land stewardship, public access, outdoor recreation, cultural recognition and education, environmental education, and community resilience; and
- To collaborate with federal, state, tribal, regional, and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and community partners in cooperative stewardship, coordination across jurisdictions, and responsible management of public lands and trail resources.

The corporation may conduct research, publish reports, provide public education, convene stakeholders, and advocate for policies and funding that support trail development and conservation objectives consistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

The corporation may apply for, receive, administer, and manage grants, contracts, contributions, and other funding from public and private sources in furtherance of its exempt purposes.

The corporation's advocacy activities shall be limited to nonpartisan education and permissible advocacy consistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

Any benefit to private landowners or other private parties resulting from the corporation's activities shall be incidental and secondary to the corporation's charitable and public purposes.

The corporation shall not be organized or operated for the private benefit of any individual or entity, and its activities shall be conducted exclusively in furtherance of its charitable purposes.

The corporation shall have all powers permitted to nonprofit corporations under the New Mexico Nonprofit Corporation Act necessary or convenient to carry out the purposes set forth in these Articles.

---

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Limitations on Activities**

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth herein.

No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, except as permitted under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code. The corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles, the corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

---

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **No Members**

The corporation shall have no voting members. All corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the authority of the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**Board of Directors**

The number of directors constituting the initial Board of Directors shall be three (3). The names and addresses of the persons who shall serve as the initial directors until their successors are duly elected and qualified are:

Katrina Arndt  
13300 Hugh Graham Rd NE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111

Loren Bell  
1103 Paseo del Pueblo Norte, Suite 4B  
El Prado, New Mexico 87529

Kimberly Calkins  
4120 Rio Bravo Street, Suite 117  
El Paso, Texas 79902

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**ARTICLE VIII**  
**Registered Agent and Registered Office**

The name of the registered agent is:

Katrina Arndt

The street address of the registered office in the State of New Mexico is:

13300 Hugh Graham Rd NE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111

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**ARTICLE IX**  
**Principal Office**

The principal office address of the corporation is:

13300 Hugh Graham Rd NE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111

The corporation may maintain additional offices as determined by the Board of Directors.

---

**ARTICLE X**  
**Dissolution**

Upon dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed exclusively for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) or the corresponding section of any

future federal tax law, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction in the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes.

---

**ARTICLE XI**  
**Indemnification**

**Section 1. General Indemnification.** The corporation shall indemnify, to the fullest extent permitted by the New Mexico Nonprofit Corporation Act, any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a director, officer, employee, or agent of the corporation. This indemnification shall include expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding.

**Section 2. Standard of Conduct.** Indemnification shall be provided only if the person acted in good faith and in a manner they reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful.

---

**ARTICLE XII**  
**Incorporator**

The name and address of the incorporator is:

Katrina Arndt  
13300 Hugh Graham Rd NE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned incorporator has executed these Articles of Incorporation on this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Katrina Arndt  
Incorporator

**STATEMENT OF ACCEPTANCE OF APPOINTMENT BY DESIGNATED INITIAL REGISTERED AGENT**

I, Katrina Arndt, hereby acknowledge that I have been named as the initial registered agent for Rio Grande Trail Association, a New Mexico nonprofit corporation.

I hereby accept the appointment as Registered Agent for said corporation and acknowledge that I am familiar with, and accept, the obligations provided for in the New Mexico Nonprofit Corporation Act (NMSA 1978 § 53-8-1 et seq.) regarding the responsibilities of a registered agent, including the requirement to maintain a registered office in New Mexico to accept service of process and other official legal notices on behalf of the corporation.

Signature of Registered Agent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 2026

# ATTACHMENT Q: FUNDRAISING FOR THE FUTURE DRAFT BYLAWS

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## DRAFT BYLAWS OF RIO GRANDE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

These Bylaws are adopted pursuant to the New Mexico Nonprofit Corporation Act (NMSA 1978, Chapter 53, Article 8), as amended.

**NOTE: Bylaws likely to be amended after completion of the strategic planning process.**

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### TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Article I – Name and Purpose**

**Article II – No Members**

**Article III – Authority and Duties of the Board**

**Article IV – Board Composition and Terms**

**Article V – Officers**

**Article VI – Meetings of the Board**

**Article VII – Committees**

**Article VIII – Advisory Board**

**Article IX – Conflict of Interest**

**Article X – Related Party Transactions**

**Article XI – Financial Oversight**

**Article XII – Indemnification**

**Article XIII – Fiscal Year**

**Article XIV – Public Benefit, Stewardship, and Accountability**

**Article XV – Records**

**Article XVI – Amendments**

**Article XVII – Limitations**

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### ARTICLE I

#### ***NAME AND PURPOSE***

##### Section 1. Name

The name of the corporation is Rio Grande Trail Association (the “Corporation”).

##### Section 2. Purpose

The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The Corporation supports, promotes, develops, coordinates, enhances, maintains, and sustains the Rio Grande Trail and related corridor initiatives; advances conservation,

land stewardship, outdoor recreation, and cultural and environmental education; and collaborates with public, tribal, nonprofit, and community partners, including gateway communities along the trail corridor, to support coordination across jurisdictions.

The Corporation may engage in advocacy and limited lobbying consistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

---

## **ARTICLE II**

### ***NO MEMBERS***

The Corporation shall have no voting members. All corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the authority of the Board of Directors.

---

## **ARTICLE III**

### ***AUTHORITY AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS***

#### Section 1. Governing Authority

The affairs, activities, and property of Rio Grande Trail Association (the “Corporation”) shall be managed under the direction of its Board of Directors (the “Board”), which shall exercise all corporate powers except as otherwise provided by law, the Articles of Incorporation, or these Bylaws.

---

#### Section 2. Fiduciary Duties

Directors shall discharge their duties:

- (a) In good faith;
- (b) With the care an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances;
- (c) In a manner reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Corporation.

Directors owe duties of care, loyalty, and obedience to the mission of the Corporation.

---

#### Section 3. Strategic and Financial Oversight

The Board shall be responsible for:

- Safeguarding the charitable mission of the Corporation;
  - Establishing organizational policy;
  - Approving annual budgets;
  - Ensuring financial integrity and responsible stewardship of funds;
  - Overseeing compliance with applicable laws and grant requirements;
  - Overseeing staff and contractor performance, until such time as organizational staff are in place to assume this function.
  - Supporting long-term sustainability of the Rio Grande Trail and related initiatives.
- 

## **ARTICLE IV**

### ***BOARD COMPOSITION AND TERMS***

#### **Section 1. Number of Directors**

The Board shall consist of not fewer than three (3) and not more than nine (9) directors. The exact number shall be determined by resolution of the Board.

---

#### **Section 2. Qualifications**

Directors shall support the mission of the Corporation and bring skills, experience, or community perspective relevant to the Corporation’s charitable purposes.

---

#### **Section 3. Board Composition and Representation Goals**

In selecting directors, the Board shall strive to cultivate a governing body that reflects:

##### **(a) Geographic Representation**

Communities and agencies along and connected to the Rio Grande Trail corridor, including both urban and rural areas.

##### **(b) Stakeholder Representation**

Experience in conservation, trail development, public infrastructure, environmental education, tribal and sovereign partnerships, government relations, fundraising, finance, marketing, community development, and related fields.

**(c) Diversity of Background and Perspective**

A range of lived experiences and community perspectives reflective of the populations served by the Corporation.

These goals are aspirational and shall not require specific quotas or invalidate Board actions if not fully achieved.

The Board shall seek to avoid concentration of directors from any single geographic region and shall strive to maintain balanced representation across the Rio Grande Trail corridor. In making appointments, the Board shall consider the overall composition of the Board to promote broad geographic perspective and avoid regional dominance.

Directors shall serve in their individual capacity and not as formal representatives of any governmental agency, organization, or entity. Nothing in this provision is intended to discourage participation by individuals with relevant professional affiliations; however, each director shall exercise independent judgment in furtherance of the Corporation's charitable mission.

---

**Section 4. Terms of Office**

Directors shall serve three (3) year terms and may serve up to two consecutive terms unless otherwise determined by the Board.

The Board shall establish and maintain staggered terms of office to promote continuity of governance and institutional stability.

To the extent practicable, approximately one-third of director terms shall expire each year. In implementing staggered terms, the Board may assign initial terms of varying lengths to achieve the desired distribution of term expirations.

The Board shall seek to avoid the simultaneous expiration of a majority of director terms.

---

**Section 5. Election**

Directors shall be elected by majority vote of the directors then in office.

---

**Section 6. Vacancies**

Any vacancy occurring on the Board may be filled by majority vote of the remaining directors.

### Section 7. Removal

A director may be removed, with or without cause, by a two-thirds vote of the directors then in office whenever removal is deemed to be in the best interests of the Corporation.

---

### Section 8. Compensation

Directors shall not receive compensation for their service as directors. Directors may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, consistent with policies adopted by the Board.

---

## **ARTICLE V**

### ***OFFICERS***

#### Section 1. Officers Required

The officers of the Corporation shall consist of a President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Board may establish additional officer positions as it deems appropriate.

The offices of President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be held by separate individuals, unless otherwise determined by the Board due to temporary necessity.

---

#### Section 2. Election and Term of Office

Officers shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors and shall serve until their successors are elected and qualified, unless earlier removed in accordance with these Bylaws.

---

#### Section 3. Duties of Officers

##### (a) President

The President shall preside at meetings of the Board, provide leadership to the Corporation, and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board.

##### (b) Secretary

The Secretary shall maintain accurate minutes of meetings of the Board and

committees, ensure that required notices are given, maintain corporate records, and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board.

(c) Treasurer

The Treasurer shall oversee the financial affairs of the Corporation, ensure that accurate financial records are maintained, present financial reports to the Board at least quarterly, and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board.

---

Section 4. Removal of Officers

Any officer may be removed, with or without cause, by majority vote of the Board whenever removal is deemed to be in the best interests of the Corporation.

---

Section 5. Vacancies

A vacancy in any office shall be filled by the Board for the unexpired portion of the term.

---

Section 6. Execution of Documents

The Board may authorize any officer, the Executive Director (if any), or agent of the Corporation to enter into contracts or execute and deliver instruments in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

---

Section 7. Executive Director

The Board of Directors may employ an Executive Director (or Chief Executive Officer) to serve as the chief administrative officer of the Corporation.

The Executive Director shall be hired by, report to, and serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall be responsible for the day-to-day management and operations of the Corporation, consistent with the policies and direction established by the Board.

The Executive Director may serve as a non-voting, ex officio participant in meetings of the Board and its committees, unless otherwise determined by the Board.

The Executive Director shall have such authority as may be delegated by the Board, including authority to execute contracts and other instruments on behalf of the Corporation as authorized by Board policy or resolution.

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## **ARTICLE VI**

### ***MEETINGS OF THE BOARD***

#### **Section 1. Regular Meetings**

The Board shall meet at least quarterly at such times and places as determined by the Board.

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#### **Section 2. Annual Meeting**

The Board of Directors shall hold an Annual Meeting each year at a time determined by the Board.

At the Annual Meeting, the Board shall:

- (a) Review and approve the Corporation's annual operating budget;
- (b) Elect directors and officers as needed;
- (c) Review the Corporation's financial condition and activities, including receipt of financial reports;
- (d) Review and affirm key governance policies, including conflict of interest disclosures as applicable; and
- (e) Receive and consider an annual report on the Corporation's programs, operations, and strategic priorities.

The Annual Meeting may include such other business as may properly come before the Board.

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#### **Section 3. Special Meetings**

Special meetings may be called by the President or by any two directors.

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Section 4. Notice

Notice of meetings shall be provided in accordance with applicable law, including the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, and may be delivered electronically.

Notice of regular meetings shall be provided at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance, and notice of special meetings shall be provided at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance, unless otherwise permitted by applicable law or Board resolution.

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Section 5. Quorum

A majority of the directors then in office shall constitute a quorum.

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Section 6. Voting

Each director shall have one vote. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, action shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is established.

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Section 7. Participation by Electronic Means

Directors may participate in any meeting of the Board by means of conference telephone, video conferencing, or other electronic communication technology that allows all participants to simultaneously hear or communicate with one another. Participation in such a meeting shall constitute presence in person.

---

Section 8. Action Without a Meeting

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Directors may be taken without a meeting if a majority of the directors then in office consent in writing or by electronic transmission to such action, unless a greater vote is required by these Bylaws or applicable law.

Such written or electronic consent shall have the same force and effect as a vote taken at a duly called meeting of the Board.

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## **ARTICLE VII**

### ***COMMITTEES***

The Board may establish standing or special committees, including but not limited to governance, finance, and other committees, as it deems appropriate.

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#### **Section 1. Governance and Nominating Committee**

The Governance and Nominating Committee shall:

- Identify and recommend director candidates;
- Assess board composition gaps;
- Oversee orientation and governance education;
- Review bylaws and governance policies;
- Promote effective governance practices.

The Committee shall consist of at least two directors appointed by the Board.

No committee shall exercise authority reserved to the Board under applicable law unless expressly delegated by resolution of the Board. All committee actions shall be subject to review by the Board.

---

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### ***ADVISORY BOARD***

#### **Section 1. Establishment**

The Board may establish an Advisory Board to provide expertise, stakeholder representation, and community insight.

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#### **Section 2. Status**

Advisory Board members:

- Are not directors;
- Do not vote;
- Do not count toward quorum;

- Do not exercise governing authority.

They serve in a non-voting advisory capacity only.

---

### Section 3. Appointment and Removal

Advisory Board members shall be appointed and may be removed by the Board.

---

### Section 4. Conflict of Interest

Advisory Board members shall comply with the Corporation’s Conflict of Interest Policy.

---

### Section 5. Regional Advisory Groups

The Board of Directors may establish one or more Regional Advisory Groups to provide localized input, stakeholder engagement, and community perspective in support of the Corporation’s mission along the Rio Grande Trail corridor.

Regional Advisory Groups may be organized by geographic area or region and may include representatives of local communities, land managers, tribal or sovereign entities, recreation stakeholders, and other relevant partners.

Regional Advisory Groups shall serve in a non-voting, advisory capacity only and shall not exercise governing authority or act on behalf of the Board.

The Board may determine the structure, scope, membership, and duration of such groups and may appoint or remove participants at its discretion.

Members of Regional Advisory Groups shall comply with applicable policies of the Corporation, including conflict of interest requirements, as determined by the Board.

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## **ARTICLE IX**

### ***CONFLICT OF INTEREST***

The Corporation shall maintain and enforce a Conflict of Interest Policy requiring disclosure of actual, potential, or perceived conflicts and recusal when appropriate.

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## **ARTICLE X**

### ***RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS***

The Corporation shall maintain a written Related Party Transaction Policy governing transactions or arrangements between the Corporation and any director, officer, or other individual or entity in which such person has a financial or personal interest.

Such policy shall require disclosure of the relevant interest, independent review by disinterested directors, and a determination that the transaction is fair, reasonable, and in the best interests of the Corporation, and that the terms are comparable to those that could be obtained in an arm's-length transaction.

---

## **ARTICLE XI**

### ***FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT***

The Board shall adopt and maintain financial controls to ensure:

- Protection of assets;
- Accurate reporting;
- Compliance with grant requirements;
- Responsible stewardship of public and private funds.

The Treasurer shall present financial reports at least quarterly.

---

## **ARTICLE XII**

### ***INDEMNIFICATION***

To the fullest extent permitted by New Mexico law, the Corporation shall indemnify any person who is or was a director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation against liabilities incurred in the course of their duties to the Corporation, provided they acted in good faith and in the best interests of the Corporation.

The Corporation may advance expenses incurred by a director or officer in defending a proceeding in advance of final disposition upon receipt of a written undertaking by or on behalf of such individual to repay such amount if it is ultimately determined that the individual is not entitled to indemnification under applicable law.

The Corporation shall seek to purchase and maintain directors' and officers' liability insurance (D&O insurance) and such other insurance as the Board of Directors deems appropriate to protect the Corporation and its directors, officers, employees, and agents against liabilities arising from their service to the Corporation.

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## **ARTICLE XIII**

### ***FISCAL YEAR***

The fiscal year shall be January 1 through December 31 unless otherwise determined by the Board.

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## **ARTICLE XIV**

### ***PUBLIC BENEFIT, STEWARDSHIP, AND ACCOUNTABILITY***

#### **Section 1. Public Benefit Commitment**

The Corporation affirms that its activities are undertaken for the benefit of the public and the communities served along the Rio Grande Trail corridor. The Corporation shall operate in a manner that promotes transparency, inclusiveness, and responsible stewardship of public and charitable resources.

To further these principles, the Corporation may provide opportunities for public observation or participation in meetings, as appropriate, and shall make information regarding its activities, governance, and finances reasonably available to the public, consistent with applicable law and Board policy.

---

#### **Section 2. Stewardship of Public Funds**

In accepting public grants or government funding, the Corporation commits to:

- Complying fully with all applicable laws, regulations, and grant requirements;
- Using funds solely for authorized purposes;
- Maintaining accurate financial records;
- Submitting required reports in a timely and transparent manner.

### Section 3. Infrastructure and Environmental Stewardship

In furtherance of its mission, the Corporation shall seek to support trail development and related infrastructure in a manner that:

- Promotes environmentally responsible practices;
  - Respects cultural, tribal, and sovereign interests;
  - Encourages long-term maintenance and sustainability planning; and
  - Coordinates responsibly with land managers and governmental authorities.
- 

### Section 4. Community Accountability

The Corporation shall endeavor to engage affected communities and stakeholders in a manner consistent with its mission and representation goals and shall seek to maintain public trust in all activities.

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## **ARTICLE XV**

### ***RECORDS***

The Corporation shall maintain accurate and complete books and records of account and shall keep minutes of the proceedings of the Board and any committees. The Corporation shall maintain a current record of directors and officers and shall retain copies of its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. Records shall be maintained in accordance with applicable law.

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## **ARTICLE XVI**

### ***AMENDMENTS***

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Board.

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**ARTICLE XVII**

***LIMITATIONS***

No part of the net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any private individual except as reasonable compensation for services rendered.

The Corporation shall not participate in political campaign activity and shall engage only in limited lobbying consistent with Section 501(c)(3).

Upon dissolution of the Corporation, assets shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation.

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**CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION**

These Bylaws of Rio Grande Trail Association were adopted by the Board of Directors on the \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026, and supersede any prior bylaws of the Corporation.

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Secretary

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# ATTACHMENT R: FY27 PROGRAM MANAGEMENT PLAN DRAFT

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**OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION**  
**FY 27 Program Management Plan**

**DRAFT**



**OFFICE OF THE**  
**RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION**  
**FY 27 Program Management Plan**

**APRIL 10, 2026**



**OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION**

**FY 27 Program Management Plan**

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# OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

## FY 27 Program Management Plan

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## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

### FY 27 Program Management Plan

## INTRODUCTION

The following discussions present and define the Office of The Rio Grande Trail Commission's (Office – RGTC) FY 27 Program Management Plan (PgMP) to provide a value proposition and action plan to advance the vision and goals leading to the formation of the Rio Grande Trail. It is envisioned that the timely and efficient management and execution of this plan will provide immediate benefits to the people of New Mexico and aid in establishing the Rio Grande Trail (RGT) as a world-class recreational attraction.

### 1. VISION AND GOALS OF THE RGTC

**1.1 Vision:** In 2015, state legislation: The Rio Grande Trail Commission Act (HB 563)<sup>1</sup> Section 1A, solidified New Mexico's vision of a 500-mile cross-state recreational trail and established the Rio Grande Trail Commission to oversee its development. As part of this master planning process, the Commission adopted the following vision statement:

*“The Rio Grande Trail is New Mexico’s cross-state, recreational trail for hiking, biking, and horseback riding along the Rio Grande. Trail users explore, learn about, and connect with a tapestry of diverse natural habitats, rich history, striking landscapes, and vibrant communities. The trail contributes to cultural and environmental awareness, healthy lifestyles, spiritual growth, and economic prosperity for New Mexico and its visitors.”*

**1.2 Goals:** The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) commissioned the Rio Grande Trail Commission based on the HB563, and in partnership with New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the State Trails System Act<sup>2</sup> to guide the development of trail alignment and overall vision of the trail. The goals of the plan are defined as follow:

- **1.2.1 Collaboration:** The RGT Master Plan calls for the following partnering, coordination and collaboration:
  - **Coordinate With El Camino Real Historic Trail:** “The commission shall collaborate and cooperate with the National Park Service’s historic trails project for the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail from Mexico to northern New Mexico when appropriate”
  - **Engage With Partner Agencies:** “consult with representatives of the following regarding issues within their jurisdiction in development of the Rio Grande trail: each of the conservancy or irrigation districts served by water in the Rio Grande; acequias, counties, land grants, municipalities, and Pueblos adjoining the Rio Grande”

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Legislation/Legislation?Chamber=H&LegType=B&LegNo=563&year=15>

<sup>2</sup> <https://nmonesource.com/nmos/nmsa/en/item/4390/index.do#a3>



## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

### FY 27 Program Management Plan

- **Seek Public Input On The Trail Route:** “prior to making any final decisions regarding trail designation, design and construction, hold public meetings to solicit public input and allow for a written comment period”; “actively engage the public in the planning process of the Rio Grande trail”.
- **1.1.2 Planning:** The planning process adheres to a clear set of principles established in the state law NMSA 1978 Section 9-5C-1<sup>3</sup> retrieved on 11/03/2025 and consistent throughout every phase of the process. Planning will also provide inspiration and guidance for New Mexicans and trail users wanting to learn more about the trail vision and what it may mean for their community. The statute specifies:
  - **Ensure A Voluntary Process:** “only land that is expressly authorized by the owner, including Indian nations, tribes or Pueblos, for inclusion in the Rio Grande trail and not to be acquired by eminent domain”; “Eminent domain shall not be used to establish or construct the Rio Grande trail or features, facilities or enhancements associated with the trail.”
  - **Use Existing Trails Along The Rio Grande Corridor:** “to the extent feasible, select existing trails for the route of the Rio Grande trail”; “to the extent feasible, in the case of non- motorized existing trails, avoid widening these trails;”
  - **Minimize Environmental Impacts:** “ensure that any recommended designation, construction and use of the trail will minimize environmental impacts”
  - **Preserve Sensitive Habitats:** “endeavor to avoid areas of significant habitat value and ensure that any recommended designation, design, construction or use of the trail will minimize the impact on habitat”, and
  - **Prioritize Non-Motorized Use:** “in the case of new trails on public lands, construct the trails for non-motorized use; provided, however, that such trails may, but are not required to, be open to power-driven mobility devices for individuals with mobility impairments”

## 2. PURPOSE & SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE OFFICE – RGTC

**2.1 Purpose:** In order to achieve the goals defined above, EMNRD and the Commission created the Office of the Rio Grande Trail Commission to manage the appropriations granted by the State. The Office – RGTC provides management of funds, contract management, ensuring funds are appropriately spent, and ensuring the Commission complies with statutory requirements to have 3 RGTC meetings per year.

<sup>3</sup> <https://nmonesource.com/nmos/nmsa/en/item/4357/index.do#9-5C-1>



## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

### FY 27 Program Management Plan

The Commission was reconstituted by EMNRD in early 2025 after a hiatus due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. In this new capacity, the Office -RGTC will:

1. Support the Commission's authority under:
  - 2015, HB 563
  - Master Plan Goals
  - General Appropriation Act of 2025
  - The State Trails System Act
2. Prepare recommendations to the legislature, and
3. Prepare reports to the Governor and the appropriate interim committees that measure, evaluate and report actual work accomplishments against the fiscal year Management Plan to define opportunities for continuous improvement.

**2.2 Scope of Work (SOW):** To achieve this purpose, the Office-RGTC has defined the following Scope of Work for FY 27:

#### **2.2.1 Task #1: Develop Resource Capability And Operational Governance, Processes And Procedures:**

- **Activity 1.1: Identify New And Revitalize Existing Working Groups.** Since the development and publication of the RGT Master Plan in 2018, the development of the Rio Grande Trail has been relegated to the following four activities to be executed by respective Office -RGTC Subcommittees:
  1. Tribal Engagement Subcommittee: The Tribal Subcommittee was created to represent tribal interests and ensure trail-related decisions are informed by tribal perspectives. The subcommittee provides input on current and future trail alignments, offers a forum to raise concerns and opportunities, and helps share trail-related information with tribal communities.
  2. Alignment Subcommittee: The Alignment Subcommittee was established to guide the development, identification, and designation of trail alignments for the RGT. The subcommittee will help set priorities for trail segment designations and identify existing and future alignments to be considered for inclusion in the master plan trail system.
  3. Legislative Subcommittee: The Legislative subcommittee will champion and support legislative efforts related to the Rio Grande Trail. This committee will help guide, recommend, and advance legislative actions needed to implement the trail, support its development, and build long-term capacity.

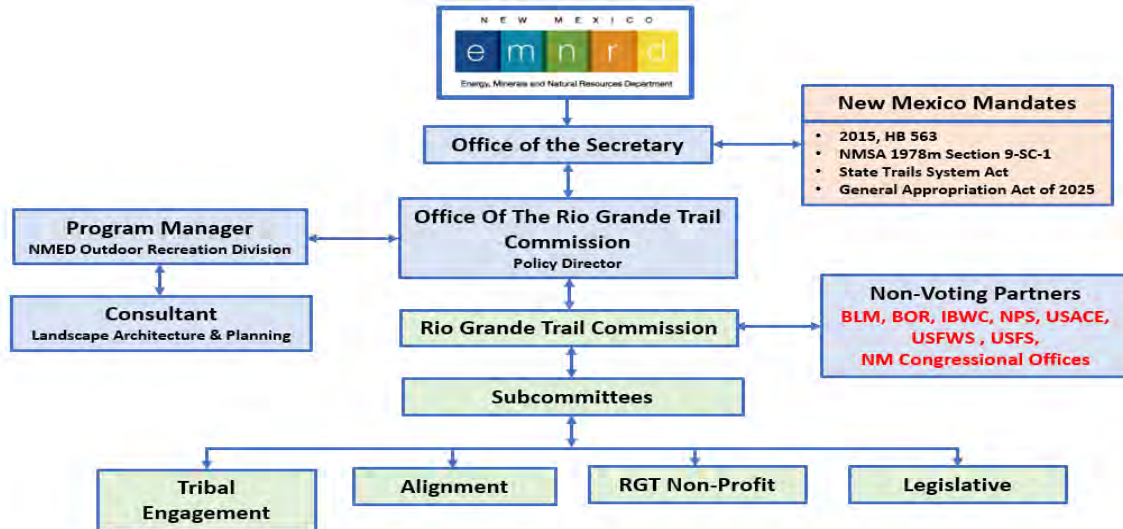


## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

### FY 27 Program Management Plan

4. Non-Profit Subcommittee: The Non-Profit subcommittee will establish and work with an independent Rio Grande Trail Non-Profit Organization focused on building capacity, coordinating resources, and ensuring the trail’s ongoing development, management, and stewardship for years to come.”

**Figure 1**, FY 27 Office – RGTC Collaborative Organization Structure presents the organizational structure developed by the Office-RGTC to perform the required WORK collaboratively in a timely and cost-efficient manner.



**Figure 1: FY 27 Office – RGTC Collaborative Organization Structure**

- **Activity 1.2: Develop And Commission Resource Capability:** In the beginning of 2025, the new Office - RGTC conducted a recruitment program to fill openings in the 12-seat commission as established by statute. The resulting Commission organization is shown in Figure 1, FY 27 Office – RGTC Commissioner Organization Chart with roles and responsibilities defined in **Table 1**, RGTC Commissioner Roles and Responsibilities.
- **Activity 1.3: Compliance with EMNRD Standardized Governance, Processes and Procedures:** The Chairman of the Office- RGTC is the only member of the Commission with the authority to enter into any agreements or commitments with external stakeholders or other public entities that may be associated with the performance of the WORK defined herein. The Chairman will follow the governance, policies and procedures establish by the Secretary of ENMRD and will seek guidance and support whenever necessary.



**OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION**  
**FY 27 Program Management Plan**

RGTC Partner	Name	Affiliation	Primary Role and Responsibility
EMNRD Secretary	Melanie A. Kenderdine	Office of the Secretary	Officially designates RGT trail segments
Office of The Rio Grande Trail Commissioner	Ben Bajema	Office of the Secretary, Policy Director	(1) Manages the appropriations granted by the State and ensures funds are appropriately spent (2) Provides contract management, (3) Ensures the Commission complies with statutory requirements to have 3 RGTC meetings per year. (4) Supports trail-based economic growth.
New Mexico Economic Development Department - Outdoor Recreation Division	Carl Colonius	Program Manager	Provides technical guidance to the Office Of The Rio Grande Trail Commission and to Pland Contractor
Pland Collaborative (Professional Landscape Architecture & Planning Contractor)	Dan Majewski	Program Manager	(1) Brings trail related items to the RGTC for approval, guidance and input (2) Administration and communication support (3) Works with stakeholders/communities to complete trail designation application
Rio Grand Trail Commission (RGTC)	Commissioners as defined below:	Multi-Discipline	Partners with EMNRD and the Office - RGTC as partners in the execution of the WORK
Office of The Rio Grande Trail Commissioner	Ben Bajema	Office of the Secretary, Policy Director	Chairman
Economic Development Department (EDD)	Karina Armijo	Outdoor Recreations Division Director	Provides funding and administrative support
Indian Affairs Department (IAD)	Michael Chacon	Tribal Environmental Justice Specialist	Ensures tribal consultation and cultural sensitivity
Department of Transportation (DOT)	Shannon Glendenning	Urban & Regional Planner	Coordinates with transportation infrastructure
Tourism Department (TD)	Dr. Shanna Sasser	Tourism Development Director	Promotes trail as tourism and recreation asset
Trail Management	Dan Carter	Continental Divide Trail	Provides trail development and maintenance expertise
State Parks Division (SPD)	Toby Velasquez	SPD Division Director	Offers state park and trail operations insight
River Ecology	Steve Harris	Rio Grande Restoration	Advises on river conservation
Bird Ecology	Tucker Davidson	Audubon Society	Focuses on bird habitat and conservation
Public 1	Howard Gross	HG Conservation Solutions	Represents general public Interest
Public 2	Myron Temchin	Temchin Environmental Planning	Supports inclusive trail development & Program planning

**Table 1: FY 2027 Office – RGTC Commissioner Roles and Responsibilities**



## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

### FY 27 Program Management Plan

- **Activity 1.4: Compliance With The Open Meetings Act** (NMSA 1978, Sections 10-15-1 to 4): Subsequent to the approval of a resolution on April 11, 2025, the Office-RGTC will comply with the requirements of the Open Meeting Act<sup>4</sup>
- **Activity 1.5: Implement Existing Trails Segment Designation and Approval Processes:** The Rio Grande Trail Commission had previously developed a process for approving trail segments. In this three-way partnership, (1) the Office-RGTC, (2) our Landscape Architectural Planning consultant (Pland Collaborative) and (3) the New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD), Trails+ department we have collectively developed a work flow process through implementing a Trail Segment Designation Process resulting in an Application Form that is designed to clarify the roles and responsibilities of land managers, owners, and agencies involved in a specific trail alignment.

**Figure 2**, Trails Segment Designation and Approval Work Flow Process identifies the six (6) step trail segment designation and approval process used by the RGTC.

**2.2.2 Task 2: Provide Management and Support to Subcommittees:** The Office of RGTC will facilitate progress, provide financial and administrative controls and risk management as appropriate to RGTC's Commissioners as they perform Subcommittee services to achieve the Office -RGTC's purpose. Detailed FY 27 Subcommittee Management Plans are presented in **ATTACHMENTS A – D** herein.

**2.2.3 Task 3: Prepare Reports To The Governor And The Appropriate Interim Committees:** Following quarterly meetings of the full commission, the Office -RGTC will prepare quarterly reports to the Secretary and Governor and then provide feedback to the RGTC Subcommittees in order to optimize performance.



# OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

## FY 27 Program Management Plan

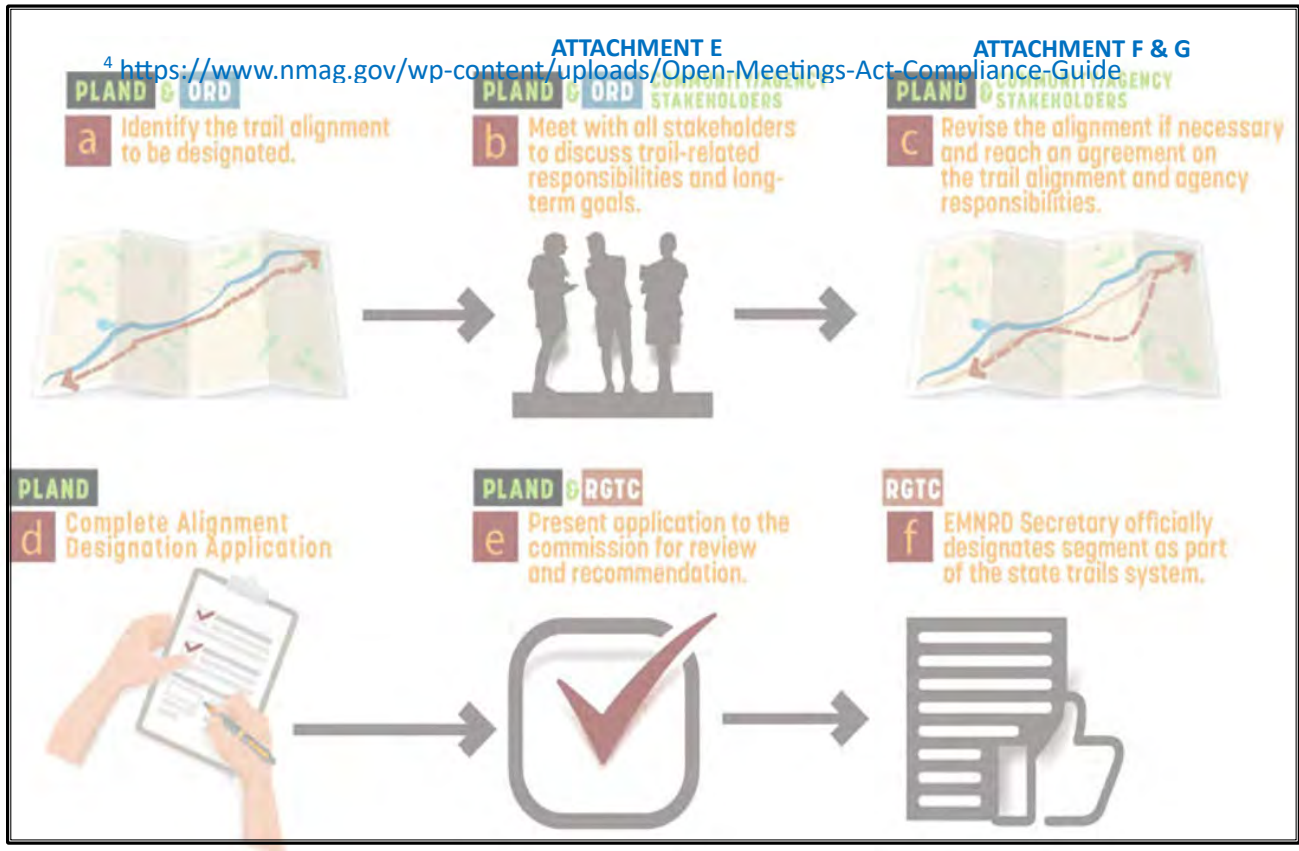


Figure 2: Trails Segment Designation and Approval Work Flow Process

### 3. DEFINITION OF CHALLENGES AND/OR RISKS

Specific challenges and /or risks to the successful implementation of Office- RGTCs FY 27 Program are defined in detail in each of the FY 27 Subcommittee Management Plans presented in **ATTACHMENTS A – D** herein. However, there are two Primary challenges that impact all of the Offices’ Subcommittee’s work efforts as summarized below.

**3.1: Primary Challenge #1: Tribal Considerations Banning Trail Development Through Its Lands:** The Commission and our Pland partners are taking great care to respect the tribal consultation process and tribal sovereignty. The Office-RGTC’s goal is to inform and seek input from all of New Mexico's Pueblos, Tribes and Nations honor and respect their self-determination over their sovereign lands, and recognize that their ancestral, cultural and traditional ties extend beyond their sovereign lands to areas up and down the Rio Grande corridor. To date and beyond, no tribes have expressed interest in having segments of the Rio Grande trail located on their sovereign lands or are they likely to. Further discussion and mitigations Strategies are presented in



## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

### FY 27 Program Management Plan

**ATTACHMENT A** to this PGMP

**3.2 Primary Challenge #2: Ambitions for the 2026, New Mexico Legislative Session – Limiting Liability of Trail Owners:** There are some challenging segments of the trail where we cannot designate it because the Conservancy District who owns and manages those segments, e.g. the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. There's an issue with liability. What does limiting liability for these special conservancy districts look like for the trail? The Office-RGTC will be developing a response to this concern. Further discussion and mitigations Strategies are presented in **ATTACHMENT D** to this PGMP.

**3.3 Primary Challenge #3: Startup Funding For A New Rio Grande Trail Non-Profit Organization:** While it is fully understood that the Office- RGTC with its consultant, will support the formation of this RGT Non-Profit, the question of from where and how will startup funding come from to support activity until the new RGT Non-Profit can pursue and win Grant funding or otherwise secure necessary startup funding. Further discussion and mitigations Strategies are presented in **ATTACHMENT C** to this PGMP.

#### 4. FY 27 OFFICE- RGTC DELIVERABLES

The goals of FY 27 efforts of the Office-RTGC include but are not limited to delivering in a timely and cost-effective manner the following Program deliverables:

1. Operate a fully functional Office of the Rio Grande Trail Commission
2. Advancing the vision and goals of the Commission's authority under the Rio Grande Trail Act
3. Defining, recommending and designating additional trail and viable back routes of the Rio Grande Trail, recommend features, facilities and enhancements needed on the trail,
4. Preparing recommendations to the legislature
5. Preparing reports to the Governor and the appropriate interim committees that measure, evaluate and report actual work accomplishments against the fiscal year RGTC Program Management Plan to define opportunities for continuous improvement
6. Providing the people of New Mexico valued services commensurate with the state's appropriations.



**OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION**  
**FY 27 Program Management Plan**

**5. FY 27 OFFICE- RGTC SCHEDULE OF PERFORMANCE**

The following schedule summarizes to FY 27 schedule of performance for the Office -RGTC. Detailed Subcommittee schedules with significant greater detail are presented in **ATTACHMENTS A – D** of this PgMP.

Task No.	Task Name	Activity Name/Description	Start Date	Finish Date
1	Office -RGTC	Provide operational governance, processes and procedures.	July 2026	June 2027
2		Provide management and Support to Subcommittees	July 2026	June 2027
3		Provide reports to the Governor and appropriate Interim Committees as required	July 2026	June 2027
1	Tribal Engagement	Discuss & inform Pueblos, Tribes Nations of RGT Commission plans	July 2026	June 2027
2		Listen to expressed concerns	July 2026	June 2027
3		Develop “Value Propositions” to incentivize Tribal participation	July 2026	June 2027
4		Update to RGT website to address Tribal sovereignty and cultural concerns	July 2026	June 2027
1	Alignment	FY 27 Trail designation prioritization	July 2026	June 2027
2		Defining Trail maintenance and signage prioritization	July 2026	June 2027
3		Identify future Trail development prioritization (FY 28+)	July 2026	June 2027
1	RGT Non-Profit	Collaborate and support RGT NPO as appropriate	July 2026	June 2027
1	Legislative	Continue efforts to amend State Trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978)	July 2026	June 2027
2		Create Office - RGTC Program Management Plan (PgMP)	September 2025	December 2025



## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION FY 27 Program Management Plan

### 6. FY 27 OFFICE – RGTC BUDGET

The use of the appropriated funds must be used to directly accomplish the vision and goals of the Rio Grande Master Plan in compliance with EMNRD policies and procedures for services and expenses defined by the Office- RGTC. As such, the Office- RGTC has defined its FY 27 budget of \$55,000 to fund this PGMP as follows:

1. \$30k to NPO/Contractor to manage and facilitate 3 RGTC meetings
2. \$7 k for trail ground truthing (I am tentatively planning to hike the Santa Fe to Taos alignment in September)
3. \$5 k for commissioner travel reimbursements to three commission meetings (this is our statutory requirement)
4. \$13k for signage or promotional materials (whatever is the will of the commission, but I would like to buy more hats)

**Total Estimated FY 27 Office- RGTC Budget: \$55,000**



**OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION  
FY 27 Program Management Plan**

***ATTACHMENT A  
FY 27 TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE  
MANAGEMENT PLAN***



# OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

## FY 27 Program Management Plan

### Subcommittee: Tribal Engagement

Chairman: Michael Chacón

#### 1. Purpose Statement and Scope of Work

The Tribal Engagement Subcommittee (Subcommittee) was created to represent tribal interests and ensure trail-related decisions are informed by tribal perspectives. The Subcommittee provides input on current and future trail alignments, offers a forum to raise concerns and opportunities, and helps share trail-related information with tribal communities.

The Rio Grande Trail Commission (RGTC) is taking great care to respect the tribal consultation process and tribal sovereignty. The Office-RGTC's goal is to inform and seek input from all of New Mexico's Pueblos, Tribes and Nations honor and respect their self-determination over their sovereign lands, and recognize that their ancestral, cultural and traditional ties extend beyond their sovereign lands to areas up and down the Rio Grande corridor.

In FY 2027 the Subcommittee is focused on proactively planning, and executing a Tribal stakeholder outreach program to:

1. Discuss And Inform Pueblos, Tribes And Nations Of The RGT Commission's Plans
2. Listen To Expressed Concerns
3. Develop Value Propositions To Incentivize Tribal Participation, and
4. Update The Rio Grande Trail Website To Address Tribal Sovereignty And Cultural Concerns.

#### Task #1: Develop Tribal Organization Outreach Structure

In order to effectively engage Tribal Communities and indigenous organizations throughout New Mexico, the Tribal Engagement Subcommittee has categorized tribal stakeholders into groups for the engagement process and strategies.

This task has been completed resulting in the following three (3) grouped outreach structure.

- Group 1 includes Tribes adjacent to the Rio Grande reaches
- Group 2 includes Tribes not adjacent to the Rio Grande reaches
- Group 3 consists of Tribal-serving organizations

#### **Group #1 – Tribes adjacent to the Rio Grande Reaches**

- |                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| – Pueblo de Cochiti       | – Pueblo of Sandia            |
| – Pueblo of Isleta        | – Pueblo of Santa Ana         |
| – Ohkay Owingeh           | – Santa Clara Pueblo          |
| – Pueblo of San Felipe    | – Santo Domingo Pueblo (Kewa) |
| – Pueblo de San Ildefonso | – Pueblo of Taos              |



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### ***Tier #2 Tribes not adjacent to the Rio Grande Reaches***

- *Pueblo of Acoma*
- *Jicarilla Apache Nation*
- *Pueblo of Jemez*
- *Mescalero Apache Tribe*
- *Pueblo of Laguna*
- *Pueblo of Nambé*
- *Navajo Nation*
- *Pueblo of Zuni*
- *Pueblo of Picuris*
- *Pueblo of Pojoaque*
- *Pueblo of Tesuque*
- *Zia Pueblo*

### ***Tier #3 - Tribal-Serving Organizations***

- *All Pueblo Council of Governors*
- *Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos, Inc.*
- *Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council*
- *Indian Pueblo Cultural Center*
- *Pueblo Action Alliance*
- *Indigenous Lifeways*
- *Tewa Women United*
- *Coalition of Six Middle Rio Grande Pueblos*

### **Task #2: Schedule Meetings to Initiate the Tribal Consultation Process**

The Subcommittee has tentatively scheduled the Tribal Consultation meetings as shown in Section 3 of this discussion. It is important to note that the scheduling of these meetings is tentative and subject to Tribal leadership availability.

### **Task # 3: Develop Plans and Strategies to Respond to Tribal Input**

Following Tribal consultation meetings, the Subcommittee will work with the respective Tribe to develop plans and strategies to address and respond to the input gained.

### **Task # 4: Update Website To Include And Address Tribal Sovereignty And Cultural Concerns**

The Pueblos which include reaches of the Rio Grande have primacy over those reaches. Further, the tribal relationships to water generally, and the Rio Grande specifically inform the path of the Rio Grande Trail, and must be an integral part of the website. The Commission must anticipate that no tribe will allow the encroachment upon their sovereign lands represented by the Rio Grande Trail, and plan accordingly.



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2. Definition Of Task And Activity Challenges And/or Risks

Primary Challenge: Tribal Considerations Banning Trail Development Through Its Lands: The Commission and our Pland partners are taking great care to respect the tribal consultation process and tribal sovereignty. The Office-RGTC’s goal is to inform and seek input from all of New Mexico's Pueblos, Tribes and Nations honor and respect their self-determination over their sovereign lands, and recognize that their ancestral, cultural and traditional ties extend beyond their sovereign lands to areas up and down the Rio Grande corridor. To date and beyond, no tribes have expressed interest in having segments of the Rio Grande trail located on their sovereign lands or are they likely to.

NEED INPUT FROM MICHAEL & SUBCOMMITTEE TEAM

3 – Schedule of Tasks and Activities

Table with 2 columns: FY Quarter, Activity/Planned Tribal Meetings. Rows include FY 27 - Q1 through FY 27 - Q4 with corresponding activities like 'Continue planning and scheduling outreach/engagement meetings'.

In addition, the Subcommittee is continuing to reach out to Tribes and Tribal Serving Organizations to schedule and conduct our proposed consultation and/or informational meetings.

4 – Description of Task and Activity Deliverables

Task #1: Develop Tribal Organization Outreach Structure

As defined in Section 1 above, the Subcommittee has completed its development of a three (3) tribal government and tribal-serving organization outreach structure that it is currently using to schedule and conduct consultation and/or informational meetings with tribes and organizations.

Task #2: Schedule Meetings to Initiate the Tribal Consultation Process

As defined in Section 3 above, the Subcommittee has already conducted four (4) tribal consultation meetings and is proactively pursuing outreach consultation meetings with all concerned tribal governments and organizations.

Task # 3: Develop Plans and Strategies to Respond to Tribal Input

To date, the Tribes the Subcommittee have consulted with have expressed no interest in having segments of the Rio Grande Trail located on their sovereign lands. As a result, our Subcommittee is communicating with the Rio Grande Trail Alignment Subcommittee in



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recommending that alternate trail alignments be defined and evaluated to ensure that the final trail alignment does not violate tribal sovereign lands.

#### **Task # 4: Develop Language To Include On The RGT Website**

In the event that a Tribe expresses interest to evaluate and/or allow the Rio Grande Trail alignment to pass through sovereign lands, the Subcommittee will embark on developing a detailed plan and subsequent documentation to pursue the opportunity.

#### **5. Cost Estimate**

The budget for the Tribal Engagement Subcommittee's outreach activities, travel and other engagement costs is already covered in the Commission Office's budget. Therefore, no additional funding is required to support the Subcommittee's FY 27 activity.



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***ATTACHMENT B  
FY 27 ALIGNMENT SUBCOMMITTEE  
MANAGEMENT PLAN***



## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

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**Subcommittee: Alignment**  
**Chairperson: Dan Carter**

#### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE DESCRIPTION

**Purpose:** The Alignment Subcommittee guides the development, identification, and designation of trail alignments for the RGT. The subcommittee helps to set priorities for trail segment designations and identifies existing and future alignments to be considered for inclusion in the trail system.

**Task #1 - Trail Designation Prioritization:** The subcommittee will work with stakeholders to identify existing trails within the proposed alignment that would be the best candidates for designation. This process will include analysis, discussion, collaboration, and the collection of letters of support.

- **Activity 1.1:** Analyze the list of existing trails to identify the best candidates for designation.
- **Activity 1.2:** Work with stakeholders and land managers to build support and identify any obstacles.
- **Activity 1.3:** Prepare trail segments for designation at future commission meetings.

**Task #2 - Trail Maintenance and Signage Prioritization:** The subcommittee will work with stakeholders and project partners to identify portions of the designated trail most in need of maintenance and signage. Once those sections of trail have been identified, the subcommittee will identify strategies to increase and improve maintenance in those sections.

- **Activity 2.1:** Identify sections of trail which need maintenance and signage.
- **Activity 2.2:** Identify strategies and partners that can support maintenance and signage needs.
- **Activity 2.3:** Work with stakeholders and partners to implement maintenance and signage improvements.

**Task #3 - Trail Development Prioritization:** The subcommittee will work with stakeholders and partners to identify sections of the proposed trail that do not yet exist and are most ready to be constructed and developed. Once those sections have been identified, the committee will coordinate with the various stakeholders involved in the trail-building process.

- **Activity 3.1:** Identify and rank sections of the proposed trail in terms of readiness for construction.
- **Activity 3.2:** Collaborate with stakeholders to support the process of trail construction and development.



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- **Activity 3.3:** Review proposals presented by trail developers and coordinate construction of the trail segment.

## 2. DEFINITION OF TASK AND ACTIVITY CHALLENGES AND/OR RISKS:

**NOTE:** The essential challenge with the Rio Grande Trail is that it is an unfunded mandate. Until it receives the proper funding, either via the New Mexico State legislature or through a non-profit organization that utilizes grants and philanthropic contributions (ideally through both methods), the trail will be unable to achieve its potential.

### Task # 1: Trail Designation Prioritization:

- **Risk 1.1:** Competing priorities from different stakeholders will require tradeoffs.
  - **Mitigation Activity 1.1:** Objectively identifying the best candidate may require some flexibility.
  - **Mitigation Activity 1.2:** Obstacles to trail designation and implementation are numerous. The best approach is to identify strong champions and prioritize coordination and collaboration with them. Even if that approach doesn't necessarily line up with the trail segments that are most likely to be implemented quickly, it will ultimately lead to better results.
  - **Mitigation Activity 1.3:** Primary barriers to designation are timely communication with the jurisdiction that is responsible for that section of the trail and the unpredictability of their response time and approval process (e.g., county commission meeting schedules). Getting ahead of that will require a cohesive schedule and timeline. A process that could speed up designation would be to obtain commission approval before the jurisdiction responsible confirms it.

### Task #2: Trail Maintenance and Signage Prioritization:

- **Risk 2.1:** Many sections of the trail are isolated and not heavily trafficked.
  - **Mitigation Activity 2.1:** Many sections of the trail are isolated and not heavily trafficked. Identifying trail segments for maintenance will require partnerships with the responsible jurisdiction and, eventually, trail users themselves. A network of people using the trail should be established and connected to the commission and the non-profit.
  - **Mitigation Activity 2.2:** There are various networks of volunteers who are already maintaining trails throughout the state. They should be leveraged for support on this project as well.



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- **Mitigation Activity 2.3:** There may be a lack of interest and awareness about the trail. Additionally, the creation of a non-profit to manage this process is vital.

#### Task #3: Trail Development Prioritization:

- **Risk 3.1:** There may be a difference between the sections of the trail that are most ready to be constructed technically and most ready to be constructed from a policy perspective.
  - **Mitigation Activity 3.1:** As mentioned, there may be a difference between the sections of the trail that are most ready to be constructed technically and most ready to be constructed from a policy perspective. A large list of “shovel-ready”, with cost estimates and technical details mapped out, projects will help to mitigate this challenge.
  - **Mitigation Activity 3.2:** With limited resources, it will be important to be strategic about where new trail gets prioritized. One approach could be to prioritize trail in places that have the least amount of existing trail. Another approach could be to focus on places where there is already a large number of trail miles designated, with only small gaps separating the various sections.
  - **Mitigation Activity 3.3:** This will be another vital role for the non-profit to fill. Selecting trail developers will require a rolling selection committee to be identified.



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**NEED INPUT FROM DAN CARTER  
& SUBCOMMITTEE TEAM**

**3. ALIGNMENT SUBCOMMITTEE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE**

<b>Task /Act. #</b>	<b>Task Name</b>	<b>Activity Name/Description</b>	<b>Milestone? Y/N</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Finish Date</b>	<b>Comment # Below</b>
1-1	Segment Analysis	Rank list of existing trails for designation	N	2/1/26	3/1/26	
1-2	Synthesis of analysis	Identify which projects have the best criteria for forward movement	N	3/2/26	4/1/26	
1-3	Designation preparation	Build support from stakeholders associated with the trail segments most likely to move forward	N	4/2/26	6/1/26	1
2-1	Maintenance/signage analysis	Rank list of segments of previously designated trail for maintenance and signage needs	N	6/2/26	8/1/26	FY 27
2-2	Maintenance/signage coordination	Identify strategies and partners that can support maintenance and signage needs	N	8/2/26	10/1/26	FY 27
2-3	Maintenance/signage implementation	Coordinate with stakeholders and partners to implement the maintenance and signage plan	N	10/2/26	1/1/27	2 FY 27
3-1	Segment construction analysis	Identify and rank sections of the proposed trail in terms of readiness for construction.	N	1/2/27	3/1/27	FY 27
3-2	Segment construction planning	Collaborate with stakeholders to support the process of trail construction and development.	N	3/2/27	5/1/27	FY 27
3-3	Segment construction	Review proposals presented by trail developers and coordinate construction of the trail segment.	N	5/2/27	1/1/28	3 - FY 27 - FY 28



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### COMMENTS:

- **FY – 26 Comment No. 1:** There is a limited number of existing trail segments that remain undesignated. The remaining sections are subject to:
- **FY – 27 Comment No. 2:** Signage installation and maintenance on trial segments that have already been designated are activities that should be coordinated if possible. Signage could be installed in coordination with maintenance need evaluations.
- **FY 27 – FY28 Comment No. 3:** Initial trail construction, for segments that don't have any existing trail, is scheduled to begin in 2027. This is due to the necessity of a non-profit to be in place before these efforts begin. While it technically could begin before a non-profit is founded, it's unclear that any of the current management entities (commission, EMNRD, ORD, or contractors) would be well-suited to manage such an endeavor. Under their current contracts or agreements. The existing contractor, Pland Collaborative, would be well-suited to do this work, but it would require a different contract to do so.

## 4. DESCRIPTION OF TASK AND ACTIVITY DELIVERABLES

### Task #1: Trail Designation Prioritization:

- **Deliverable 1.1:** A ranked inventory of existing trail segments evaluated for Rio Grande Trail designation, including documentation of evaluation criteria, jurisdictional ownership, known constraints, and relative readiness for designation.
- **Deliverable 1.2:** A stakeholder coordination summary documenting outreach effort, letters of support, identified champions, unresolved obstacles, and recommended actions needed to advance priority trail segments toward designation.
- **Deliverable 1.3:** commission-ready designation packets for priority trail segments, including maps, supporting documentation, stakeholder endorsements, and staff recommendations for presentation at future RGT Commission meetings.

### Task #2: Trail Maintenance and Signage Prioritization:

- **Deliverable 2.1:** A prioritized list of designated trail segments with identified maintenance and signage needs, supported by field observations, stakeholder input, and available condition assessments.



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- **Deliverable 2.2:** A maintenance and signage strategy memo outlining potential partners, volunteer networks, funding sources, and implementation approaches for addressing priority needs along designated trail segments.
- **Deliverable 2.3:** Documentation of implemented or initiated maintenance and signage improvements, including coordination records, partner commitments, and recommended next steps for ongoing trail stewardship.

#### Task #3: Trail Development Prioritization:

- **Deliverable 3.1:** A ranked list of proposed trail segments suitable for new construction, including readiness criteria such as land ownership, policy alignment, estimated costs, and technical feasibility.
- **Deliverable 3.2:** Stakeholder coordination summaries and planning materials supporting trail development, including meeting notes, agency coordination outcomes, and alignment with local or regional planning efforts.
- **Deliverable 3.3:** Review memoranda and recommendations related to trail development proposals, including coordination with selected trail developers and documentation supporting future construction phases.

## 5. COST ESTIMATE

The budget for the Tribal Engagement Subcommittee's outreach activities, travel and other engagement costs is already covered in the Commission Office's budget. Therefore, no additional funding is required to support the Subcommittee's FY 27 activity.



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**DELETE?**

**6. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION AS APPROPRIATE**

A summary of the above spreadsheet, in the form of a legislative ask, is below. Note that these are conservative numbers, and we could adjust the numbers in the spreadsheet if required.

**FY26 Legislative Funding Request**  
**Rio Grande Trail Commission – Alignment Subcommittee**  
**Program Management, Planning, and Coordination**  
**Requested FY26 Allocation: \$95,000**

**1. Purpose of the Request:**

The Rio Grande Trail (RGT) Alignment Subcommittee requests a \$95,000 FY26 legislative allocation to support planning, coordination, and program management activities necessary to advance trail designation, maintenance prioritization, and future trail development along the Rio Grande Trail corridor.

This request supports non-capital, pre-construction activities that are critical to advancing the Rio Grande Trail in a strategic, coordinated, and cost-effective manner across multiple jurisdictions.

**2. Scope of Work Supported by the FY26 Allocation:**

The requested funds will support three core work areas during FY26:

**1. Trail Designation Prioritization:**

Funding will support analysis and coordination needed to identify, rank, and prepare existing trail segments for formal Rio Grande Trail designation. This includes stakeholder coordination, jurisdictional outreach, and preparation of commission-ready designation materials.

FY26 Allocation: \$25,000

**2. Trail Maintenance and Signage Prioritization:**

Funding will support the identification of maintenance and signage needs along already-designated trail segments and coordination with partners to implement targeted improvements. This work emphasizes leveraging volunteer networks, local governments, and in-kind support to maximize impact.

FY26 Allocation: \$40,000



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### 3. Trail Development Readiness and Coordination:

Funding will support analysis and coordination for trail segments that do not yet exist but are most ready for development. This includes readiness assessments, stakeholder coordination, and proposal review to position projects for future capital funding once a non-profit entity is established.

FY26 Allocation: \$30,000

#### Total FY26 Funding Request:

Category	FY26 Amount
Trail Designation Prioritization	\$25,000
Trail Maintenance & Signage Prioritization	\$40,000
Trail Development Readiness	\$30,000
<b>Total Request:</b>	<b>\$95,000</b>

**What This Funding Does Not Cover:** This request does not include capital construction costs, such as:

- New trail construction
- Major infrastructure improvements
- Land acquisition
- Long-term maintenance operations

Those efforts will be pursued separately through future legislative requests, federal grants, and philanthropic funding once a dedicated non-profit partner is in place.

### 3. Why This Investment Is Necessary:

The Rio Grande Trail is a statewide, multi-jurisdictional project that currently functions as an unfunded mandate. Without dedicated programmatic funding:

- Trail designation efforts stall due to coordination constraints
- Maintenance and signage needs remain unprioritized
- Future construction projects cannot be positioned for outside funding

This FY26 allocation provides the foundational planning and coordination capacity required to unlock future capital investments and ensure that limited public funds are spent strategically.

### 4. Expected Outcomes in FY26:

With this funding, the Rio Grande Trail Commission will:



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- Advance multiple trail segments toward formal designation
- Identify and address priority maintenance and signage needs
- Prepare a ranked, shovel-ready pipeline of trail development projects
- Strengthen partnerships with state, federal, tribal, and local entities
- Position the Rio Grande Trail for future federal and philanthropic funding

### 5. Administration of Funds

Funds will be administered by EMNRD in coordination with the Rio Grande Trail Commission, utilizing existing contractor capacity and in-kind partner contributions where possible to maximize cost efficiency.



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***ATTACHMENT C  
FY 27 NON-PROFIT SUBCOMMITTEE  
MANAGEMENT PLAN***



## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION FY 27 Program Management Plan

**Subcommittee: Non-Profit**  
**Chairperson: Howard Gross**

### 1. PURPOSE & SCOPE OF WORK DESCRIPTION

**Purpose:** The Non-profit Subcommittee was created to support the establishment of and work with an independent Rio Grande Trail Non-Profit Organization (NPO) focused on building capacity, coordinating resources, and ensuring the trail's ongoing development, management, and stewardship for years to come.

**Task #1: NPO/Contractor:** The Non-profit Subcommittee will provide funding to the newly formed NPO/Contractor to manage and facilitate three (3) RGTC meetings as well as startup support as appropriate

### 2. COST ESTIMATE

The budget for the Non-profit Subcommittee's outreach activities, travel and other engagement costs is already covered in the Commission Office's budget. Therefore, no additional funding is required to support the Subcommittee's FY 27 activity.



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***ATTACHMENT D  
FY 27 LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE  
MANAGEMENT PLAN***



## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION FY 27 Program Management Plan

**Subcommittee: Legislative**  
**Chairperson: Tucker Davidson**

### 1. Purpose Statement and Scope of Work:

**Purpose:** Champion and support legislative efforts related to the Rio Grande Trail. This committee will help guide, recommend, and advance legislative actions needed to implement the trail, support its development, and build long-term capacity.

**Task #1:** Provide limited liability for Special Districts by amending the State Trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978). Develop amendment language in the State Trails Act that will facilitate the cooperation and willingness of special districts like Elephant Butte Irrigation District and Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District to participate in the designation of the Rio Grande Trail. for special district public use of the trail hosted on its land.

When a special district grants an easement or a right of way to EMNRD to be designated as part of the state trail system, they are also allowed to receive those limits of liability (excluding cases of willful or wanton misconduct of that special district). If there is gross negligence, there is still a pathway for the injured individual to pursue legal action. But per the state trails act, there is a liability entity, that being the Secreta of ENMRD, who would oversee, per the states trails act, the management, maintenance and policing of the trail system. EMNRD is just trying to clarify that immunity exists, and still giving claimants a voice and a path forward in the courts to right wrongs.

- **Activities 1.1:** Develop language for the amendment as follows:

“The state trails act already says no person or corporation (INSERT: "or political subdivision or special district of the state, including irrigation and Conservancy District") their successors and interest who has granted a right of way or easement across his land to the mineral energy minerals and Natural Resources Department for use in the state trail system, shall be liable to any user of the trail for injuries suffered on the right of way or easement unless the injuries are caused by the will for wanton misconduct of the grantor.”

EMNRD proposed language was submitted to the governor's office on June 1, 2025; waiting for feedback and comment.

- **Activities 1.2:** Evaluate if there are other avenues or if legislation is not required, or if there are other better statutes that should be amended



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- **Activities 1.3:** Promote the amendment to special districts and present to interim committees in the summer of 2025. Maintain and find legislative sponsors:
  1. Senator Brantley and Representative Kathleen Cates to bring to the floor
  2. Juliana Coob - representing trail attorneys - people who have interest in injury cases
  3. Elephant Butte Irrigation District legislators
  4. New advocates to be defined

**Task #2:** Possible transfer of management and maintenance of trail segment of the state trail system back to the current land manager using alternate legal document. Evaluate other legal document formats for the original land manager to take over those responsibilities of management that the Secretary is granted per the state trails act.

- **Activity 2.1:** Evaluate/develop language for a Memo of Understanding (MOU), leasing agreement or some similar legal document that for the original land manager allows them to take over those responsibilities of management that the Secretary is granted per the state trails act.

**Task #3:** Office of the Rio Grande Trail Commission (Office) Creates an FY 27 Program Management Plan (PgMP). Prepare a FY 27 Program Management Plan that defines the planned activities for the Office of the Rio Grande Trail Commission. For the Office itself and for each Subcommittee under the Office, the PgMP will define the planned:

- (1) Scope of Work (SOW);
- (2) Envisioned Challenges and Risks associated with the planned SOW;
- (3) Schedule for Performance;
- (4) Task and Activity Deliverables; and
- (5) A cost estimate for performance of the SOW activities.

The PgMP will provide management direction for the FY 27 Office work effort and provide a baseline for measuring and reporting the value of the Office's efforts on a periodic basis.

- **Activities 3.1:** Develop a management approved PgMP template for each subcommittee to use to develop and record its FY 27 Plan.
- **Activities 3.2:** Transmit the template for each Office subcommittee to complete and forward back to the Legislative subcommittee for incorporation into an Office-wide DRAFT PgMP.
- **Activities 3.3:** Legislative subcommittee creates the Office-wide DRAFT PgMP and routes it back to each subcommittee for review and comment.



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- **Activities 3.4:** Open discussion of DRAFT PgMP in upcoming April 2026 Commission Meeting.
- **Activities 3.5:** Legislative Committee incorporates comments from September Commission meeting, and prepares a DRAFT final for the Office to Route to the Office of the Secretary for final review, comment and approval.
- **Activities 3.6:** Legislative Committee incorporates comments from the Secretary's Office and prepares a final document for FY 27 Office execution by the end of FY 2027 Q2.

## 2. DEFINITION OF TASK AND ACTIVITY CHALLENGES AND/OR RISKS:

**Risk 1.1:** Provide limited liability for Special Districts by amending the State Trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978)

- **Mitigation Activity 1.1:** Choosing the right legislation to amend. Review amendment strategy with EMNRD general counsel, MRGCD counsel, and personal injury lawyers' representative;
- **Mitigation Activity 1.2:** Getting special districts, injury lawyers, and legislators on-board with the amendment. Host several meetings to review liabilities and other worries that the districts might have. Emphasize the benefit that this amendment provides to special districts in the event of litigation. Start with meetings with MRGCD and Elephant irrigation Districts;
- **Mitigation Activity 1.3:** Getting approval from the legislative body during the 2026 legislative session. Present to interim committees during the summer to address any concerns that could hinder the amendment from passing.

**Risk 2.1:** Possible transfer of management and maintenance of trail segment of the state trail system back to the current land manager using alternate legal document.

- **Risk, Mitigation Activity 2.1:** In process of discussing this mitigation strategy.

**Risk 3.1:** Office of the Rio Grande Trail Commission (Office) Creates and executes a compliant FY 27 Program Management Plan (PgMP).

- **Mitigation Activity 3.1:** Subcommittee Commissioners have difficulty in reaching consensus in developing/defining a comprehensive Plan for FY 27 activity;
- **Mitigation Activity 3.2:** Subcommittee Commissioners are resource limited and cannot complete the PgMP template in a timely fashion to meet milestone completion requirements for discussion in the September 2025 Commission meeting.



**OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION  
FY 27 Program Management Plan**

**NEED INPUT FROM Tucker &  
SUBCOMMITTEE TEAM**

**3. SCHEDULE TEMPLATE FOR TASKS AND ACTIVITIES**

<b>Task /Act. #</b>	<b>Task Name</b>	<b>Activity Name/Description</b>	<b>Milestone? Yes/No</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Finish Date</b>	<b>Comment No. Below</b>
1-1	Amend State trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978)	Develop Amendment language		6/15/2025	TBD	
1-2		Evaluate other avenues or if legislation is not required				
1-3		Promote the Amendment				
2-1	Possible transfer of trail segments to current land owners	Evaluate/develop language for MOU if appropriate		6/15/2025	TBD	
3-1	Create Office Program Management Plan	Legislative Subcommittee creates DRAFT PgMP and transmits to all Subcommittee review and comment	No	2/15/2026	3/13/2026	Completed
3-2		Legislative Subcommittee revises DRAFT based upon New Mexico approved appropriation & route to Commissioners	No	3/16/2026	3/20/ 2026	Completed
3-3		PgMP discussion in April 2026 Commission Meeting	YES	4/10/2026	4/10/2026	
3-4		Legislative Subcommittee prepares Final Draft for Secretary Approval	No	4/13/30	4/17/2026	
3-5		Legislative Subcommittee finalizes PgMP for Execution	YES	6/15/2026	6/30/2026	
3-6		RGT -Office execution and reporting			7/1/2026	6/30/2027



## OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION

### FY 27 Program Management Plan

#### 4. DESCRIPTION OF TASK AND ACTIVITY DELIVERABLES

**Task #1:** Provide limited liability for Special Districts by amending the State Trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978).

- **Activities 1.1:** Deliverable: Selection of the right legislation to amend.
- **Activities 1.2:** Deliverable: Successfully soliciting approval from special districts, injury lawyers, and legislators on-board with the amendment.
- **Activities 1.3:** Deliverable Description: Successfully promote the legislative body during the 2026 legislative session to approve the proposed Act language changes.

**Task #2:** Evaluate transfer of management and maintenance of trail segment of the state trail system back to the current land manager using alternate legal document.

- **Activities 2.1:** Deliverable: TBD

**Task #3:** Create an FY 27 Program Management Plan (PgMP).

- **Activities 3.1:** Deliverable Description: Create DRAFT PgMP and transmits to all Subcommittee review and comment.
- **Activities 3.2:** Deliverable Description: Revise DRAFT based upon New Mexico approved appropriation and route to Commissioners.
- **Activities 3.3:** Deliverable Description: PgMP discussion in April 2026 Commission Meeting.
- **Activities 3.4:** Deliverable Description: Prepare Final Draft for Secretary Approval.
- **Activities 3.5:** Deliverable Description: Finalize PgMP for Execution
- **Activities 3.6:** Deliverable Description: RGT-Office execution and reporting

#### 5. COST ESTIMATE

The budget for the Non-profit Subcommittee's outreach activities, travel and other engagement costs is already covered in the Commission Office's budget. Therefore, no additional funding is required to support the Subcommittee's FY 27 activity.