

24th 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 23rd 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