Rio Grande Trail

Rio Grande del Norte National Monument
Santa Fe
Española
Los Alamos
Belen
Bernalillo
Albuquerque
Los Lunas
Socorro
Las Cruces
Mesilla Valley Bosque
La Llorona Trail
Lea Dam State Park
Pecos Dam State Park
Caballo Lake State Park
Elephant Butte Lake State Park
City of Elephant Butte
Truth or Consequences

Designated Trail
Existing Potential Trail
Proposed Trail
THE VISION

In 2015, state legislation (HB 563) 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.”

The Rio Grande Trail corridor includes three national wildlife refuges, six national monuments, one national heritage area, and six state parks, touching nearly 10 counties and more than 22 cities or towns.

From an evening walk to a month-long expedition, the Rio Grande Trail offers a window into the heart and soul of New Mexico and a journey through its exceptional natural and cultural heritage.

THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL CORRIDOR WILL INCLUDE:

- Three national wildlife refuges: Bosque del Apache, Isleta Bosque, and La Joya.
- Six national monuments: Bosque del Apache, Isleta Bosque, La Joya, White Sands, Painted Desert, and Petrified Forest.
- One national heritage area: Pecos Valley.
- Six state parks: El Malpais, Baja Grande, White Sands, Bosque del Apache, Isleta Bosque, and La Joya.

**WHY DOES THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL MATTER?**

**ADVENTURE**

65% of New Mexico residents participate in outdoor recreation each year. "

**EDUCATION**

As the Rio Grande Trail weaves through many New Mexican communities, educators will use the river path as an outdoor classroom. Students will take field trips to learn about local history, culture, ecology, and geology.

**EMPLOYMENT**

99,000 direct jobs

The Rio Grande Trail will be the latest addition to New Mexico’s thriving outdoor industry, which, as of 2015, accounts for $9.0 billion in direct jobs and $3.8 billion in wages and salaries.

**ACCESS**

Though the river runs through some of the largest cities in the state, many New Mexicans have never visited the Rio Grande.

The Rio Grande Trail will improve public access to the Rio Grande, which will increase the connection New Mexicans have to the river and cultivate river stewardship.

**HEALTH**

The Rio Grande Trail will provide an accessible option for active recreation and transportation for all New Mexicans. Communities that encourage physical activity by building trails see a significant effect on the number of people exercising, which benefits public health and well-being.

**TOURISM & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

$623 million in river & local tax revenue

$9.9 billion in consumer spending

In 2015, outdoor recreation in New Mexico accounted for $6.9 billion in consumer spending, $623 million in state and local tax revenue, and more than twice as many jobs depend on outdoor recreation than on the energy and mining sectors combined. The Rio Grande Trail will provide outdoor recreation opportunities that will translate to economic benefits by bringing increased tourism, jobs, consumer spending, and tax revenue.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

The Rio Grande Trail will help preserve important natural landscapes, link fragmented habitats, protect plant and animal species, and improve air and water quality.