



# OUTDOOR RECREATION TRAILS+ GRANT

2024-25 PROGRAM GUIDE



# Introduction

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The New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division increases equitable access to the outdoors for all New Mexicans, ensuring healthy outcomes, environmental stewardship, and economic prosperity.

Our job at the Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD), housed within the Economic Development Department, is to grow the outdoor recreation economy in a sustainable way, benefiting all New Mexicans. That starts with equitable access to the outdoors, from the Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness to the Organ Mountains.

To grow outdoor access for both residents and visitors, as well as preserve these wild places within our state, the legislature, through the ORD, has created the Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant. The program has also been a powerful engine to grow wealth and job opportunities in our state, supporting projects that enable residents to hold jobs that afford them dignity, joy, and stability.

The grant program has funded 140+ projects across New Mexico since its creation in 2020. Over \$15M in funding has supported outdoor infrastructure in 29 New Mexico counties.

This grant invests in conservation-minded shovel-ready projects that are open to the public, increase access to outdoor opportunities, and demonstrate a clear economic benefit to the community through improved quality of life, better public health outcomes, and/or increased eco-tourism. Grants are available to tribal, rural, acequia/land grant, and urban communities.

This program guide is intended as a tool for applicants to apply to the Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant. New funding investments and program changes the past two years enabled Trails+ to increase both the number and scope of the awarded projects and 2024 promises even more funding support. Read on for more details.

This guide outlines specific requirements and provides examples of eligible projects. To find more information about ORD and apply for grant funding, please [visit our website](#).



**NEW MEXICO**  
OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION

# What's New for 2024?



Applications accepted on a rolling basis in three rounds, July 1, 2024 through February 28, 2025 or until funds are expended.



Tier 2 is now open to non-profits with capacity (Organizations should have an operating budget five times that of the grant request and have dedicated staff to oversee the project.)



Applicants with capacity **and** solid progress on current project can apply for an additional Trails+ Grant in consecutive ORD fiscal years.



New this year, there will be a Tier 3 (\$500K to \$1 million). One Tier 3 regional project may be approved per grant cycle or round to qualifying organizations.



The Trails+ Grant is now supported with recurring funding through the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund.



# GRANT OVERVIEW:

## Tier 1 Local Projects

### GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

**Eligible Applicants:** Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations; Municipalities; Counties; Nonprofits; Public preschools/schools/districts; Colleges/Universities; Soil and water conservation districts; Acequia and land grant associations.

**Economic Impact:** Project must show demonstrable benefit to the local community, either by attracting and/or retaining residents or attracting visitors.

**Recreation Access:** The project must be open for public use. Note: Projects on tribal lands are eligible and do not have to be open to the general public, but should be open to tribal members.

### 2024 GRANT CYCLE

Grant opens July 1, 2024. Applications accepted on a rolling basis with three rounds until February 28, 2025 or until funding is expended.

### DEADLINES

Round 1: September 30, 2024. Round 2: December 31, 2024. Round 3: February 28, 2025.

### AWARD RANGE

\$25,000 to \$99,999

### MATCH REQUIREMENT

1:1 match for urban applicants; 2:1 for applicants in rural and/or Tribal communities. In-kind and/or cash accepted.

### GRANT AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Project must be completed within 24 months of the signed contract date.
- Grant money will be awarded up front in full after the grant agreement is signed.
- Applicant must submit (1) progress report halfway through the grant period and (1) final report after the project completion.
- There is a requirement for a project expenditure report with mid-term and final report.
- Any subcontract over \$20,000 needs a written quote submitted with the application.
- Applicant must submit photos and be willing to participate in marketing and promotional efforts.
- Each awardee is required to tag ORD (@NMOOutdoorRec) in at least one social media post or mention ORD/Trails+ with a link to the ORD website (NMOoutside.com) within 24 months of the signed contract date.

# GRANT OVERVIEW:

## Tier 2 Regional Projects

### GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- **Eligible Applicants:** Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations; Municipalities; Counties; Public preschools/schools/districts; Colleges/Universities; Soil and water conservation districts; Acequia and land grant associations. \*Nonprofits with capacity are now eligible.
- **Economic Impact:** Project must show demonstrable benefit to the whole region, either by attracting and/or retaining residents or attracting visitors.
- **Recreation Access:** Projects must be open for public use.\* Projects must demonstrate economic value for the region as a whole. Collaborative multi-partner projects will score highest. \*Projects on tribal lands must be open to tribal members.

### 2024 GRANT CYCLE

Grant opens July 1, 2024. Applications accepted within three rounds until February 28, 2025 or until funding is expended.

### DEADLINES

Round 1: September 30, 2024. Round 2: December 31, 2024. Round 3: February 28, 2025.

### AWARD RANGE

\$100,000 to \$500,000

### MATCH REQUIREMENT

1:1 match for urban applicants; 2:1 for applicants in rural and/or Tribal communities. In-kind and/or cash accepted.

### GRANT AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Application will include a virtual or in-person presentation to review committee before being awarded.
- Grant money will be awarded up front in full after the grant agreement is signed.
- Project must be completed within 24 months of contract signing.
- Applicant must submit (1) progress report halfway through the grant period and (1) final report after the completion of the project.
- There is a requirement for a project expenditure report with mid-term and final report.
- Any subcontract over \$20,000 requires a written quote submitted with the application.
- Successful project completion requires an in-person site visit.
- Applicant must submit photos and be willing to participate in marketing and promotional efforts.
- Each awardee is required to tag ORD (@NMOOutdoorRec) in at least two social media posts or mention ORD/Trails+ with a link to the ORD website (NMOoutside.com) within 24 months of the signed contract date.

# GRANT OVERVIEW:

## Tier 3 Regional Projects

### GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- **Eligible Applicants:** Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations; Municipalities; Counties; Public preschools/schools/districts; Colleges/Universities; Soil and water conservation districts; Acequia and land grant associations. Nonprofits are not eligible.
- **Economic Impact:** Project must show demonstrable benefit to the whole region, either by attracting and/or retaining residents or attracting visitors.
- **Recreation Access:** Projects must be open for public use.\* Projects must demonstrate economic value for the region as a whole. Collaborative multi-partner projects will score highest.  
\*Projects on tribal lands must be open to tribal members.

### 2024 GRANT CYCLE

Grant opens July 1, 2024. Applications accepted within three rounds until February 28, 2025 or until funding is expended.

### DEADLINES

Round 1: September 30, 2024. Round 2: December 31, 2024. Round 3: February 28, 2025.

### AWARD RANGE

\$500,000 to \$1,000,000

### MATCH REQUIREMENT

1:1 match for urban applicants; 2:1 for applicants in rural and/or Tribal communities. In-kind and/or cash accepted.

### GRANT AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Application will include a virtual or in-person presentation to review committee before being awarded.
- Grant money will be awarded up front in full after the grant agreement is signed.
- Project must be completed within 24 months of contract signing.
- Applicant must submit (1) progress report halfway through the grant period and (1) final report after the completion of the project.
- There is a requirement for a project expenditure report with mid-term and final report.
- Any subcontract over \$20,000 requires a written quote uploaded within application.
- Successful project completion requires an in-person site visit.
- Applicant must submit photos and be willing to participate in marketing and promotional efforts.
- Each awardee is required to tag ORD (@NMOOutdoorRec) in at least two social media posts or mention ORD/Trails+ with a link to the ORD website (NMOoutside.com) within 24 months of the signed contract date.

# ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

What type of infrastructure projects can you apply for?

## ELIGIBLE

- Structures and other infrastructure that enhance public nature-based outdoor recreation
- Design, survey, and engineering plans
- Equipment (specific to project construction and maintenance) - up to 30% of grant request
- Trail, wayfinding, or other signage
- Maintenance and improvement to existing outdoor infrastructure
- Administrative costs - up to 10%
- Billed labor

### Examples

- Trail design or construction, signage, river access, whitewater amenities, outdoor classroom infrastructure, trailhead improvements, picnic shelters, wildlife viewing areas.

## INELIGIBLE

- Land acquisition
- Outdoor swimming pools or water parks
- Recreational facilities such as golf courses, playground structures, and traditional sports facilities (i.e. soccer fields)
- Landscaping and beautification ONLY projects
- Infrastructure owned by a for-profit entity

### Examples

- Indoor recreation amenities; structures owned by a private business or entity that are not open for public use; developing or enhancing baseball fields.



# OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

This fund invests in projects that enhance outdoor recreation. How we define outdoor recreation: Any activity that takes place outside, in a natural environment.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:



Adaptive outdoor recreation of all types.



Trail activities: hiking, backpacking, trail running, horseback riding, hunting etc.



Camping: tent, RV, yurts, etc.



Off-road motorized activities: UTV, ATV, off-road motorcycles, etc.



Nature enjoyment: wildlife viewing, wildlife photography, birdwatching, nature walks, plant identification, etc.



Snow activities: snowboarding, all skiing types, snowshoeing, etc.



Bicycling: road, mountain, gravel, bikepacking, etc.



Water activities: canoeing, kayaking, rafting, stand-up paddle boarding, fishing, etc.

For more examples of eligible projects, read about the past grant recipients [here](#).



# FAQs

## **Are privately owned businesses or state/federal agencies eligible to apply?**

No. Neither privately owned businesses nor state/federal agencies are eligible. We encourage partnerships with state/federal agencies and private businesses on these projects, but the application must come from one of the following entities: Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations; Municipalities; Counties; Nonprofits; Public preschools/schools/districts; Colleges/Universities; Soil and water conservation districts; Acequia and land grant associations. Note that nonprofits with capacity are now eligible for Tier 2 Regional awards.

## **Can my organization submit more than one application per year?**

No. Only one submission per entity per ORD fiscal year is allowed. We ask that you not submit multiple applications from different partners for the same project (in an attempt to increase the odds of it being funded). Please submit one application for the project and include letters of support from your partners.

## **Do in-kind donations and services qualify as match?**

Yes. The match component can be any combination of cash or in-kind (i.e. volunteer hours, prior work, purchase of the land, permitting costs, professional staff services, annual maintenance, donated equipment, services, and/or materials). Other state and federal funds can be a match.

## **How are awardees selected?**

1. An external review committee will individually score applications on a rolling basis.
2. An internal meeting will be held to discuss each top scoring application and make final decisions on awardees.
3. All applicants will receive a notification if they were awarded or declined funding within two months of cycle or round close.

## **What is required of a strong application?**

Projects will be scored based on five main categories:

1. Recreational value;
2. Contribution to equitable outdoor access;
3. Environmental and cultural impacts;
4. Economic value;
5. Projects with robust, demonstrable community support (in the form of letters of support, resolutions, MOUs, etc.).

Tier 2 and Tier 3 Regional applicants will be required to make a formal presentation to the scoring committee during the application process.

## **What is considered rural?**

"Rural" is defined as any part of the state other than Los Alamos County, Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Farmington, Las Cruces, Roswell, Santa Fe, and a 10-mile radius around those cities.

## **When will grant announcements be made?**

Awards will be announced after each review cycle. Applicants are highly encouraged to apply early, as the grant will remain open until the fund is spent.

# FAQs

## **Is the match requirement the same for urban and rural applicants?**

No. There is a 1:1 match required from all urban applicants (See previous page for "rural" definition). For rural or tribal applicants, the match is 2:1. For example, if an urban applicant requests \$50k in grant funds they would need at least \$50k in matching funds; if a rural or tribal applicant requests \$50k in grant funds they would need at least \$25k in matching funds.

## **When will I be awarded the grant?**

Grantees will be awarded 100% of the grant award up front in full after the grant agreement signing, creation of a purchase order, and invoice submitted. Timeframe can vary depending on how quickly required documents are returned.

## **Can I phase my project?**

Yes. ORD encourages phasing. Applicants may apply for Trails+ funds for one phase of a project, then reapply for a second phase once progress and capacity has been demonstrated for phase one. Complimentary applications from multiple stakeholder groups can apply for phased projects.

## **When can I expect to hear back about my application?**

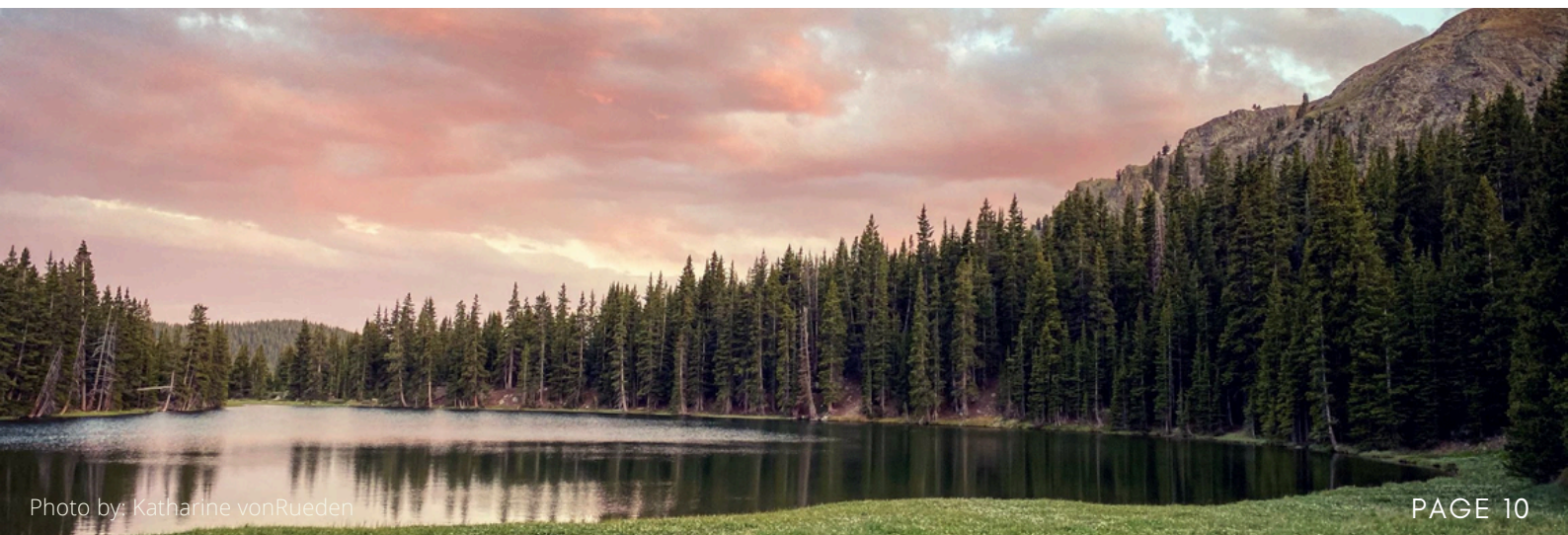
You will receive an email from the ORD team within two months of application close dates, informing you whether your project was awarded funding. Both those awarded and declined funding will be notified.

## **What are the requirements if I receive a grant?**

Projects must be completed within 24 months of the signed contract date. The applicant, adhering to a template created by ORD, must submit one progress report halfway through the grant period and a final report after the completion of the project including financial reporting. The applicant must submit photos and be willing to participate in marketing and promotional efforts, including inclusion of ORD logo in project materials. Applicants will be expected to host an in-person site visit before project completion.

## **How do I know if I am eligible to apply for a Tier 2 or Tier 3 grant?**

Organizations should have an operating budget five times that of the grant request and have dedicated staff to oversee the project. Project must show demonstrable benefit to the whole region, either by attracting and/or retaining residents or attracting visitors.



# Application Tips

- For more information and to access the application, visit the [\*\*New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division website.\*\*](#)
- Be concise with responses; **there is a word limit for each question.** You will be prevented from submitting if any answer exceeds this limit.
- Double-check the **award amount, budget, and match** to ensure they are accurate.
- Pay **close attention to additional instructions in the application** notes. Some requirements, if not completed correctly, will disqualify you from receiving funding or significantly delay the funding process.
- Confirm the account the application is submitted from is the primary contact. ORD will send all grant updates to the account that submitted the application (for the entire duration of the 24-month grant contract and the application process) **including reporting forms.**
- Save your work in the online application frequently. Connection errors can lead to a loss of data that is not recoverable. **Do not rely on autosave.**
- Take **advantage of the "Collaboration" option** in the online application. This allows organizations to select multiple users to work on a submission. This will appear after you log in to your account, in the top right-hand corner of the application page.
- To avoid technical difficulties, **submit early.** If you do run into technical issues with login, your application, or submission, contact Submittable at the bottom of this [page.](#)
- Stay up to date on grant updates, webinars, and deadlines by [\*\*signing up for our newsletter.\*\*](#)



# APPLY NOW

## GRANT OPENS JULY 1, 2024

### CONTACT US WITH QUESTIONS



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