



Enchanted Circle Trails Association

Developing, maintaining, and promoting trails in northern New Mexico
info@enchantedcircletrails.org

ECTA Quarterly Report Jan-Mar 2024

Summary

Enchanted Circle Trails Association (ECTA) develops, maintains, and promotes a trail system throughout the Enchanted Circle. The following is a summary of actions from last quarter and includes all jurisdictions (*i.e., BLM and US Forest Service and local units of government.*)

Trail Maintenance

Adopt-a-Trail: ECTA continues to expand our Adopt-a-Trail program, bringing on several new organizations and businesses to help maintain our trail infrastructure for everyone's benefit. Among these are UNM-Taos, Brownrice Internet, Taos Trail Runners, Taos Women's Outdoor Adventurers, Taos Land Trust, and TaosNet. To support these groups, ECTA has purchased a cache of trail tools and equipment with Trails+ funds which will enable us to more efficiently engage with community partners.

Legacy Trails Grant: ECTA has been awarded a Legacy Trails Grant from American Trails to maintain and increase the sustainability of certain trails in the Rio Fernando Watershed. Planned projects include rerouting the North Boundary Trail and building a bridge and trail at Palo Flechado Pass, as well as maintenance on the El Nopal Nature Trail. ECTA is partnering with Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, local businesses, and volunteers to accomplish this work.

Trail Outreach

Trail Outreach and Communication: Our trail outreach and communication efforts provide timely information about trails and trail issues and provide pathways for folks to get involved with the trail community. Current outlets include social media (Facebook, Instagram), our website, and print media. During the last quarter, we increased Facebook followers by 3%, Instagram followers by 1%, and email subscribers by 2%. Additionally, we saw a 22% in website discovery via search.

Trailforks: ECTA has been working with TrailForks, a comprehensive multi-sport mapping app, to help ensure that area trails are properly mapped and designated for accepted use. Trailforks is free for all, but a pro subscription will further support ECTA's work: <https://www.trailforks.com/pro/?aid=150>

Community and Strategic Planning

ECTA remains actively engaged in various community planning and outreach activities to ensure that trails and the healthy outcomes they provide our region are considered.

Outdoor Alliance Advocacy Network: ECTA's Director, Loren Bell, has been selected to join the Outdoor Alliance Advocacy Network. Outdoor Alliance unites the voices of paddlers, hikers, climbers, surfers, mountain bikers and backcountry skiers to conserve America's public lands and protect human-powered outdoor experiences. Bell will participate in a series of workshops with outdoor leaders from around the country before traveling to Washington DC to meet with key decision-makers on conservation and recreation priorities in northern New Mexico.



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Friends of the Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument: ECTA's Director, Loren Bell, has been elected to the Friends group's board of directors. As a part of this organization, ECTA will continue to advocate for community access to the National Monument through well-managed recreation trails while supporting other conservation initiatives within the monument.

Taos Metropolitan Redevelopment Area: ECTA continues working with Taos Mainstreet and community stakeholders to ensure that walkability and bikeability remain a cornerstone of downtown investment and revitalization. More information about the MRA:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3e1137310d8a4dc7a512072cfe203db8>

Trail Development / Roadway Improvements / Connectivity	
Project	Status
NM150 Multi-Use Pathway from US64 to Arroyo Seco (Taos Pueblo/NMDOT)	ECTA has selected an engineer to develop plans for this project. Community and stakeholder meetings will be held during 2024 to ensure the infrastructure is designed to meet public demand.
Questa to Red River Trail (Questa/Red River/USFS)	ECTA has selected a NEPA contractor to begin biological and cultural surveys along the route. This multi-year process will ensure that various management priorities are considered and balanced throughout the lifecycle of this project.
Largo/Lama Canyon Trails (Questa/USFS)	The Questa Economic Development Fund and ECTA held three public meetings in Questa to gather community feedback on the potential for new trails in the Largo and Lama Canyons region. With this information, ECTA will begin mapping existing routes and exploring possibilities for new trails in the region.
Talpa Ridge System (USFS)	No action was taken this quarter.
Rio Grande Trail - Bridge to Bridge Segment (BLM)	No action was taken this quarter.
Horsethief Mesa Trails (BLM)	ECTA applied for a Department of Interior grant to conduct a full archaeological survey of proposed trails in the Horsethief area. The region has seen consistent use, and alignments will need to be adjusted to mitigate potential impact to historically and culturally significant areas. ECTA has also begun working on a proposal to move the fence line at the transfer station away from the highway and allow several parking spots outside of it.
Taos Valley Overlook (BLM)	No action was taken this quarter.
Outward Link Trail (Town of Taos)	The lawsuit filed by the Town of Taos to regain access to the Town's easement continues to work its way through the legal system.



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Bull of the Woods to Big Ditch (USFS)	No action was taken this quarter.
Miranda Canyon (USFS)	ECTA continues to work with the Carson National Forest on developing the best approach for managing recreation in the area.
Palo Flechado Trail (USFS)	ECTA received a grant from American Trails to finish work on this new trail construction this summer with the help of volunteer crews.
Devisadero Trail (USFS)	ECTA received a grant from American Trails to re-construct the retaining wall and ramp at the Devisadero trailhead. ECTA is looking for bids for this project.
North Boundary Trail (USFS)	ECTA received a grant from American Trails to construct a 1-mile re-route of a fall-line section of the trail to reduce erosion and bring the trail to sustainable best practices. ECTA will be contracting with Rocky Mountain Youth Corps to complete this work.