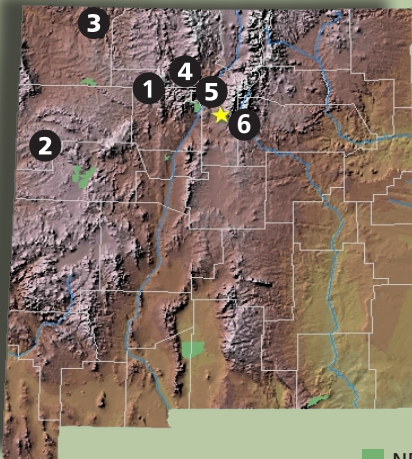




# New Mexico News



Views of Las Ventanas Ridge from El Malpais National Monument.  
Photo credit: Steve Owen.



■ NPS Unit  
★ State Capital

## PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2011

### CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Step Into Cuba  
Nacimiento Medical Foundation
2. Zuni Mountain Trails  
McKinley County
3. Animas River Trail  
Aztec Trails & Open Space Committee
4. Merced del Pueblo Abiquiu Open Space  
Merced del Pueblo Abiquiu Land Grant Association
5. Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area  
Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, Inc.
6. Pecos Youth Intern Program  
Pecos National Historical Park

Find out more about each project starting on page 3.

## Recent Successes

### Animas River Trails

The City of Aztec and the citizens Trails and Open Space committee made significant progress on moving the Main Avenue Walkway from visionary idea to reality. The trail will lead pedestrians and bicyclists from downtown Aztec across the Animas River to the Visitor Center at Aztec Ruins National Monument and, along the way, they'll learn about the Old Spanish National Historic Trail near the historic river crossing location.

continued on page 2



"Let me tell you about Aztec Trails!"  
-- Learning about trails on an Aztec Oktoberfest hayride.

### ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provides technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects they initiate.

## We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit from RTCA Staff Assistance? Contact us to find out.

### Attila Bality

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## 2010 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,251 Miles of Trail Developed

1,694 Miles of River Conserved

25,370 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

94% Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

Find more information online at

[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)



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## Recent Successes cont.

In 2010, RTCA assisted City staff and volunteers in involving more Aztec residents in Main Avenue Walkway planning. A community survey went out with the utility bill asking about trail usage and trail preferences. On National Night Out, volunteers talked with friends and neighbors about the trail and other connectors. During the City's Oktoberfest celebration, trail volunteers organized hayrides along the trail right-of-way and 200 people learned about trail connections to Aztec Ruins National Monument.

Most importantly, a pedestrian bridge adjacent to Aztec Ruins National Monument is now in the engineering and design phase. Once completed, Aztec citizens will have a riverfront trail system that connects its most significant community assets.



Completing trail surface test project in Cuba.  
Photo credit: Anna Shulte

## Step Into Cuba

Building on the successful "Trails & Walkability" workshop in 2009, RTCA collaborated with the New Mexico Chapter American Society of Landscape Architects and the University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning to stage an intensive park design charette activity.

With support from RTCA, graduate students initiated a civic engagement process to collect information on the park. The process included interviewing village residents, a one-day workshop, outreach to high school youth in the school lunch line, and presentations to the Village Council. The final concept plan took shape as a graduate level professional project for one student. RTCA also facilitated the planning and construction of a trail surface demonstration path to help residents better understand trail surface terminology.

## Pecos National Historical Park launches first year Youth Intern Program to engage youth in resource stewardship projects

With assistance from RTCA, Pecos National Historical Park (NHP) received funding to develop an 8-week summer youth intern program for three Pecos high school students. The Youth Intern Program was created to energize youth interest in public lands and careers in public service and create more informed public lands stewards. In the summer of 2010, the students completed projects and research such as adobe preservation of the mission ruins, removal of invasive plant species, and analysis of park interpretive tours and materials, alongside park staff from the Division of Facilities and Cultural Resources Management, Visitor Services and Resource Protection, Maintenance, and RTCA. The park also hosted presenters to educate the students on careers with other NPS programs and public land managers and organized field trips to other national parks and cultural sites to expand their knowledge on conservation and preservation practices. Upon completion of the program and under the guidance and mentorship of RTCA, the students designed a final project based on their research interests and presented their final projects to Pecos park staff.

# Current Projects

*“RTCA support has facilitated the planning of physical activity venues and built environment improvements for the community of Cuba, NM. These developments, including topic experts and civic engagement, would not have been possible without RTCA!”*

- Anna Shulte, Walking Champion  
Nacimiento Community Foundation



Animas River Pedestrian Bridge.

## 1. Step Into Cuba

Project Partner: Nacimiento Medical Foundation

RTCA Contact: Attila Bality

Location: Village of Cuba

### Project Goal

Create 5-10 miles of walkways and trails, rehabilitate a local Land & Water Conservation Fund park (St. Francis of Assisi) as a regional trailhead, and create a healthier local economy by engaging local residents in increased physical activity.

### RTCA Role

Develop a process for public input and guidance on Cuba area walking and hiking resources as well as engaging federal, state, county and village partners in creation of a trails plan. RTCA will help local partners explore creation of a Youth Corps to support trail related projects.

### RTCA Role

Assist in strengthening the collaborative effort to achieve community and regional goals; assess trail related resources and develop conceptual plans for trail systems; and provide support in creating a broad-based civic engagement plan.

### RTCA Role

Support the Aztec Trails & Open Space Committee with a public consensus building process for extending the Animas River Trail to Aztec Ruins National Monument. Provide technical assistance on trail design issues and accessing rights of way for public use.

continued on page 4

## 3. Animas River Trail

Project Partner: Aztec Trails & Open Space

RTCA Contact: Attila Bality

Location: Aztec, NM

### Project Goal

Develop 3 miles of trail along the Animas River connecting the recreational resources of the city's largest parks, the cultural resources of Aztec Ruins National Monument, and the historic resources of the landscapes surrounding them.

*“Thanks to RTCA guidance, we now have a blueprint for the multiple aspects of the Healthy Communities program.”*

- Anna Hargreaves, NM Department

## 2. Zuni Mountain Trails

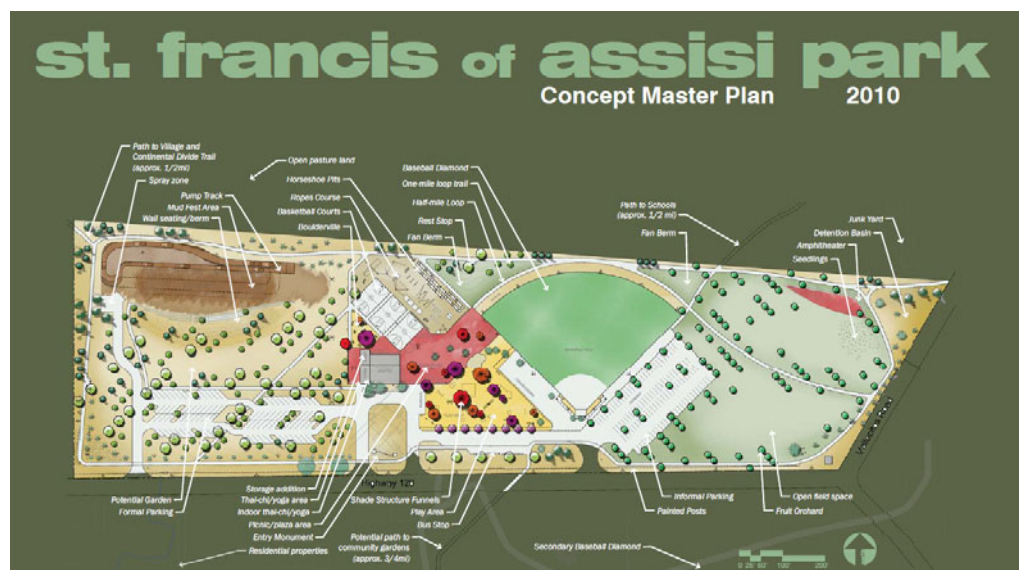
Project Partner: Zuni Mountain Trails Partnership, Gallup Trails 2010

RTCA Contact: Attila Bality

Location: Gallup and Grants, NM

### Project Goal

Develop 110 miles of new trails connecting gateway trailheads into the Zuni Mountains of New Mexico. A regional trails, health, and tourism partnership will coordinate trails planning and development with the US Forest Service for mountain bicycling, hiking and winter sports activities, and forest restoration in three priority areas.



Park Concept Plan for increased physical activity. Credit: Chance Munns.

# Current Projects cont.



The Abiquiu Open Space Project looks to develop 21 acres of riparian habitat along the Rio Chama in Abiquiu, NM.

## 4. Merced del Pueblo Abiquiu Open Space

Project Partner: Merced del Pueblo Abiquiu Land Grant Association  
RTCA Contact: Katherine Faz  
Location: Abiquiu, NM

### Project Goal

Protect 32 acres of riparian habitat, develop interpretive trails to educate the public on significant cultural, natural, and historical resources, and develop a program to engage local youth in the importance of water and land resource stewardship through river bank restoration projects.

### RTCA Role

Coordinate and facilitate community meetings to identify the community's interests and needs for the development of the 32 acres and educational programs and activities. Organize the input from the community meetings and develop site plans and implementation strategies.

*“RTCA helped us figure out our civic engagement priorities. They got us back on track.”*

- Glenna Dean, Associate Director, Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, Inc

## 5. Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area

Project Partner: Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, Inc.  
RTCA Contact: Katherine Faz  
Location: Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, and Taos Counties

### Project Goal

Assist NRGNHA with the completion of their management plan and other NHA requirements, including partnership plan support. Support the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area in promoting community partnerships to develop projects that sustain and celebrate their heritage.

### RTCA Role

Identify youth organizations and program opportunities to support the NHA's mission. Organize and facilitate meetings with partners that will assist in the completion and review of the management plan.

## 6. Pecos Youth Intern Program

Project Partner: Pecos National Historical Park  
RTCA Contact: Katherine Faz  
Location: northern New Mexico

### Project Goal

Establish a second-year Youth Internship Program that engages local high school students in park-related projects that will enhance their understanding of resource stewardship while providing them hands-on experience in a diverse range of career skills.

### RTCA Role

Develop and coordinate, with assistance from park staff, a program that engages students in research and field projects related to cultural and natural resource management. Organize field trips and invite professionals in the conservation and preservation field to discuss the importance of resource stewardship.