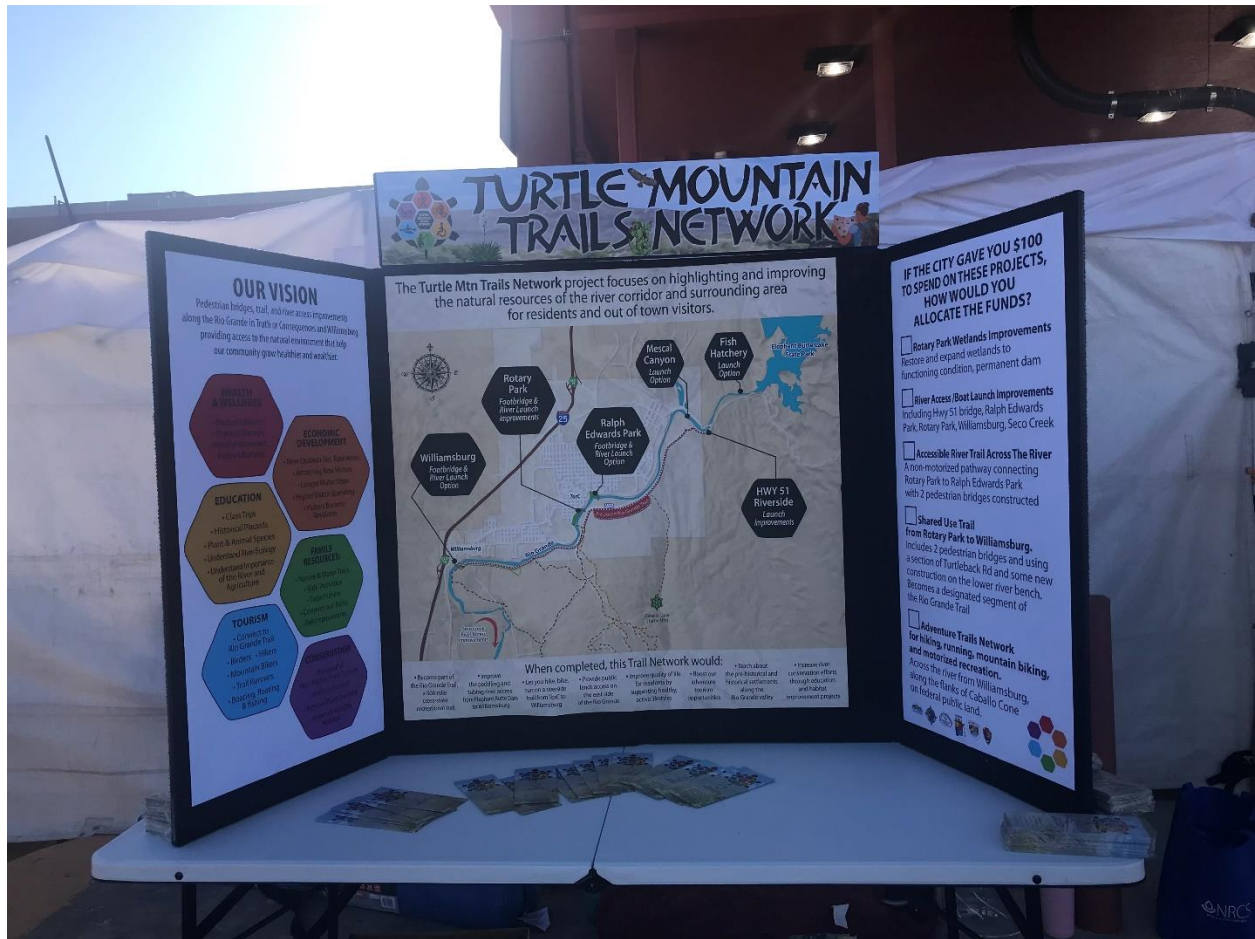


## **TURTLEBACK TRAIL NETWORK**

The Jornada RC&D was approached by an individual in the community of Truth or Consequences for assistance in finding a way to have access to the east side of the Rio Grande during the summer months so he could take advantage of the many miles of public roads. He was an avid runner and during the summer with the river flowing he would have had to drive eight miles to get to the same point he could get to when the river flows were minimal. He was hoping Jornada could help him secure funding to install a pedestrian bridge and locate it in about the middle of town. Jornada members felt that this idea would be a great boost to the local economy and increase outdoor access but felt this project could be expanded to be more inclusive of other opportunities within the area. Jornada took the lead, and a steering committee comprised of a broad base of individuals/non-profits and local governments was formed. An application was made by the City of Truth or Consequences to the National Park Service Recreation, Trails and Conservation program, for their technical assistance in gathering community input and development of a recreation plan. Over the five-year long process many community outreach activities occurred to gather local support and to encompass ideas for development. Events were held, presentations were made to most of the organizations within Sierra County and presentations during community events. Discussions were held with local emergency response personnel, the local hospital and law enforcement to attain their support and document their concerns. Working committees were formed to focus on three different aspects of the recreation plan-folks who took advantage of the Rio Grande through floating or fishing, avid hikers and runners and a conservation and education component. The group identified an appropriate name for their planning efforts and a logo was established. After approximately five years, the Turtleback Trail Network Conceptual Plan was completed and approved by both the City of Truth or Consequences and the Village of Williamsburg. Plans will move forward to start securing funding to begin implementing the various components of the trail. Those components include two pedestrian footbridges over the Rio Grande, one located in the middle of the City of Truth or Consequences next to the river and one footbridge near the hub of the Village of Williamsburg. Other improvements would be improved and safe access to the Rio Grande for floating and Kayaking and also improved takeout points; another key amenity would be interpretive signage, trailheads and wayfinding signs. Future plans are to work with the appropriate public land agency to encourage more development of new designated hiking/biking trails.



# TURTLE MOUNTAIN TRAILS NETWORK

The Turtle Mtn Trails Network project focuses on highlighting and improving the natural resources of the river corridor and surrounding area for residents and out of town visitors.



When completed, this Trail Network would:

- Reconnect the Rio Grande Trail to the city of Williamsburg
- Improve the existing trail network from Williamsburg to Mescal Canyon
- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking
- Improve the quality of the trail network for all users
- Connect the city of Williamsburg to the surrounding area
- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking
- Improve the quality of the trail network for all users
- Connect the city of Williamsburg to the surrounding area

## OUR VISION

Pedestrian bridges, trail, and river access improvements along the Rio Grande in Tularosa County and Williamsburg providing access to the natural environment that help our community grow healthier and wealthier.

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

- Promote physical activity and mental health
- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Attract visitors to the area
- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking

### EDUCATION

- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking
- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking

### NATURAL RESOURCES

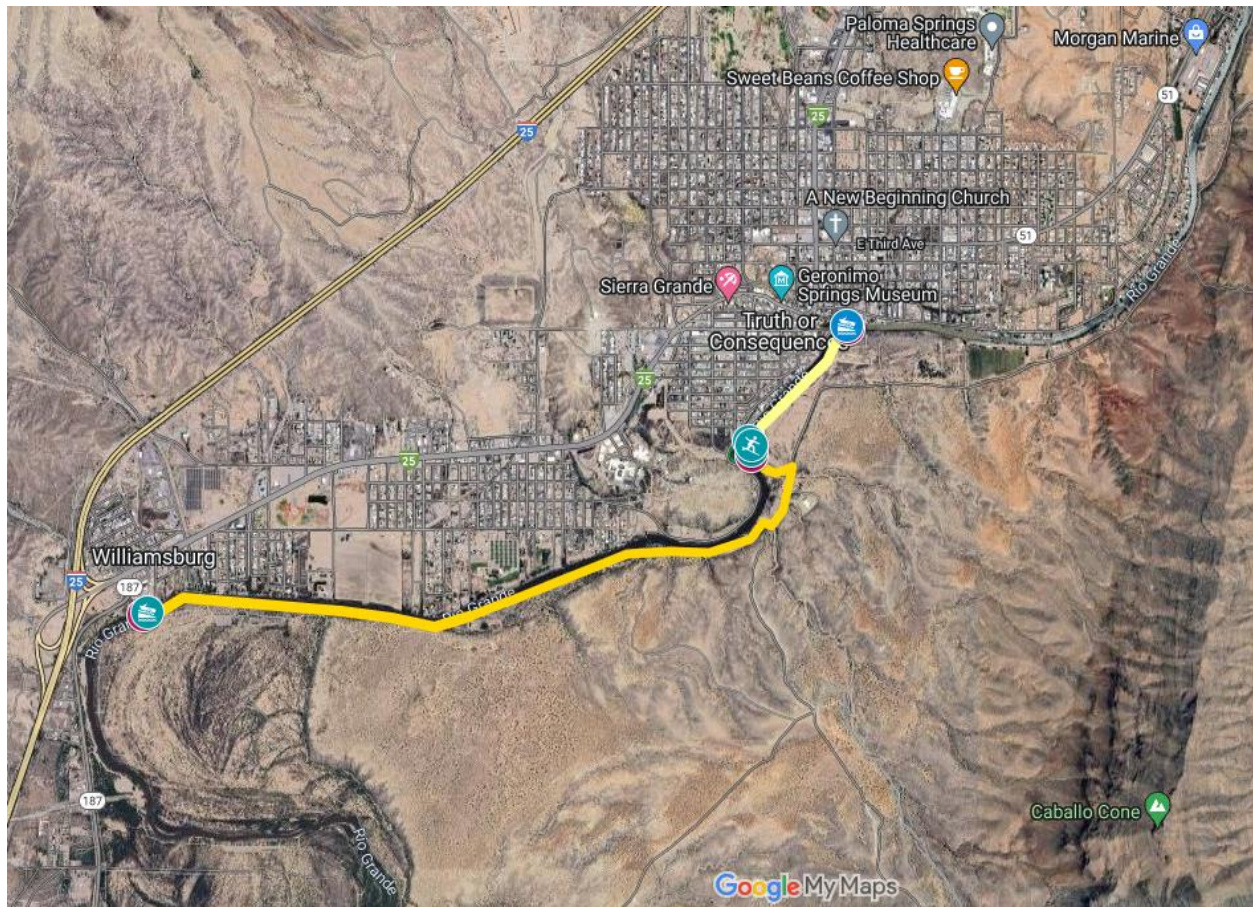
- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking
- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking

### TOURISM

- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking
- Provide a safe, scenic route for walking, jogging, and biking

## IF THE CITY GAVE YOU \$100 TO SPEND ON THESE PROJECTS, HOW WOULD YOU ALLOCATE THE FUNDS?

- ☐ Rotary Park Wetlands Improvements  
Restore and expand wetlands to functioning condition, permanent dam
- ☐ River Access (Boat Launch Improvements)  
Including Hwy 51 bridge, Ralph Edwards Park, Rotary Park, Williamsburg, Seco Creek
- ☐ Accessible River Trail Across The River  
A non-motorized pathway connecting Rotary Park to Ralph Edwards Park with 2 pedestrian bridges constructed
- ☐ Shared Use Trail  
From Rotary Park to Williamsburg, includes 2 pedestrian bridges and using a section of Turtleback Rd and some new construction on the lower river bench. Becomes a designated segment of the Rio Grande Trail
- ☐ Adventure Trails Network  
for hiking, tennis, mountain biking, and motorized recreation. Across the river from Williamsburg, along the banks of Caballo Cone on federal public land.



Turtleback Train Network

### Poverty Creek Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project

Through the Secure Rural Schools Act many rural counties in New Mexico received funding from the US Forest Service. The program has three components-85% of the funding, referred to as Title 1, is returned to the local schools for their use with a portion of that funding going to the appropriate county to assist in road maintenance. The remaining 15% is utilized through two different programs-Title II and Title III. Each of those programs has its own guidelines. Title II funds are to be utilized in on-the ground projects within the County, with cooperation with the local Forest Service office and projects are to directly benefit Forest Service land or land adjunct to it. Title III funds can be utilized by a county for seven different categories, including emergency response by county assets to forest service lands, FireWise concerns and Community Wildfire Protection Plans. A County can opt out of this program if they choose to with all the funds going to Title II or the funds can be split 8% Title II and 7% Title III. Sierra County has opted to utilize these funds. In early 2024 the Jornada RC&D was approached by Sierra County and discussions were held regarding hazardous fuel loads in two communities that lie within the boundaries of the Black Range Ranger District, Gila National Forest. The County wanted to hire someone to



begin reduction projects in those areas. Jornada suggested that the County enter into a contract with the Jornada RC&D to implement the thinning project which would alleviate the County of their procurement process, and more funds could be applied on the ground. Treatment in one community was completed by early September and plans are moving forward to begin treatment work in the second community by early fall.

The following picture shows a sharp contrast between property that has been thinned to reduce hazardous fuels in comparison to land that has not been thinned.





