

PRESS RELEASE

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Clarkdale Receives Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program Grant from the National Park Service

Clarkdale, AZ (October 6, 2014) – The Town of Clarkdale learned this week that they have received a technical assistance grant from the National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program for the 2015 federal fiscal year.

Clarkdale requested the grant in order to enhance trail connections as part of the Verde River @ Clarkdale project. Of particular interest is an extension of the Benatz Trail to the Tuzigoot River Access Point, and beyond to Tuzigoot National Park. Additionally, Clarkdale would like to see trail access between Tuzigoot National Park and the recently established Lower TAPCO River Access Point.

Through the grant, the National Park service anticipates supporting the Clarkdale Trails Project by:

- Helping locate and acquire funding for the proposed trails
- Identifying critical stakeholders and developing strategies for project engagement and support
- Ensuring meaningful opportunities for community participation throughout the planning process

In the award letter from the U.S. Department of the Interior, RTCA Program Manager Alan Ragins noted that the project description of a system of connected parks, river, trails and greenway in the Clarkdale area aligns well with the strategic goals of the RTCA Program including their goals of promoting close-to-home resource conservation, stewardship, and outdoor recreation opportunities, and to develop and/or improve connections to parks, rivers, trails and greenways. Of special interest was Clarkdale’s desire to improve non-motorized access to Tuzigoot National Monument.

Clarkdale Community Service Supervisor Dawn Norman noted, “The grant application was a true collaboration, involving volunteer grant writing support from Cynthia Malla, and letters of support from numerous local groups, including the Friends of the Verde River Greenway, the Verde River Valley Nature Organization, Tuzigoot National Monument Superintendent Dorothy Firecloud. The overarching principle of the Verde River @ Clarkdale project is to help people form connections with the Verde River. Our project fits perfectly with the goals of the RTCA Program, which strives to connect people to the environment through rivers, trails, greenways and natural areas. The RTCA program recognizes that projects like the Verde River @ Clarkdale benefit a community’s economy, public health and quality of life, and we are thrilled to be able to work with them on the Clarkdale Trails Project.”



Town Manager Gayle Mabery was happy to see the Town of Camp Verde receive a RTCA grant award as well, noting: “We understand that one of our partners in the Verde Front-String of Pearls collaboration, the Town of Camp Verde, also received a grant award. I’m happy to see the National Park Service’s support of two projects in our region that are so aligned with the sustainable recreation efforts of the Verde Front. All of the partners in the Verde Front-String of Pearls effort are committed to working together to ensure stewardship for well-managed recreational and educational opportunities that sustainably connect people to nature along the river and upland ecosystems.”

In the coming months, Clarkdale will work directly with Joe Winfield in the National Park Service’s RTCA Tucson office on the Clarkdale Trails Project. Mr. Winfield will also serve as the Project Manager for the Camp Verde grant.

