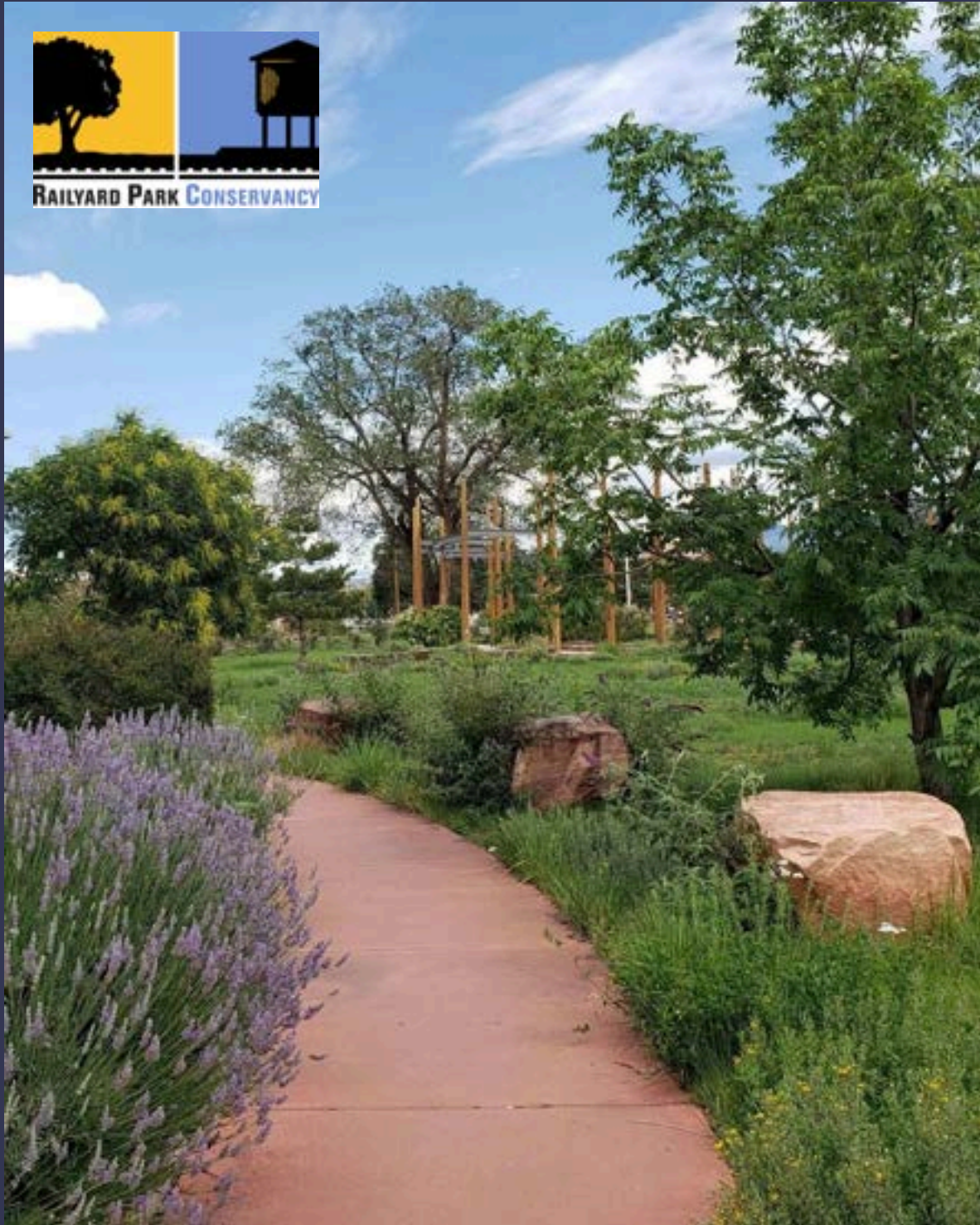


REPORT TO THE CITY



Fiscal Year 2024

Introduction

Since its inception in 2010, the Railyard Park Conservancy (RPC) has delivered exceptional service and value through our annual City of Santa Fe Professional Services Agreement, providing community stewardship and advocacy for the horticultural care, educational programming and public art in the Railyard Park + Plaza. Our mission is deeply informed by the original vision of the park – developed after hundreds of hours of public input – as an environmentally sustainable greenspace offering community engagement and cultural enrichment. To that end, the RPC diligently strives to honor and uphold the Conservation Easement under which the Park + Plaza operate.

The RPC is guided by a commitment to sustainability, equitable access to public greenspaces, and creating opportunities for local families to enjoy the healing benefits of nature. We are especially proud of our ability to weave these principles into each of our three focus areas, ensuring that our programming remains dynamic, progressive and inclusive. This was clearly reflected throughout Fiscal Year 2024, during which we spearheaded weekly volunteer horticulture sessions; our Graze Days/Healthy Soils grassland restoration initiative; Living Laboratory field trips; Sand Play Saturday; a large community Earth Day celebration; Pop-Up Playground; and three public art exhibits. All told, the RPC provided 2,300 hours of hands-on horticultural care in the Park, while serving more than 4,000 youth and adults with free educational and community programming.

Following are details outlining the RPC’s work between July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. Our Board of Directors, staff and volunteers thank the City for its continued support and collaboration.

Railyard Park Voted Best Park

2019	2022
2020	2023
2021	2024



Staff, Board of Directors & Advisory Committees

The RPC executes its mission using a small, four-person staff and a dedicated group of community volunteers. Our work is informed by a volunteer Board of Directors and four volunteer Advisory Committees that meet throughout the year to set organizational goals and priorities.

Staff	Board of Directors	Horticulture Committee	Children's Committee	Development Committee	Railyard Art Committee
Izzy Barr <i>Executive Director</i>	Jennifer Jenkins <i>Chair</i>	Molly Mehaffy	Barbara Ansel	Anne Culp	Brandee Caoba
Peggyjoy Hodgen <i>Horticulture Director</i>	Max Meyers <i>Treasurer</i>	Anne Nelson	Lynn Grimes	Calvin Fields	Matthew Chase-Daniel
Juliet Staveley <i>Early Childhood Educator (part-time)</i>	Anne Nelson <i>Secretary</i>		Priscilla Gutierrez	Priscilla Gutierrez	Tim Farrell
Corey Pritts <i>Marketing Director (part-time)</i>	Lynn Grimes		Anne Nelson	Anne Nelson	Aurelia Gomez
	Priscilla Gutierrez		Janice Vascott		Lynn Grimes
	Molly Mehaffy		Tish Wilson		Melissa Houser
					Lillia McEnaney
					Molly Mehaffy
					Valerie Michael
					Maria Luisa Minjares
					Ginny Sanders

Community Partners

Community collaboration is vital to the RPC's success, allowing us to achieve more than capacity would normally allow and ensure that we're reaching the most diverse audience possible. We have developed a vast network of local partners that share our core values, adding breadth and depth to our work, and broadening its reach within the community.

Academy for Technology & the Classics

Acequia Madre Association

Acequia Madre Elementary School

All Aboard Earth

Amy Biehl Community School

Aspen Community School

Atalaya Elementary School

Axle Contemporary

Bike Santa Fe

Brindle Foundation

Camino Real Academy

Cerise Consulting

City of Santa Fe

Santa Fe Arts & Culture Commission

CoLab Initiative

Community Educator's Network

Earth Care

Fayette Street Academy

Georgia O'Keeffe Museum

Girls Inc.

Gonzales Community School

Hands-On Heritage

Herstory Printmaking Collective

Horned Locust Goatscaping

International Folk Art Market

MFUGE Youth Group

Milagro Middle School

Native Plant Society of New Mexico

New Mexico Department of Agriculture

New Mexico Healthy Soils Working Group

New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division

New Mexico School for the Deaf

Plants of the Southwest

Positive Energy Solar

Presbyterian Medical Service

Queen Bee Music Association

Quivira Coalition

Randall Davey Audubon Center

Reunity Resources

Rio Grande Elementary School

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps

Santa Fe Children's Museum

Santa Fe Conservation Trust

Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization

Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation

Santa Fe Watershed Association

Save Water Santa Fe

SITE Santa Fe

Southwestern College

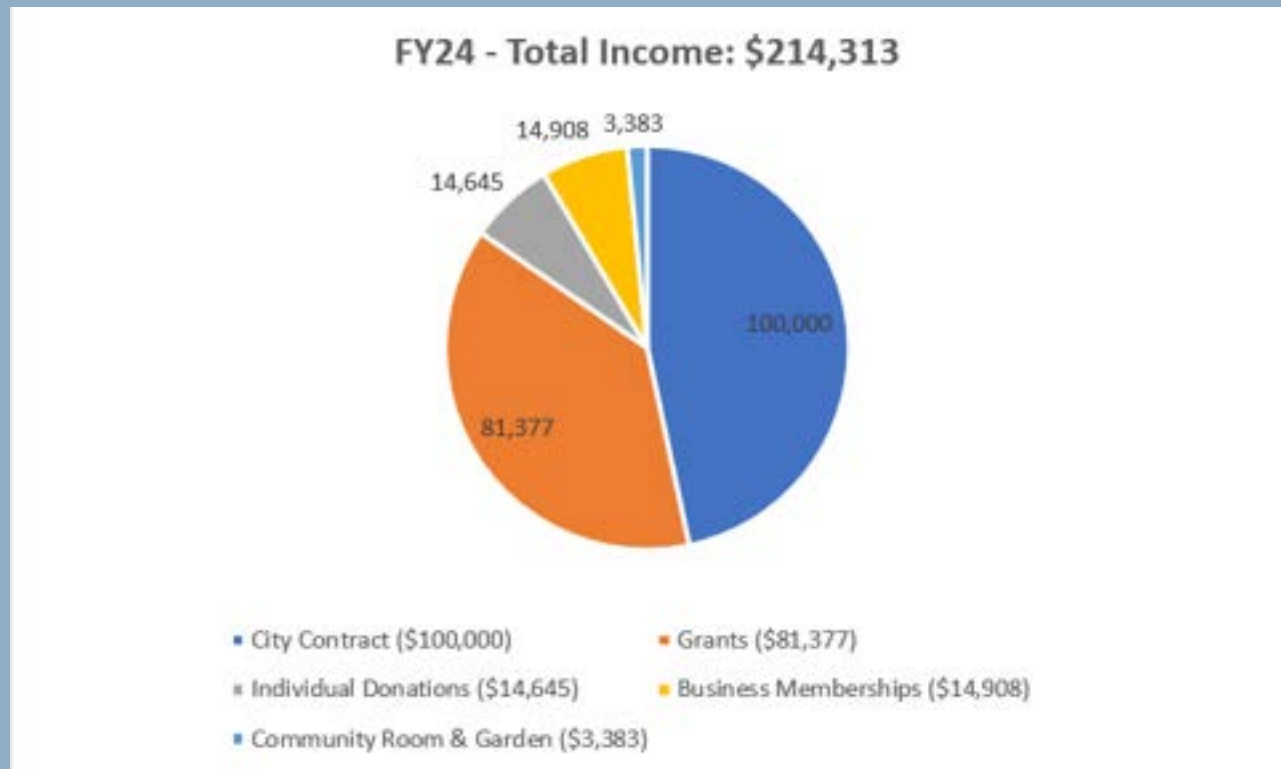
The MASTERS Program Charter School

Vladem Contemporary

Whole Foods Market

Xerxes Society

Fundraising and Additional Contributions FY24



Grant Funding FY24

Brindle Foundation – \$31,000 for nature-based play programming in 2023-2024
Presbyterian Medical Services – \$25,000 for nature-based play programming in 2023-2024
NM Department of Agriculture – \$9,597 for our Graze Days/Healthy Soils initiative in FY24
City of SF Arts & Culture Commission – \$10,000 for the Railyard Art Project in FY24
Lannan Foundation – \$4,000 to support general operations in 2024
TW Family Fund – \$1,000 to support general operations in 2024
MFUGE – \$700 to support general operations in 2024
United Way - \$80 to support general operations in 2024

Additional grant applications submitted in FY24: NM Department of Agriculture (awarded), New Mexico Arts (awarded), City of SF Arts & Culture Commission (awarded), Bank of America Foundation (pending), AMFUND (pending), Del Norte LOV Foundation, New Mexico Children's Foundation, Santa Fe Community Foundation, Swantz Family Foundation, Sustaining New Mexico Fund, and Dreyfus Foundation.

Fundraising and Additional Contributions FY24

Value-Added Contributions FY24	Volunteer Hours	Dollar Equivalent
Volunteer Contributions to Horticultural Care (23-24 Independent Sector volunteer rate = \$28.54/hour)	1610	\$45,949
Volunteer Contributions to Educational Programming (23-24 Independent Sector volunteer rate = \$28.54/hour)	692	\$19,750
Volunteer Contributions to Public Art (23-24 Independent Sector volunteer rate = \$28.54/hour)	166	\$4,738
Volunteer Board of Directors & Advisory Committee Contributions (\$75/hour – Specialized Skills)	187	\$14,025
Business Memberships	N/A	\$14,908
Grants & Foundations	N/A	\$81,377
Individual Donations	N/A	\$14,645
	Total Value Added	\$195,392

Horticultural Care FY24



Yardmasters spread compost around the Ponderosas (l) and remove alfalfa from the native grasslands (r).

Yardmasters – An experienced, highly skilled group that meets twice a week year-round, Yardmasters is the lynchpin of the RPC’s horticultural efforts, providing specialized care for the park’s diverse gardens and social spaces. They contributed 615 hours of service in FY24, including spring and fall clean-ups, tree and shrub pruning, mulching, native grassland reseeding and invasive species removal.



Arborist Kelsey Pazera (l) and Yardmasters (r) prune crabapple trees in the Rail Gardens.

Horticultural Care FY24



The park's Waffle Garden was designed to reflect historic Pueblo gardening traditions. In the spring of 2024, Yardmasters planted corn and amaranth, as well as a variety of pollinator-friendly wildflower seeds, including milkweed and bee balm.

Whole Foods & IFAM – In the spring of 2024, staff member from both Whole Foods Market (below, left) and the International Folk Art Market (below, right) pitched in to provide 50 hours of volunteer work in the park, including mulching, deadheading, invasive species removal and trash pick-up.



Horticultural Care FY24

Water Warriors – Despite the challenge of hauling hundreds of feet of hose throughout the gardens, our Water Warriors are committed to helping the trees, shrubs and plants thrive. With rising temperatures, ongoing drought, and 30% of the irrigation system still not functioning, their hard work is essential to the Park's long-term biological health.

Hand watering crabapples in the Rail Gardens.



Community Garden – In collaboration with the RPC, SITE Santa Fe took over the park's Community Garden in the spring of 2024 to plant a dye garden. It's part of their community-engaged initiative, liná: Botanical Dye Garden, timed to coincide with Diné artist Dakota Mace's spring 2025 solo exhibition. In addition to cleaning and prepping the garden, SITE staff mobilized 157 hours of community service to plant Hopi Red Dye Amaranth, Indigo, Purple Cosmos and Marigolds.



Horticultural Care FY24



Youth In-Service Volunteers – The RPC’s Youth-In-Service and Green Job Skills Training programs incorporate horticulture care and education, introducing dozens of youth annually to real-world climate solutions being practiced in the park, and inspiring a new generation of conservationists. They’re also essential to the park’s long-term biological health, accounting for 51% of volunteer horticulture work completed in FY24.

Rio Grande Elementary

Rio Grande students stop to check out the Railrunner while working in the park's compost pile.



Horticultural Care FY24

The MASTERS Program and Girls Inc.



The MASTERS Program adding compost in the Suerte (l), and Girls Inc. spreading straw in the Waffle Garden (r).



New Mexico School for the Deaf (NMSD).

NMSD students record results from their soil survey in one of the park's native grassland rehabilitation areas.

Horticultural Care FY24

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps – Through an ongoing Green Job Skills collaboration with Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC) and NMSD, members of the deaf and hard of hearing community receive hands-on horticultural training, while also developing leadership and project management skills.



The RMYC crew provided 280 service hours in June 2024, assisting in our Healthy Soils initiative, removing invasive species, and shoring up the embankment along the historic Acequia Madre.



Horticultural Care FY24



Our first Graze Days of 2024 garnered a feature story in the Santa Fe New Mexican.

Graze Days – With a second year of funding from the NM Department of Agriculture, the RPC hosted eight Graze Days sessions in FY24, drawing more than 1,700 visitors. It's an essential piece of our Healthy Soils in the Railyard Park initiative, which aims to strengthen the ecosystem, maximize biodiversity and create resilience against drought and climate change by incorporating healthy soil management principles into all of our horticultural work.



Grant-funded grazing areas include native grasslands along the Acequia Madre (l) and near the Rail Gardens (r).

Horticultural Care FY24



Above: Our Graze Days/Healthy Soils initiative has transformed a scarred and barren field (l) into an area teeming with native grasses and wildflowers (r).

Below: Grant funds allowed us to print additional educational signage, in both English and Spanish, to display at each Graze Days session.

HEALTHY SOIL PRINCIPLES

- KEEP SOIL COVERED**
Cover is critical to protect soil from wind and water erosion, provide food and habitat for macro- and microorganisms, buffer soil temperatures, cut down on evaporation and make the most out of scarce water resources.
- MINIMIZE SOIL DISTURBANCE & EXTERNAL INPUTS**
Avoid both physical and chemical disturbance as much as possible. Tillage destroys soil structure, leading to erosion. Synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and fungicides are harmful to life in the soil as well.
- MAXIMIZE DIVERSITY**
Diversity above ground is mirrored below. Each plant, insect and animal has something to offer. Together they provide a varied diet for microorganisms, break disease cycles and create habitat for wildlife and pollinators.
- MAINTAIN LIVING ROOTS**
Soil organisms cluster around roots that provide their basic food source: carbon. In turn, the soil biology fuels the plant nutrient cycle. Ensure roots by planting perennials or multi-species cover crops.
- INTEGRATE ANIMALS**
A healthy ecosystem provides habitat for animals large and small. Planned grazing is essential for soil health on rangelands, beneficial insects find food and shelter in hedgerows, and earthworms thrive in healthy soil.
- KNOW YOUR CONTEXT**
Every place has its history, and unique strengths and vulnerabilities. Understanding the land and its inhabitants is central to being a good caretaker and will inform how to apply healthy soil principles.

 railyardpark.org  nmhealthysoil.org

LOS PRINCIPIOS DE UN SUELO SALUDABLE

- MANTÉN EL SUELO CUBIERTO**
El cubrir la tierra es fundamental para protegerla de la erosión eólica (por viento) e hídrica (por agua), proporciona alimento y hábitat para macro y microorganismos, amortigua la temperatura del suelo, reduce la evaporación y aprovecha al máximo los escasos recursos de agua.
- MINIMIZA LA ALTERACIÓN DEL SUELO Y LOS APORTES EXTERNOS**
Evita las alteraciones físicas y químicas lo más posible. La labranza destruye la estructura del suelo, lo que conduce a la erosión. Los fertilizantes sintéticos, herbicidas, pesticidas y fungicidas también son dañinos para la vida en la tierra.
- MAXIMIZA LA DIVERSIDAD**
La diversidad en la superficie se refleja en la parte inferior. Cada planta, insecto y animal tiene algo que ofrecer. Juntos proporcionan una dieta variada para los microorganismos, rompen los ciclos de enfermedades y crean un hábitat para la vida silvestre y los polinizadores.
- MANTÉN RAÍCES VIVAS**
Los organismos del suelo se agrupan alrededor de las raíces que proporcionan su fuente básica de alimento: el carbono. A su vez, la biología de la tierra alimenta el ciclo de nutrientes de las plantas. Asegura las raíces plantando plantas perennes o cultivos de cobertura de múltiples especies.
- INTEGRA ANIMALES**
Un ecosistema saludable proporciona un hábitat para animales grandes y pequeños. El pastoreo planificado es esencial para la salud del suelo en los pastizales, los insectos beneficiosos encuentran alimento y refugio en los setos, y las lombrices de tierra prosperan en suelos sanos.
- CONOCE SU CONTEXTO**
Cada lugar tiene su historia y sus fortalezas y vulnerabilidades únicas. El comprender la tierra y sus habitantes es fundamental para ser un buen cuidador e informar cómo aplicar los principios para mantener un suelo saludable.

 railyardpark.org  nmhealthysoil.org

Educational Programming FY24



Sand Play Saturday – One of the cornerstones of our free educational programming, Sand Play Saturday is an opportunity for infants and toddlers to explore, discover and think creatively through open-ended play with sand, water and toys. The highly popular program, which served 711 people in FY24, is grounded in the growing body of research showing that sensory and nature-based play provides young children with experiential building blocks crucial to the development of the brain, body and central nervous system.



Educational Programming FY24

Living Laboratory Field Trips – Launched in the spring of 2023 with funding from New Mexico’s Outdoor Equity Fund, the Living Laboratory is a pilot field trip program designed to engage K-5 students with outdoor learning in ways that are experiential, relevant and culturally responsive. In FY24 the program served 294 local youth from Amy Biehl, Girls Inc., Gonzales, Atalaya, Fayette Street Academy, Acequia Madre, and NMSD.



The Living Laboratory curriculum is aligned to NM science and social studies standards, and includes Physics on the Playground, Plants & Pollinators, and Soil and Plant Investigation.



Educational Programming FY24



Pop-Up Playground – Perfect September weather and boundless kid energy helped make our fifth annual Pop-Up Playground a resounding success. More than 130 people turned out to build the ultimate fort city out of recycled material, while also enjoying face painting, and music from the Academy for Technology and the Classics' student marimba band.

Queen B Kids Singalong – Queen B Music Association's third year at the Park was its most successful yet, serving 858 children and adults with a free weekly singalong on the Performance Lawn. Led by Teacher Sarah-Jane, the family-friendly get together features a variety of engaging music games geared towards infants and toddlers.



Public Art FY24



Women of the Rails – Spanning two sides of a Railyard Park community building, the Herstory Printmaking Collective's large-scale mural celebrated the many under-recognized women who have contributed to the culture surrounding the Western rail experience. The piece featured original artwork printed using Caligo inks, and traced the often forgotten role of women in developing the railroads. The Railyard Art Project (RAP) installation was one of two FY24 exhibits funded by a grant from the City of Santa Fe's Arts & Culture Commission, and ran from April-early August of 2024.



Women of the Rails was installed during the RPC's Earth Day celebration, which drew more than 500 visitors, and included additional art exhibits from Axle Contemporary and the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum's Art to G.O.

Public Art FY24

Activating Oga Po’ogeh Land Acknowledgment – Renowned local artist Kathleen Wall (Jemez Pueblo/White Earth Chippewa) drew from her decades-long career as a Pueblo potter to create this multi-media sculpture off of the Santa Fe Rail Trail. The piece is brought to life through video installations of community members walking across Oga Po’ogeh, creating a powerful communal experience that addresses issues of land, identity and our complex local history. The second of RAP’s FY24 grant-funded projects, it ran from May through August of 2024.



Wall's family and larger community played an important part in bringing Activating Oga Po’ogeh Land Acknowledgment to life, reinforcing her collaborative approach to art-making.



Public Art FY24

Plastolithic – Inspired by and meant to evoke ancient Egyptian art, Adam Horowitz’s imposing installation – which ran from April 14-June 17, 2024 – offered powerful commentary about the evolution over time into a culture of waste. The piece was constructed of four mixed waste and recycling bales, each weighing 1,000 pounds, a simultaneously stark and grand visual depiction of the amount of trash an American couple creates annually.



Bluegrass & Bagels – In collaboration with the RPC, Greg Neal and Queen Bee Music host this free, drop-in jam session in the park’s Community Room on the second Sunday of every month. More than 135 local musicians attended in FY24 to play their favorite GospelGrass, TradGrass and NewGrass tunes.



Community Contributions FY24



Earth Day – For the second straight year, the RPC hosted a free community Earth Day event, this time celebrating Healthy Soils in the Rallyard Park. Presented in collaboration with two dozen partner organizations – including Save Water Santa Fe, NM Healthy Soils Working Group, Queen Bee Music, the Randall Davey Audubon Center, SITE Santa Fe and the Xerces Society – the event featured family-friendly activities like Graze Days, kids’ nature play, live music, seed ball making, composting demos, public art exhibitions and a dog photo booth, serving more than 500 community members.

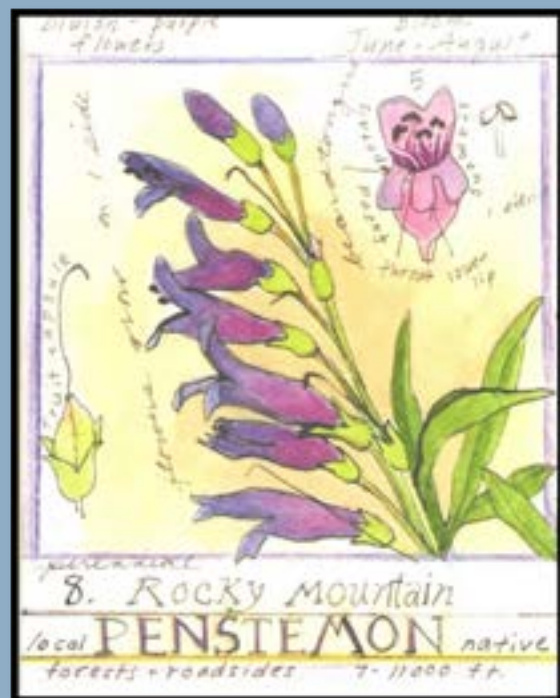
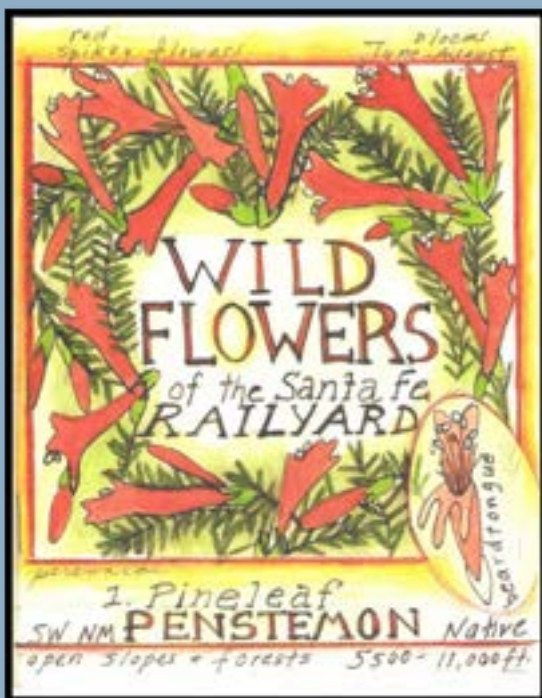


Community Contributions FY24



Bike Month – In honor of Bike to Work Day, the RPC once again teamed up with the Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization to serve free Coffee & Donuts on the Rail Trail. More than two dozen people came to celebrate Bike Month with baked goods donated by Santa Fe’s own Whoo’s Donuts.

Native Plant Society of New Mexico (NPSNM) – In March of 2024, the NPSNM invited RPC Executive Director Izzy Barr and Board Member/Artist Lynn Grimes to give a presentation to their Santa Fe chapter, serving 35 adults. The talk centered around Lynn’s watercolor booklet, “Wildflowers of the Santa Fe Railyard” (printing of which the NPSNM funded), and biodiversity at the Railyard Park.



Community Contributions FY24



PMS early childhood educators at a Railyard Park nature play workshop in the fall of 2023

Nature-based play at Earth Care, Southwestern College & PMS – The RPC has leveraged our commitment to equity and network of community partners to connect children and families with nature in other parts of Santa Fe. With support from the Brindle Foundation, since 2021 we have helped launch southside Sand Play programs at Earth Care and Southwestern College's Tierra Nueva Counseling Center (TNCC), and introduced nature-based play and education to Presbyterian Medical Services' (PMS) Early Head Start and Head Start classrooms. Combined these programs served more than 500 children and 60 early childhood educators in FY24.



Sand and nature play programs at TNCC (l), Earth Care (c) and PMS' Early Head Start (r)