



NEWS RELEASE



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Contact: Jessica Peterson
Public Relations Director
(970) 244-1640

Jessica.peterson@mesacounty.us

New Section to Be Added to Riverfront Trail

Easement will allow Mesa County to complete design work and start building the new length of trail this summer.

Walkers, joggers, bikers and roller bladers who enjoy the paved path along the Colorado River will soon have a new mile-and-a-half of trail to blaze.

The Mesa County Commissioners today agreed to accept an easement on a property that will soon become a new part of the Colorado Riverfront Trail. The move comes as part of the county's renewed focus on completing the approximately 30-mile paved trail from Fruita to Palisade.

There are currently three completed sections of the Riverfront Trail, which enjoy a lot of use by citizens. "We've made completing the Riverfront Trail from Fruita to Palisade via Grand Junction a high priority for the county," according to Mesa County Commissioner Craig Meis. "This particular stretch of the trail will greatly further the progress toward completing the connection between Grand Junction and Palisade, and gets us one step closer to providing an alternative transportation corridor in the Grand Valley."

The property in question is directly north of the Colorado River near 33 Road. The Mesa Land Trust acquired the trail easement in 2005 from property owners Ron and Kathleen Arnett, with funding from the Colorado Riverfront Foundation. Today's action by the Commissioners now officially transfers that easement to Mesa County for use as part of the Riverfront Trail. "We need more parks and recreational trails for the young people in our community," said landowner Ron Arnett. "We're just trying to do our part to help."

"By accepting this easement, Mesa County can move forward with completing a new section of the Riverfront Trail between 32 Road and 33 1/2 Road," according to Tom Fisher, Mesa County's Regional Services Director. "This segment should be complete by next spring, and will provide folks in the eastern Grand Valley a great new place to recreate, as well as providing an alternative to driving. We hope this is just the first of many steps toward completion of the entire trail."

"This progress toward our goal of completing the Riverfront Trail is due to a very effective partnership between the landowners, [Mesa County](#), the [Riverfront Commission](#), the Riverfront Foundation, and the [Mesa Land Trust](#)," according to Steve Acquafresca, Chair of the Mesa County Board of Commissioners. "This cooperation will truly benefit our communities for generations to come."

The easement falls within the boundaries of the Mesa County Community Separator or "Buffer Zone", which is intended to protect agricultural land and open space between the communities of Grand Junction and Palisade. Mesa Land Trust Executive Director Rob Bleiberg added, "This unique collaboration brings the community a mile-and-a-half closer to having a conserved greenway along the Colorado River."

"By providing the funding for this easement, the Riverfront Foundation is pleased and proud to play a significant role in creating this important new section of trail," said Bill Prakken, Chair of the Riverfront Foundation.

Please note: The land where the new segment of trail will be built is private, and is therefore not currently open to public use. There will not be any public access to this land until the trail is constructed and officially open.

