



EDD

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
August 30, 2021

Outdoor Recreation Division Selects 6 Entrepreneurs to Live-Pitch Business Ideas at Outdoor Economics Conference

Business founders from the 6 selected will join the state's first-ever outdoor recreation industry Pitchfest at the Sept. 29 – Oct 1 conference, with the winner eligible to receive \$5,000 in marketing support to promote their idea.

SANTA FE, N.M. – The Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) of the Economic Development Department has announced the six participants who will live-pitch their outdoor recreation business ideas at the fall Outdoor Economics Conference. The entrepreneurs will be part of the state's first outdoor recreation industry Pitchfest.

The 2021 Outdoor Economics Conference Pitchfest on September 30 in Farmington aims to connect outdoor entrepreneurs with mentors and investors. Its ultimate goal is to seed an entrepreneurial network of outdoor-business founders, industry experts, and funders to grow the New Mexico outdoor economy.

ORD invited outdoor businesses to apply to participate in the first-ever Pitchfest. Business ideas related to the nature-based outdoor recreation industry were eligible. The six finalists were scored based on their business description, the ability to scale the company in New Mexico, and revenue potential. Two of the finalists have participated in New Mexico State University's BizSprint Outdoor Accelerator program, which ORD helped fund.

"These businesses all have a unique business model that is not only good for our economy, but also for the environment," Economic Development Secretary and Pitchfest judge Alicia J. Keyes said. "We're so proud of the diversity of these applicants and the ingenuity they have shown. Businesses like these support the outdoor recreation economy, which is paramount in our recovery and resiliency efforts."

The six outdoor Pitchfest finalists are:

- **Bee Wild Outside, Alexandra Merlino:** Bee Wild Outside is a purpose brand focused on delivering the highest quality sunscreen protection for all people while being safe for the environment, creating a sustainable packaging system focused on reducing waste, and being a leader in sustainability. Their high-performance sunscreen appeals to customers from a design, health, and an ecological perspective. Bee Wild Outside is meeting the increasing demand for sustainable products by making the first zero-waste and refillable containers for sunscreen.

- **Bosque Mobile Bike Repair, Frankie Soto:** Bosque Mobile Bicycle Repair is a mobile bicycle repair service based in Albuquerque that can go to you. They do house calls and repairs in the field, on the bicycle path, and on the trails. The company also makes informational videos about accessories with recommendations of where to buy the products online.
- **Free-to-Roam eBiking, Susan Gautsch:** Free-to-Roam eBiking's purpose is to enable more enjoyable, healthy, environmentally sustainable, and affordable lifestyles across all ages, abilities, and communities of New Mexico. They offer a wide range of ebiking experiences, including ebike rentals, guided tours, fleet rentals, regularly scheduled exploration rides led by RideGuides & Bike Educators, and a "FreeRoamers" subscription to help riders gain greater knowledge, comfort and confidence with bike safety and riding skills. They also offer long-term ebike lease plans that include we-come-to-you maintenance and upgrade eligibility.
- **Rerouted, Chap Grubb:** Rerouted is building tech to fix the used gear industry. It is a used gear e-commerce platform for buying, selling and donating used gear. They are focused on P2P & helping used gear stores. www.rerouted.co
- **Southern New Mexico Trail Alliance (SNMTA), Peter Livingstone – NMSU BizSprint Outdoor Accelerator Graduate:** The Southern New Mexico Trail Alliance (SNMTA) is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 corporation registered in New Mexico. SNMTA coordinates with land management agencies and user groups to preserve and enhance trail connectivity and outdoor recreation opportunities. SNMTA organizes and leads trail maintenance, cleanup events and workshops, and trail runs and races. Public education and engaging New Mexico's youth to learn about their local environment and to participate in outdoor recreation is at the heart of their mission. SNMTA offers free entry to all trail running events to youth 18 and under. Through these efforts, they hopes to inspire the next generation of trail stewards and to continue building the foundation for New Mexico's outdoor economy.
- **Southwest Outdoor Fitness, David Crider - NMSU BizSprint Outdoor Accelerator Graduate:** Southwest Outdoor Fitness (SOF) is an unique two-part outdoor health & fitness "outdoor concept gym" that helps members reach their fitness & nutrition goals while learning new outdoor skills. SOF consists of an in-depth virtual side: at home exercises, full nutritional & meal programs, personal guest profiles, community and outdoor exercise calendars coupled with instructor led, outdoor fitness modules. Senior program guests do not need to purchase any equipment. They just show up for the instructor led cardio classes in the great outdoors.

"We're so proud to announce this incredible group of outdoor economy businesses," ORD Director Axie Navas said. "The founders have business ideas including zero-waste sunscreen manufacturing, a mobile bike repair shop, a used outdoor gear e-commerce platform, and an innovative e-bike subscription program. In other words, they truly represent the creativity and the breadth of the outdoor recreation economy, which employs over 35,000 New Mexicans."

These six entrepreneurs will pitch their ideas to an esteemed group of Pitchfest judges, including Sec. Alicia J. Keyes, State Sen. and President of Las Cruces Green Chamber Carrie Hamblen, NM Angels President Drew Tulchin, Sun Mountain Capital Principal Brian Lewis, and Luis Benitez, Vice President of Government Affairs & Global Impact at the VF Corporation.

At the outdoor Pitchfest, participants will receive 1:1 mentoring with industry professionals and funders, expert feedback from the panel of judges, media coverage of the event and business pitch, an option to commit to multi-week fall accelerator program and attend weekly remote meetings, management training, and mentorship activities, complimentary entry to the Outdoor Economics Conference, and a free one-year membership to endeavOR New Mexico. The winner will receive a \$5,000 prize to create a marketing video of their business idea.

To attend the outdoor Pitchfest, [register for the Outdoor Economics Conference](#). The

Pitchfest will start at 3:30PM MT on Thursday, Sept. 30 in the Farmington Civic Center, followed by the evening reception, Party by the River at the Farmington Museum & Visitor Center.

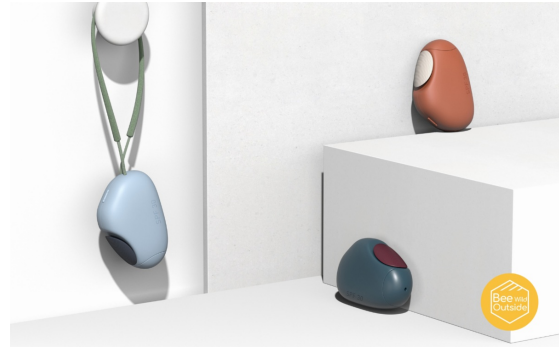
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Free-to-Roam Ebiking lead team



Bosque Mobile Bike Repair, Frankie Soto



Bee Wild Outside sunscreen product display

The New Mexico Economic Development Department's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive.

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