



**Sarah Huckabee Sanders**  
Governor  
**Shea Lewis**  
Secretary

Secretary Tom Vilsack

U. S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Tom Vilsack,

Arkansas is known as The Natural State for a reason – we are blessed to offer pristine streams, unspoiled wilderness, and diverse outdoor recreation opportunities that include hiking, biking, floating, climbing, hunting and more. Our mission at the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism (ADPHT) is to protect and promote the state's natural, cultural and historical resources, contributing to a thriving economy and enhanced quality of life. The Office of Outdoor Recreation was created within ADPHT to lead the state's efforts to grow the outdoor recreation economy in Arkansas. Our goal is to further establish Arkansas as a top destination for outdoor recreation and to ensure outdoor businesses continue to thrive.

The Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation writes this letter to express our support for the Trails at Mena project, an endeavor that represents a significant step forward for Arkansas State Parks, the Arkansas Parks and Recreation Foundation, the City of Mena and the Ouachita National Forest.

The Trails at Mena project is the culmination of a shared vision. Since the city of Mena began work on trails at Ward Lake in 2020, the project has inspired additional parties to join forces to connect Queen Wilhelmina State Park and the city of Mena. This effort has established an outdoor recreation plan that respects the natural environment and meets the needs of both visitors and residents.

By highlighting the natural terrain and environment of the Ouachita Mountains, the Trails at Mena project will create accessible and sustainable recreation opportunities that blend seamlessly with the landscape. Additionally, by diversifying the trails that we offer around the state, this project will help attract a wider range of outdoor enthusiasts, further contributing to the growth of the Arkansas outdoor economy.

The Trails at Mena project is poised to become a significant asset, not only for the local community, but also for the state as we continue showcasing why Arkansas is a world-class outdoor recreation destination, providing valuable recreational opportunities and fostering economic growth.

Thank you for considering our support for this important project. We look forward to seeing the positive impact the Trails at Mena will have on the Mena community and the state of Arkansas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "KAndrews".

Katherine Andrews  
Director, Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation