

## **Edu-Venture Trail: A Demonstration of Arid Land Techniques**

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The Edu-Venture Trail demonstration project has developed an educational trail with landscapes grading from a dry desert ecosystem to irrigated vegetation and gardens. There are multiple purposes incorporated into the trail. For urban home owners or landscapers, the different segments of the trail demonstrate plants that can be used for different visual effects and have different water 'costs' to maintain them. Interpretive signage along the trail will identify species and discuss the inputs necessary for their sustainability. For students, different features along the trail will be tied to particular scientific principles which they will be able to explore at their individual educational level. Lessons have been developed which will tie the scientific principles learned to the state science standards for Arizona and New Mexico.

A strong emphasis has been placed on developing a site that demonstrates wise use of natural resources. A monolithic dome has been constructed on site to demonstrate an energy efficient building which could be used for a dwelling. A photovoltaic array has been installed to pump water for an artificial stream and pond system and also provide lighting in the monolithic dome.

Educational programming has begun already, even though the planting of the various ecosystems is not complete. Since the initiation of the project more than 1600 people have been taught at the site. The visitors have come from different groups, varying from Graham and Greenlee county students, scout and church groups to local adults on a home garden tour.