Friends of Nevada Wilderness

2021 Annual Report

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Photo Courtesy of Vivian Olds

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Friends of Nevada Wilderness is dedicated to preserving all qualified public lands as Wilderness, protecting all present and potential Wilderness from ongoing threats, educating the public about the values of - and need for - Wilderness, and improving the management and restoration of these wild lands.

"Wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit, and as vital to our lives as water and good bread." - Edward Abbey

We Advocate, We Steward, We Reach Out

Desert National Wildlife Refuge Advocacy

Board Member Jose Witt and Executive Director Shaaron Netherton

One of our highest priority advocacy campaigns is protecting the Desert National Wildlife Refuge from military expansion and habitat fragmentation.

As a result of our effective efforts, **Friends of Nevada Wilderness received the National Wildlife Refuge Association's National Refuge Advocates of the Year Award** for advocacy of permanent protection for the Desert National Wildlife Refuge in Southern Nevada.

Temporary protection of the Refuge was granted when Congress rejected the military's proposed expansion in the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act. We hope you will join us in our ongoing efforts to seek permanent Wilderness designation of 300,000 additional acres in the Refuge to protect bighorn sheep and the hundreds of other species that rely on this habitat, some of the best left in the western US.

This continues to be our highest priority and we will not give up our defense of the refuge until permanent protection is established. #DontBombTheBighorn

Griffith Peak Trail Rebuild Project

After fires and floods wiped out the popular Griffith Peak Trail, we vowed to make it accessible to the public. Using hand saws in the Mt. Charleston Wilderness, volunteers and staff removed over 100 fallen logs from the trail allowing the Forest Service to reopen the trail. **Friends of Nevada Wilderness received the Coalition for Recreational Trails Annual Achievement Award** for the Griffith Peak Trail Rebuild Project for our Public-Private Partnerships and Enhancing Public Lands Access.

National Volunteer Excellence Award

On behalf of our amazing volunteers, **Friends of Nevada Wilderness was proud to accept the Bureau of Land Management's National Group Excellence Award.** *Thank you to our exceptional volunteers for helping to improve our public lands!* This year, we surpassed three million dollars cumulatively of in-kind services thanks to the work of our volunteers.

Since our founding in 1974, Friends of Nevada Wilderness has been a key player in the designation or expansion of all 70 Wilderness areas across the state (3.4-million acres) along with three National Conservation Areas and two National Monuments. We are proud to be a non-partisan organization with supporters from a wide range of backgrounds.

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." - The Lorax by Dr. Seuss

2021 Program Highlights

Dark Sky Program

We were recognized as a leader in dark sky preservation in Nevada helping to get **dark sky legislation (SB52) passed in the 2021 Legislative session**. We continued to monitor and report on the Massacre Rim Dark Sky Sanctuary in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management and the International Dark Sky Association. We hosted dark sky festivals and lectures and worked with rural communities across the state to promote the magic of Nevada's starry skies. Dark skies provide a window to the universe inviting each one of us to experience the wonder of its beauty and vastness.

Sheldon Wildlife Refuge Restoration

For nearly 15 years, Pat Bruce has led the **significant restoration effort on the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge**. Over 130 tons of metal, including 340 miles of unneeded fencing, has been removed from the refuge **(4 tons in 2021)**.

Rewilding the Sheldon Refuge has long been our dream where wildlife like the pronghorn can run free without becoming tangled in dangerous barbwire. Dreams really can come true!

Our partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Greater Hart Sheldon Conservation Fund in the stewardship of this magnificent wild area is a lasting achievement that will benefit future recreationists and wildlife.

Year In Review

- Legislative Campaigns: 7
- Stewardship Projects: 45
- Springs Surveyed: 313
- Miles of Trail Maintained: 59
- Total Volunteers: 737
- Total Volunteer Hours: 6,937
- Volunteer In-Kind: $266,865
- Americorps In-Kind: $86,754
- Outreach Events: 29

Spring Monitoring

We continued to grow our **springs monitoring program**, getting out to **313 springs in 2021** across Clark County. With global warming and drought, monitoring and restoring our precious water resources is critically important. Wildlife and associated aquatic systems rely on the health of these springs for survival. We hosted multiple trainings in 2021 for volunteers to become our spring citizen scientists. Staff and volunteers survey springs, such as the Stanley Springs in the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area, for water quality and flow.

A Tribute to Harry Reid December 2, 1939 - December 28, 2021

Senator Harry Reid loved the land of Nevada from arid deserts to towering 13,000 foot mountains. His devotion, skill, and tenacity over decades led to adding 69 Wilderness areas to Nevada's original one. He also secured protection for Great Basin National Park, Sloan Canyon and Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Areas, Tule Springs Fossil Beds, and Gold Butte and Basin and Range National Monuments. Senator Reid leaves a magnificent legacy of protected areas in Nevada for future generations.

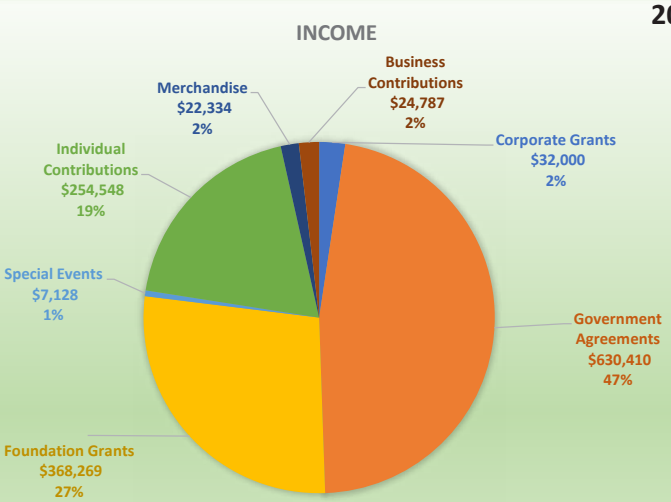
Marge Sill, one of the founding members of Friends of Nevada Wilderness, shared a December 2nd birthday with Senator Reid. While she too has passed on, we will always remember them sending each other birthday messages and notes of encouragement.

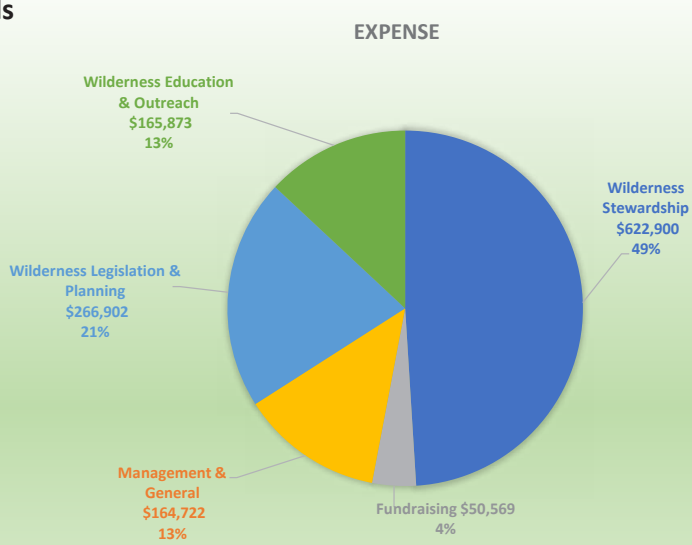
Today we continue our quest for more Wilderness inspired by Senator Reid's tremendous track record. Friends of Nevada Wilderness will continue to protect, restore, and educate the public about wild places in Nevada. It is our way to honor Senator Reid and his generous actions on behalf of Wild Nevada.

Senator Reid, we will miss you. Thank you for all you have done for Nevada, on behalf of the Friends Board of Directors and Staff.

Senator Reid and Shaaron Netherton

2021 Financials (unaudited)





Become a Steward of the Wild! - A monthly membership is an impactful way to ensure our work protecting and stewarding your public lands can continue for generations to come.

"As we work to heal the Earth, the Earth heals us." --Robin Wall Kimmerer

Wild Nevada Legacy Circle: A bequest shows your thoughtfulness and forward-thinking generosity to help ensure Nevada's public lands remain Forever Wild! Leaving a legacy gift in your will demonstrates your commitment to protect and restore Nevada's wild lands in perpetuity.

Contact Ralph Phillips, Development Director
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FRIENDS of NEVADA WILDERNESS

To learn more about legacy gifts visit: **NevadaWilderness.org/legacy_giving**