The town of Gerlach is situated at the base of the fabulous Granite Range and is the gateway community to the Black Rock Desert - High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area, a popular destination for outdoor recreation that affords a wilderness experience like no other area. Those recreational opportunities, the famous dark skies, historic trails and the wild nature of the area are all threatened by a proposal by Ormat to create a network of roads and drill pads with the plan to develop an industrial scale geothermal facility at the town’s edge.
Between extreme heat and rain and returning smoke, this has been an interesting start to fall. We did have good weather in August, however, when we were finally able to get our staff and Board of Directors together for a very productive meeting in the woods south of Reno. Due to COVID, it was the first time some of them had met in person. We spent time talking about what makes Friends of Nevada unique and making sure our mission and values are still aligned to true north. I have to say I am so impressed with the passion and commitment our board and staff bring to protecting wild Nevada.

This summer has been a busy one with our volunteers making a big difference on-the-ground. Our two trail crews have been keeping Wilderness trails accessible and our resource crew in the Sheldon continues to re-wild the refuge. We’ve had a lot more outreach events than in the previous years and have enjoyed seeing old friends and making new ones.

On the legislative front, we have continued to be active champions for protecting new Wilderness and national conservation areas across the state. Our Nevada delegation has been quite supportive, although moving protections through Congress has gotten more difficult. Still, we remain steadfast and up to the challenge and hope to have good news by the end of the year. Stay tuned!

Shaaron

Patagonia - “Earth is now our only shareholder”

On September 14, Yvon Chouinard, the founder of Patagonia made an exciting announcement: “Earth is now our only shareholder. If we have any hope of a thriving planet—much less a business—it is going to take all of us doing what we can with the resources we have.” Read his statement at patagonia.com.

Yvon has restructured the company with the new Patagonia Purpose Trust and the Holdfast Collective, a 501 (C) 4 nonprofit, dedicated to fighting the environmental crisis and defending nature. The funding will come from Patagonia; each year, the money made after reinvesting in the business will be distributed as a dividend to help fight the crisis.

Patagonia has been an incredible partner with Friends of Nevada Wilderness for decades. Their support for protecting wild Nevada through grants, employee engagement, space for events, and networking opportunities has been invaluable. Patagonia’s head of Grants and Activism has reached out to us and its other grantees to reassure us that the company’s commitment and process for supporting grassroots organizations like ours will not change.

We have always felt incredibly fortunate to be part of the Patagonia family. We are so blown away by their generosity and commitment to the planet. Thank you, Yvon Chouinard, for your vision and enduring love for nature.
There are no easy answers in the ongoing debate over how to balance the need to develop renewable energy sources on public lands and protect the environment at the same time. Regardless, Friends remains committed to scrutinizing potential impacts of alternative energy development on our public wild lands in Nevada.

We are continuing to monitor and provide comments on the ill-conceived ORMAT plans to drill up to 20 exploration wells and ultimately build a geothermal plant on the outer edge of Gerlach. The proposed plant would negatively impact the community by threatening dark skies, recreational access and, very importantly, our Granite Banjo Wilderness proposal. The minor amount of energy that would be produced here does not warrant the impacts to the community, recreation and Wilderness.

We are also involved in the Greenlink Nevada project (West and North) planned by NV Energy that would construct a 350-mile long transmission line from Las Vegas to Yerington, a 235-mile long transmission line from Ely to Yerington, and three lines from Yerington to Reno.

Friends of Nevada Wilderness is highly concerned about the impacts of the Ely to Yerington North line along the relatively undisturbed Highway 50 corridor and would much prefer an alternative route along the much less wild I-80 corridor. We are also working on a partial reroute of the Greenlink West project to protect a number of areas with wilderness characteristics that would be impacted by the proposed route.

The Stillwater Range WSA near Fallon and the heart of wild Nye County may be a few hundred miles apart, but they share one thing in common - their fate lies in the US Senate and a single piece of legislation involving the expansion of the Navy’s Fallon Range Training Complex. Should the Navy’s expansion move forward in the National Defense Authorization Act this year it is critical that the package includes extensive conservation mitigation measures in northern Nevada as well as the comprehensive measures to protect sacred tribal lands and to provide economic opportunities that indigineous communities support.

Northern Nye County would also feel the impacts of an expanded naval complex which is one of the reasons Friends has worked so hard to reach agreement with local officials on Wilderness and other conservation designations for hundreds of thousands of acres in Nye County.

Though the sand is almost through the hourglass, we are still pushing to see Nye County included in legislation this year.

For months, we have been in constant contact with our delegation members and their staff and other stakeholders and we won’t let up now.
WEED WARRIORS, A DECADE LATER

For ten years, Friends has provided the shovels and gloves and the volunteers bring the energy and enthusiasm to musk thistle removals in the Mt. Rose Wilderness.

Thanks to funding from the Truckee River Fund, the National Forest Foundation and the Charles H. Stout Foundation, Friends led eight Weed Warrior trips this last spring into the Hunter Creek Trailhead area of the Mt. Rose Wilderness to dig up 25,000 invasive musk thistles. Volunteers came from several organizations and businesses including the Patagonia Service Center and the Midtown Rotary Club.

Due to the success of the program, in 2021 Friends began returning in the fall to revisit areas where weeds were pulled to spread native seeds to further restore the natural habitat.

Stewardship Manager Chris Cutshaw has been involved with the Weed Warriors program since 2015, and can truly see the difference volunteers have made over the years.

“Sites we visited this season once produced thousands of musk thistle and required at least a full volunteer day each. And now, in 2022, we are knocking out multiple sites in one morning and finding far fewer thistle,” he said.

“Don’t get me wrong, there are still a ton of musk thistle out there, but it’s nice to see a difference being made and finding less thistle at multiple sites.”

Classified as a noxious weed, musk thistle thrives in disturbed areas like fire scars and replaces native plants. As wildfire season rages hotter and longer, restoration is vital to ensure native species have a fighting chance at survival.

AND THEY’RE OPEN!

One of the proudest accomplishments for the 2022 Trail Crew was opening up two incredible access trails to the Mt. Moriah Table, Big Canyon and Hendrys Creek trails. Since Friends’ crews last worked out in the area three years ago, over 100 trees had fallen over the trails, making it extremely challenging for any hikers or equestrians to reach the crest of the Snake Range.

The crews spent 3 hitches (work weeks) clearing all those trees with their favorite crosscut saws, axes, and handsaws. The Backcountry Horsemen of Nevada packed one crew up Hendrys creek so they could set up basecamp closer to the site, saving them energy and hours of hiking time.

Many parts of the trail had also eroded from some of the serious rain events and seasonal snowmelt.
A little summer rain didn’t stop a crew of Southern Nevada staff and seven hardy volunteers from getting some major work done in the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area in early August.

For years, Friends has led extended Alternative Spring Breaks in the cooler months of the year. They’re called “alternative” because rather than nightclubs and pool parties, students spend their time out in the wild, learning more about and giving back to their public lands. This year, Friends added an Alternative Summer Break with support from the Southern Nevada Agency Partnership (SNAP), a coalition of five federal land management agencies who coordinate conservation and outreach. The crew escaped the valley summer heat and hiked high up into the Spring Mountains to do trail restoration, monitor sensitive springs and remove piles of trash. Students also got to interact with SNAP representatives to learn more about the complexities of managing millions of acres of public lands.

Other major projects included our ongoing graffiti removal effort. With support from the Mt. Charleston License Plate Fund, dozens of volunteers painstakingly removed graffiti found along 6.2 miles of popular trails like Mary Jane Falls, Fletcher Canyon, Little Falls, and Cathedral Rock.

On the other side of the Spring Mountains, we worked with volunteers and the Forest Service to remove 40 stolen road signs from an illegal vehicle route by the Mount Stirling Wilderness Study Area. Vandals had affixed the signs along over 2 miles of steep and winding terrain. All of these efforts ensure that visitors to the mountains are able to enjoy the natural experience that they’re seeking.

We continue to host springs monitoring training throughout the year and hope you can join us for a session soon! The training provides volunteers with the skills and resources needed to monitor springs on their own time, which contributes to groundwater science and helps everyone take better care of these invaluable resources. You’ll also get to meet Montana Stevens, who joined our ranks as the Springs Monitoring Coordinator this summer and brings new, exciting fisheries knowledge to the springs program. The next virtual springs monitoring training will be presented in late October.

See more of our crew photos and a Special Volunteer Shout Out on page 10!
The crews repaired the surface of the trail, the tread, and constructed drains to ensure water moves off the trail instead of down it.

“Hendrys Creek is my favorite trail so far in Nevada. The cliffs, creek, diverse scenery, wildlife and where the trail takes you make it an A+ trail.” says Ed Ruiz, FNW Trail Crew Lead. If you plan to hike to Mt. Moriah summit, the 2nd highest peak in any Nevada Wilderness area, Big Canyon is a shorter hike with a more difficult drive to the trailhead from the west side, and Hendrys Creek is a longer hike with easier access to the trailhead from the east side. Whichever way you choose, Mt. Moriah Wilderness will not disappoint!

And to help plan and guide you on this amazing trek, be sure to go to nevadawilderness.org/shop to purchase our Snake Range map.

The crews removed three and a half miles of fence and more than six TONS of metal debris, including 650 metal T-posts.

Fence removal project is complete

Crew Leader Omer Barash and AmeriCorps Service members Eric Einsphar and Gabriel Bierwas spent more than three months this summer on the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge, removing the last of the barbed wire fence that wildlife officials wanted gone.

We were excited this year to embark on a new and important effort to restore habitat for the threatened Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (LCT). Over two weekends in July, staff and a total of 13 volunteers traveled to the remote LCT Instant Study Area in far northeast Washoe County where the purest strain of fish still survives. This 12,000-acre area was established in 1973. About 2,000 acres are fenced to keep out livestock and protect water quality and spawning habitat.

In just two weekends, 3,105 feet (or 0.6 miles) of fence was repaired and 2.3 miles scouted. We camped in a stunning mahogany grove and woke up refreshed each morning ready to get to work!

The best part of the project was the opportunity to relax and enjoy the beautiful views. Fishing is not allowed in the creek, but just seeing the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout thrive in the crystal clear water and the return of healthy native plant communities was a rare treat.

That’s a Wrap!

We've become quite attached to this special place and plan to return for many years to come!
The Santa Rosa-Paradise Peak Wilderness is a quietly spectacular landscape with rugged granitic rock formations, abundant spring wildflowers, and wide, sweeping basins above pockets of aspen. Paradise Peak offers majestic views, abundant wildlife and a 30-foot waterfall hidden in Falls Canyon on the west side. This region is the traditional home of the Northern Paiute and Shoshone-Bannock people who have been living on and with these lands for countless generations. Our trail crews and volunteers have done extensive trail work, invasive weed removal, native plantings for fire restoration and wildlife projects in the area.

Getting There:
The Santa Rosa-Paradise Peak Wilderness is located in the southern end of the Santa Rosa Ranger District of USFS. From Winnemucca along I-80 take Highway 95 north to the Highway 290 junction to Paradise Valley. Highway 290 accesses the east side trailheads and Highway 95 accesses the west side trailheads. All-wheel drive, sturdy tires, and a high clearance vehicle are necessary to access most trailheads during the warm months. During the winter, the roads are often covered in snow.

Camping Locations:
North of the Wilderness is the Lye Creek Campground, near Hinkey Summit which features 13 campsites. Additional dispersed camping opportunities can be found along the Hinkey Summit-Canyon Creek Road (FR 084).

To explore on our website from the comfort of your chair check out:
www.nevadawilderness.org/santa_rosa_paradise_peak_wilderness_summary
WE REACH OUT

PARK TO PARK IN THE DARK
an only-in-Nevada adventure!

Now is a good time to plan a fall trip through beautiful central Nevada, where, once the sun goes down, you’ll see more stars than just about any other place in the world.

To make sure travelers get the absolute most out of their adventure, Friends teamed up with a number of other public and private partners to create an itinerary called Park to Park in the Dark.

Both Death Valley National Park to the west and Great Basin National Park in the east are certified as International Dark Sky Parks. Both offer amazing stargazing programs that will instill a new appreciation in starry skies for all who look up.

And in-between, there are sooo many places the whole family can stop to stargaze at night and hang out during the day to see only-in-Nevada sights, like the International Car Forest of the Last Church or the Tonopah Historic Mining Park or the Ward Charcoal Ovens State Park.

Because so much of our great state is owned by us, the public, it is home to vast expanses of land where there is no artificial light... where on a clear night, you can set up your campsite by light from the sky, lie back, gaze upward and let yourself be “star-struck.”

We encourage everyone to check out parktoparkinthedark.org and plan your trip. Whether you make the whole trek or just a part of it, you will never forget what it’s like to escape the city lights and get out under the stars.

Daytime sights in beautiful Nye County along the Park to Park in the Dark route
- Photo by Kurt Kuznicki

★ DARK SKY FEST A STELLAR SUCCESS ★

Nearly 150 people gathered in Cedarville, CA, August 19th & 20th to celebrate the starry skies in and surrounding the Massacre Rim Wilderness Study Area Dark Sky Sanctuary.

The annual Dark Sky Festival is hosted by Friends, the BLM Applegate Field Office and Modoc Outdoor Rec and Tourism. This year, members of the Astronomical Society of Nevada brought their high-powered telescopes to make day and night sky viewing particularly memorable.

Festival-goers created some art, competed in a far-out trivia contest, and of course gazed up at the cosmos. A cloudless sky provided visitors the breathtaking opportunity to view planets, distant galaxies, nebulae, and even an occasional shooting star.

The event becomes more popular each year – watch our website and our social media next summer for the announcement of the 2023 Dark Sky Festival.

Thank you to the Jeep Only dealership in Las Vegas for inviting us to their 1st annual Jeep Jam, and for generously donating the raffle proceeds to Friends of Nevada Wilderness! We had a blast getting to know everyone and are excited about this new partnership!

Family fun at the 2022 Dark Sky Festival

- Photo by Kurt Kuznicki

NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO PLAN A FALL TRIP THROUGH BEAUTIFUL CENTRAL NEVADA, WHERE, ONCE THE SUN GOES DOWN, YOU’LL SEE MORE STARS THAN JUST ABOUT ANY OTHER PLACE IN THE WORLD.
This year, the Friends crew headed out to Burning Man to host the Bureau of Land Management’s ‘Interp Camp’ during the first official event since 2019. Friends staff enthusiastically shared their love and knowledge of the area with Burners eager to learn about the Black Rock Desert and surrounding public lands. Whether folks stopped by for a quick fun fact about the local flora and fauna, or a more in-depth lesson on the natural and cultural history, everyone enjoyed hearing about all the Black Rock NCA has to offer outside of the Burning Man event. Did you see us out there? We hope you came by and gave us a high-five!

Burners Learn About Wild Nevada

Meg, Olivia and Tara at Interp Camp

Burners drop by the Interp Camp where Friends staff shared info about conserving public lands

Photo by Chris Cutshaw
Welcome and Farewell...

Friends welcomes Montana Stevens, our new Springs Monitoring Coordinator. Montana worked for the Nevada Department of Wildlife and is familiar with our state’s wild lands. “I am excited to take on this new adventure with Friends of Nevada Wilderness. Springs are an invaluable resource. I look forward to helping to improve their health and working with our many volunteers,” said Montana. He is picking up the reins from Chantal Iosso who moved on to lead our state’s Wetland Program at the Nevada Division of Natural Heritage.

Chantal spent the last two years at Friends building our southern Nevada Springs Program. “I’ve learned so much and seen so much of wild southern Nevada. But I’m definitely going to miss the people most of all; I couldn’t have asked for a better group of coworkers and volunteers,” she said.

One last staff note - Ralph Phillips, our Director of Development for the last several years retired in early August so he would have more time to play. Ralph was instrumental in setting up our Wild Nevada Legacy Circle, updating our online donation information from bequest forms to stock donations and other advancements. He brought a wealth of knowledge about working with our amazing donors. We wish him the very best!

Thank You Ron for over 1000 Volunteer Hours!

Congratulations and a huge shout out to Ron LaPointe, right with Peter Sbraccia, who this summer surpassed ONE THOUSAND volunteer hours on Friends’ stewardship projects. Ron has been volunteering longer than some of our staff has even been around. If you have hiked a trail in the Spring Mountains, chances are Ron has maintained it at some point, often fixing things up on his personal hikes. We hope everyone who enjoys the area appreciates Ron as much as we do! Thank you, Ron!
**PLEASE HELP KEEP NEVADA WILD - FOR NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE**

Since 1984, Friends of Nevada Wilderness has been actively protecting Nevada’s wild places. Our unique emphasis on restoration of public lands, permanent protection through legislation, and hosting special educational events has been a cornerstone of our work for decades. We rely on support from our members to continue this important work. By giving now, you can make a huge difference in Nevada’s future.

With your support, 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. In 2021, alongside 737 volunteers, we worked on seven legislative campaigns, completed 45 stewardship projects, surveyed 313 springs, maintained 59 miles of trail, and hosted 29 outreach events.

**WON’T YOU JOIN US IN SUPPORTING NEVADA’S WILD LANDS?**

There are so many ways to give to help ensure our unique wild lands here in Nevada are permanently protected. To give a gift you can send or direct a check to Friends of Nevada Wilderness at PO Box 9754 Reno, NV 89507 or go to: www.nevadawilderness.org/contribute

Leave a Legacy: www.nevadawilderness.org/legacy_giving
If you have membership questions, please contact Karen Weiss, Membership and Outreach Coordinator, karen@nevadawilderness.org or 775-324-7667 ext 202. Thank you in advance!

**Shop our online store and new items!**

Proceeds benefit wild places across Nevada!

**INFORMATIVE TRAIL MAPS!**

**SPECIAL EDITION SHIRTS!**

**NEW CALENDAR!**

You may order and pay directly on our website, for assistance please contact Karen Weiss: karen@nevadawilderness.org or 775-324-7667 ext 202.

Gold Transparency 2022
Candid
Friends of Nevada Wilderness is dedicated to preserving all qualified Nevada 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 wild lands.

Northern Nevada

Mt. Rose Wilderness Native Plant Re-Seeding Fall 2022
This fall, we are heading into Mt Rose Wilderness to spread native seeds in riparian areas recovering from invasive weed infestations. We will hike bags of seeds from native grasses and pollinator-friendly plants, spread them across the meadows by hand, and then let nature take them from there. Seeds are most successful if spread right before snow or rain, so therefore, we are not setting specific dates at this time. Register on our Calendar of Events page to learn more.

Volunteers, experienced and brand new ones, can sign up at nevadawilderness.org/volunteer

Southern Nevada

Mormon Mountains Plantings October 15th, 22nd, and 29th - Help us team up with NV Dept of Wildlife for a series of post-wildfire restoration projects by planting native perennials near Mormon Mountains Wilderness!

Virtual Spring Monitoring Training October 18th - Join our spring monitoring webinar from the comfort of your home! FNW Springs Coordinator Montana Stevens will present an overview of spring monitoring techniques, tools, and information so volunteers can safely, accurately and independently monitor springs while enjoying wild Nevada on their own terms!

Sloan Canyon Trail Rehab November 4th and 10th - We’ll use some hand tools and artistic license to rehabilitate habitat damage from an old road scar leading into North McCullough Wilderness and define an alternate route around invaluable cultural resources at Sloan Canyon.

Wild Speaker Series: Jackalopes Abound with Michael Branch December 1st - University of Nevada Reno professor Michael Branch will discuss his new book: On the Trail of the Jackalope: How a Legend Captured the World’s Imagination and Helped Us Cure Cancer.

Alternative Spring Break March 12th-17th - Calling all college students! Mark your calendars for a week of fun, stewardship, and camping at Walking Box Ranch near Searchlight. This event is free and no experience is required. Signs up start early 2023.

Follow Us! @FRIENDSOFNWILD

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Cover Photo by Bob Wick, Bureau of Land Management
Granite Range near the Black Rock Desert - High Rock Canyon National Conservation Area