

## **Frequently Asked Questions: Wilderness Trail Scout Volunteer**

### **What trails can I scout?**

When you fill out your application, you will answer a few questions on your preferences. Based on everyone's preferences and our priorities, a trail(s) will then be assigned to you during training.

### **When can I scout?**

After you have been trained, you are welcome to begin scouting whenever you want before the deadline for your assigned trail!

### **I don't live near Reno/Washoe County. How can I get involved?**

You can still volunteer as a Wilderness Trail Scout! You will only need to attend the virtual or in-person training. Trail Scouting will be in Wilderness areas across the state so you do not need to be based in Reno.

### **Can I bring other people to scout with me?**

Feel free to bring other people (including your children) to scout with you. The people that come with you must also fill out a volunteer agreement form (VSA). If you have someone you know will be joining you, they are encouraged to attend the training session with you as well.

### **Can I be a Wilderness Trail Scout volunteer if I am only comfortable walking short distances?**

Most of the trails you will be scouting are in rugged terrain and require that you are able to hike 10-15+ miles. If you are only comfortable with shorter hikes, we do have other [volunteer opportunities](#) available that might be more suitable.

### **Can I take my ATV to scout trails?**

You may take an ATV to access the trailheads, however, the trail(s) you will be scouting are within designated Wilderness where ATVs are not permitted.

### **Do I need a 4wd high clearance vehicle to be a Wilderness Trail Scout?**

Some trailheads can only be accessed with a 4wd high clearance vehicle so it is highly recommended. However, not all trails require it. You will be assigned a trail based on your vehicle capabilities.

### **Can I be a Wilderness Trail Scout volunteer if I don't have much outdoor experience?**

Experience with backcountry navigation, hiking and scrambling over rugged/uneven terrain, and hiking 10-15+ miles are essential requirements for participating as a Wilderness Trail Scout. Please consider our other [volunteer opportunities](#) to gain more experience.

### **Can I bring my dog to scout trails?**

Yes! Make sure to follow all local leash laws and know your dog's limits.

**How will I collect the trail condition data?**

We will train you on how to use a simple app called Survey123.

**What happens to the data I collect?**

All of the data collected by Wilderness Trail Scouts will be used by the Trails Program and the US Forest Service to make informed decisions about how we plan our field season, where we send trails crews, planning volunteer trail projects, and planning for future grant opportunities.

**What if I don't want to go through the training, but have information about Wilderness trail conditions that I'd like to share?**

We always welcome information provided by the public, please email the trails program:

[trails@nevadawilderness.org](mailto:trails@nevadawilderness.org)

**What if I can't make it to either training?**

We do require everyone participating as a Wilderness Trail Scout volunteer to attend either the virtual or in-person training. Please email us if you have questions.

**What if I can't cover the entire distance of the trail I'm assigned?**

Safety is our number one priority. If you get out on a trail and need to turn around for **ANY** personal reason, please do not hesitate. If you are out on a trail and the trail becomes too difficult to follow and you do not feel comfortable navigating off trail to try and continue on, that alone is valuable information to us. Feel free to turn around and submit all the information you gathered up to that point. Only continue to the end of the "trail" if you feel confident in your navigation and off-trail hiking abilities.

**Do I have to cover the whole trail distance in a single day?**

You are welcome to create a backpacking trip that includes the trail you are assigned to scout! Some of the trails are long and would make great overnight outings if you enjoy backpacking.