



AmeriCorps

2021

# ANNUAL REPORT





# NEVADA OUTDOOR SCHOOL PARTNERS

Funders and Program Partnerships

*thank  
you* ❤️  
*We can do what we do,  
because of you!*

Employee Giving Programs  
(Matched by Employer)



**FUEL for LIFE.**  
Employee Giving  
Powered by Southwest Gas  
Southwest Gas



NEVADA GOLD MINES  
**HERITAGE  
FUND**  
Nevada Gold Mines



Advanced  
Movement and  
Wellness



American Red  
Cross



**AmeriCorps**  
Nevada



Blach Distributing



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF WINNEMUCCA

Boys and Girls Club  
of Winnemucca



Bureau of Land  
Management



California Trail  
Interpretive Center



Camp Chef



Chukar Chasers  
Foundation



City of  
Elko



Community in  
Schools



Community Foundation of  
Western Nevada



D3 Church



Elite Island  
Resorts



Elko Broadcasting  
Company



Elko Convention and  
Visitors Authority



Elko County  
School District



Elko County



Elko Daily  
Free Press



Elko First  
Presbyterian Church



Elko Institute for  
Academic Achievement



Family Support  
Center



Friends of Black Rock  
High Rock



Friends of Nevada  
Wilderness



Frontier Community  
Action Agency



Frontier Community  
Coalition



Great Basin  
College



Great Nonprofits



Grocery Outlet



Hecla Mining  
Company



Humboldt County  
Commission



Humboldt County  
School District



Humboldt County  
Sheriff



Humboldt General  
Hospital



Ignite Life  
Chiropractic



Khouri's Grocery  
Store



# NEVADA OUTDOOR SCHOOL PARTNERS

Funders and Program Partnerships



KNPB  
Public Television



Lander County  
School District



Lassen Park  
Foundation



Lazy P  
Adventure Farm



Leave No  
Trace



National Public  
Lands Day



Nevada Bighorns  
Unlimited - Midas



Nevada Chukar  
Foundation



Nevada Department  
of Wildlife



Nevada  
Gold Mines



Nevada Muleys



Nevada Off-Highway  
Vehicle Commission



Nevada  
State Parks



Nevada Volunteers



Nomadic  
Broadcasting



North American Association  
for Environmental Education



NV Energy  
Foundation



Off Road  
Nevada



Pershing County  
Senior Center



Pleasant Senior  
Center



Polaris



Port of Subs



Public Lands  
Alliance



Rocky Mountain  
Elk Foundation



Russell  
Cellular



Saggio  
Advertising



Sierra Nevada  
Journeys



Small Mine  
Development



Southern Nevada  
Conservancy



Southwest Gas



Spring Creek  
Association



Sportman's  
Warehouse



SSR Mining  
Marigold



Swick Drilling  
North America



Tread Lightly!



USDA Forest  
Service



Wild Sheep  
Foundation



William H and Mattie  
Wattis Harris Foundation



Winnemucca Chrysler,  
Dodge, Jeep, and Ram



Winnemucca  
Publishing



5th Gear  
Powersports

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

## 12 Years of Transformation

Over the past 12 years, it has been my professional and personal pleasure to lead Nevada Outdoor School (NOS) through more than a decade of transformation. The first 6 years as the Financial Manager, helping to ensure NOS became financially stable and sustainable, securing and managing as many as 30 different funding sources each year; and the last 6 years as Executive Director, helping to transform NOS into the premier provider of outdoor education in Nevada with two locations to serve from.

After 2020 gave us the opportunity to slow down, review, rethink and reimagine our programs, 2021 saw us put action to our great ideas and now we have newly revamped and recharged nature themed youth programming, responsible recreation focused training programs and a whole year of planned healthy community outreach events.

We are excited to be implementing our new Action. Impact. Choice. (A.I.C.) model and Outdoor Ethics philosophy into everything we do. Through guidance and support, participants learn to analyze their actions, evaluate the impacts those actions have, and choose wisely to positively impact their environment and minimize negative impacts when possible.

At NOS, we believe that the more experiences people have outside exploring the natural world, the more they will learn and want to learn about nature and the environment. The more people learn about the natural world, the more they will love (appreciate and care for) the outdoors. The more people love nature and being outdoors, the more experiences they will want to have... and the cycle continues!

As I think back over this last year and about each and every person who truly makes Nevada Outdoor School such a unique and successful organization, I am filled with pride. Each one of our NOS Staff and AmeriCorps Members brings a delightedly different perspective and a wealth of knowledge and mad skills to the team. I am lucky to be surrounded by such talented and passionate individuals.

For you, the donors, sponsors, partners and participants, I am so grateful! Without you and your continued support we could not accomplish so much.

For more details about our upcoming fun, engaging and creative programs, outreach events and fundraisers that you can be part of, go to our website, <https://www.nevadaoutdoorschool.org> or to our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/NevadaOutdoorSchool](https://www.facebook.com/NevadaOutdoorSchool).



The Future is Bright!

*Melanie Erquiaga*

Melanie Erquiaga, Executive Director



# Nevada Outdoor School

## BY NUMBERS

*What we do, because of you!*

**163**

*Number of  
Summer Campers*

**8,395**

*Total hours  
Campers spent off  
electronics while at  
summer camp*

**24**

AmeriCorps  
Members at

**6**

Host Sites  
serving

**16,824** hours of  
service

**174**

IN-PERSON  
NATURE AFTER SCHOOL  
PARTICIPANTS

**105**

Number of  
classroom teachers  
who invited us into  
their classrooms.

**1,025**

SHOTGUN SHELLS  
SHOT AT THE  
YOUTH TRAP SHOOT  
IN WINNEMUCCA

**8**

Community  
Events in  
Elko and  
Winnemucca  
serving

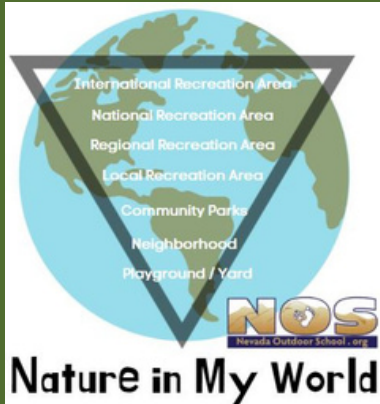
**678**

residents

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# YOUTH PROGRAMS



We take the "outdoor" in our name seriously! We love teaching outside and using nature as our classroom. In the 2020 – 2021 school year, we taught 124 lessons in grades K – 4 and our rural schools.

For the 2021 – 2022 school year we completely transformed our school-based program. Our new Nature in My World program is designed to expand worlds in an age-appropriate fashion while integrating components of literacy (reading), mathematics, and social studies to support learning in traditional classrooms. Nature and responsible outdoor recreation topics provides us plenty of learning opportunities.



*Naturalist Macy Rohr teaches different components of the 1st Grade "What is Fall" lesson, including reading and interpreting a poem and creating a graph based on leaf color.*



124  
LESSONS  
TAUGHT

20-21 School Year

Generous donations from **Nevada Gold Mines, Elko County School District, Small Mine Development, SSR Mining-Marigold, Humboldt County Commission, Elko County Commission, and City of Elko** provided funding for our school-based programs throughout Humboldt, Lander, Elko, and Pershing counties.

## NATURE AFTER SCHOOL

In response to the pandemic, we began our after school program that continues to grow! Nature After School lessons are banded for grades K-2 and grades 3-5. Each month there is a field trip component that is offered to grades K-5. We are thankful for our local **Parks and Recreation Departments** who provide us space for this program.

Nature After School topics are vast and include:

- Animal Skins and Skulls (pictured)
- Compass Skills
- Archeology
- Growth and Survival
- Water







Continued longtime partnerships with **Nevada Muleys**, **Nevada Chukar Foundation**, **Nevada Bighorn Unlimited-Midas**, the **Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation**, and the **Wild Sheep Foundation** allowed us to once again host amazing summer camps! We returned to our traditional overnight camps, but with smaller group sizes that we found to be an improvement for connecting with kids.

Due the overall increase of people being outside since the pandemic started, we are grateful for private parties who provided us space this summer!

Adventure Camps (ages 8 - 10) include 3 days of day camp and a one-night overnight experience. For many of our campers this is the first time camping without their family. We are deeply appreciative of **The Neff Family** in Ruby Valley and **The Hunt's** in Paradise Valley for graciously allowing our campers to use their land for their campout.

After a year hiatus, it was wonderful for the Pathfinder Camps (ages 11 - 13) to return to **Judge Montero's Ranch** in Winnemucca and be able to utilize the "NOS Annex", space donated by **Brett Worsham** in Spring Creek for the two-night campouts.

Our "big kids", ages 14 - 17, enjoyed Backroad Adventures at Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge and Backpacking '21 in the Ruby Mountains.

Every NOS Camp incorporates the seven Leave No Trace Principles to influence youth behaviors and teach them to "share the care" of the natural world.



# TRAINING PROGRAMS



*Summer of 2021 Staff and AmeriCorps  
Naturalists at Ryepatch Reservoir  
Campground for Summer Camp Training*

Through your generosity, each summer we dedicate four days to training our Staff and AmeriCorps members in preparation for 'summer camp season'. During this training we train like we camp, with lots of games and 'just in time' learning. Summer Camp Training is scenario driven, crazy things are happening all the time!

We also were able to train with Sierra Nevada Journeys, a "sister" organization that serves in the Sierra Nevada (western Nevada) region. Learning from their staff provided us fresh ideas and made us better outdoor educators. Experiencing their rope courses really helped us stretch and grow as a staff!



*Zulma, our AmeriCorps  
Director, conquering the  
low ropes.*



*Melanie, our Executive  
Director, feeling strong  
and proud as she is  
lowered after completing  
the high rope crossing.*



*Naturalist Emilie  
getting as high as  
she was comfortable  
with, and being  
proud of that  
accomplishment.*

## **KEY LEARNING:**

**We each have our own limits, communicating those and being supported in them is key for growth of individuals and organizations!**



# ATV Safety Training

## Ride Safe - Ride Smart

Thanks to a generous grant from the **Nevada Commission on Off-Highway Vehicles** Nevada Outdoor School continues to provide ATV Safety training to kids and adults. Our Ride Safe-Ride Smart training program will be available in 2022 with online and in-person opportunities.



## Outdoor Skills

One of our goals at Nevada Outdoor School is to offer specific outdoor skill trainings to our communities. This year we started to meet that goal by offering several survival skill and first-aid kit workshops and knot tying classes.



# HEALTHY COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



Our first place winners were:

Youth: Team Mario Brothers (Kayden Yowell and Kyler Enochson)

Chuck Wagon: Voodoos Vidles (Pedro Castro)

Bean Master: Country Calf (Gene & Chrissy Hunt)

International Dutch Oven Society: Rose Creek Duo (Betty and Dan Rodgers)

We were back in person at Vesco Park, Winnemucca for our favorite and largest fundraising event! It was wonderful to be with the cooks again at our 13th Annual Dutch Oven Cook-Off. It was fun to personally welcome Dutch Oven Deb and her Dude this year. She had joined us last year virtually from Washington.

**We deeply appreciate all who compete, as well as those who come to eat!**

*Cousins Ashley and Catherine cooking.*



*Dutch Oven Deb cooking.*



We also hosted our inaugural Fire and Ice Charity Golf Tournament at Spring Creek Golf Course. **Thank you to all who donated raffle prizes and played golf!** See you on the links in 2022!



*Brayden Karr wins TWO coolers as part of the "Ice" raffle.*

1st Place: Trent Whitaker, Ruben Garcia, Dan Stewart and Alyssa Wood  
Straightest Drive (Hole #2): Robert Owen  
Men's Closest to the Hole (Hole #8): Dan Stewart  
Ladies Closest to the Hole (Hole #17) Dana Morfin

## Community Events: Snow or Shine!

We are deeply thankful for our longstanding funding partnerships with the **Bureau of Land Management**, the **US Forest Service**, **Nevada State Parks**, and **Nevada Muley's**. This funding allows us to offer outdoor skill trainings and fun-filled community events. This year we even participated in a birthday party!



*What better weather to teach a survival lesson to a 6th Grade class?*

*Naturalists Julia and Michelle at Kids Fishing Day at Spring Creek Marina.*



*Happy Birthday! This party came to our community hike in Lamoille Canyon to celebrate!*



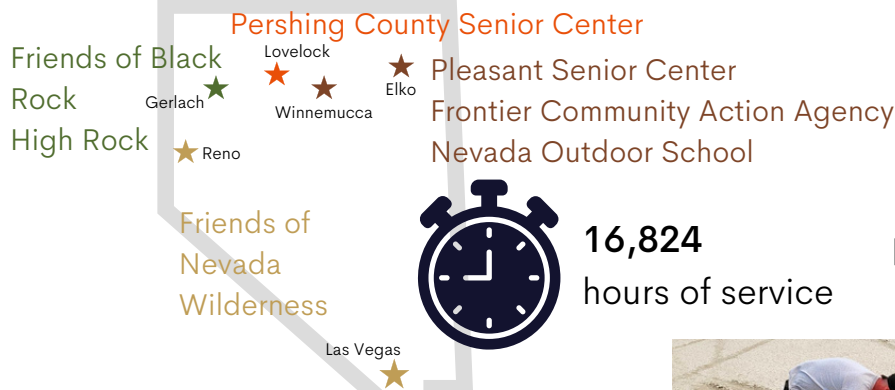


# AmeriCorps



Scan to watch a video about  
AmeriCorps and  
Nevada Outdoor School

## 24 Members in 6 Host Sites



**16,824**  
hours of service



**483**  
people served



**445 acres**  
improved



*AmeriCorps Members serve at Host Sites throughout Nevada; making a difference!*



## AMERICORPS AND THE SEGAL EDUCATION AWARD CHANGES LIVES



Friends of Nevada Wilderness (FNW) is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving Nevada's wild places and Wilderness Areas. Peter started at FNW as a volunteer in 2015 while completing a second undergraduate degree. He then applied for an AmeriCorps opportunity with FNW and completed two 300-hour terms and a 900-hour term in 2018 and 2019. After his final term he earned a permanent position in the southern Nevada office; it's been two years of loving his job as Stewardship Coordinator.

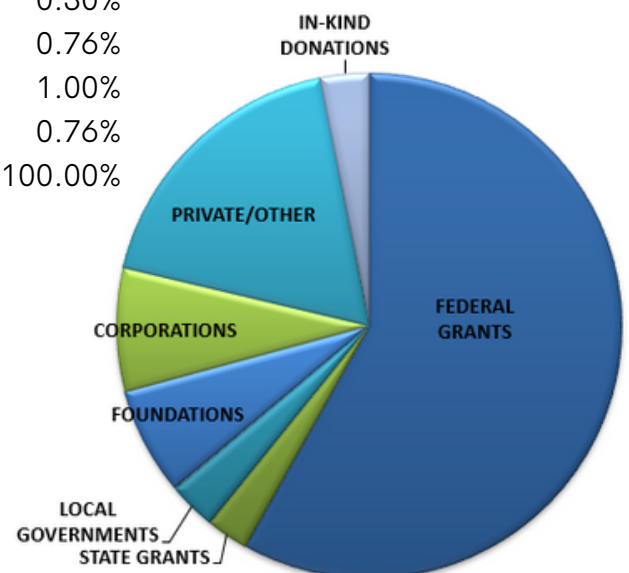
### *In his own words...*

"During my time with AmeriCorps at Friends of Nevada Wilderness I was able to lead groups of volunteers, train people on the use of tools like our cross-cut saws and rock slings, and plan service projects with our partner agencies. It was an invaluable opportunity to test drive a career I didn't know was an option before my AmeriCorps service. At the end of my service, and during my second and third hitches, I was able to use my education stipend to cover the cost of some of my tuition, textbooks, and technology."

# FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2021 REVIEW

## TOTAL REVENUE

AmeriCorps Nevada - Nevada Volunteers	\$200,827	30.62%
AmeriCorps Host Site Partnership Match	\$45,007	6.86%
Bureau of Land Management	\$47,000	7.17%
Chukar Chasers	\$1,500	0.23%
City of Elko	\$5,000	0.76%
Community Foundation of Western Nevada	\$5,000	0.76%
COVID-19 PPP Loan	\$98,857	15.07%
Elko County Commission	\$5,000	0.76%
Elko County School District	\$5,000	0.76%
Fundraiser Revenue	\$28,199	4.30%
Harris Foundation	\$6,000	0.91%
Humboldt County Commission	\$5,000	0.76%
In-Kind Donations	\$20,245	3.09%
Lassen National Park Foundation	\$1,000	0.15%
Nevada Bighorn Unlimited - Midas Chapter	\$5,000	0.76%
Nevada Chukar Foundation	\$5,000	0.76%
Nevada Commission on Off-Highway Vehicles	\$17,764	1.86%
Nevada Gold Heritage Fund	\$12,194	2.71%
Nevada Gold Mines	\$36,595	6.86%
Nevada Muleys	\$10,000	1.52%
Nevada State Parks Rec Trails Program	\$34,614	5.28%
NV Energy	\$5,000	0.76%
Other Miscellaneous Donations	\$15,873	2.42%
Polaris T.R.A.I.L.S. Grant	10,000	1.52%
Program Revenue	\$11,645	1.78%
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	\$2,000	0.30%
Small Mine Development	\$5,000	0.76%
Southwest Gas Fuel for Life	\$6,570	1.00%
Wild Sheep Foundation	\$5,000	0.76%
<b>Total REVENUE</b>	<b>\$655,891</b>	<b>100.00%</b>





# TOTAL EXPENSES

Accounting	\$5,891	0.88%
Advertising and promotion	\$8,499	1.27%
Background checks	\$1,356	0.20%
Conferences/Conventions/Trainings	\$5,860	0.88%
Employee benefits	\$22,276	3.33%
Fundraiser Expenses	\$8,347	1.25%
Information Technology	\$9,438	1.41%
In-Kind Donation	\$20,245	3.03%
Liability Insurance	\$23,639	3.53%
Occupancy	\$33,383	4.99%
Office Expenses	\$1,963	0.29%
Payroll taxes	\$36,344	5.43%
Program specific supplies	\$35,248	5.27%
Staff salaries	\$286,465	42.83%
Stipends for AmeriCorps Members	\$143,782	21.50%
Student lodging and transportation	\$1,012	0.15%
Travel Expenses (including Fuel)	\$23,598	3.53%
All other expenses	\$1,530	0.23%
Total EXPENSES	\$668,877	100.00%

# YEARLY COMPARISON

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY2021</u>
Income by year	\$554,076	\$644,511	\$762,067	\$650,651	\$601,403	\$655,891
Expenses by year	\$563,753	\$628,050	\$759,666	\$690,287	\$610,677	\$668,877



Inspiring exploration of the natural world,  
responsible stewardship of our habitat  
and dedication of community, since 2003.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

\*Russ Yowell - President/Treasurer

Gene Hunt - President

Sarah Low - Treasurer

Brett Worsham - Secretary

D'ette Mawson - Member



*\*In April we suddenly and unexpectedly lost Russ due to a heart attack. He faithfully served NOS for over 12 years, and we deeply appreciate all he did for the NOS family.*

## STAFF

Melanie Erquiaga - Executive Director

Dr. Brandolyn Thran - Associate Director and Science Advisor

Zulma Mayora - AmeriCorps Program Director

Sarah Welsh - Finance Director

Jessica Snaman Myers - Outreach Director

Jacklyn Orr - Communication and Marketing Specialist

Allana Havernick - Winnemucca Programs Coordinator

Meghan Rich - Elko Programs Coordinator

## CALIFORNIA TRAIL INTERPRETIVE CENTER PARTNERSHIP

Nicholas La Palm - Interpretative Program Assistant

## AMERICORPS MEMBERS - NATURALISTS

2019 - 2021 BayLee Kirkendoll

2020 - 2021 Taylor Billows

2020 - 2021 Emilie Stone

2020 - 2021 Julia Janson

Summer of 2021 Kayla Sharp

Summer of 2021 Shae Relyea

Summer of 2021 Tristen Miller

Summer of 2021 Jesse Love

Fall of 2021 Kaci Mahtapene

2020 - 2021 Michelle Rookstool

2020 - 2022 Macy Rohr

2021 - 2022 Gretchen Westhoff





**AmeriCorps**

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