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For Planning Purposes - May 11, 2018

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**\*\*\* Media Advisory \*\*\***

## **Weed Warriors Begin 2018 Attack on Invasive Thistles**

### **Friends of Nevada Wilderness volunteers removing weeds from Mt. Rose Wilderness Area**

Reno, NV – Volunteers led by the Friends of Nevada Wilderness (FNW) Stewardship Team will head into the hills on Wednesday, May 16, and Saturday, May 19, to launch the annual effort to control the spread of invasive and damaging weeds in the popular Mt. Rose outdoor recreation area.

The Weed Warriors, armed with gloves and shovels, will be on the lookout for the Musk Thistle, which must be pulled in the spring before the plant produces seed. Spring removal also helps clear the wilderness of invasive weeds before the peak of the summer hiking season.

The invasive thistles threaten the wilderness qualities of the area because they can outcompete native plants for light, nutrients, and water. The weeds increase soil toxicity, increase fire danger, and diminish native wildlife habitat.

**What:** Weed Warriors invasive weed removal hike

**When:** Wednesday, May 16, and Saturday, May 19

7:30 a.m. – 2:30 pm

(Weed removal hikes are planned through the month of June)

**Where:** Meet at Michael S. Thompson Hunter Creek Trailhead off of Plateau Rd. in west Reno

Media are invited to meet the crew at 7:30 am and join them for all or part of the excursion (a 2-3 mile hike), or meet them as they return to the trailhead at the end of the hike at approximately 2:30 pm. Friends of Nevada Wilderness will have a spokesperson and volunteers available for interviews. FNW can also provide photos of the weed, the Mt. Rose Wilderness Area and past Weed Warrior outings.

**Background:**

The musk thistle seed can remain viable in the soil for up to 15 years, so repeated removals are necessary to fully eliminate the plant from an area. FNW has been hosting weed removal hikes and monitoring for new noxious weeds in the Mt. Rose Wilderness since 2006. Over the years, hundreds of thousands of weeds have been pulled. Weed Warriors is one of the many stewardship programs sponsored by Friends of Nevada Wilderness that make the outdoor recreation experience more naturally enjoyable for local and visiting outdoor enthusiasts.

Volunteers can sign up for Weed Warriors at [nevadawilderness.org/calendar\\_of\\_events](http://nevadawilderness.org/calendar_of_events)

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