



FRIENDS of NEVADA WILDERNESS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friends of Nevada Wilderness Wraps Up First Half of 2018 Field Work

Volunteers generate thousands of dollars in in-kind trail work

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July 2, 2018 – Tens of thousands of weeds pulled, miles of trail cleared and repaired, bags of trash picked up, retaining walls built, boundaries marked, and campsites cleaned – all of that and more was accomplished in the first six months of the Friends Stewardship Program’s field season.

The season kicked off in a big way at the end of March when 22 college students chose the backcountry over the beach for the Friends Alternative Spring Break. For the 8th consecutive year, Alt Spring Break gave some young adults the chance to get in touch with nature and give back to their public lands in the Arrow Canyon Wilderness, Pahranaagat National Wildlife Refuge, and the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. Students worked on a number of restoration projects, learned about conservation and advocacy, and enjoyed camping and cowboy cooking under the stars.

To celebrate National Trails Day at the beginning of June, a volunteer crew spent two nights in the Massacre Rim Wilderness Study Area in northern Washoe County, doing maintenance work on the upper High Rock Trail and the Massacre Cabin. At the same in southern Nevada, volunteers installed wilderness boundary signs in the Griffith Peak area of Mt. Charleston and constructed two rock retaining walls to address damage done by flash flooding.

The following week, team members led an Eagle Scout Troop back up the Griffith Peak trail for more maintenance work and to remove invasive plants. The trail, which has been closed, was brought that much closer to re-opening to the public as a result of their hard work.

The Team spent June 11 clearing trees on Mt. Charleston’s Bonanza Trail so that pack horses provided by the Bristlecone Chapter of the Back County Horsemen could bring in supplies for the June 22-25 Bonanza Extravaganza! A small group of volunteers then spent four full days in the wilderness stabilizing and repairing parts of the trail and camping near Bonanza Peak.

Back up north, in the Santa Rosa Wilderness Area just north of Winnemucca, volunteers spent June 15 – 17 pulling over a thousand bull thistles and cleaning up a campsite. Then it was over to the Pine Forest Wilderness Area further west to install boundary markers.

More...

And throughout the entire months of May and June, more than 150 volunteer Weed Warriors pulled more than 30,000 invasive musk thistles off the Hunter Creek trail in the Mt. Rose Wilderness. The Friends Stewardship Program relies on a small army of volunteers, many of whom have been on the team for years. All volunteers are trained on how to stay safe out in the wild and to leave no trace behind.

It's volunteers like Cathy Schmidt who make the Program a success. "I started volunteering with Friends because I wanted to learn more about our Wilderness areas and get out with the people taking care of them," Schmidt said after her last field trip. "The fine folks, delicious food, and incredible experiences in the field keep me coming back. I feel like I'm giving back and showing gratitude for the beauty and wonder of the Wilderness."

The Friends Stewardship Team has been leading volunteer crews into some of the most beautiful and remote areas of the state for more than 30 years. Hundreds of volunteers have spent thousands of hours working to help make the wilderness recreation experience safer and more enjoyable for everyone. Outdoor enthusiasts can visit nevadawilderness.org/volunteerfnw to sign up for one of these fun and adventuresome trips.

"Our Stewardship Program is all about preserving wilderness qualities in the most wild and scenic places in Nevada, and at the same time, improving public access and enjoyment of the public lands we all own," said Friends Executive Director Shaaron Netherton. "Over the years, our stewardship volunteers have contributed more than \$1.5 million in in-kind services to enhance outdoor recreation in Nevada."

Funding and other support for the Stewardship Program come from the Nevada State Recreational Trails Program, Barrick, other granting and partner organizations, and individual donors to Friends of Nevada Wilderness. Interested individuals can visit nevadawilderness.org/contribute to help support wilderness stewardship throughout wild and scenic Nevada.

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About Friends of Nevada Wilderness

Founded in 1984, Friends of Nevada Wilderness has helped protect over 3.4 million acres of Nevada's wild lands by leading efforts in the expansion or designation of all 70 Wilderness areas in the state. Over the past thirty-two years, the Wilderness Stewardship Volunteer Program has generated over \$1,500,000 of in-kind services to benefit Nevada's public lands. For more information, visit <http://www.nevadawilderness.org/>.