



# TRUCKEE MEADOWS PARKS FOUNDATION

*AWARENESS • APPRECIATION • STEWARDSHIP*

## Volunteer Handbook

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation, Volunteer Coordinator : \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook has been designed to be a guide for your time as a volunteer with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation. We want to share with you our history, philosophy, practices, and policies so you can take on your role with the most confidence. No volunteer handbook can answer every question. You are highly encouraged to speak with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation staff if you have any questions that are not addressed in the handbook. If you have any questions regarding the content of this handbook, please contact your assigned Volunteer Manager or the Executive Director.

## Organizational Information

### History & Background

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation was founded by members of the Reno-Sparks community concerned about the challenges facing our parks. The Parks Foundation was incorporated in Nevada on April 26th, 2012, received its 501 (c) (3) determination on January 15th, 2013, and began operating on April 15, 2013. We work to support parks and open spaces in the following ways: 1) through park-based educational and recreational programs; 2) by providing private financial support for new and existing park infrastructure; and 3) by serving as a mechanism through which citizens can advocate for their parks. Although we work in close cooperation with park management agencies, we are an independent, private, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that operates primarily through grant funding and membership contributions.

### Mission

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation protects and enhances our communities' livability through public engagement, education, and the sustainability of our parks, open spaces, and trails.

### Goals

- Provide innovative park-based programs for families, community groups, and schools.
- Cultivate awareness, appreciation and stewardship of our parks.
- Inspire citizens to take a proactive volunteer role in the preservation and improvement of our parks.
- Serve as a fiscal sponsor for community-led initiatives to enhance park infrastructure.
- Strengthen the bond between citizens and their parks.

### Location & Hours

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation is located in Idlewild Park at 50 Cowan Dr. Reno, NV 89509.

The office hours are Monday-Friday 9:00am - 4:30pm. We are closed during all federal and state holidays.

### Contact Information

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation

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## Programs

- **Student Stewards Program**

The Student Stewards Program is a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), standards-based curriculum that uses citizen science to engage kids with their local parks. We turn parks into learning laboratories where students learn about their environment and collect data for local and national research. Spring Break and Summer Break camps are also offered as an extension of the Student Stewards Program.

- **Junior Naturalist Program**

The Junior Naturalist Program is a free, park-based program that gives children of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to explore hands-on science. Children and parents join us in a different park the second Saturday of each month. Each session includes multiple stations with activities such as short hikes, nature and science experiments, and arts and crafts, all based on the day's lesson.

- **Truckee Meadows Trails Challenge**

The Trails Challenge is a primarily self-guided, goal-oriented program that encourages people to explore the 51 trails located within 20 minutes of downtown Reno. TMPF offers a two-mile, interpretive hike on a different trail each month for Trails Challenge participants focusing on the natural and cultural history of the region.

- **Discover Your Parks Walks**

Discover Your Parks Walks are free, hour-long, guided walks where the public can explore a new location and learn about the unique and varied ecology and history of parks in our area. These walks are held every Thursday evening at 6:00pm from April to September.

- **Dementia-Friendly Nature Walks**

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation, in cooperation with our partners at the Alzheimer's Association, the Sanford Center for Aging, and Dementia Friendly Washoe County, offer free, weekly interpretive walks specifically-designed for individuals living with dementia and their care partners.

- **Proposed Truckee Meadows Nature Study Area**

It is the vision of Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation to restore the property formerly known as Rosewood Lakes Golf Course to a functional wetland system. The goal of this restoration project is to reopen the area as the Truckee Meadows Nature Study Area (TMNSA) in the summer of 2020. TMNSA will offer an array of recreational and educational activities for members of the community of all ages.

- **Doggie Ambassador Project**

The Doggie Ambassador Project is a volunteer driven initiative to stock and maintain dog waste stations throughout Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County. This program mitigates pet waste in our parks, trails, and open spaces and helps keep harmful bacteria from reaching our watershed.

- **Truckee Meadows Parks Project**

The Truckee Meadows Parks Project serves as a comprehensive park directory for Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County parks. This online resource is intended to inspire connection, appreciation, and stewardship of Truckee Meadows parks through a shared sense of wonder found within our local parks.

## Special Events

- **Spring and Fall Parks Cleanup events, *in partnership with Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful's Great Community Cleanup and Truckee River Cleanup***

As part of KTMB's Spring and Fall events, the Parks Foundation hosts community cleanups at Idlewild Park and the proposed Truckee Meadows Nature Study Area. Volunteers participate in various park improvement and beautification projects, such as invasive species removal, debris pickup, tree wrapping, planting, and mulching.

- **MLK Day of Service: Mini-BioBlitz & Wetland Cleanup**

As part of an annual phenology project, participants catalog all living things in the proposed Truckee Meadows Nature Study Area to garner a better understanding of the plants, animals, and other wildlife and how their populations are changing. Participants are given tools like binoculars, aspirators, and data sheets in an effort to collect data used in national and local databases.

## Volunteer Information, Conduct, & Policies

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundations' dedicated volunteers share our mission to enhance the lives of northern Nevadans. Without community support and active volunteerism, Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation would not be as successful as it is today. Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation accepts and encourages volunteer involvement at all levels of the organization. All volunteers and staff are encouraged to assist in the creation of productive, meaningful roles in which volunteers might serve, as well as encourage the recruitment of future community volunteers.

Unless specifically stated, these policies apply to all volunteers with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation. The purpose of these policies and engagement guidelines are to provide overall guidance and direction to both Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation staff and volunteers. These policies are intended for internal management guidance only, and do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a personnel agreement. Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation reserves the right at any time to change the policies.

## 'Volunteer' Defined

Unless specifically stated, a 'volunteer' is an individual who performs their specified job description willingly at the direction of Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation without compensation. Although Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation does not recognize volunteers as employees, they understand and enforce the need to respect them as such. As a direct result of this, organizational rules and expectations apply to volunteers while volunteering with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation.

## Minors

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation welcomes and encourages the involvement of youth within our organization. Individuals whom are under the age of 18 must have a parent or legal guardian fill out Volunteer Agreement Forms, Liability Forms, and Emergency Contact Forms as needed. Youth participation at some events may require a parent or guardian on-site.

## Becoming a Volunteer

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation has two types of volunteer opportunities. First, Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation offers on-going positions that require an on-boarding interview, training and orientation, and hours submitted via an online form. Volunteer position descriptions are available online or can be requested via email. Once accepted as a volunteer, the individual will receive a general volunteer orientation and instructions specific to their area of interest.

We also offer volunteer opportunities at our annual events. Volunteers during these events do not need to interview, but will need to follow procedures specific to the event. Some events require possession of the event handbook and an orientation and or/training. Event volunteers are expected to follow the guidelines per event. Volunteers are important personnel to Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation and as such, are extended the right to meaningful duties, fair treatment, and full participation. In exchange, Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation expects volunteers to perform their assigned duties to the best of their ability and remain loyal to the mission, goals, and procedures of Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation.

## Dress Code

As representatives of the program, staff and volunteers are responsible for presenting a quality image to the community. Volunteers are expected to dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Specific dress requirements are outlined in volunteer position descriptions. Volunteers will be expected to wear their Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation volunteer shirt when volunteering with us, especially during events.

## Time Sheets

Individual volunteers are responsible for the accurate completion and timely submission of timesheets to the designated Volunteer Coordinator. Each month, the Volunteer Coordinator will request hours of on-going positions. The volunteer will proceed by submitting their hours through the supplied online form after being requested to do so.

## Attendance

We're counting on you! Volunteers should contact the Volunteer Coordinator immediately if they are unable to fulfill a commitment so that a replacement may be found.

## Harassment and Discrimination Policy

It is the policy and commitment of Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation to not discriminate based on race, color, sex and/or gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, religion, and/or familial status in admission of its volunteers or its programs and services. All volunteers and employees are accountable to this notion and failure to comply with this policy may result in termination from the program. Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation is also committed to an environment in which all employees, volunteers, partners, and participants are treated with respect and dignity. Each person has the right to a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits discriminatory and retaliatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation expects that all relationships in the workplace will

## Harassment and Discrimination Policy (cont'd)

be professional, business-like, and free of bias, prejudice, harassment, or retaliation.

In keeping with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundations' commitment to maintain a professional work environment for all employees and volunteers, Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation will not tolerate harassment or discrimination of our employees or volunteers by anyone, including any supervisor, or by someone not directly connected to Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation (i.e., an outside vendor, consultant or customer).

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, visual, on any electronic media or any other way related to the work environment that is based upon a person's legally protected status, such as race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender, age, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, genetic information, military service, marital status, veteran status, or any other protected status. Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Any such harassment is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## Representing Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation

While volunteering with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation, volunteers must take into consideration the magnitude of their actions and comments while working alongside outside personnel. Volunteers may not speak with the press unless previously authorized by the Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation Executive Director. Volunteers are required to act as representatives of the program as indicated within the extent of their position descriptions.

Volunteers must give every participant equal opportunities to access resources and advice pertaining to the program's mission. Volunteers must also show equal respect to participants regardless of differences. If a volunteer feels uncomfortable with a certain situation or participant, they must immediately notify the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Online and Written Communication

All volunteers agree to communicate, verbally and written, with sensitivity, patience, and respect. While volunteering with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation, volunteers will become involved with a diverse population and must remain conscious of the possibility for misinterpretation of tone and inference. Volunteers agree to use clear and kind language when formulating messages.

## Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary and/or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a staff member, volunteer or other person, or overall program business. Designated and authorized volunteers will have exposure to confidential information that is defined as inside, personal or sensitive information and may include contact information, business credentials, or personal experience stories.

### Conflict of Interest

No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or part of the program, whether personal, philosophical, or financial, shall serve as volunteer with the activity/program. Examples of this: volunteers, such as subcontractors or landlords, who will receive monetary wage as a result of a project; a person trying to obtain a preoccupied space for themselves. If there is a concern that there may be a conflict of interest, the volunteer is asked to direct the concern to the Executive Director.

### Maintenance of Records

The Volunteer Coordinator will maintain a system of records on each volunteer within the program, including dates of service, positions held, duties performed, hours volunteered, and awards received. Volunteers and appropriate staff shall be responsible for submitting all appropriate records and information to their Volunteer Coordinator in a timely and accurate fashion.

### Access to Program Property & Materials

As deemed appropriate, volunteers will have access to program property, materials and as needed, training to fulfill their duties. Volunteers may utilize Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation property and materials only when directly required for program or event purposes.

### Use and Copyright of the Website

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation reserves all rights and privileges to its logo, graphics, endorsement, and property, which cannot be used without consent of proper organizational authorities.

### Drug and Alcohol Policy

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation is subject to the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation is firmly committed to providing its employees and volunteers with a safe and productive workplace, while promoting high standards of health and safety. Using or being under the influence of illegal substances of any kind, impairing an employee's/volunteer's ability to do their job; drugs, prescribed drugs or alcohol on the job can pose serious safety and health risks not only for the user but also for fellow workers and the public. The possession, use or sale of an illegal drug can also pose unacceptable risks to safe, healthful and efficient operations. Off the job illegal drug activity or alcohol abuse that could have an adverse effect on the employee's/volunteer's job performance, or that could jeopardize the safety of other employees/volunteers, the public, Truckee Meadows Parks Foundations' equipment, or Truckee Meadows Parks Foundations' relations with the public will not be tolerated. Accordingly, violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### Background Checks

Volunteers may be subject to a background check. The Volunteer Coordinator will notify you if your proposed volunteer position requires a background check and will arrange the details. Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation will cover the costs of the background check but this may be on a reimbursement basis. Your continued service may be conditional upon the findings of this inquiry.



## Personal Vehicle Use Policy

Volunteers will not be asked to transport participants or staff for Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation programming or projects. A vehicle is recommended, but not required to be a volunteer with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation. You may be asked to transport items such as a table, chairs, and flyers or paper handouts.

## Social Media and Social Networking

Unless approved by Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation Executive Director, volunteers are not permitted to represent Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation while participating in personal blogs, social media, or social networking sites. This rule exists to protect Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation assets, images, associates, vendors, and customers. Volunteers that create or maintain personal blogs that reference Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation should include clear disclaimers that the views expressed by the author in the blog are the author's alone and do not represent the views of Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation. Information published on a volunteer's blog or other blogs, forums, and social networking sites should comply with the Truckee Meadows Parks Foundations' confidentiality and disclosure policies.

When participating in social media or on social networking sites, volunteers should be respectful to Truckee Meadows Parks Foundations' board of directors, employees, other volunteers, customers, members, and competitors. Volunteers should be aware that actions captured via images, posts or other online comments can reflect poorly on Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation in certain cases. When participating in social media or on social networking sites, do not reference Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation members, partners, vendors or customers without their expressed consent.

## Safety and Security

The safety of our volunteers is very important. We expect all Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation employees and volunteers to be safety-conscious, follow safety rules, and to immediately alert management of any conditions in the workplace that are believed to be unsafe or unhealthy. Safety training will be conducted before beginning any project with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation. If a person feels unsafe at any time, they should discontinue their project and seek a safer alternative. If staff cannot adequately address the issue, and unsafe conditions continue, contact the Volunteer Coordinator or Executive Director.

## Dispute Resolution

If a problem should arise among volunteers, the parties involved are expected to first communicate directly with one another in a respectful attempt to reach a mutual understanding. If a reasonable resolution cannot be reached, a volunteer can request mediation from the Volunteer Coordinator and then if necessary, the Executive Director.

## Grievances

Should there be a disagreement over the interpretation of policies or a grievance related to one's duties or relationships with fellow staff or volunteers, it should be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator immediately. Complaints about the Volunteer Coordinator can be directed to the Executive Director.

### Whistleblower Policy

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports. Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation also prohibits retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint with, or otherwise participating in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing conducted by, any government agency or commission. Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Any employee bringing a bona fide harassment complaint or assisting in good faith in the investigation of such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment, nor discriminated against or discharged because of the complaint or assistance.

Harassment, discrimination and retaliation have no place in a professional environment, and will not be tolerated by Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation.

### Termination Policy

Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation reserves the right to dismiss volunteers as they see fit. Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with the agency at any time. It is requested that volunteers who intend to leave in good-standing provide two weeks notice of their last day.