

NATURE ALLIES

IMPACT REPORT 2023



Together We Find A Way

As humanity confronts the unprecedented challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss, the demand for action is greater than ever before. The Nature Conservancy believes that together, we can find a way to meet this moment. Embedded in that belief is the understanding that the “we” must rapidly encompass more people from all ages and abilities, different cultures and backgrounds, across the globe.



©Devan King/TNC

That’s why The Nature Conservancy is designing creative and relevant pathways to mobilize the time, talents, experiences and influence of people who can help us to work toward our ambitious 2030 goals to inspire action in their communities.

Volunteers serve in many ways, guided by a shared vision to support healthy, more resilient and equitable lands, waters, and communities. A two-person team under the Leveraging Our Lands Program in the North America Region supports business units, departments and teams in growing and diversifying their volunteer corps, bringing more equity, efficiency, and capacity to the organization to achieve our goals.

VOLUNTEERS FY 2023

total
VOLUNTEERS

11,923

hours
OF TIME

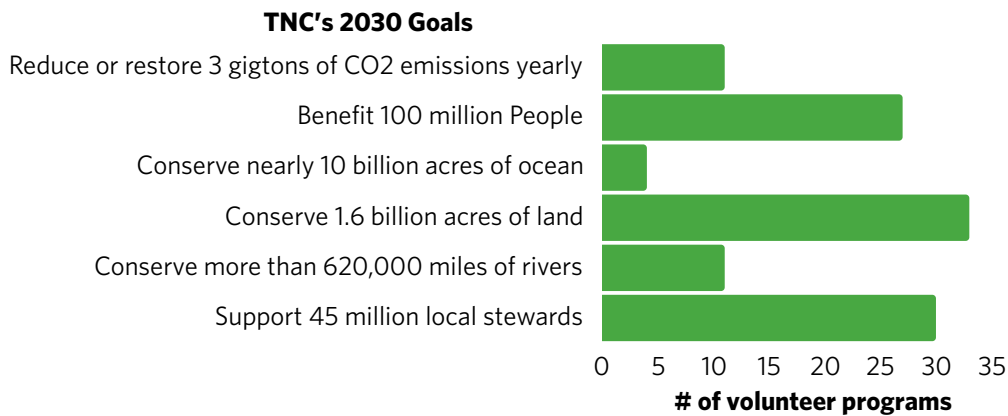
183,200

donated
LABOR VALUE

\$5.7M
100+ FTEs

Achieving TNC’s 2030 Goals

Volunteer efforts across TNC are meaningfully aligned with the organization's 2030 goals.



Stats were compiled and reported from TNC's Nature Allies FY23 annual organization-wide survey.

VOLUNTEER ROLES

Volunteering can mean many things-- from a family attending a seed collecting event, to a life long volunteer leading restoration days, to an elaborate collaboration with partners in the community. Below are examples of the different ways people are giving their time to The Nature Conservancy.



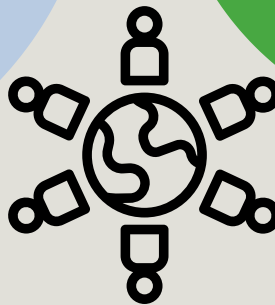
Conservation & Restoration

invasive species removal, native tree and vegetation planting, trail maintenance, clean-ups, native seed collection & prescribed fire



Marketing & Communications

photography, videography, social media, tabling, writing & editing



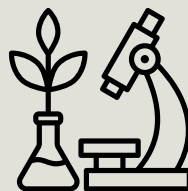
Education & Programs

leading and supporting hikes, tours, & education programs



Admin & Operations

volunteer coordination, facilities upkeep & operations & IT support



Science & Research

data analysis, research & monitoring



Fundraising & Development

engaging supporters, donor data entry & planning events

SNAPSHOTS

FROM THE FIELD



©Nick Proctor/TNC

VIRGINIA

Spruce It Up

High-quality craft beer depends on a critical ingredient: clean water. And clean water depends on forests to filter it. To highlight the connection between forests and good beer, volunteers in Virginia hiked up a mountain collecting red spruce tips that were used in our OktoberForest craft beer project.

CALIFORNIA

Keep a Lookout

At our Dye Creek Preserve, volunteers are our eyes and ears on the trail. They led group hikes during the day and dark sky programs at night, guided school groups, and helped set up camera traps to spot wildlife.

Read All About It!

Volunteer Francie managed and developed two new websites for TNC California: The Greenprint Hub and the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy Toolkit, both are resources and guidance to staff and partners in TNC's climate mitigation work.



©Jerry & Marcy Monkman/EcoPhotography

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Make It Count

Volunteers persevered through intense rainfall to raise 1,800 baby oysters for restoration efforts in the Great Bay as part of the Oyster Conservation Program to help restore the depleted population.

CONNECTICUT

If You Plant it, They Will Come

Over 100,000 plants on 39-acres at Stratford Great Meadows were planted, as part of a salt marsh restoration, over the course of four volunteer workdays.

These efforts will benefit existing and create new, salt marsh sparrow nesting sites.



©Maneula

Bluebirds of Happiness

TNC partnered with Franklin Academy, a school that provides education opportunities to individuals with nonverbal learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorders. Students completed their capstone project where they built Bluebird boxes and installed them around the Burnham Brook Preserve.

SNAPSHOTS

FROM THE FIELD



©Ericka Nortemann

CHILE, SOUTH AMERICA

Welcome!

At the TNC managed Valdivian Coastal Reserve, Seattle resident Anna greeted and directed English-speaking visitors and supported park rangers in monitoring and surveillance at the reserve. Joaquin helped with monitoring water quality, field work, photography, and systematizing field information.



©Rebecca Kusay/TNC

NEW YORK

Have a Seat

A volunteer built 12 wooden benches for Mashomack Preserve, improving accessibility and providing additional rest spots for visitors.

OHIO

Take Good Care

Chuck knows the Lucia Nash Preserve like his own hand. That's because he's been volunteering there for 23 years—racking up a whopping 6,000 hours. He removes invasive plants, engages visitors at the nature center, and leads hikes.



©Ian Adams

UTAH

Thanks for Coming

In 2023, volunteers hosted 1,723 students at the Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve; helped to reach thousands of people at engaging outreach events; and supported restoration work on public and Tribal-owned land throughout the region.



©Erica Byrd/TNC

WEST VIRGINIA

Plant for the Future

More than 90 volunteers turned out for an Earth Day tree planting in West Virginia. They swiftly planted more than 6,000 saplings. Next year TNC plans to host a series of plantings to welcome more volunteers--and plant even more trees!

SNAPSHOTS

FROM THE FIELD

FLORIDA

From Trash to Treasure

The Center for Conservation Initiatives (CCI) works across TNC preserves in Florida to engage volunteers and connect people to nature. At Blowing Rocks Preserve, volunteers helped summer campers collect trash from the ocean and beaches. After sanitizing, they helped the campers transform it into eight mosaics depicting plants and animals at the preserve. The project involved over 300 kids, removed over 500 pounds of debris from the ocean and beaches. The mosaics they created live on--they are displayed at events to inspire conversation about marine conservation.



©Mikayla Bell



©Claire Reilly

HAWAII

Listen Up

Palmyra Atoll may be far away from everything (it's in the Pacific, about 1,000 miles from Hawai'i), but it's a hotbed of scientific research. Conservation science volunteers, live at Palmyra for six months deploying underwater microphones to record the soundscape of the coral reef, studying social attraction in seabirds, and removing invasive plants and old fishing gear from the water to protect the reef.

ARIZONA

Does it Hold Water?

Over 100 volunteers equipped with a GPS, cameras, and water monitors sample along 300 miles of the San Pedro River and its key tributaries to map the state of the water supply.



©Dan Wolgast

Loko i'a

Community volunteer workdays at Kiholo Fishpond Preserve have helped to restore 50 ft of broken rock wall, propagated and planted 500 native seeds and cuttings in the nursery, and out planted seedlings along the fishponds to help with stabilization. Workdays also include education regarding traditional Hawaiian fishpond practices, their history and importance, and activities to teach Hawaiian names.

SNAPSHOTS

FROM THE FIELD



ILLINOIS

Decades of Restoration

Volunteer Steward, Bernie has supported the restoration of five acres a year for the past decade at Nachusa Grasslands Preserve. He helps to build relationships with neighbors and serves as the President of Friends of Nachusa Grasslands.

INDIANA

Smile!

Norm loves nature and technology so naturally he has completely overhauled and streamlined TNC Indiana photo management. He has taken what was a stressful pain-point for marketing and development teams and created an easy, up-to-date, and searchable system.

MISSOURI

On the Lookout

Volunteers from a local company designed and built lookout platforms at TNC's Dunn Ranch Prairie. These platforms elevate the visibility for visitors to locate and watch the bison herd and connect more people to grasslands.

NEVADA

Need for Nature

River Fork Ranch was busy in 2023 with over 42 events and 1,358 community attendees. Events included a BioBlitz with Girl Scouts, Monarch monitoring, Cans on the Cottonwood to protect the plants from mule deer, turtle monitoring, journaling and painting, bee house building, tours and more.



ALABAMA

Down the Drain

Alma Bryant high school volunteers conducted water quality monitoring as part of a stormwater mapping and improvements grant

awarded to TNC. In partnership with Dauphin Island Sea Lab, the students also studied the various aquatic ecosystems within the marine environment they were monitoring.



MARYLAND/DC

School is FUN!

Over 100 middle school students, in coordination with the National Aquarium in Baltimore, MD, volunteered to plant 1,200 trees across 50 acres at our Nassawango Creek Preserve.

SNAPSHOTS

FROM THE FIELD



©Harvey Payne

OKLAHOMA

Take the Lead

At Joseph H. Williams Tallgrass Prairie, volunteer docents lead all things related to the visitor center. This not only includes greeting and educating over 20,000 visitors a year on the history of this prairie and bison, but they also recruit, train and schedule volunteers and host workdays at the preserve.

IDAHO

Science on the Fly

At Silver Creek Preserve, in partnership with Science on the Fly, volunteers collect monthly (rain, snow or shine) water samples to help monitor the health of the streams throughout the U.S. and Canada. This long-term data helps TNC monitor trends and guide restoration efforts.

WYOMING

Hmm, You're Here Early

Due to climate change, wildflowers are blooming earlier than ever before, and some are getting out of synch with their natural pollinators. The committed Wyoming Wildflower Watch volunteers recorded a whopping 11,946 observations (compared to 1,942 in 2022) in the Nature's Notebook phenology database. In just a few years the data has already indicated that many species of native wildflowers are blooming an average 2-3 weeks earlier than previously documented.



© Gail Moser

MARKETING

That's One of Ours

Volunteers helped digital marketing team claim 300 listings of preserves owned by The Nature Conservancy on Google Maps, allowing us get the word out about TNC preserves and making it easier for people to find one to visit.

CARIBBEAN- U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Future Coral Allies

At the coral propagation facility (Coral Lab), volunteers help to maintain tanks and care for corals for six hours per week! Many of the volunteers are students that apply this experience to advance their schooling and careers.

ARKANSAS

Ride On

At Blue Mountain Preserve, the local youth mountain bike team has adopted and maintains the trails.

SNAPSHOTS

FROM THE FIELD



NEW JERSEY

RISE UP

Reaching Independence through Structured Experiences (RISE) is a program designed to ease special needs students into a supported work environment in a safe, secure and monitored capacity. TNC New Jersey has partnered with RISE for a few years at Maurice River Bluffs where students come to help with projects around the preserve and to be surrounded by nature. For example, the students built and planted flower boxes in the parking area of the preserve.

OREGON

Knowledge is Power

Oregon Volunteer Naturalists greet and share their knowledge with visitors on weekends at Cascade Head, Camassia Natural Area, and Tom McCall Preserves. In 2023, 40 volunteer naturalists

helped enhance visitor experiences at these special places on more than 50 days.

Check It Out

Across the country, TNC is evaluating preserve and landmark names to ensure that they reflect TNC's values. TNC Oregon enlisted the help of five volunteers in this effort.



© Molly Dougherty/TNC

MASSACHUSETTS

Eagle Eye

One of the volunteers at Hawley Bog Preserve monitors the trail and informs stewardship staff (who live hours away) of any needed maintenance to the boardwalk as well as monitors beaver activity and the hydrology of the bog.

TEXAS

It's Always Bigger in Texas

Volunteers are active across seven TNC preserves in Texas. They conduct monthly bird surveys at the gulf coast preserves, lead volunteer workdays, assist with field research and prescribed fire and at the preserve in West Texas they helped set up a camera grid to better understand elk populations.

LOOKING FORWARD

© Devan King/TNC

Volunteerism is at the core of The Nature Conservancy's past successes and present ambitions. Just like TNC's work has evolved to include much more than traditional land conservation, we have to adapt how we think about engaging people, too.

Thoughtful and modern interpretations of volunteerism present a powerful opportunity to grow and diversify the "we", which in turn, will inspire innovation, strengthen connections to nature and support our organization's commitments to global conservation to amplify hope and foster action at the scale needed to meet the challenges confronting society.

According to the 2023 University of Hamburg Climate Futures Outlook, a report that includes data from 140+ countries, significant social change is needed to halt catastrophic climate change — and society isn't changing fast enough. Keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius — the goal set in the Paris Agreement — is implausible for social reasons, not technical ones. (The Hill)

In the coming years, we aim to:

- [Expand opportunities for skilled-based volunteers](#) to serve in vital roles across TNC, which improves TNC's ability to meet the urgent challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change;
- [Create training opportunities](#) that meet the needs of volunteers and TNC to improve operations, increase outcomes and foster meaningful relationships;
- [Create more equitable and inclusive volunteer experiences](#) and intentionally engage new, diverse and younger audiences;
- [Implement a centralized volunteer management system](#) that provides a seamless experience for people who are searching and signing up for volunteer opportunities while streamlining how TNC tracks and reports on volunteer service and impact;
- [Grow and nurture a community of practice](#) across TNC business units to foster collaboration, unlock efficiencies and support innovation.

These creative, relevant and interconnected initiatives are intentionally designed to harness the time, talent, experience and influence of people in new ways.

We are broadening our definition of volunteering—to fostering allies for nature.

Get in Touch!

For more information on the Nature Allies program and how to get involved, contact:

[nature.org/volunteer](https://www.nature.org/volunteer)

Karen Tharp

Director of Nature Allies
ktharp@tnc.org

Megan Whatton

Nature Allies Program Manager
megan.whatton@tnc.org



"I'm deeply grateful for the well-timed mangrove training provided by Mazella Maniwavie and The Nature Conservancy Papua New Guinea Team. Through their program, I learned how to restore mangrove ecosystems, which are very important for safeguarding our coastlines, oceans, fish, and combating climate change. This experience allowed me to view mangroves in a fresh and appreciative way, deepening my understanding of these unique ecosystems. The training empowered me to carry out the Coastline Care Project, focused on restoring coastline resilience. Since the beginning of 2023, my team and I effectively coordinated seven projects under this initiative, including educational programs, mangrove planting, and monitoring. Our efforts resulted in the successful planting of over 1,560 mangrove species on degraded coastlines, carried out in close partnership with local communities. The work we did would not have been possible without the help of our sponsors and over 200 volunteers from diverse backgrounds that we engaged in our efforts."

*- Volunteer Masiy Lus
Papua New Guinea*

COVER: Virginia volunteers finished a 3.5 year oyster and marsh restoration project near the town of Wachapreague. Nearly 160 volunteers donated 2,174 hours to install over 10,000 pieces of oyster substrate to protect 2,000 feet of shoreline. Some volunteers helped more than 50 times over the course of the project.
©Margaret Van Clief / TNC