

## **Outdoor Visitor Safety Fund (OVSF)**

### **Executive Summary of Program Impact (Rounds 1 & 2)**

#### **Executive Overview: Strategic Investment in Public Safety and Recreation**

In response to the unprecedented surge in outdoor recreation pressure experienced during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, Nevada County established the Outdoor Visitor Safety Fund (OVSF). Through two funding rounds, approximately \$850,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding was strategically deployed across 17 distinct projects to address critical infrastructure and safety needs in the region's most popular outdoor spaces. The OVSF program successfully enhanced public safety, improved recreational access, bolstered environmental resilience, and strengthened emergency response capabilities across the county's high-use trailheads and river corridors. The program's success was rooted in a clear framework of strategic objectives, which directly produced the quantifiable outcomes and lasting impacts detailed in this summary.

#### **Program Purpose and Strategic Objectives**

To ensure maximum return on investment, the OVSF program was governed by a clear strategic framework. These objectives provided a rigorous methodology for fund allocation, ensuring all 17 projects contributed to a unified vision for improving outdoor recreation safety and sustainability in Nevada County. The program's multi-faceted approach was designed to achieve four primary strategic objectives:

- Strengthening public safety and emergency response in high-use trailheads and river corridors.
- Improving recreation access through enhanced parking and wayfinding infrastructure.
- Boosting environmental resilience with sanitation improvements and habitat protection.
- Fostering long-term sustainability through the support of volunteer stewardship programs.

By targeting these key areas, the OVSF program translated strategic goals into measurable, tangible outcomes that have created a safer and more resilient outdoor recreation landscape across the county.

#### **Quantifiable Outcomes: A Data-Driven Impact Assessment**

Accountability and a clear return on public investment were paramount. The OVSF program therefore tracked a significant portfolio of tangible assets and services that directly address its core objectives. The following table provides a high-level summary of the key physical and programmatic deliverables achieved across all 17 funded projects.

#### **Key Program-Wide Accomplishments**

Category	Deliverables
<b>Sanitation &amp; Visitor Amenities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4+ permanent vault toilets installed</li> <li>• Portable restrooms and dumpsters deployed at Donner Summit</li> <li>• 3 water stations and 6 trash receptacles installed</li> </ul>
<b>Access &amp; Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple formal parking lots constructed (Adam Ryan, Scotts Flat, Station 82)</li> <li>• 1 ADA parking pad (360 sq ft) built</li> <li>• 7.4 miles of trail built or improved</li> </ul>
<b>Safety &amp; Wayfinding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 74 mile markers installed across 35 miles of trail</li> <li>• 9 visitor kiosks and 6 metal kiosks installed</li> <li>• River and trail ambassadors deployed to multiple sites</li> </ul>
<b>Community &amp; Stewardship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12+ community stewardship events hosted</li> <li>• Trail counters deployed for visitor use monitoring</li> </ul>

These quantitative results form the foundation of the program's success and were made possible by the targeted work of individual grantee projects, each addressing a unique need within the community.

### **Project Spotlights: Illustrating Diverse Impacts**

While all 17 projects were vital to the program's overall success, highlighting a few diverse examples effectively illustrates the comprehensive impact of the OVSF. The following projects represent key investment areas: infrastructure development, environmental stewardship, and emergency response enhancement.

**Adam Ryan Preserve Parking Area (Bear Yuba Land Trust)** This project is a prime example of improving safe public access. By constructing a formal parking lot complete with a 360-square-foot ADA pad, the project successfully mitigated dangerous and unmanaged roadside parking. This investment not only enhanced safety for all visitors but also reduced erosion caused by roadside parking and improved accessibility for users of all abilities.

**Wild & Scenic Trail Marker & Safety Signage (SYRCL)** This project played a critical role in enhancing public safety and emergency preparedness. The installation of 74 distinct mile markers over 35 miles of trail provides clear location data that significantly improves navigation for visitors. More critically, these markers enhance location accuracy and reduce response times for emergency services during critical incidents, directly contributing to safer outcomes for trail users.

**Community Trails Stewardship Program (Truckee Dirt Union)** This project highlights the OVSF's commitment to long-term sustainability and community engagement. The investment in a trail trailer, tools, equipment, and event support empowered a robust volunteer workforce. This support increased the local capacity for ongoing trail maintenance and fostered a durable culture of community stewardship, ensuring that trail systems remain safe and well-maintained for years to come.

These examples demonstrate how targeted investments in infrastructure, safety systems, and community partnerships worked in concert to achieve the OVSF's primary strategic goals.

### **Conclusion: A Successful Investment in Nevada County's Future**

The Outdoor Visitor Safety Fund represents a highly successful and strategic use of public funds, delivering significant and measurable returns for Nevada County. The \$850,000 in ARPA funding was leveraged to produce lasting improvements that address the evolving needs of our community and its visitors. The program's legacy is not merely a list of completed projects, but a tangible enhancement of public safety, environmental health, and the overall quality of the recreational experience. The Outdoor Visitor Safety Fund serves as an effective model for how strategic investment can address pressing community needs and fortify the vital public assets that are cornerstones of our county's quality of life and local economy.