



## 2025 Annual Report

Friends of Snow Canyon State Park is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organized in 2011 and incorporated in 2012.

The Mission of the Friends of Snow Canyon State Park is a) to support the mission of the Park; b) to preserve and protect the ecological, historical and recreational integrity of Snow Canyon State Park through public awareness and education; and c) to promote the development of facilities and responsible recreation for present and future generations.

### Board of Directors

President  
Vice-President  
Treasurer  
Secretary

#### 2025

George Otott  
Alan Risenhoover  
Linda Neff  
Jim Bily

#### 2026

Alan Risenhoover  
*Vacant*  
Linda Neff  
Jim Bily

### Members

Lori Capshaw  
Ellen Nathan  
Barry Neff  
Sandy Nelson  
Don Drabant  
Phyllis Winkler

Lori Capshaw  
Ellen Nathan  
Barry Neff  
Sandy Nelson  
Don Drabant  
Jenean Campos

We thank Phyllis Winkler for her service as a Board member. We also thank George Otott for his leadership as President for the past two years. Both Phyllis and George were insightful and dedicated contributors and will be sorely missed.

### Non-Voting Members

Park Manager  
Trail Steward Captain

Kristen Comella  
Don Hite

## **Message to FOSC Members from Park Manager Kristen Comella**

2025 brought many significant changes to Snow Canyon State Park. With funding from the State, we were able to complete parkwide parking expansion and improvement projects; build a new flush restroom at the Scout Cave trailhead; construct a fantastic south entrance station; and add a second incoming lane at the south entrance with first of its kind annual pass scanning technology. After more than five-years, we also received official Urban Night Sky Place designation in partnership with Dark Sky International.

Amongst these changes there was a constant: The passion and dedication of you and the Friends of Snow Canyon. Your membership dues and donations allowed us to fund the many projects and amenities listed elsewhere in this report.

However, the Friends of Snow Canyon has always been about more than just money - our volunteers are truly the backbone of the park. Thanks to the generous gift of your time, both the Trail Steward and Docent programs continue to run strong.

Thank you for making a difference and caring for this special place! We are hard at work planning for 2026 including a new vault toilet along West Canyon road; expansion of the Docent program and development of new pop-up programs for visitors; Chuckwalla trailhead improvements; and longer-term projects such as a Lower Galoot shade pavilion. Thank you for your contributions.

## **Year in Review**

Snow Canyon State Park is a precious and fragile place. Park staff strive to balance recreation opportunities for nearly 1,000,000 visitors with protection of natural resources. The Park offers hiking, biking, camping and touring while also preserving wildlife, plants and awe-inspiring geology. Members and donors to FOSC contribute to these efforts through volunteerism and funding.

Protecting the resources while providing an awesome experience to so many visitors takes cooperation and coordination of the permanent staff, seasonal employees and the many volunteers working under the auspices of Friends of Snow Canyon. In addition, projects and amenities funded by FOSC contribute mightily to both the enjoyment of visitors as well as protection of the resources. Members and donors can take pride in their contributions!

## Supporting the Mission of the Park

### A. *Preserve and Protect*

1. Trail Steward Program: FOSC sponsors a Trail Steward program that contributes the equivalent of two full-time staff members worth of time and work. Led by Trail Steward Captain Don Hite, 55 volunteer trail stewards donated a total of 4,183 hours to the Park in 2025.

As goodwill ambassadors, the Stewards meet and greet visitors to the Park, providing advice on trails to use and answering questions about the Park's geology, ecology and history.

Stewards work independently to maintain trails as they roam the Park on their hikes. They also participate in work parties to improve and construct trails, under Jesse Henderson's supervision. Projects this year included:

- Feb: Cinder Cone trail building
- Mar: Toe trail pruning and maintenance
- Apr: White Rocks trail building (twice)
- May: Jenny's Canyon trail maintenance
- Sept: Johnson Canyon reopening
- Oct: White Rocks restoration of old trail bed
- Nov: Lower Padre Canyon trail maintenance
- Dec: Petrified Dunes / Tortoise Walk closing illegal trails

During the summer when many of us stay inside to avoid the heat, a dedicated and heat tempered cadre of trail stewards "adopt" assigned trails, performing regular maintenance to keep them in top condition for Park visitors.

2. Docent Program: We are grateful to have nine passionate docents who donated 317 hours to the program in 2025. They presented 38 "pop-ups" throughout the canyon. These pop-up programs reached 1,794 visitors (1,359 adults and 435 children) with hands-on, interactive opportunities to learn about geology, park reptiles, birds, and underground wildlife dwellers.

Cheyenne Winchester, Park Naturalist and seasonal naturalist Gemma Zigman hosted 2,589 area students, teachers, and parents for on-site field trips. They also gave presentations and guided hikes to 1,230 visitors. Docents were instrumental in many of these programs, serving as hiking guides, "sweeps" or rear guides and much needed extra hands.

In 2025, a total of 5,613 visitors engaged in park programming and our volunteer docents played an active role in reaching many hearts and minds!



*Figure 1: Docent "pop-up" table*

3. In 2025, members participated in two service projects that sought to protect habitat for the desert tortoise. In both February and April, volunteers erased illegal trails adjacent to the Berm Trail, preserving both plants the tortoises rely on as well as protecting their burrows.

#### **B. Enhance Public Awareness and Provide Educational Events**

1. FOSC sponsors educational and fun events during the non-summer months for the enjoyment and education of members. In 2025, these events included:
  - Ecosystems of Snow Canyon with Cheyenne Winchester
  - Exploring our Cliffs: Bats of Snow Canyon with Zac Warren
  - Secret Lives of Wildflowers with Kristen Comella
  - Earth Day Celebration Hike and Ecosystem Exploration with Rick Fridell
  - Yoga in the Park with John Yohman (twice)
  - Stellar Star Party with Ali Holland
  - Tortoise Talk with Cheyenne Winchester
  - Friends of Snow Canyon Annual Meeting
  - Desert Homes Hike with Gemma Zigman

2. We maintain a website not just to promote the Park but also as resource to enhance visitor experience. Pages are devoted to identifying and describing the many plants and animals found in the Park. The section dedicated to wildflowers is particularly robust. The site provides information about Friends of Snow Canyon, including event registration and a portal for memberships and donations.
3. We use email to send FOSC newsletters to all members. These newsletters present current Park-related information as well as FOSC updates and information.
4. We provide funding to print and distribute the Park brochures provided to all visitors. We also fund the Junior Ranger program, helping to pay for the workbooks as well as the badges.

**C. *Promote the Development of Facilities.***

While most of the funding for the Park comes from entry fees and the State, FOSC augments these to improve the visitor experience. A prime example are the new steps on the Scout Cave Trail. Hunter Belcher, the Park's seasonal trail technician, replaced all of the steps, lined the route with rocks and added crush to the tread for stability. FOSC provided funding for the position and to purchase the new railroad ties. Last year, your dues and donations contributed over \$44,000 to help:

- Complete the rebuild of the Scout Cave steps – 112 steps in total!
- Partially fund our part-time Trail Technician position
- Fund our part-time seasonal Naturalist position
- Assist with the purchase of additional steel bike racks
- Purchase new visitor benches at the Scout Cave trailhead
- Produce new Lava Flow trail wayside exhibits (replacing faded and illegible educational signs)
- Maintain a well-signed and delineated trail system of more than 38-miles



*Figure 2: Scout Cave Stairs*



## **Expressing our Gratitude**

The Friends of Snow Canyon Board of Directors is grateful to every member for committing to support Snow Canyon State Park's mission. Your membership dues, donations and volunteer hours allow the Park to advance critical goals, ensuring that the Park is cared for and maintained beyond what Park staff and funding alone could do.

### **THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SUPPORTERS**

#### **Friends \$1000+**

Lois Andrews  
Donald Drabant and Angela Van Fossen  
Terry and Sandra Nelson  
Peter Scherer  
Laurie Tuttle and Donald Crane  
Chloe Ormisher (fundraiser)

#### **Benefactors \$500+**

Alan Risenhoover and Laurel Bryant  
George & Denise Otott  
The Arbutus Family Foundation  
Douglas Meehan  
Tom and Marsha McCoy

#### **Golden Plus Members and Donors \$250+**

Neil and Okchon Allison  
Doug Beck  
James and Linda Bily  
Jeff & Paula Botkin  
Loriana De Crescemzo  
James Doll  
Sara and Nathan Dupre  
Michael and Colleen Evans  
Lee Goss  
Steve and Jennifer Haddad  
Rob and Kathy Herrick  
Stephen & Lisa Jarvis  
Nancy and Byron Kosick  
Kathy and Bob Lovett  
Bonnie McGee and Dee Hubbard  
Kitty and Ray Nolin  
Katy and Mark Peterson  
Jim and Sue Ann Roberts  
Chuck and Sara Schwartzberg  
Donald and Barbara Smith  
Judy Odom & Ron Vermillion  
Robert and Phyllis Winkler

**And all past and present Board Members, Trail Stewards and docents who have provided countless volunteer hours on behalf of the park and the Friends of Snow Canyon.**



## Summary

Friends of Snow Canyon is completing its fourteenth year of supporting Snow Canyon State Park. Membership is the core of the organization and depends on each and every one of you. Today, FOSC has a total of 273 memberships.

We depend on our members to keep us fresh. If you have program ideas, suggestions for program improvement, or interest in serving on the Board or as a Trail Steward, contact the Board through the email [contact@friendsofsnowcanyon.org](mailto:contact@friendsofsnowcanyon.org)

Please tell your friends and neighbors about Friends of Snow Canyon State Park and encourage them to consider joining in support of this incredible natural wonder in our backyards.

Contact information, along with membership renewals and new member information can be found on our website: [www.friendsofsnowcanyon.org](http://www.friendsofsnowcanyon.org).

Thank You for your Support!

Note: Detailed financial statements available on request