



Making A Difference In Nevada

The state of Nevada has long been considered one of the last vestige's of the "wild west", abundant in scenic beauty, mountain ranges, clear blue sky, and the hundreds of miles of open rangelands. Many native Nevadans pride themselves on their ability to persevere through difficult times, live in isolation, and most of all, to think and behave independently. Couple this with the fact that Nevada ranks as one of the fastest growing states in the union, and you have the recipe for conflict.

Developing partnerships requires patience, perseverance, an extroverted personality, and the ability to "think outside the box". Prior to 2001, opportunities to restore habitat were rare due to Nevada's social and political climate.

Bridget Nielsen embarked on a tremendous challenge when she became interested in developing partnerships for the Fish and Wildlife Service with Tribes and private landowners. Over the last five years, she has met that challenge, head-on, and has been instrumental in the success of the partnership programs in Nevada.

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program has grown from expending less than \$30,000 per year to requesting over \$235,000 in fiscal year 2005 since Bridget's arrival. These funds have restored and enhanced habitat for species such as the endangered White River spinedace, endangered Southwestern willow flycatcher, threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout, and endangered Sulphur Springs buckwheat in addition to many highly localized, endemic species of fish and plants. In 2005, the Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office assisted private landowners in the development of proposals for the Private Stewardship Proposal Program totaling over \$250,000. Nevada's federally recognized tribes were able to obtain over \$600,000 in 2004, over \$300,000 in 2005 through the collaborative efforts of the Service's Private Lands Program.



Bridget Nielsen (right) with Walter and Carrol Cripps, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Programs 1st Safe Harbor in the State of Nevada to reintroduce White River spinedace into historical habitat

Bridget's collaborative efforts with the Nevada Department of Wildlife has resulted in the submission of two highly successful Recovery Lands Acquisition grant requests that have enabled the state of Nevada to acquire important habitat essential for the recovery of the threatened Railroad Valley springfish and Bull Trout. Her coordinated efforts to restore habitats for endangered and threatened species in Nevada has also lead to the completion of the first Safe Harbor Agreement for the endangered White River spinedace reintroduced into historic habitat on private lands.

Bridget graduated in 1991 with a Bachelor's degree in Biology and Environmental Science from the University of California at Santa Cruz. Following graduation, she secured a term position with the now U.S. Geologic Survey, Biological Resources Division in Reno, Nevada working in desert fish research. She came to the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Reno, Nevada in 2000, as the lead for the recovery of listed desert fish species such as the Railroad Valley Springfish, White River spinedace, and the Clover Valley speckled dace.