



Community Report

2023-2024



Strengthening youth & communities through nature

natureconnectco.org  vamonosoutside.org

Our Work



Family

NatureConnect reached hundreds of families in La Pine, Madras, Prineville, and Redmond through our free spring and summer family programs. Our programs bring families together in community parks and provide engaging hands-on activities that gets kids excited about nature in their neighborhoods.



Schools



NatureConnect serves as a resource hub for schools who want to bring learning outdoors. Our goal is for all students who grow up in Central Oregon to have access to environmental education programs that connect them to places across our community. To support this, we provide a range of services including field trip bus funding, teacher workshops, a lending library of field equipment, and one-stop-shopping for program information for teachers. We also provide a free NatureHoods program for K-2nd grade students that teaches them how to be scientists who study nature.

Youth Leadership

Our Green Jobs program employed 11 BIPOC high school youth this summer through work experiences with local partners. Interns gained experience in program facilitation, wildlife interpretation, risk management, curriculum development, and more. NatureConnect also provided ongoing training and networking opportunities throughout the summer, which will continue into the 2024-2025 school year.



How did your connection to nature change throughout the internship?

“The internship expanded my view of the place I live in. There were many places I didn't know existed and I got to know them and see myself out a lot more.”

“I grew a lot closer to nature and formed a stronger bond. I now feel like spending time outside will be part of my everyday life.”

“At first it was a bit of a challenge being outside all day every day and I didn't think I could survive. Then I got the hang of it and realized there's so much beauty outside, that there's so much incredible stuff, and I realized how much I had missed. Now I really love the outdoors.”

Network

NatureConnect provides ongoing opportunities for our network to collaborate and learn together about diversity, equity, and inclusion topics in our sector. Our goal is to bring equitable and inclusive practices into our organizations and programs. Our vibrant learning culture allows us to grow together - sharing promising practices, discussing shared challenges, and inspiring each other.

By the Numbers

1

Rebrand! Read the full story at natureconnectco.org

11

High school interns hired by the Green Jobs program

2,551

Hours worked by Green Jobs interns this summer

98

Field trips funded by the Field Trip Fund

1,453

Students served by the NatureHoods program

15

Free family programs offered in rural communities

21

Collaborative meetings/trainings facilitated with our network of partners

Vámonos Outside

Vámonos Outside works to advance an inclusive outdoor culture by providing outdoor recreation opportunities for Latine and BIPOC communities. By utilizing the outdoors as a mechanism for personal transformation, we create a lasting impact on individuals and families.



By the Numbers

62

Youth participating in Jugamos Afuera and Camp Chica

70

Days of Camp Chica programming

74

Teens participating in outdoor recreation programs

346

Family program participants

175

Total days of programs offered last year

19

Latine and BIPOC program volunteers and interns

Jugamos Afuera

Jugamos Afuera is a free afterschool program offered at Bear Creek and R.E. Jewell Elementary schools in the fall and spring. The program connects youth with nature in a supportive setting, and focuses on free play and building community.



Camp Chica

Camp Chica is a bilingual adventure camp for female-identifying youth. The program is offered year-round and features afterschool programs, no-school day programs, and summer camps. Each week, the chicas explore new locations around Central Oregon.



Teen Programs

Vámonos Outside provides several different teen programs - including a winter ski and snowboard program, and a mountain bike program in the spring and fall. These programs focus on youth development and building self-confidence by providing challenging yet attainable activities in the outdoors, where youth can take risks and experience accomplishment. Vámonos Outside works to make these programs accessible for youth by offering them at no cost and providing all necessary equipment and transportation.



“ I am so grateful to these programs designed for our kids of color that not only help make these outdoor activities be reachable, but also have mentors who have inspired and motivated our children to be leaders in the community, to support others, and to feel proud of their roots, which is so important for our family. ”

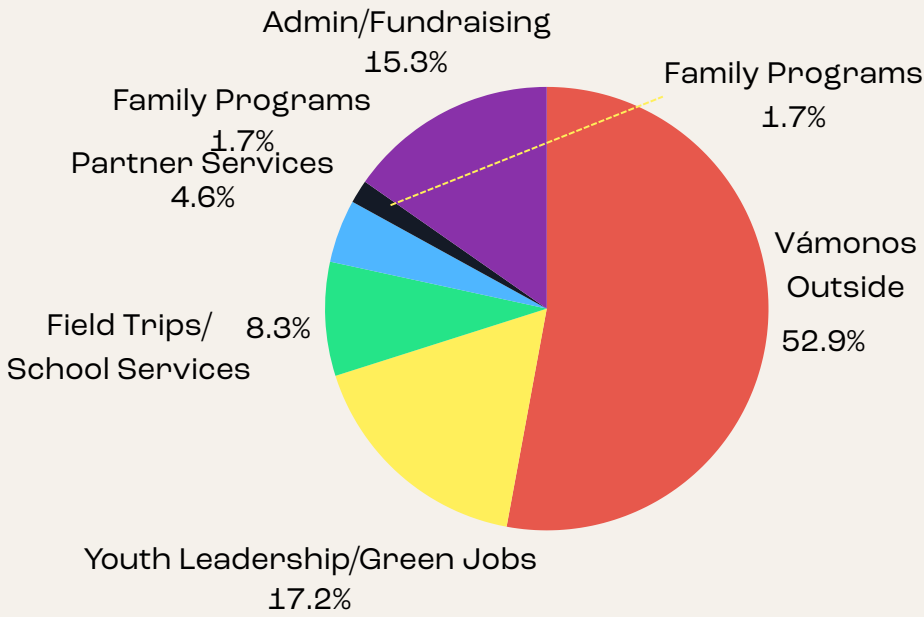
Family Programs

Vámonos Outside provides year-round family programs including our monthly BIPOC climb night at Bend Rock Gym, summer programs in partnership with Juntos Aprendemos, and other outings including camping, fishing, snowshoeing, and rafting.



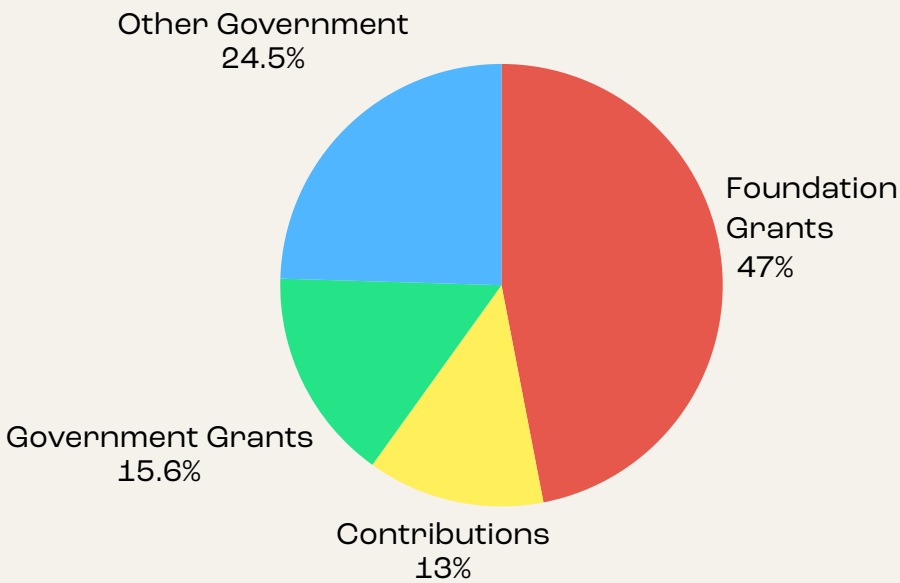
Financials

Expenses by Program



Revenue

Total Revenue = \$566,883



Our Supporters

Thank you to all the organizations, businesses, and individuals who support our work! These programs wouldn't be possible without their partnership and generosity.

Major Supporters

- Oregon Department of Education
- Oregon Community Foundation
- Grey Family Foundation
- Meyer Memorial Trust
- Bend-La Pine School District
- U.S. Forest Service
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Mt. Bachelor
- Bottle Drop
- Share Winter Foundation
- Redmond School District
- Ford Family Foundation
- High Desert Education Service District
- Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation
- Bend Cultural Tourism Fund
- C.O. Latino Partnership Program
- Crook County School District
- Oregon State University
- Deschutes Brewery
- Bend Endurance Academy
- The Putnam Foundation
- Sisters School District
- Pacific Power Foundation
- The Dirksen Derby
- Wyatt Tigert
- The Haven
- Cog Wild

Our Partners

- Deschutes National Forest
- Ochoco National Forest
- Oregon State Parks
- High Desert ESD
- Bend-La Pine SD
- Redmond SD
- Crook County SD
- Jefferson County SD
- Sisters SD
- Bend Parks and Rec
- Redmond Area Parks & Rec
- Mosaic Medical
- Bend Forest School
- Bend Rock Gym
- Boys & Girls Club of Bend
- Camp Fire Central Oregon
- Camp Tamarack

- Cog Wild
- Deschutes Land Trust
- Discover Your Forest
- The Environmental Center
- Friends of the Children
- Heart of Oregon Corps
- High Desert Museum
- Juntos (OSU)
- Juntos Aprendemos
- Middle Deschutes Watershed Council
- Oregon Adaptive Sports
- Oregon Wild
- Sunniver Nature Center
- Think Wild
- Trout Unlimited
- Upper Deschutes Watershed Council
- Wildheart Nature School



Donate

Make your donation to NatureConnect and Vámonos Outside today!

