

Nevada Desert Experience's Mission

- to stop nuclear weapons testing through a campaign of prayer, education, dialogue, and nonviolent direct action.
- to mobilize people of all faiths to work toward nuclear abolition and nonviolent social change.
- to support personal renewal in the desert tradition, reconnecting with each other and the earth.
- to end subcritical tests and other war-making preparations at the Nevada Test Site and preventing the return of full scale nuclear testing.

History of NDE

The Nevada Desert Experience was formed in 1984 to stop nuclear bomb tests at the Nevada Test Site (NTS). It developed out of the six-week "Lenten Desert Experience" first organized by a Franciscan community in 1982. Making the journey to the desert came to be seen as a significant spiritual and political act. Prayerful, persistent civil disobedience coupled with open, respectful communication has remained a hallmark of NDE actions. Avoiding hostility and violence has allowed priests, women religious, parents and elders to participate.

In 1986 the Western Shoshone nation began issuing permits for protesters to be on their land. Raising awareness of indigenous rights and issues was an important development for NDE and the anti-nuclear testing movement. Pressure from NDE and other groups was instrumental in the passage of the 1992 federal ban on full-scale nuclear tests. Since then, NDE has continued to oppose other war-making preparations at the NTS and neighboring Nellis and Creech Air Force Bases.

Desert Immersion Programs

NDE Immersion Programs provide college or high school groups, religious communities or other organizations an opportunity to learn about the relationships between nuclear weapons and indigenous sovereignty, environmental degradation, militarism and economic justice. Possible immersion activities include:

- a visit to the Nevada Test Site, Creech Air Force Base and the surrounding desert
- discussions with members of the Western Shoshone Nation and other local Native American communities
- prayer or ritual at the Sekhmet goddess temple in Cactus Springs
- a chance to serve with the Catholic Workers on their morning soupline and to participate in their weekly peace vigil
- a picnic at Red Rocks, a local state park
- a tour of the Atomic Testing Museum
- a vigil on or tour of the Las Vegas strip.

Immersion trips range from two to seven days and can be scheduled as alternative Winter or Spring breaks, during the Summer, or to coincide with religious holidays.

Nevada Desert Experience

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We work with several networks and coalitions, in part:

- Abolition 2000: Global Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
- The Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space
- Pacific Life Community
- United for Peace and Justice

Nevada Desert Experience



*Interfaith
Resistance
to Nuclear
Weapons*

10/08 Design: Design Action Collective



As the 21st century progresses, nuclear weapons pose an ever increasing threat to the planet that is our only home. The promise of nuclear disarmament is embodied in Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in which the original nuclear-weapons states bound themselves to pursue negotiations to end the arms race and to disarm. Contrary to its treaty obligations, the U.S. is pursuing new kinds of “usable” nuclear weapons. At the Nevada Test Site currently, on-going sub-critical nuclear tests and other research contribute to continued weapons design.

Nuclear weapons testing has been conducted worldwide on lands taken from indigenous people. The NTS land was taken from the Western Shoshone Nation (Newe Sogobia) in violation of the Treaty of Ruby Valley. This occupied area, held sacred for centuries, has become the most bombed place on Earth. In less than 50 years, over 1000 nuclear weapons have been exploded there.

The U.S. government keeps the NTS readied to resume full-scale testing, eroding the prospects for full ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Various programs like the “Reliable Replacement Warhead”, “Complex Transformation” and the doctrine of “Full Spectrum Dominance” further bring into question our government’s commitment to treaties and international law. Even when Congress deletes funding for some of the these initiatives, new requests quickly follow. With U.S. plans to build new nuclear bombs, our sharing of nuclear weapons technology to countries not signed onto the NPT, and repeated U.S. threats to fire nuclear arms, every battlefield threatens the entire planet. While ending testing will contribute to the elimination of nuclear weapons, our ultimate hope lies in the abolition of nuclear weapons everywhere, and of the institution of war itself.

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Sacred Peace Walk

A Communal Pilgrimage to America’s Nuclear Sacrifice Zone

We walk in the footsteps of a long legacy of peace walkers and spiritual leaders to draw attention to the nuclear dangers that continue to threaten our sacred planet and the community of life. This 62 mile, 6 day pilgrimage to the Nevada Test Site begins with an orientation in Las Vegas. Teachings and holy days of different faiths are honored. Some walkers only come for a few days or just for the beginning or end. A support vehicle assists the walkers and is always nearby in case of emergency.

Lenten Desert Experience

We remain inspired by and connected to NDE’s foundational gatherings. The Lenten observances include time for prayer and reflection in the desert. The specific activity depends on when during Lent it happens and may be included as part of the Sacred Peace Walk.

August Desert Witness: August 6 to 9

We commemorate the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with an annual teach-in and action at the Nevada Test Site. The presentations and discussions vary. Time for prayer, meditation, or simple silence is included. A vigil on the Las Vegas strip adds a poignant juxtaposition to the gathering.

NDE CALL TO ACTION

Join Nevada Desert Experience in one of our nonviolent direct actions or invite us to make a presentation or prayer-offering to your community or congregation. We are grateful for your prayers and financial contributions too!

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Name _____

Group _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

email _____

(NDE does not share our list; nor do we send lots of e-mail. E-mail is often very helpful for our organizing.)

Please add me to your mailing list. I want to receive the NDE newsletter, *Desert Voices*, and to be kept informed of NDE events.

To save money and resources, please send me a link to the *Desert Voices* newsletter on-line instead of mailing it to me.

Enclosed is a check for:

\$1000 \$100 \$50 \$25 other

Contact me about giving monthly or quarterly as a “Friend of the Desert”

Contact us for more information about

Lenten Desert Experience Sacred Peace Walk
 August Desert Witness Immersion Programs
 Other Collaborative Ideas

Nevada Desert Experience is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.