

## Nevada Desert Experience's Mission

- to stop nuclear weapons testing and development 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.



## 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. In April, 2009 NDE coordinated the first civil resistance action against unmanned air strikes abroad, many of which are controlled from Creech AFB via satellite.

## 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:

- Vigiling at the Nevada Test Site, Creech Air Force Base, at the Federal Courthouse and on "The Strip"
- 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
- serving food at the Catholic Worker soup line
- exploring Red Rock National Conservation Area and other inspirational, desert gems
- visiting the Atomic Testing Museum

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
- Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service

# Nevada Desert Experience



*Interfaith  
Resistance  
to Nuclear  
Weapons*



**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. The Nevada Test Site (NTS) symbolizes nuclear weapons development and is inconsistent with the goal of disarmament.

The U.S. keeps the NTS readied to resume full-scale testing, eroding the prospects for meaningful ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Programs like the warhead “Life Extension Program”, “Complex Transformation” and the doctrine of “Full Spectrum Dominance” further bring into question our government’s commitment to be a disarmament leader. Even when Congress deletes funding for some of these initiatives, new requests quickly follow. The U.S. is developing new bombs and missiles, shares nuclear weapons technology with countries not signed onto the NPT, and threatens first use of nuclear arms. Every battlefield threatens the entire planet.

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. 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. Includes time for action against hunter-killer drones headquartered at Creech AFB in Indian Springs. 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.

## August Desert Witness

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.

## 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.

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

Group \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Please mail me the quarterly newsletter, *Desert Voices*.
- To save money and resources, please send me 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 me for more information about

- Sacred Peace Walk  August Desert Witness
- Creech AFB  Immersion Programs
- Other Collaborative Ideas

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