

SNAP Team Out in Force at *Aviation Nation*



Representatives of the Southern Nevada Agency Partnership (SNAP) set up shop at Nellis Air Force Base on November 4-6, 2022, during the annual *Aviation Nation* spectacle on the base.

By Dan Balduini, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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While the crowd marveled at the aerial acrobatics performed by the men and women of the Air Force, thousands of people stopped by the SNAP exhibit set up no more than 50 yards from the flight line.



Chris Linehan, with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and lead for the SNAP Education, Interpretation and Outreach Team, was in charge of organizing SNAP's involvement in the event. Linehan took care of the staffing schedule and arranged for the equipment on display near the SNAP tables. Visitors to the exhibit got a first-hand look at two National Park Service airplanes and a ranger vehicle, a U.S. Forest Service fire engine and the Smokey Bear trailer, and a boat used by the Bureau of Reclamation on Lake Mead, Lake Mojave, and the Colorado River. Over the three days, 75 people representing the five SNAP agencies staffed the exhibit.

"Roughly 85 percent of the land in the state is under the control of the federal government, and most of it is open for the public's enjoyment," Linehan said. "SNAP agencies are stewards of that land and we encourage the public to help us take care of these special places to ensure future generations can also enjoy them."

Kevin DesRoberts, Project Leader for the Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex, said some of the visitors were surprised to learn that the Desert National Wildlife Refuge, located on the northern doorstep of the Las Vegas Valley, is the largest national wildlife refuge in the lower 48 states.

Bureau of Reclamation Graphic Artist Christina Robinson-Swett created this poster for the event featuring the QR code he developed that links directly to SNAP agency job openings posted on the [USA Jobs website](https://www.usajobs.gov). Credit: Dan Balduini, USFWS



“At times, the loud roar of jet engines made it difficult for us to communicate with those visiting our tables,” said Kevin DesRoberts. “Nonetheless, folks were very interested in hearing about southern Nevada’s public lands and the recreation opportunities they offer.”

Kellie Berry, Deputy Field Supervisor for the Southern Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, pointed out the value of participating in the event. “Aviation Nation gives us the opportunity to reach a large number of people at one time with our conservation and stewardship messages,” Berry said. “A future wildlife biologist or ranger could be among those who visited the SNAP exhibit.”



Kevin DesRoberts shows some youngsters a Mojave Desert tortoise shell. Credit: Dan Balduini, USFWS

The federal land agencies in southern Nevada formed SNAP in 1997 to coordinate their conservation and management efforts. Since then, SNAP has become a national leader in protecting, restoring, and promoting responsible use of public lands. The partnership consists of:

- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**, Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex and the Southern Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office.
- **U. S. Bureau of Land Management**, Southern Nevada District
- **National Park Service**, Lake Mead National Recreation Area
- **U.S. Forest Service**, Spring Mountains National Recreation Area
- **U. S. Bureau of Reclamation**, Lower Colorado Region

Smokey Bear strikes a mighty pose in front of a U.S. Forest Service fire truck. Credit: Chris Linehan, USBR



SNAP agencies manage more than 10 million acres of public lands and water in southern Nevada to provide conservation and recreational opportunities, including:

- Hiking
- Camping
- Wildlife viewing
- Water sports
- Snow sports
- Bicycling
- Off-roading



One of two National Park Service airplanes on display during *Aviation Nation* at Nellis Air Force Base near Las Vegas, Nevada. Credit: Chris Linehan, USBR



U.S. Forest Service personnel hand out souvenirs to young visitors during Aviation Nation at Nellis Air Force Base near Las Vegas, Nevada.
Credit: Dan Balduini, USFWS

For more information about SNAP, visit www.fws.gov/partner/southern-nevada-agency-partnership.

Aviation Nation, sometimes referred to as “America's Air Show,” is the annual award-winning air show of the United States Air Force. The show is hosted at [Nellis Air Force Base](#) near Las Vegas each November.

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