



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**GREENevada Announces Winners of the Golden Pinecone Sustainability Awards 2017**  
– Celebration being held at National Automobile Museum on November 7, 2017

**Reno, NV - October 2, 2017.** Local non-profit GREENevada announced today the winners of the 2017 Golden Pinecone Sustainability Awards, who will be honored at its annual event to recognize outstanding organizations and individuals for their achievements toward improving and sustaining the environment. We invite the business community to attend to honor the significant accomplishments of individuals and organizations that utilize the triple bottom line practices (social, environmental, and financial) in their mode of operation.

The Golden Pinecone Awards celebration is a legacy event initiated by Environmental Leadership and run for more than 25 years by Environmental Leadership, Nevada EcoNET and greenUP! The awards recognize individuals and organizations for their efforts both to make our community environmentally healthy and safe and to promote sustainable living practices. The 2017 Golden Pinecone Sustainability Awards are being hosted by GREENevada and will take place on Tuesday, November 7, 2017, at the National Automobile Museum in Reno, Nevada. The theme for the event is “On the Road to Sustainability,” and attendees are encouraged to dress for a drive down memory lane representing their favorite era.

The ticket price for the event is \$55 per person or \$500 for a table for 8. Go to the GREENevada site for a link to purchase tickets: <http://greenevada.org> .

GREENevada is giving recognition in ten (10) categories:

Educational Program - Classrooms Unleashed by Sierra Nevada Journeys  
Educator - Linda Conlin, Former Director, Current Board Member - River Wranglers  
Individual / Volunteer - Mark Korinek, Director of Operations - Carson City School District  
Public Figure / Servant - Hillary Schieve, Mayor - City of Reno  
Youth Leadership - Eric Duong - UNR Student  
Nonprofit Organization - Walker Basin Conservancy  
Federal /State Agency - Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)  
Small Business - Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc. (EMPSi)  
Medium to Large Business - Otis Bay Ecological Consultants  
Sustainability Milestones - Washoe County School District’s Sustainability Policy

GREENevada thanks its sponsors for this important community recognition event. Support is provided by the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), NV Energy, Tesla, Reno Printing and Boondoggle band.

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The Golden Pinecone Ball was started by Tod Bedrosian, Bob Fulkerson, Glenn Miller and Bob Loux to bring the environmental community together as friends and initially to get the community excited about stopping the dump of nuclear waste. The pinecone awards were handmade out of plywood, an ironic twist on formal award ceremonies to honor environmental achievements of the past year.

GREENevada stands for Growing Resources for Environmental Education in Nevada and is a consortium of 20+ environmental organizations in Northern Nevada whose mission is to foster sustainability through environmental education and leadership. The fiscal sponsor for the event is greenUP! a 501c3 nonprofit organization. For more information, <http://greenevada.org>.

## **Background on Individuals and Organizations Awarded**

### **Educational Program - Classrooms Unleashed by Sierra Nevada Journeys**

Classrooms Unleashed (CU) is a flagship Sierra Nevada Journeys outdoor science education program with three in-class lessons and one field-study at a local nature area. CU uses hands-on, experiential and outdoor education as a framework for young people to study, think, and learn. CU is aligned to state and national standards and the North American Association for Environmental Educations Guidelines for Excellence. External evaluation by the University of Nevada's Center for Program Evaluation showed that in 2016, 5% more students at schools that participate in Sierra Nevada Journeys programming score at the proficient level on the State Science assessment than students at comparison schools. During that same year, the CU program was delivered to 6,800 students in Northern Nevada, and Sierra Nevada Journeys currently holds a waiting list for schools with interest in participation.

### **Educator - Linda Conlin, Former Director, Current Board Member - River Wranglers**

Linda Conlin stepped down as the Director and Lead Educator of River Wranglers in July after 23 years of dedicated service. Working largely with K-12 students in the Carson River Watershed, Linda championed hands-on education programs that reached over 2000 students annually. Her model of teaching high school students to mentor elementary students—who then become high school mentors to a new generation of environmental stewards—is Linda's legacy and a testament to her sustained commitment and leadership. In an email introducing the new River Wranglers Director Linda stated, "I will continue to be involved in our watershed as a RW board member. As you know about 65% of the human body is made of water and I think most of mine is Carson River water!" Having worked as a UNCE 4-H educator for 23 years prior to spearheading River Wranglers, Linda's 46 years of passion, unwavering dedication, and tireless leadership is why she is the ideal Golden Pinecone Sustainability Award winning educator!

### **Individual / Volunteer - Mark Korinek, Director of Operations - Carson City School District**

Mark is a visionary leader guiding the district to implement sustainable practices and contributes to the movement on many levels. Mark is very diligent about making sustainability a high priority in the operation of the Carson City School District. He chairs the CCSD's Sustainability Action Team and incorporated sustainability language, "Plan and develop sustainable solutions for operational goals," into the Carson City School District's Strategic Plan. He made changes to facilities by installing; 2 MW of solar panels, LED retrofits, heat exchange pumps, trash compactors, day lighting and automatic

controls. Green practices include; recycling Styrofoam containers, water conservation and a Green Process Cleaning program. At schools, he supported 5 USGB Service projects, speaks in classrooms, supports gardens/ habitats, and brought in the Project Recharge and powerED programs. Mark is a member of; Northern NV Facility Management Association, the Nevada Public Purchasing Study Comm and Sustainable Partners of Northern Nevada. He was awarded a USGBC Award.

### **Public Figure / Servant - Hillary Schieve, Mayor - City of Reno**

Mayor Hillary Schieve has committed the City of Reno to honor and uphold the Paris Agreement, joining 381 mayors from across the nation that have come together to offer a unified voice to both President Trump, the United Nations, and the global community that "We Are Still In." Mayor Schieve was a signatory to two open letters for the President and the countries that have signed the Paris Agreement stating, "Climate change is both the greatest single threat we face, and our greatest economic opportunity for our nation. That is why we affirm our cities' commitments to taking every action possible to achieve the principles and goals of the Paris Climate Agreement, and to engage states, businesses and other sectors to join us." Mayor Schieve is providing local leadership by ensuring that the City conducted a community-wide greenhouse gas inventory and establish a climate action plan to help prioritize actions and investments that will reduce local emissions.

### **Youth Leadership - Eric Duong - UNR Student**

Eric Duong has demonstrated environmental leadership through many efforts. A large project he worked on last year was through Envirolution Project Recharge. As a student from Reed High, he recognized the amount of energy being used at Reed, specifically the refrigerators used for breakfast/lunch storage in the cafeteria. The goal of his project was to improve Reed High's kitchen energy efficiency with new technology. The refrigerators that were being used were over 40 years old. He discovered that the kitchen's power usage totaled to about 60% of the school's total energy usage. Eric collected data on how much energy the current refrigerators used, newer models and their impacts resulting in: 17.6% energy usage reduction and saves the school \$315.36 annually. Eric also volunteered with Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation to create a study on the use of parks and correlations to health.

### **Nonprofit Organization - Walker Basin Conservancy**

Walker Basin Conservancy (WBC) is dedicated to creating a culture of environmental sustainability and restoration in the Walker Basin. This was exemplified when WBC made possible an historic event by donating 12,100 acres of land to the Nevada Division of State Parks (NDSP) for the development of a new State Park called the Walker River State Recreation Area. The creation of this new park shows the value WBC places on Nevada's natural environment by opening historic regions for the public to enjoy. Not only does WBC make a local impact through environmental work, it works to teach basin-locals about ways to contribute to conservation. WBC will continue to work with NDSP and other agencies to ensure that the retired farmland continues to be restored in ways that benefit the Walker River and Walker Lake in order to support the reintroduction of threatened species like the Lahontan cutthroat trout.

### **Federal /State Agency - Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)**

RTC incorporates sustainability best practices into all aspects of the agency's work including following LEED design standards in 2 newly constructed transit centers; utilizing bio swales in roadway design;

expanding the bicycle network; utilizing Complete Street design principles; replacing diesel buses with diesel-electric hybrid and 4 fully electric buses; retrofitting existing buildings with energy efficient lighting, HVAC technologies, and water-saving fixtures. Since 2010, the RTC has reduced total facility energy use by nearly 25%, GHG emissions per passenger trip by 10%, and solid waste generation by 24%. In June, 2017 the RTC developed their first agency wide Sustainability Plan which will guide all RTC sustainability initiatives for the next 5 years and includes annual reporting on progress towards completion. In August, 2017 the RTC was awarded a Silver-level of recognition by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) for sustainability achievements and goals. Moreover, RTC's success is further strengthened by its collaboration with external entities (local jurisdictions, WCSD, SPINN, LUTRC, TMRPA, WC Air Quality, and others).

### **Small Business - Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc. (EMPSi)**

EMPSi is a small business environmental consulting firm committed to making the world a better place by solving complex environmental problems related to natural resource management, planning and sustainability, renewable energy, and water. They are recognized experts in environmental impact analysis, sustainability, geographic information systems, and public outreach and facilitation. They attract and retain the best people in the field by supporting a culture that balances work, life, and social responsibility. Their workplace reflects these priorities with flexible hours and an emphasis on fitness and health. EMPSi is committed to providing its employees with opportunities to lead a sustainable lifestyle. EMPSi provides a stipend for those who commute to work via bicycle, transit, or other non-auto method. EMPSi offices provide recycling and composting options and encourage a paperless work environment. They match employee contributions to environmental and other NGOs.

### **Medium to Large Business - Otis Bay Ecological Consultants**

For over two decades, Otis Bay, headed by Chad Gourley, has accomplished multiple wetland restoration projects, benefitting native aquatic wildlife in Nevada. Otis Bay applies ecosystem-based restoration solutions to Great Basin and Mojave riparian systems to preserve our diverse natural heritage, including both aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna.

The Truckee River McCarran Ranch project, Lockwood Park, and Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge are just a few of their projects helping protect Lahontan cutthroat trout, cui-ui, Ash Meadows pupfish and other species in healthy, functioning wetland systems.

Chad Gourley worked closely with multiple agencies to develop and implement early, enhanced Truckee River flow prescriptions to support native fish and riparian forest growth. Many of Otis Bay's restoration projects include recreational elements such as the Moapa trail and stream viewing window allowing visitors an up-close look at endemic desert fish and invertebrates in a restored stream.

### **Sustainability Milestones - Washoe County School District's Sustainability Policy**

The Washoe County School District received an award for Sustainability Milestone for their design and approval for a district wide Sustainability Policy. This policy has been in the works for many years and recently got approved by the WCSD Board of Trustees in May. This policy will address issues related to energy, waste and water conservation measures that will not only help save the district money but will help insure our schools are safe and effective learning environments for students and staff.

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