

RED EMERALD RESILIENCE TRAINING PROGRAM



UTAH OFFICE OF TOURISM | INSTITUTE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM

TAKEAWAYS AND RESOURCES

SESSION 2: HOW TO EDUCATE NEW-TO-NATURE TOURISTS ABOUT RESPONSIBLE RECREATION

PANELISTS

- Bianca Lyon, Tourism Director of Community and Partner Relations, [Utah Office of Tourism](#)
- Matt Blocker, Outdoor Recreation Planner, [Bureau of Land Management](#)
- Katie Boué, President, [Outdoor Advocacy Project](#); [Recreate Responsibly Coalition](#)
- Danielle Fowles-McNiven, Assistant Director, [Tread Lightly](#)
- Elizabeth Hora, Archaeologist, [Utah State Historic Preservation Office](#)

WATCH THE FULL SESSION

HIGHLIGHT REEL (COMING SOON)

WHY DO WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT EDUCATING NEW-TO-NATURE VISITORS ABOUT RESPONSIBLE RECREATION?

- Visitation to national and state parks has increased steadily for the past 15 years. In March 2020, visitation increased even more so with the COVID-19 pandemic as people sought refuge in the outdoors.
- Certain locations received greater pressure than others, including evidence of people engaging with the land in new, unexpected, and sometimes destructive ways.
- Some visitors were relatively inexperienced in the outdoors and “new-to-nature.”
- A common message to teach and encourage responsible, sustainable recreation became an urgent need for land managers across all public lands from federal, to state, to local.

WHAT DO SUSTAINABLE RECREATION AND STEWARDSHIP MEAN?

- Sustainable recreation allows for the preservation of the natural setting and protection of resources to provide positive outdoor experiences both now and into the future.
- The sense of stewardship comes from an emotional connection to the land.

- Empowering people with a sense of ownership of their public lands is crucial for stewardship.
- Stewardship and sustainable recreation go hand-in-hand. Sustainable recreation requires stewards to help model appropriate behaviors and positively educate others.

TO WHOM AND WHAT DO WE NEED TO COMMUNICATE WHEN TRYING TO CULTIVATE RESPONSIBLE RECREATION AND STEWARDSHIP?

- Preparation is critical for safe, responsible travel. It is key for every experience in the outdoors and relevant for every visitor from the new-to-nature, or new to Utah, to the very experienced.
- The [Leave No Trace](#) and [Tread Lightly](#) principles are great starting points to educate users on how to recreate responsibly and sustainably for safe and fun adventures.
- People respond better to positive messaging, versus gate-keeping or threats. Examples include, “We need your help to protect these artifacts” or “This is a special place,” and to remind people they are “part of a larger group.”
- All kinds of recreationists exist. Recognizing the differences and similarities across the various enthusiasts’ groups can help when cultivating responsible recreation.



HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE TO REACH DIFFERENT AUDIENCES? WHAT TOOLS AND APPROACHES CAN WE USE?

- Having a consistent message is key. Too many messages can be confusing, especially for those without a background in conservation or sustainability. Relying on existing, time-tested messages can help.
- [Recreate Responsibly](#) offers broad, approachable language that can be tailored to reach different audiences, activities, or perspectives. Speaking in the voice they need to hear will support greater understanding.
- Using local knowledge and the right language can provide authenticity. Local collaboration can also help with identifying areas that are becoming overwhelmed and other areas where visitors could responsibly be redirected.
- Providing opportunities for your audience to get involved and give back can encourage a conservation ethic, cultivate a sense of stewardship, and help people who want to be part of something.

TIPS FOR CONSISTENT MESSAGING THROUGH COLLABORATION AND EDUCATION

- Partnering with organizations that have credibility with the specific user group and who know the right language is critical.
- Building regional and local partnerships can help bring the right people together, ensure a consistent message is pushed out, and identify subject matter experts.
- The message should be consistent across businesses, frontline employees, and visitors.

DOABLE NEXT STEPS FOR TOURISM BUSINESSES, LOCAL NON-PROFITS, AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS TO ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE RECREATION

- Businesses and individuals can join the [Recreate Responsibly Coalition](#), individuals can do this for free, businesses/organizations can activate a membership. Download the [Recreate Responsibly Guidelines](#). Print and distribute in a few high touchpoint areas (trailheads, store fronts, etc.)

- Check out the [Forever Mighty Toolkit](#), and sign up to receive the [Utah Office of Tourism's Partner Newsletter](#). Contact the [Office of Tourism's Destination Management Team](#).
- Take the [Pledge to Protect the Past](#). Sign up to get information about Utah's archaeology, where and how to visit these sensitive sites, and how to protect the past.
- Provide opportunities for people to give back. [Tread Lightly Care](#) is a program that can get people out there putting a little love into areas that need it. Contact [Tread Lightly](#).
- Contact the local BLM District Office early and often for tips, tricks, rules and regulations to help you "know before you go."
- Emphasizing preparation is key - "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

RESOURCES FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

- **Research:**
 - "Who Started, Stopped, and Continued Participating in Outdoor Recreation during the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States? Results from a National Panel Study" (2021). [Link to article](#)
 - "Encouraging Pro-environmental Behaviour: An Integrative Review and Research Agenda" (2009). [Link to article](#)
- **Messaging:**
 - Five key messages for responsible recreation in Jackson Hole, Wyoming:
 1. Plan ahead/Know before you go
 2. Leave No Trace/Tread Lightly
 3. Prevent wildfires
 4. Respect wildlife
 5. Be kind and inclusive
 - Emery County, Utah, with help of the State and Katie Boué developed the campaign, "Keep it Swell - When you come to the Swell. You're not just a visitor, you're part of this place."
- **Videos:**
 - [Friends of Cedar Mesa](#) produced a 'Visit With Respect Tips' video series. [Link to video series](#)
 - San Juan County and Utah's Canyon Country created a 'Recreate Responsibly' videos series to address issues seen during the COVID-19 pandemic when visitation increased on public lands:



- [San Juan County Recreate Responsibly - Archeology](#)
- [San Juan County Recreate Responsibly - Dispersed Camping](#)
- [San Juan County Recreate Responsibly - OHV](#)

RESOURCES SHARED BY PANELISTS

- **Matt Blocker, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Bureau of Land Management**
 - [BLM Directory - National Office](#)
 - [BLM Camping](#)
 - [BLM Know Before You Go](#)
 - [BLM Maps](#)
 - [BLM Outdoor Ethics](#)
 - [BLM Visit Pages](#)
 - [Gotta Go Utah](#)
- **Danielle Fowles-McNiven, Assistant Director, Tread Lightly**
 - [Tread Lightly!](#) Send an email and check in with us!
 - [Tread Lightly! Recreation Tips](#)
 - [Tread Lightly! Online Courses](#)
 - [Tread Lightly! Media Library](#)
 - [Tread Lightly! TLC Stewardship Projects](#)
- **Bianca Lyon, Tourism Director of Community and Partner Relations, Utah Office of Tourism**
 - [Utah Office of Tourism - Industry Site](#)
 - [Utah Office of Tourism - Partner Newsletter](#)
 - [Forever Mighty - Inspiration Page](#)
 - [Forever Mighty - Preparation Page](#)
- **Katie Boué, President, Outdoor Advocacy Project; Recreate Responsibly Coalition**
 - [Recreate Responsibly Coalition](#)
 - Recreate Responsibly's core guidelines:
 1. Know before you go
 2. Plan and prepare
 3. Build an inclusive outdoors
 4. Respect others
 5. Leave No Trace
 6. Make it better
 - A wildlife-specific edition to be released later this year.
 - For influencers, content producers, and filmmakers: join the [Create Responsibly Initiative](#) and get involved with the programming we're developing! Use that ~influence~ for good!
- **Elizabeth Hora, Katie Boué, President, Outdoor Advocacy Project; Recreate Responsibly Coalition Archaeologist, Utah State Historic Preservation Office:**
 - [Utah State Historic Preservation Office](#)
 - [Utah State Historic Preservation Office - Visit Sites with Respect](#)
 - [Pledge to Protect the Past!](#)
 - Read "How to Visit Rock Imagery Sites Like an Archaeologist," by Elizabeth Hora. [Link to article](#)
 - Three tips when visiting archaeological sites:
 1. Take nothing
 2. Leave nothing
 3. Watch your step

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