

# Gathering For Our Mountains 2014



Nuwuvi (Southern Paiute), U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Mountain Institute and Portland State University Participants







Evening round dance at the Gathering For Our Mountains, 2014

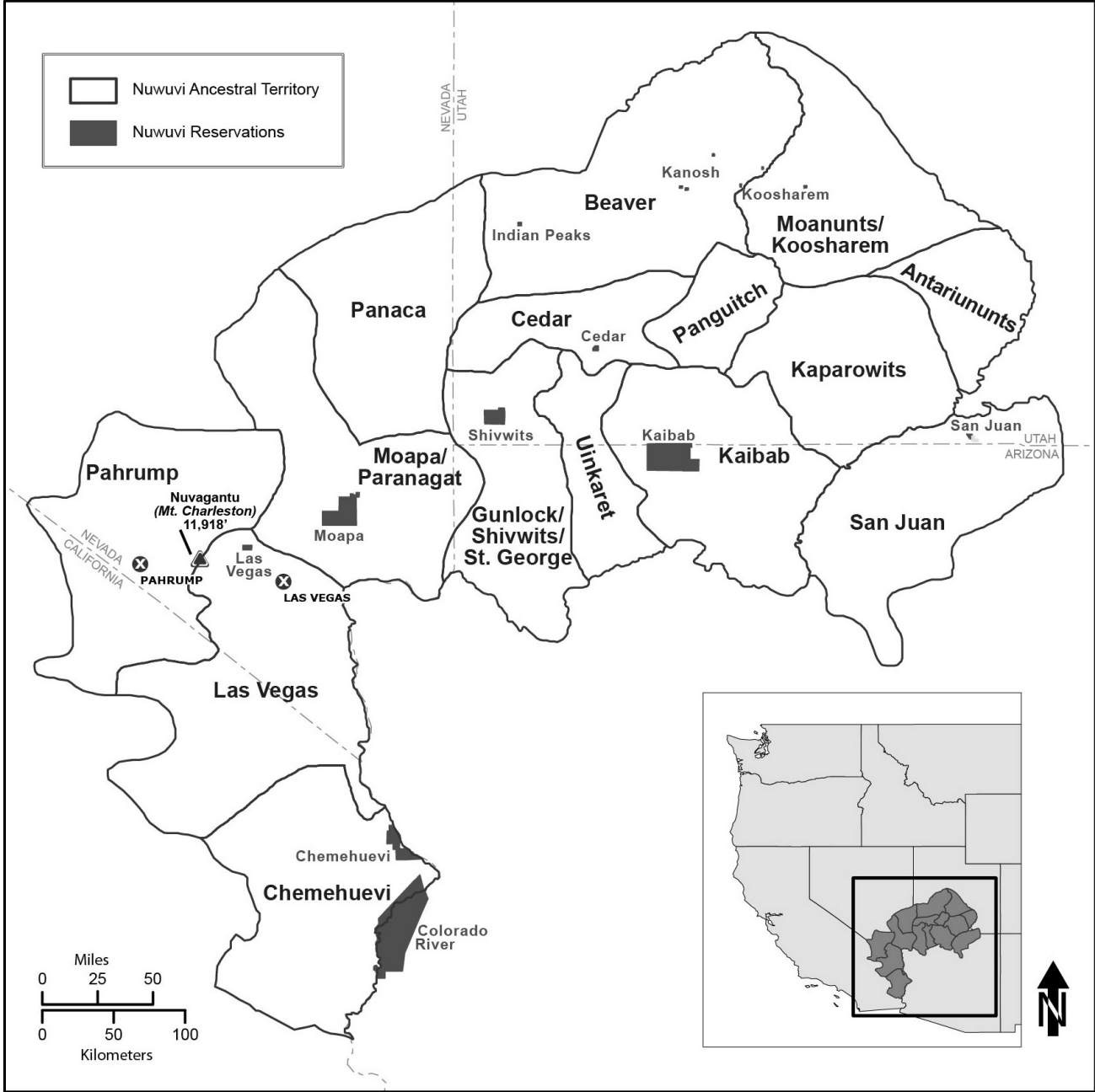
## Gathering For Our Mountains Brings Tribes and Federal Agencies Together

On September 12-14, 2014, more than 150 representatives from the Nuwuvi (Southern Paiute) Nation, the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service gathered at the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area (SMNRA) for two nights to harvest pine nuts, demonstrate cultural skills, share stories and sing traditional songs. This fourth annual Gathering for Our Mountains event was co-sponsored by federal agencies and Nuwuvi tribes and facilitated by Jeremy Spoon and his research team from Portland State University and The Mountain Institute.

Multiple generations of Nuwuvi united in partnership with the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and community supporters to engage in inter-cultural exchange, learning from each other about different ways of knowing and understanding federal lands. Prior to the Gathering, an Annual Meeting was held with federal agency representatives and a Working Group of Nuwuvi delegates to discuss mutually important information and to plan future activities.

Nuwuvi ancestral territory spans portions of four states in Nevada, Utah, Arizona and California. The Spring Mountains landscape, located within the SMNRA, and other areas in the Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex (DNWRC), are known to be sites of Nuwuvi creation. Accordingly, it is told that when the world was new the Creator placed Nuwuvi throughout their ancestral territory and charged them with stewarding the land with respect in a culturally appropriate manner. This environmental relationship is not passive; rather, it requires Nuwuvi interaction to bring the land into a state of balance for future generations, depending on what the land needs. Nuwuvi consider plants, animals, rocks, water, air and other natural features to be sentient, and most importantly, their relatives. From this perspective, the land needs Nuwuvi and Nuwuvi need the land in order for both to be healthy.

Nuwuvi (Southern Paiute) Ancestral Territory and Current Reservations







**Nuwuvi family enjoys the gifts of the mountain**

Pine nut harvesting is part of the traditional Nuwuvi pinyon-juniper habitat management process. The time for the harvest is known when the Rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*) is yellow, the Milky Way is overhead and the Pinyon Jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*) sings. Pinyon trees (*Pinus monophylla* and *P. edulis*) are 'whipped' using long dried poles to knock off the pinecones. The lower branches are lopped to reduce fire fuel loads thereby encouraging fires to burn through the grove and not up the trees. Pine nuts are gathered and roasted when the cones are green, or from open, brown cones. The nuts

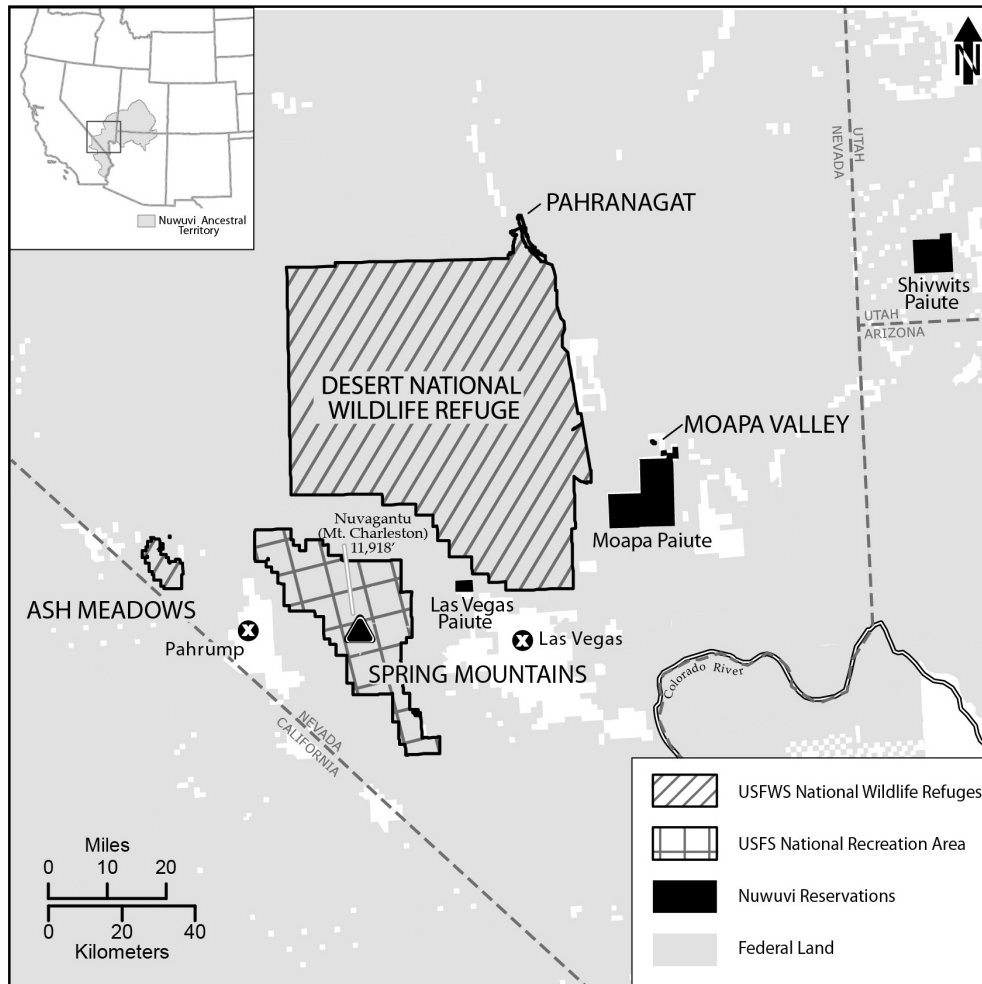
contain a high degree of protein and are used in a variety of dishes, such as a mash or porridge. Beyond physical management, offerings, prayers, special songs and the laughter and happiness among children and adults helps to feed the grove and encourages production in subsequent years. Nuwuvi also leave offerings of pine nuts to nourish the animals and feed the mountains.

The Gathering For Our Mountains event reunited Nuwuvi with their ancestral lands and created new pathways for communication between the federal agencies and the tribes. Multiple generations came together to renew familial ties and to make new connections with their friends and partners. Both Nuwuvi and federal agency volunteers exchanged common knowledge about the culture, such as basket making, knapping stone tools and throwing the atlatl. Select attendees included: the Forest Supervisor of the SMNRA, the Refuge Manager of the DNWRC, Tribal leadership from various Nuwuvi Nations and the Chairman of the State of Nevada Indian Commission.

The event is part of a larger collaboration among Nuwuvi, the Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service at the SMNRA and DNWRC. Efforts include the creation of a mutually agreed upon systematic government-to-government consultation process and collaborative research and design for four interpretive landscapes. The interpretive projects include progressive involvement in siting, architecture, panels, media and art interpreting the complex Nuwuvi relationship with their ancestral lands and the co-stewardship occurring between Nuwuvi and federal agencies. The first completed visitors center incorporating the Nuwuvi voice opened in the DNWRC in February 2014. Three other visitors centers are scheduled for completion in 2015.

For more information, contact Jeremy Spoon at [jspoon@mountain.org](mailto:jspoon@mountain.org) and visit [jeremyspoon.com](http://jeremyspoon.com).

# Nuwuvi Ancestry Territory, Current Reservations, Protected Areas and Gathering For Our Mountains Project Area



Nuwuvi tribal members singing bird songs at the Gathering For Our Mountains, 2014