

# Keep Sedona Beautiful 2024 Annual Report

Photo by George Hussey



# KSB

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ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS  
SINCE 1972  
KEEP SEDONA BEAUTIFUL



## Message to our Members and Supporters

On behalf of the Officers, Board of Trustees, and staff of Keep Sedona Beautiful (KSB), I'm honored to present our 2024 Annual Report.

As we celebrate 53 years of volunteer service to Sedona and the Verde Valley, it's evident that our work is becoming increasingly vital. KSB is dedicated to providing clear, objective information and education on critical environmental issues, including sustainable living, climate change mitigation, public land protection, the preservation of dark skies, responsible landscaping, and more.

Your support demonstrates your commitment to the value of reliable information in an era where misinformation abounds.

This Annual Report highlights how we've advocated for the issues that matter most to our community.

Thank you!



Craig Swanson  
Executive Vice-President, Keep Sedona Beautiful





## Our Mission and Vision



Keep Sedona Beautiful, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is dedicated to preserving the natural beauty of Sedona and the Verde Valley for current and future generations. Our work includes education, advocacy, protecting the environment, preserving public lands, enhancing our dark skies and litter lifting.

Since our founding in 1972, our volunteer-driven organization has partnered with city, county and state governments, as well as local civic and business leaders, to promote sustainability, balance, and open dialogue in response to the challenges of growth.

### Our Mission

*“To protect and sustain the scenic beauty and natural environment of Sedona and the Verde Valley.”*

### Our Vision

*“The Verde Valley will model how diverse communities can effectively collaborate to preserve a sustainable and beautiful environment for future generations.”*

We envision a region where:

- Local communities work together to protect natural treasures through education, advocacy and a commitment to sustainability.
- Dark, clear night skies inspire wonder and connection for residents and visitors.
- Native plants, wildlife and ecosystems thrive for generations to come.
- Scenic viewpoints and vistas remain undeveloped, preserving the unique beauty of our landscape.



## KSB Leadership



**Carla Williams**  
President



**Craig Swanson**  
Executive Vice-President



**Abbie Denton-Landers**  
Treasurer



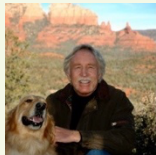
**Lynn Zonakis**  
Secretary



**Jan Wind**  
Office Manager



**Wendy Heald**  
Executive Assistant



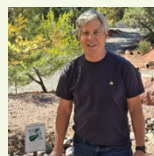
**Rob Adams**  
Trustee



**Mark Lawler**  
Trustee



**DeAnna Bindley**  
Trustee



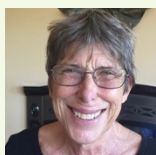
**Robert Masters**  
Trustee



**John Black**  
Trustee



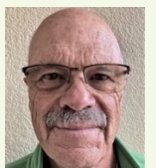
**Norris Peterson**  
Trustee



**Peggy Chaikin**  
Trustee



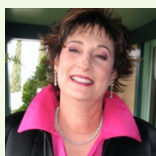
**Bob Rothrock**  
Trustee



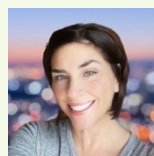
**Kevin Cook**  
Trustee



**Richard Sidy**  
Trustee



**Hollace Davids**  
Trustee



**Micheline Welch**  
Trustee



## 2024 Awards of Excellence

Each year, we recognize individuals, organizations and businesses demonstrating outstanding contributions to our community and contributing to achieving KSB's mission.



2024 Awardees

From left to right: Maia Vettorel, Ernie DiMillo, Becki Ross, DeAnna Bindley, Doug Von Gausig, Kegn Moorcroft, Craig Swanson, and Zach Schwartz Photo by Derek Von Briesen.

**Ernie DiMillo** received an award for Community Service, recognizing his volunteer work for multiple organizations.

Awards for Dark Sky Lighting went to **Ramazan Meneske** of Nick's West Side and **Dieter Lehmann** of Steakhouse 89.

**Gerardo' Mocer**i of Gerardo's Pizzeria in Sedona was honored for their strong emphasis on Sustainability.

**The City of Sedona** was recognized with an award for Sustainability for the successful Sedona Trailhead Shuttle program.

**Darin Dinsmore**, owner of TinyCamp, also received an award for Sustainability.

**Doug Von Gausig** and the Verde River Institute were recognized for Environmental Stewardship.

Awards for Environmental Stewardship went to two advocates who have worked over 4 years to galvanize attention on our OHV crisis: **DeAnna Bindley** and **Becki Ross**.



## Dark Skies

Since 1975, KSB has advocated for preservation and enhancement of our dark skies. We continue to advocate for dark skies in the Verde Valley and are working with the City of Sedona on its new land use code, effective 1/1/2028, requiring all outdoor lighting to be dark-sky compliant. [The Summer 2024 issue](#) of our quarterly magazine, Preserving the Wonder, focused attention on dark skies.

Our website has been updated to include a wealth of information and links on how to make your business or residence compliant, regardless of where you reside. [Learn more.](#)

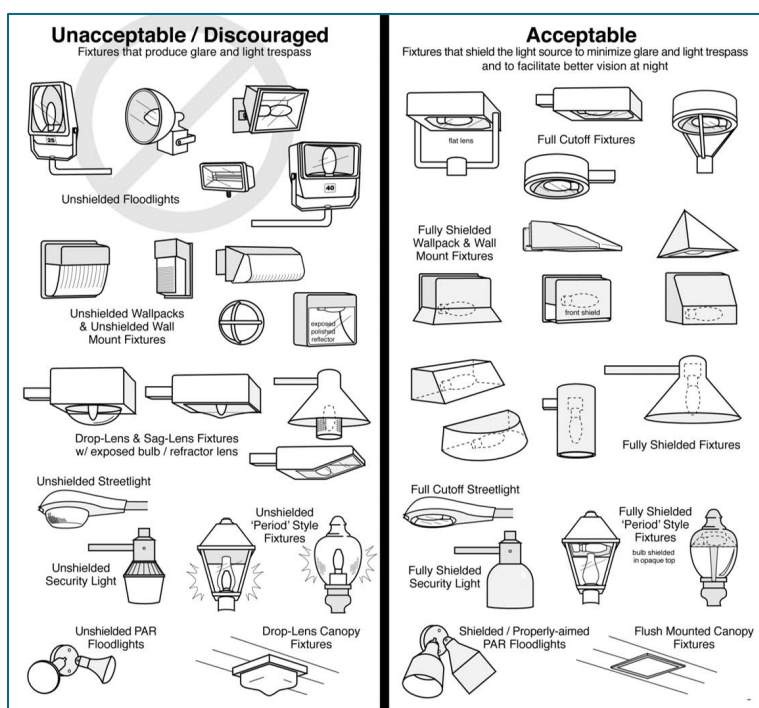




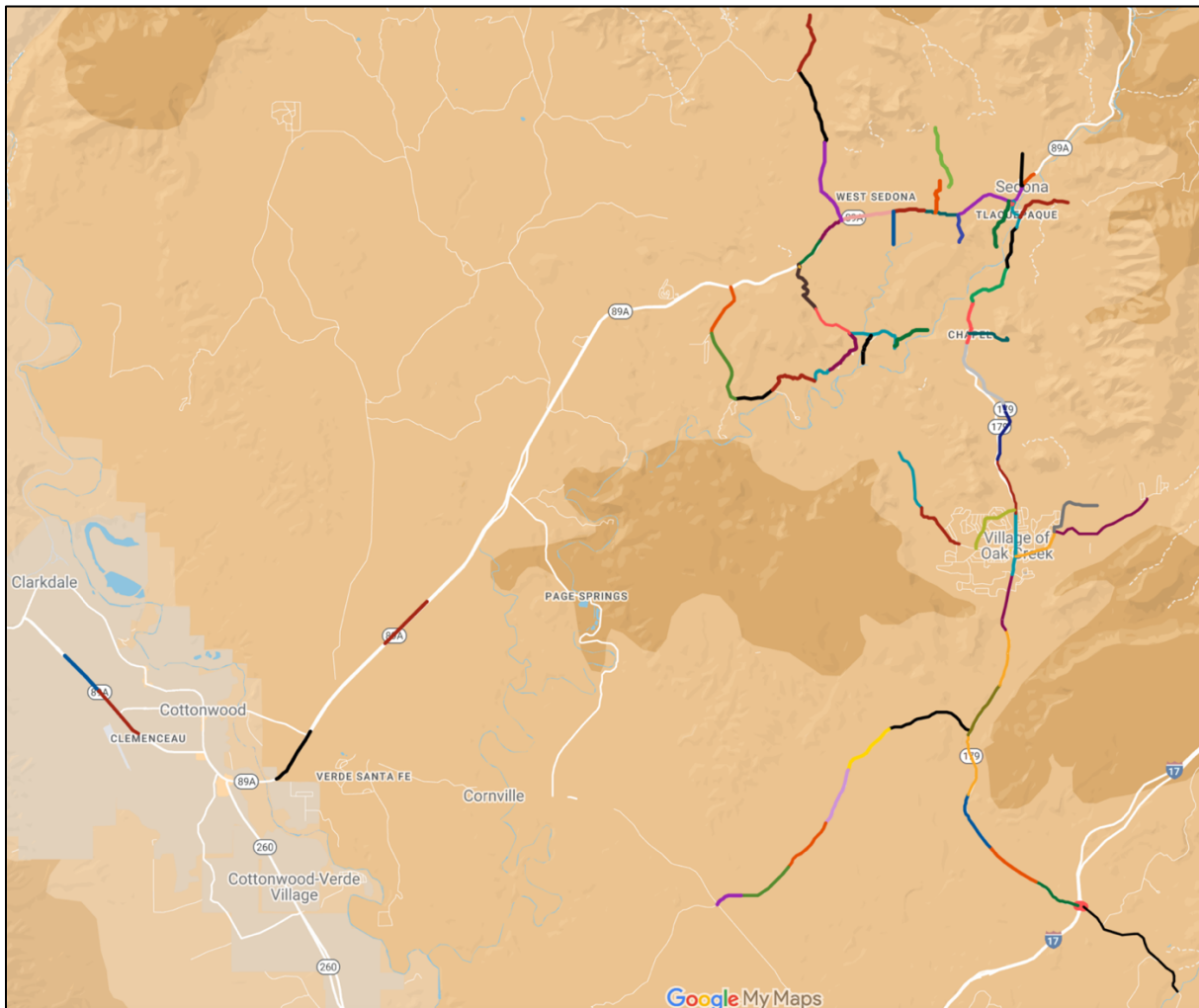
Photo by Mile Koopsen

## Litter Lifting



Litter lifting began even before incorporation in 1972, and is our most visible program. Over 70 KSB volunteers cleared litter from more than 50 miles of streets and roadways. In 2024, Yavapai County awarded us a Certificate of Appreciation, and we took on additional cleanup routes along 89A west of Sedona.

Included below is a map showing all of our routes. [Click here to see a full-scale map.](#)



## The Oak Creek Collaborative Cleanup

In November 2024, KSB actively participated in the first **Oak Creek Collaborative Cleanup** event organized by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and the Oak Creek Watershed Council. 112 volunteers collected nearly 600 pounds of trash and litter from the Oak Creek and along Highway 89A in Oak Creek Canyon. We hope this becomes an annual event.





## 2024 Speaker Series Events

The KSB Speaker Series is free and open to the public, providing the community with informational and engaging presentations on topics like water resource conservation, night sky, the OHV Crisis and flora and fauna of the Verde Valley.

January		<b>Isaac Dudley</b> discussed “Rain Harvesting for a River Friendly Home.”
February		<b>Lise Grubbs</b> topic was “Birds of the Verde Valley.”
March		<b>Roxanne Holland</b> , Director of Wastewater for the City of Sedona spoke on “City of Sedona Treated Wastewater Quality and Management.”
April		<b>OHV Panel Discussion:</b> This discussion informed the community on the work being done by the Greater Sedona Recreational Collaborative to identify recommended strategies to address the OHV crisis in Sedona.
May		<b>Denise Gibbs</b> presentation was titled “For the Love of Monarchs: Join the Push to Save a Beloved Butterfly.”
September		<b>Barry Mallis</b> discussed “Sinaguan Echoes in the Verde Valley.”
October		<b>Rita Faruki</b> spoke about “Our Animal Brothers and Sisters, Their Biology and Spiritual Significance.”
November		<b>Mike Dechter</b> discussed “Southwestern Native American Use of Fungi.”

## The KSB Eco-Hub



KSB believes sustainability and protection of the environment are prerequisites for responsible growth. We strive to continually educate the public on how they can live more sustainably and how our region can become more resilient.

Our **EcoHub** initiative is one way we practice what we preach. We began an intensive effort to thin overgrowth and become a Firewise compliant property, and rehabilitated our long-neglected native landscape garden.

With recent renovations, our building now a net producer of energy rather than a net consumer. We have eliminated use of plastics at our events and strive for all events at the EcoHub to be [Zero Waste](#).

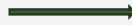




We made great strides in 2024 on our relandscaping project. With a generous grant from Friends of the Verde River, we created a series of swales to capture rainwater, keep it from running off the property and nourish our plants. The before and after images show the results.



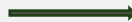
Before



After



Before



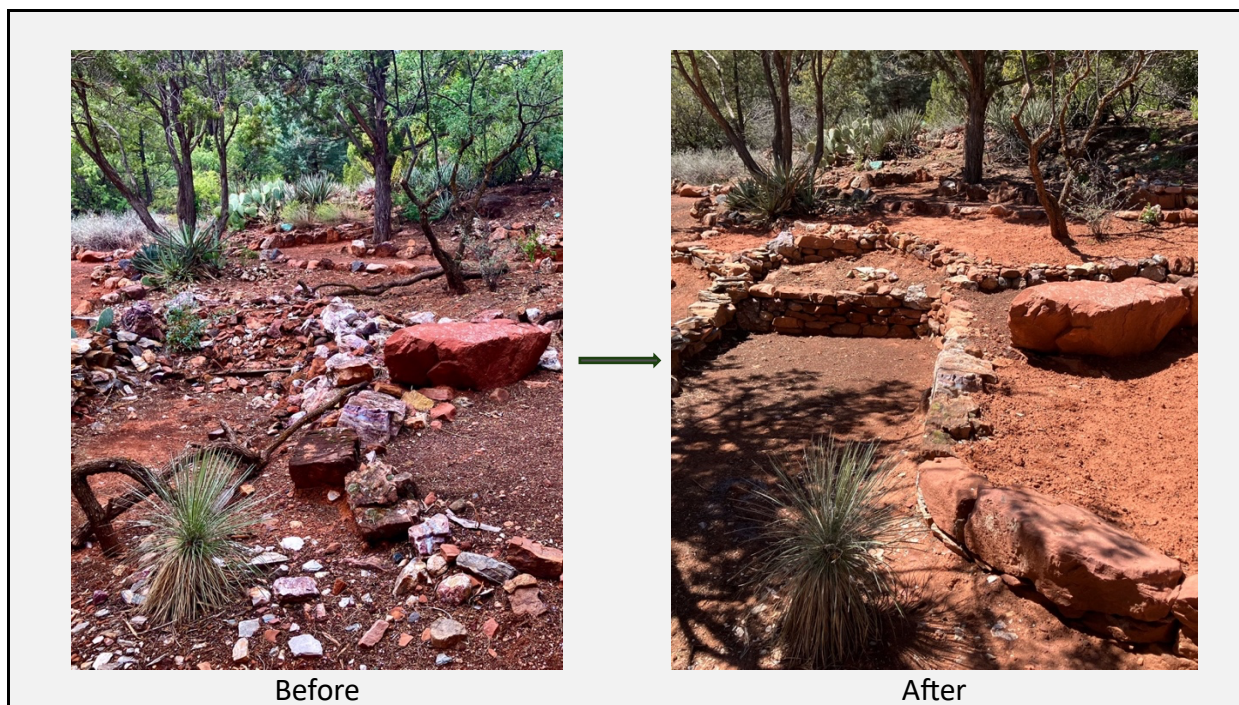
After





We've also completed extensive renovations to the garden area, well on our way to creating the **KSB Educational Garden**. This effort is supported by generous donations from Melissa Dunn and George Goley, Tom and Pat O'Halleran and Carolyn and Norris Peterson. It's also been funded by grants from the Langston Family Foundation, the City of Sedona and the Arizona Community Foundation.

The garden will function as a model for responsible landscaping, emphasizing native plants, xeriscaping and water capture.



We're also installing interpretive signs to inform visitors about the plants we've selected for the garden, and on a host of topics: Water Capture, Using Native Plants, Attracting Pollinators, Xeriscaping and Indigenous Use of Plants.



## Mariola

*Parthenium incanum*  
Aster Family



Origin: Southwestern US

A silvery-gray, drought-tolerant shrub with small yellow flowers. It is often used for erosion control and serves as a forage plant for wildlife.



Full Sun



Very Low Water



Native



Pollinator  
Friendly



Indigenous Uses



## Use Native Plants

Gardening in the Verde Valley offers unique opportunities and challenges due to its distinctive climate and ecosystem. One of the best strategies is to incorporate native plants, which are adapted to arid conditions and can thrive with minimal water.

Using native plants promotes biodiversity by providing habitats for local wildlife, including birds, pollinators and beneficial insects. This contributes to soil health and reduces the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Incorporating native flora not only benefits your garden but also supports the local ecosystem. By choosing native plants, you can cultivate vibrant, low-maintenance gardens that conserve water and promote ecological balance.



Look for this icon  
on our plant signs



Ocotillo



Learn more about our  
native plants by  
scanning this QR code



Evening Primrose



Indigo Bush



Blackfoot Daisy



Donate to KSB

Sponsored by Melissa Dunn and George Goley



# Xeriscaping

Xeriscaping is essential for gardens in the Verde Valley, where the arid climate and limited water resources require sustainable landscaping practices. This method emphasizes drought-tolerant plants, native species and efficient irrigation techniques, significantly reducing water consumption.

By incorporating xeriscaping principles, you can create a vibrant garden that thrives in harsh conditions. Additionally, these gardens require less maintenance and lower overall costs, making them a smart choice.

The aesthetic appeal of xeriscaping—featuring rocks, mulch and a variety of resilient plants—creates visually striking outdoor spaces that harmonize with the stunning red rock formations. Overall, xeriscaping is an environmentally responsible approach that promotes sustainability and preserves ecological balance.



Look for this icon on our plant signs



Staghorn Cholla



Learn more about xeriscaping by scanning this QR code



Golden Barrel Cactus



Parry's Agave



Diamond Cholla



Donate to KSB

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## Responding to the OHV Crisis

KSB believes the Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Crisis on the Red Rock District of the Coconino National Forest continues to be one of our most pressing local issues.

Residents in both the Broken Arrow neighborhood and Bear Mountain have their tranquility shattered by the relentless noise from vehicle that have no business traveling on public roads. Arizona is one of only a handful of states that allow OHVs on public roads.

We serve on the Greater Sedona Recreation Collaborative (GSRC), a stakeholder group that has identified a set of strategies to address the OHV crisis. Those recommended strategies include the following.

Challenge	Strategy
<b>Volume/Demand</b>	Speed Limits – 15 mph
	Permit System
	Continue to Coordinate Voluntary Efforts with RROCC & Others
<b>Infrastructure/Environment</b>	Conduct Short- & Long-Term Motorized System Planning
<b>User Behavior</b>	Increase the Visibility of Existing Educational Programs & Create New
	Increase Effectiveness/Consistency of Signage & Barriers
	Increase Enforcement

Voluntary efforts are continuing and educational programs are being expanded, including mandatory education for those wishing to obtain a State of Arizona OHV permit. Signage is likely to be simplified, making it more effective. Additional barriers are being constructed to protect vulnerable areas. Increasing enforcement is planned, but requires funding and prioritization. Short and long-term motorized system planning is underway with both GSRC and a Forest Service Enterprise Team focused on this aspect.

However, speed limits and a permitting system are not yet being worked on. KSB recognizes the challenges in implementing a permitting system, but we know that such a system is in place at Soldier's Pass, Fossil Creek and on the Tonto National Forest.

Neither the Forest Service nor Yavapai County have the resources to fund a study that is required in order for the Forest Service to objectively justify imposing a speed limit on Forest Service roads. For this reason, KSB is applying to be the sponsor of a grant from Arizona State Parks to fund such a study. We're hopeful that this Environmental/Speed Study can be funded and completed in 2025.

## Collaboration

Keep Sedona Beautiful is just one of many organizations in the Verde Valley dedicated to improving the environment and the lives of residents. We know that one voice can be lost among the clamor of competing interests, but that many voices can rise to be heard.

In 2024, we supported collaborative efforts by:

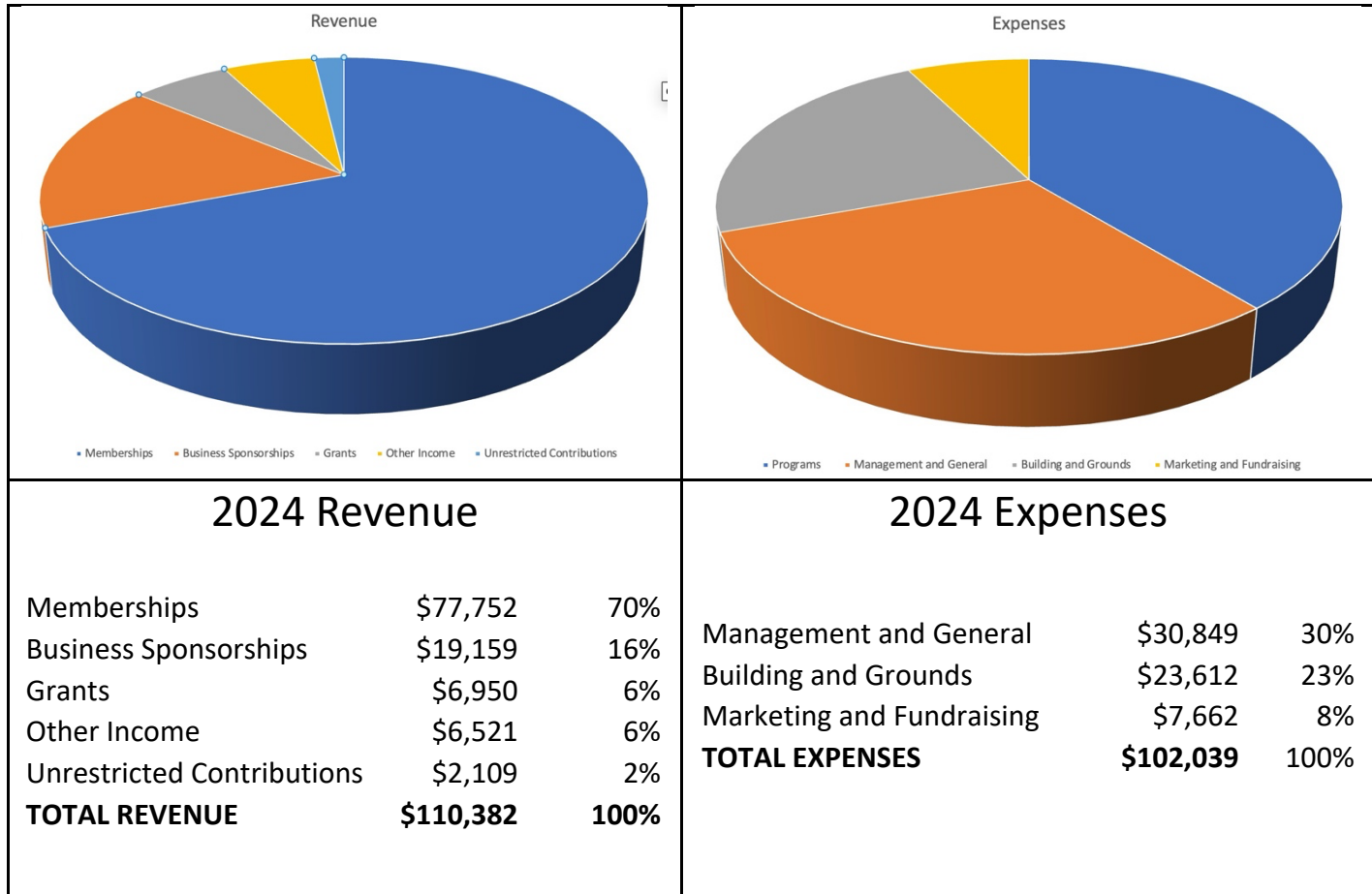
- Participating on the Greater Sedona Recreation Collaborative, working to solve the OHV crisis
- Joining the Verde Front Leadership Council
- Serving on Sedona's Tourism Advisory Board
- Partnering with over 15 organizations, including the Oak Creek Watershed Council and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, for the Oak Creek Collaborative Cleanup event.
- Providing substantial input to the Sedona Community Plan update
- Submitting recommendations to the City of Sedona to require permits for pickleball courts, advocating for minimum setbacks to reduce noise
- Working with the City of Sedona to prepare for its land use code change effective 1/1/2028 requiring all outdoor lighting to be dark sky compliant
- Requesting and receiving approval from the Arizona Department of Transportation to adopt additional miles in Highway 89A for litter lifting



## Financial Summary

Except for two part-time office staff employees, Keep Sedona Beautiful is an all-volunteer organization.

Our volunteers, including the Board of Trustees donate thousands of hours of their time each year. Nearly all of these hours directly support our programs.



## Giving to Keep Sedona Beautiful

To become a member or business sponsor of KSB or to make a donation to support our efforts, visit:  
[www.keepersdonabeautiful.org/donate-to-ksb/](http://www.keepersdonabeautiful.org/donate-to-ksb/)

### **Contact Us**

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Email: [info@keepersdonabeautiful.org](mailto:info@keepersdonabeautiful.org)

Website: [www.KeepSedonaBeautiful.org](http://www.KeepSedonaBeautiful.org)

We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. EIN: 23-7313508



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Photo by NASA



## Our Business Sponsors

<b>Bell Rock Level - \$5,000</b>		
<b>Thunder Mountain Level - \$2,500</b>		
<b>Wingfield Mesa Level - \$1,000</b>		
		
		
		
		
<b>Bear Mountain Level - \$500</b>		
	 	 
<b>Chimney Rock Level - \$250</b>	Bedrock Landscape Materials & Supplies Coffeepot Restaurant Make Sedona My Home Realty Pioneer Title Sedona Candle Magic Sedona Trolley Snap Fitness VOC Taylor Waste Verve Events & Tents	Canyon Portal El Portal Hotel Pink Jeep Tours RE/MAX Sedona Sedona Recycles Sinagua Plaza Andrew Bailor of State Farm Thunder Mountain Bikes

To become a Business Sponsor, visit: <https://www.keepsedonabeautiful.org/ksb-business-sponsorship/>