

newsletter

American Society of Landscape Architects | Nevada Chapter



ASLA
NEVADA

May 2025

**Honored with City of
Reno 2025 Historic
Preservation Award**

**Recap The Art of
Designed Spaces
Spring Exhibit**





2024 NVASLA HALS Challenge Second Place Winner
(Image Credit: Dr. Jung-Hwa Kim and Amanda Rookey)

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ASLA Testimony on the Water Resources Development Act of 2024

Sediment has been used to build marsh islands between mainland New Jersey and beach resorts, such as Mordecai Island in Barnegat Bay. Photo courtesy *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*.



NVASLA | President Message



As professionals devoted to shaping environments that reflect and sustain both human and ecological well-being, we stand at a vital intersection of ethics, creativity, and responsibility. In this moment of continued growth and transformation within our field, I want to take a moment to reflect on a cornerstone of our profession: **integrity**.

Integrity is not simply a value—it is the foundation upon which our work must rest. It is expressed in the honesty of our designs, the transparency of our processes, and the authenticity of our engagement with communities and the natural world. It is what ensures that our visions do not compromise the trust placed in us by clients, the public, or the planet.

In practice, integrity means advocating for sustainable solutions even when they are more complex. It means respecting the cultural and ecological context of the landscapes we shape. It means listening—truly listening—to diverse voices and incorporating equity into our design thinking. And it means being accountable: to our clients, to our peers, and to future generations who will inherit the landscapes we leave behind.

Our profession is one of lasting impact. Whether we are restoring a watershed, designing an urban park, or planning a resilient coastline, the decisions we make today shape the stories of tomorrow. Let those stories be ones of courage, honesty, and care.

As we look ahead, I encourage each of us to recommit to the principles that define integrity in action: ethical leadership, thoughtful stewardship, and a deep respect for the interconnectedness of people and place. These are not just ideals—they are imperatives.

Thank you for your continued dedication to advancing the practice of landscape architecture with purpose and principle. Together, let us lead by example.

Geoffrey Schafler
President

Upcoming Events

2025

August 7 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Rainbird Luncheon University of Nevada, Cooperative Extension 8050 Paradise Rd. Suite # 100-105, Las Vegas, NV 89123
September 8 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Exerplay Luncheon University of Nevada, Cooperative Extension 8050 Paradise Rd. Suite # 100-105, Las Vegas, NV 89123
September 19 Time TBA	NVASLA Golf Tournament Boulder Creek Golf Club, Boulder City Address to be announced
November 15 5:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.	Pink Flamingo The Assembly - UnCommons 6880 Helen Toland St, Las Vegas, NV 89113
	Coming Soon Nevada Sales Agency (NSA) Mixer Great Western Recreation Luncheon Movie Screening at UNLV School of Architecture Bellagio Conservatory Tour

For more info 

Honored with City of Reno 2025 Historic Preservation Award

NVASLA HALS Team 2024 recognized for outstanding research on the Cochran Ditch, preserving Reno's historic landscape legacy.



2024 NVASLA HALS Challenge Second Place Winner: Cochran Ditch. Dr. Jung-Hwa Kim (UNLV), Melinda Gustin (ASLA), Jacel Zeres Avila (UNLV), and Amanda Rookey (ASLA, PLA) received a Historic Project Award for their work researching the Cochran Ditch Flume (Image Credit: Dr. Jung-Hwa Kim and Amanda Rookey)

In May, the City of Reno and the Historic Reno Preservation Society hosted the annual Historic Preservation Awards celebration, honoring individuals, organizations, and projects that contribute to the preservation of Reno's cultural heritage. Among this year's recipients was the 2024 Nevada HALS (Historic American Landscapes Survey) Team, recognized with a Historic Project Award for their detailed documentation of the Cochran Ditch.

Composed of Jacel Zeres Avila and Dr. Jung-Hwa Kim from UNLV, along with Melinda Gustin and Amanda Rookey from ASLA, the team was celebrated for their contribution to the national 2023 HALS Challenge. Their submission focused on the Cochran Ditch, one of the earliest irrigation systems in Reno. Originally constructed in the nineteenth century, the ditch played a key role in shaping the city's agricultural development and urban growth by distributing water across what was then a rapidly evolving landscape.

Their project involved extensive historical research and field documentation, culminating in a comprehensive report that captured the cultural and infrastructural significance of the site.

A central feature of their work was the inclusion of measured drawings and interpretive analysis of the Cochran Flume, a remaining built structure along the ditch that exemplifies the ingenuity of early water management in the region. By bringing attention to this lesser-known but historically vital landscape, the HALS Team has helped ensure that Reno's legacy of water infrastructure and land development is recorded and remembered for future generations.

This year, the NVASLA HALS Team is pleased to add UNLV student, Adam King. The team will be focusing their research on the 2025 HALS Challenge theme "Landscapes of Roadside America"



2024 HALS Challenge Second Place Winner: Cochran Ditch, HALS NV-6: Cochran Flume on the Cochran Ditch, crossing over Dry Creek (Image Credit: Jacel Zeres Avila, May 4, 2024.)

Significance

The Cochran Ditch, also known as the Cochrane Ditch, is a testament to Reno's evolving urban landscape and infrastructure. As one of the first major irrigation ditches, it represents the establishment of water systems crucial for meeting the growing agricultural needs of the burgeoning city during the 1860s-70s. The ditch encompasses Virginia Lake, a man-made recreational facility exemplifying New Deal projects in Nevada during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The Cochran Flume, located at the intersection of the ditch and Dry Creek, is currently threatened by potential removal, highlighting the ongoing urbanization of southern Reno and the reduction of the use of water for agriculture in the Truckee Meadows today. Furthermore, the Cochran Ditch holds a deep connection to the social history of Reno, illustrated by the organization of the United Parent-Teachers' Association (United PTA) in 1927 and their fundraising initiatives during the 1930s-50s aimed at protecting children from drowning in the irrigation ditches.

Jury comments

"The jury praised the quality of the research and the concise description of the resource and its defining features. The survey will make a great addition to the HALS collection in the Library of Congress. Your survey will be an invaluable reference for people studying the history of the ditch system and broader development of the City of Reno."



2024 HALS Challenge Second Place Winner: Cochran Ditch, HALS NV-6 (Image Credit: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.)

For more info [→](#)



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Sierra Chapter Climate Action Symposium

At this panel, there were representatives from the California Natural Resources Agency who discussed current projects underway in the state to improve habitat and biodiversity and build resilience to wildfires.

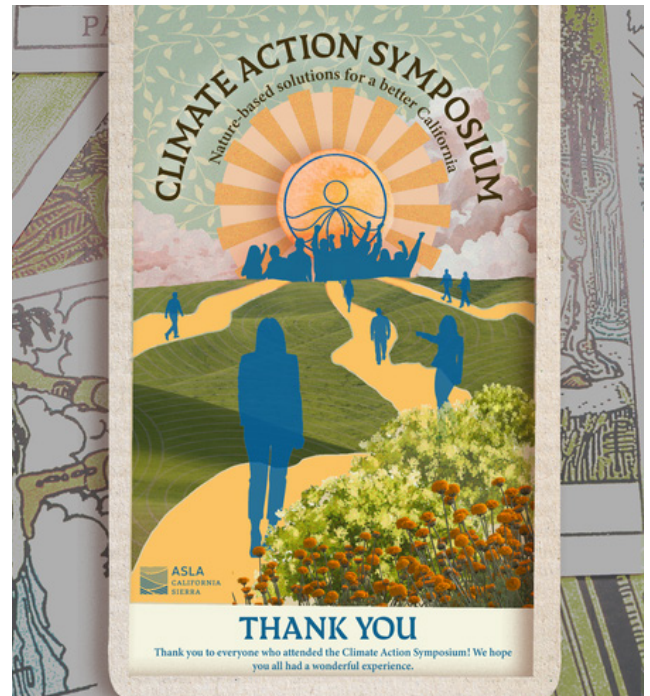
April 18, 2025

By: April Sorenson

The symposium began with an address by ASLA president, Torey Carter-Conneen. He provided an uplifting message that summarized the progress that ASLA has made as an organization towards climate change and outlined the future goals of the organization. He described examples of how ASLA members have been able to put the organization's Climate Action Plan into effect. He also provided examples of how he has collaborated with people in other disciplines such as engineers, developers and planners across the nation to improve the influence of landscape architects. He instilled the message that we as landscape architects have more influence than we realize and have a critical role in addressing climate change.

After Torey's introduction, we broke into morning group sessions. Each person could choose which session to attend. The sessions included many topics, such as biodiversity through native plants, greening Sacramento, increasing the biodiversity of solar installation projects, design strategies for fire prone communities and more.

After the morning sessions, lunch was served with a keynote panel discussion. At this panel, there were representatives from the California Natural Resources Agency who discussed current projects underway in the state to improve habitat and biodiversity and build resilience to wildfires. They spoke about the difficulty of changing policies at a state level and cutting the red tape of bureaucracy.



Sierra Chapter Climate Action Symposium, Thank you.
(Image Credit: Sierra Chapter Climate Action Symposium Website)

After lunch, we broke into afternoon sessions. The session topics included Miyawaki micro forests, carbon sequestration, decarbonizing design, climate action planning at a firm level, and a sketch crawl with Chip Sullivan.

After these sessions was the Dream Session Interactive Workshop where we broke into groups to brainstorm potential climate solutions at an individual, firm, organizational, and societal level. Each group wrote down easy, medium and hard actions we could take in the fight against climate change. Each group shared their best ideas with the whole group at the end of the session.

Finally, everyone wrote a personal climate commitment and pasted it on the wall. The symposium ended with summary remarks and time to mingle with other participants.

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NVASLA | "Movie Night: My Garden of a Thousand Bees"

The Northern Nevada Chapter of ASLA teamed up with the May Arboretum to screen the PBS documentary *My Garden of a Thousand Bees* by wildlife filmmaker Martin Dohrn on April 23, 2025.



The film focuses on Dohrn's discovery of more than 60 different species of bees in his small yard in Britain during the COVID-19 lockdown in the spring and summer of 2020. As he follows the bees, he starts to reveal the behaviors of all the different species. With captivating cinematography, the movie highlights the intricacies and ecology of the natural world, especially at the micro scale.

As part of the annual movie event, a panel of local speakers discussed the role of pollinators specifically in the Reno area. The panel, Ryan Sharrer (City of Reno horticulturist), Ray Hopper (master beekeeper, treasurer of Help Save the Bees Foundation, and Co-Founder of Biggest Little Bee City), and Joseph Schmitt (president of Help Save the Bees Foundation), led the discussion on the role that bees play locally and how home gardeners can better support bee habitat.

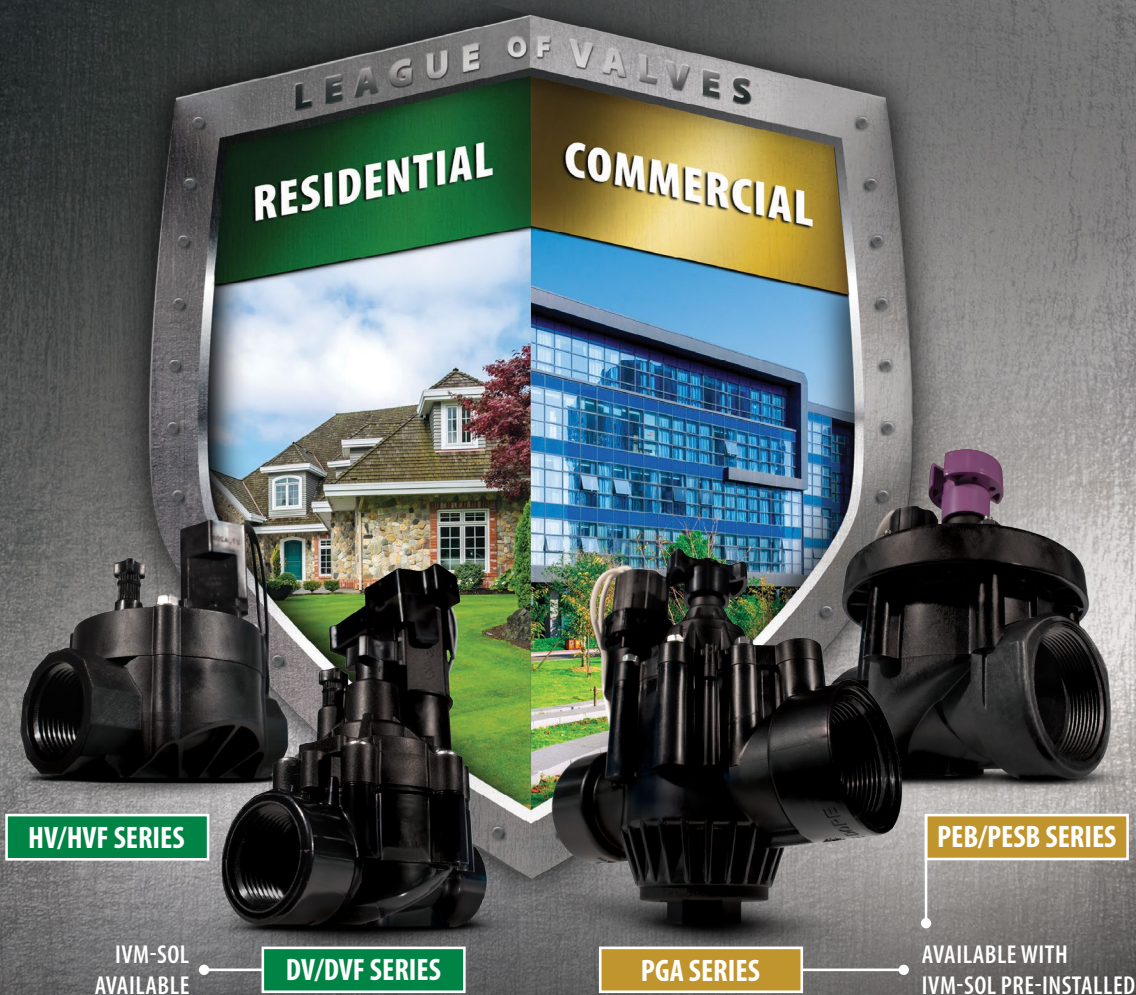
The movie and panelists were all incredibly well received, with lots of excitement and knowledge shared. Thank you to all who participated!

Next year's movie event is scheduled for April 22, 2026 (Earth Day)

All are welcome!



Movie Night, *My Garden of a Thousand Bees*. Rancho San Rafael Regional Park. Reno, NV. (Image Credit: Kacy Roeder)



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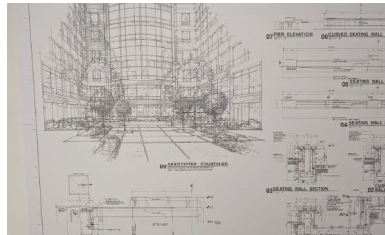
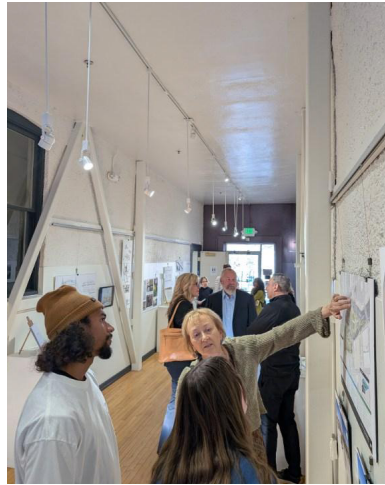
NVASLA | The Art of Designed Spaces

The North Section of the Nevada ASLA celebrated WLAM 2025 with a first of its kind event for Nevada “The Art of Designed Spaces: A Landscape Architecture Showcase,” an art exhibit of landscape architecture design work.

The goal of the exhibition was to highlight the profession for community members who may never have heard of landscape architecture. The show was from March 17 through April 25 at the City of Reno’s McKinley Arts and Culture Center. Arts and Culture staff said the exhibit generated a ton of interest and they saw people spending time in the gallery and looking closely at the work.

On exhibit were hand drawings, paintings, 3D renderings, photos, plan sets, an award-winning national research project and student work. In all, 10 firms and individuals from Northern and Southern Nevada exhibited their work. The artist reception was attended by about 30 LAs, a county commissioner, a team from a housing developer and members of the public.

It is the goal of NVASLA is to continue to hold the exhibition so keep an eye on the newsletter and the website for future opportunities to participate.



Opening Reception, March 2025. McKinley Arts & Culture Center (Image Credit: Michael Hernandez, past president)

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A vibrant graphic for the 2025 Landscape Architecture Awards. The background is a bright pink with a pattern of small white dots. Large, bold numbers '20' and '25' are stacked vertically on the left in a bright yellow-green color. To the right, the words 'Landscape Architecture Awards' are stacked vertically in a bold, pink, sans-serif font, each word on a separate line. The text is set against a background of horizontal yellow-green bars. There are also several abstract geometric shapes in yellow-green and light blue, including a large triangle at the top left, a smaller triangle in the middle, and a large curved shape at the bottom right.

2025

Landscape Architecture Awards

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the 2025 NVASLA Design Awards—an annual program that recognizes excellence in landscape design across Nevada.

This is a chance to celebrate your hard work, gain recognition, and showcase the environmental and cultural contributions of our profession. Submit your best work and help raise public awareness of the power of landscape architecture.

**Let's spotlight the
outstanding projects shaping
Nevada's landscapes!**

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**The Assembly
at UnCommons**

Saturday, November 15, 2025

5:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.



How SB78 Fails Nevada — And Why It Matters



Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing
434 followers



May 9, 2025

In Carson City, lawmakers are considering **SB78**, a sweeping proposal that would consolidate Nevada's professional licensing boards and staff under the banner of "efficiency." But make no mistake: this bill doesn't streamline government – it strips away critical protections from the public.

By collapsing boards and eliminating profession-specific leadership, **SB78 replaces expertise with bureaucracy**. For highly technical professions like engineering, architecture, landscape architecture, surveying, and public accounting, this bill slashes oversight at a time when public safety, infrastructure resilience, and financial integrity are more important than ever.

What supporters of SB78 fail to understand is the **critical distinction** between technical professions with high public impact and general occupational licensing. While there may be opportunities to responsibly streamline *some* licensing functions, applying SB78's overbroad approach to professions that directly impact public safety and financial security is dangerously misguided.

Let's break it down:

- SB78 dismantles the specialized oversight that protects public safety, replacing it with a watered-down structure that lacks the technical depth needed to effectively regulate high-risk professions.
- CPAs and other licensed professionals would lose their dedicated Executive Directors and staff, replaced by a generic pool of resources that lack the deep understanding needed to regulate complex, high-risk work.

– and placed under a centralized structure with no clear benefit to the public.

This isn't hypothetical. In Georgia, a similar consolidation effort backfired. Licenses were delayed, businesses suffered, and the state spent \$2 million to fix the damage. Nevada risks the same outcome – with even higher stakes.

And the public sees the value of professional licensing boards. [Ninety percent of voters](#) agree that professional licensing boards are essential to protecting the public. Yet SB78 would undermine their very purpose.

To truly protect Nevadans, these three non-negotiable elements must be preserved for high-impact professions:

- Boards must maintain their current composition to ensure sufficient subject matter experts
- Executive Directors and specialized staff must remain in place
- Boards must retain autonomy over budget, staffing, and operational decisions

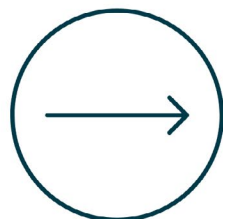
Measured against these essential standards, SB78 isn't reform. It's reckless policy disguised as cost savings – and it endangers the very safeguards that protect lives and livelihoods.

If passed, SB78 would erode public trust in professional oversight, jeopardize public safety and financial security, and create inefficiencies and delays – not alleviate them.

We urge Nevada lawmakers: **don't sacrifice public safety for political optics.**

Reject SB78 and stand up for a strong, accountable professional licensing framework that works for all Nevadans.

Read More





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Plains & Pods



Luncheon with RainBird

Take a break and join us for a Rain Bird Lunch & Learn! Enjoy lunch while gaining valuable insights into.

[subject TBA]



Thursday, August 07, 2025



11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.



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