A group of five people are on a wooden boardwalk that spans a small stream. The boardwalk is made of light-colored wood and has a dark metal railing. One person is standing on the left, another is walking towards the center, and three others are sitting on the railing. The background is a dense forest with green trees and foliage. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The overall mood is peaceful and outdoorsy.

**On a journey to build  
connections, joy and  
belonging outside.**

**rei  
cooperative  
action  
fund**

**A look back at our early years**

**JULY 1, 2021—DECEMBER 31, 2024**



# Letter from our Executive Director

We are proud to share this report, which reflects on the REI Cooperative Action Fund's (REI Fund) impact in its first three and a half years. During this time, we received **nearly 3.2 million donations and have distributed almost \$24 million in grants** to hundreds of nonprofits nationwide. These organizations, large and small, are doing the essential work of making the outdoors more accessible and inclusive for everyone. This is truly cooperative action in action!

It is also the continuation of a legacy. REI Co-op has been in business since 1938 and has a 50-year history of supporting nonprofits that steward outdoor places and connect people to time outside. REI Co-op launched the REI Cooperative Action Fund in 2021 as a 501(c)(3) public charity to deepen this commitment. The REI Fund helps ensure that **everyone can experience the health and well-being benefits of nature by bringing together the collective strength of the co-op community.**

Since then, the **size of our donor community and collective impact have grown at a pace we could not have imagined.** We are incredibly grateful for how our community of individuals, businesses, employees and foundations has come together in truly unexpected ways. In particular, REI store employees across the country have played a key role by inviting customers to give at the register, creating a groundswell of support for local and national grantees. This collective generosity allows us to bring to life our three grantmaking initiatives—connecting people outside, creating space outside and centering health outside.



We hope you'll enjoy exploring the stories and highlights in this report, which showcase the momentum of our growing donor community, our grantee network and our shared vision for a more accessible and inclusive outdoors.

This is just the beginning! We invite you to continue the journey with us as a valued supporter, amplifier and champion.

With gratitude,

**Kristen Ragain**  
Executive Director



## Our belief

We believe that time outside is fundamental to the health and well-being of all people.

## Our vision

A world where everyone can experience the health and well-being benefits of nature.

## Our mission

To support nonprofits doing the essential work in making the outdoors more accessible and inclusive for everyone.

## Cooperative grantmaking in action

Since our founding, the REI Cooperative Action Fund has worked to build mutually trusting relationships with the nonprofits we support. Through our grantmaking, we honor the expertise of our grantees and their deep knowledge of the spaces and communities they serve. This is why we offer mostly unrestricted, multiyear funding, giving grantees the flexibility to determine where grant dollars can have the greatest impact.

Our approach to grantmaking is cooperative, which includes partnering with community advisors to help select and vet some of the organizations we fund. From nonprofit leaders to world-renowned researchers, our advisors' collective wisdom enhances our ability to make impactful, mission-aligned grants.



## GRANT INITIATIVE:

# Connecting people outside

Connecting historically excluded communities to the outdoors—cultivating joy, healing, belonging, connection and well-being.

## CONNECTING PEOPLE OUTSIDE:

# Catalyst Sports

The outdoors should be a place of possibility for everyone. That's the steadfast belief at the heart of Catalyst Sports. Since their founding in 2012, they have worked to dismantle barriers that prevent individuals with physical disabilities from accessing

outdoor recreation. From hiking and biking to paddling and climbing, Catalyst Sports programs create confidence, community and transformative experiences through access to nature.

**Between 2022 and 2024, Catalyst Sports connected more than 1,900 individuals with disabilities to over 2,000 inclusive outdoor experiences across the**

**Southeastern United States.** These weren't just events—they were breakthroughs. In collaboration with Great Smoky Mountains National Park, they hosted the first ranger-led accessible hike and backcountry camping experience in park history. This model has helped shift how national parks consider accessibility and sparked momentum for broader systemic change.

The unrestricted nature of REI Cooperative Action Fund grants has allowed Catalyst to build toward these breakthroughs, to seize new outreach opportunities and to invest in their staff's capacity and expertise—so they can continue to power the behind-the-scenes work that is essential to Catalyst Sports' impact.

With continued support, Catalyst Sports will keep expanding what's possible for people with disabilities—one trail, one summit and one story at a time.





## GRANT INITIATIVE:

# Creating space outside

Ensuring people have equitable access to quality, close-to-home, culturally relevant outdoor spaces.

## CREATING SPACE OUTSIDE:

# East Coast Greenway Alliance

Change doesn't happen overnight, but with steady and committed progress transformative impacts are possible. Few projects embody this better than the East Coast Greenway Alliance.



This ambitious project began in 1991 as a 3,000-mile interconnected trail network along the East Coast. Over the years, through collaboration with local, state and federal agencies, they have raised \$2 billion and completed nearly 40% of the trail—an inspiring testament to vision, perseverance and partnership.

“I look at the East Coast Greenway as a source of hope,” says Executive Director Dennis Markatos-Soriano. “We can connect our cities and states, create a north and south connection, urban and rural connection, where people can feel common ground. We’re in a unique moment in history where we need ways to help rebuild our social fabric and tackle some of the real challenges we face, like climate and public health. East Coast Greenway is one of those ways.”

**“REI and the REI Cooperative Action Fund are among the most important partners in the East Coast Greenway’s history. We’ve been working together for over 15 years. The flexible funding, partnership with REI stores and expertise of REI leaders who serve on our board has been really crucial for us.”**

—Dennis Markatos-Soriano, Executive Director, East Coast Greenway Alliance



## GRANT INITIATIVE:

# Centering health outside

Strengthening and amplifying research that demonstrates nature is critical for individual and community health and well-being.



NATURE & HEALTH  
ALLIANCE

## CENTERING HEALTH OUTSIDE:

# Nature & Health Alliance

The Nature & Health Alliance (NHA) is a collaborative platform and national network of researchers, scientists and practitioners working together to build the scientific case for nature's role in human health.

Launched in December 2023 with support from the REI Cooperative Action Fund, the NHA collaborates with nonprofits, community groups and policymakers to ensure that these critical research findings reach those who can use them to drive change.

The findings offer hope and inspiration. As Dr. Jay Maddock, Ph.D., chair of the Nature & Health Alliance, explains, time outside is **“addressing all the major problems that are facing America today, from obesity to anxiety to depression to myopia. Nature is a part of the solution.”**

“Sharing that information with the public has an immediate and strong effect,” adds Maddock. **“People are so hungry for this information. Once people see the data, they say, ‘Wow, this is something I should be doing for my health.’”**

Of course, knowledge alone isn't enough—many people still face barriers to accessing time outdoors. The NHA is committed to identifying and addressing those challenges. Incoming chair of the NHA, Dr. Jennifer Roberts, emphasizes the importance of promoting a positive and culturally relevant connection with nature: “Even with these great scientific findings, nature also needs a PR expert! Relationships with nature have to start somewhere, and they don't come in just one form.” By advancing research and sharing inclusive, accessible narratives, the NHA is helping ensure everyone has the opportunity to experience the transformative power of time outside.



# Our grantees are making an impact

Our local, regional and national grantees are working across the country to ensure everyone can enjoy the health and well-being benefits of nature. **Explore the highlights to the right from our grantee network.**



**PADDLE 4 TOMORROW**



**TRAIL ACCESS PROJECT**



**COLLECTIVE FOR NATURE IMMERSION SCIENCE AND PRACTICE, COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

## Connecting people outside

### **Paddle 4 Tomorrow** • Atlanta, GA

Connected over 300 youth from diverse backgrounds to each other and the natural world through inclusive programs like Art in Nature, which fosters environmental awareness, creativity and community.

### **Ogden Valley Adaptive Sports** • Western U.S.

Created 890 sports and recreation opportunities that made the outdoors more accessible for people with disabilities, fostering an inclusive community for individuals with and without disabilities.

### **The Venture Out Project** • National

Volunteers and staff held 200 events, guiding 2,500 participants in outdoor experiences centered on cultivating connections with the LGBTQ+ community.

## Creating space outside

### **Pacoima Beautiful** • Los Angeles, CA

6.7 acres of land stewarded, including Green Alley, which was designed by the community. Transformed a crumbling, neglected alley into a vibrant community space for residents to congregate, walk and bike.

### **Trail Access Project** • Southwestern U.S.

With input from trail users, released a national adaptive trail map and began testing inclusive recreation equipment to make the outdoors more accessible for individuals with disabilities.

### **Rails To Trails Conservancy** • National

Added 25 miles of new, multiuse trail to the Great American Rail Trail—now more than halfway to completion—which will cross the U.S. from Washington, D.C., to Washington state.

## Centering health outside

### **Collective for Nature Immersion Science and Practice, Colorado State University** • Fort Collins, CO

Helping unite researchers and health professionals in measuring the impact of time in nature on historically excluded communities in order to strengthen the success of outdoor programs.

### **Northwest Nature and Health** • Pacific Northwest U.S.

Supported 18 new research papers on topics such as green space access and early childhood development, time in nature and emotional regulation, as well as the importance of tree cover for limiting extreme heat exposure.

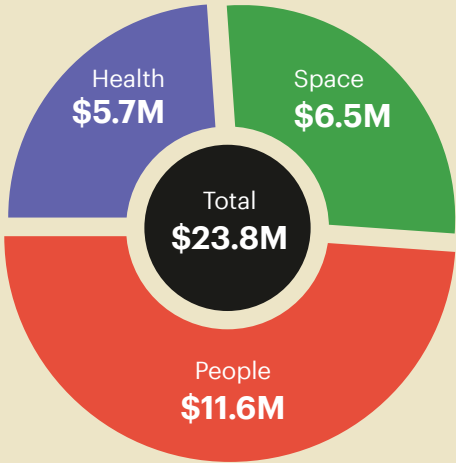
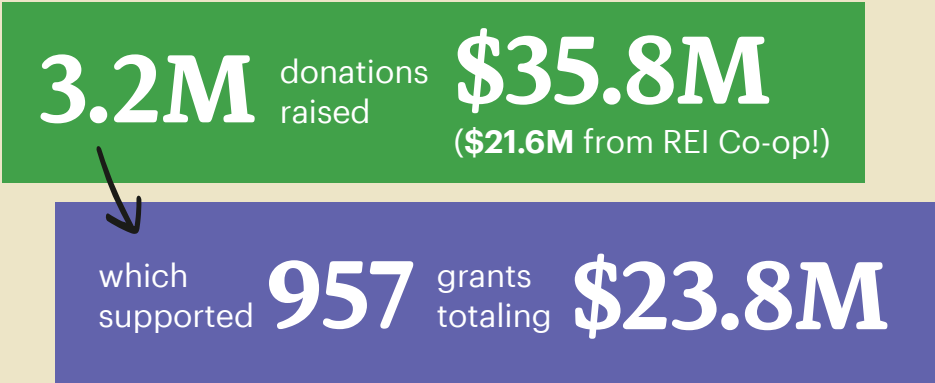
### **Campus Nature Rx** • National

Launched the Campus Nature Rx Academy, uniting 82 colleges and universities to collectively serve more than 100,000 students to improve health and well-being on campuses nationwide.



# REI Cooperative Action Fund's impact

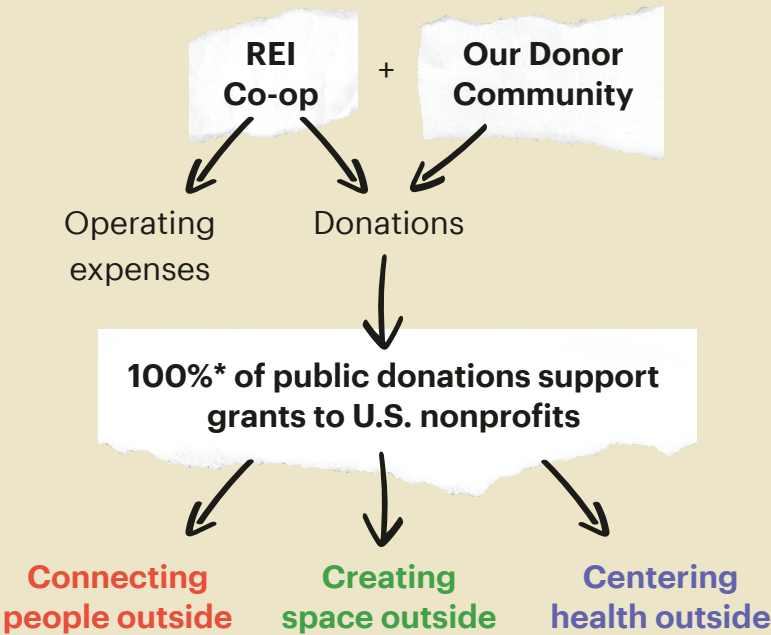
Grantmaking since inception  
Through 12/31/2024



Grantmaking YOY Through 12/31/2024	\$650K FY21, 7/1/20–6/30/21	\$2.8M FY22, 7/1/21–6/30/22	\$6.8M FY23, 7/1/22–6/30/23
	\$8.5M FY24, 7/1/23–6/30/24	\$5M Stub 24, 7/1/24–12/31/24	

## REI Cooperative Action Fund financial flow

Since our founding, REI has had unwavering commitment to our mission, donating the total cost of our operating expenses—which means that 100%\* of donations from the general public go directly to our grantee community. Additionally, thanks to REI’s support, we have over \$11M in net assets, which will be used to support the REI Fund and future grantees.



To see all Form 990s, please visit [REIfund.org/impact](https://REIfund.org/impact)

*\*minus credit card transaction fees*

## A word from our donors

We bring together REI Co-op Members, customers, employees and our generous corporate business partners who believe in our shared effort to create joyful, safe and accessible outdoor opportunities for everyone.



LATINO OUTDOORS

**“As a young girl, I participated in a program that took youth snowboarding.**

**Sitting in the quiet of the snow, with snowcapped peaks around me and crisp, fresh air in my lungs, I had never dreamed of such a beautiful, peaceful place.**

**That opportunity changed my life, and I am grateful for organizations like yours that give all communities access to opportunity.”**

**—REI Cooperative Action Fund community donor**





OUTLOUD DALLAS

## There are many ways to give, and every donation is 100% impactful.

- Mail a check to the REI Cooperative Action Fund, PO Box 511754, Los Angeles, CA 90051-1750
- Recommend a grant from your Donor Advised Fund
- Give public securities or stocks
- Make a qualified charitable distribution
- Make a gift in honor or memory of someone special in your life

## Be a part of a joyful legacy

Did you know you can allocate a part of your retirement or life insurance to the REI Cooperative Action Fund? Consider a planned gift to help share the joy and healing power of nature with everyone. **Contact [giving@reifund.org](mailto:giving@reifund.org) to learn more.**

## With gratitude to our founder



We are grateful for the meaningful support of our founder, REI Co-op. Since our founding, REI has donated the total cost of operating expenses—which means that every single dollar donated by the general public directly funds our grantee partners.\*

## Thank you to our corporate business partners

We gratefully acknowledge our corporate and business partners who support our mission to make the outdoors more accessible and inclusive for everyone.

To become a corporate partner, please contact [giving@reifund.org](mailto:giving@reifund.org)



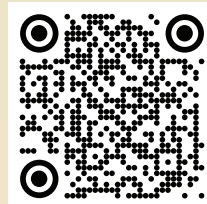
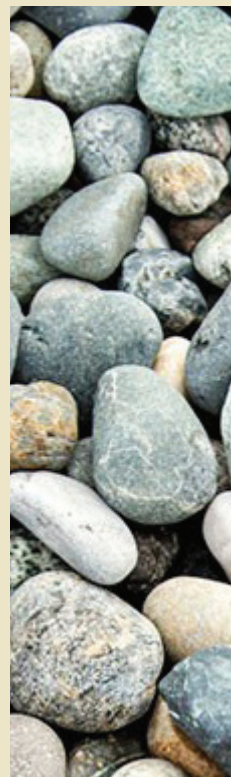
\*minus credit card transaction fees



**“Adaptive Sports Connection gave me the tools and space to move my body in ways I thought were impossible. When I first started cycling, I was only able to go 1 mile and would tire out. It would take me a whole week to recover. I am now able to ride 6 miles out and back.**

**This confidence of knowing I am able to ride has also spread to other parts of my life. I [now] have a place where I belong and have made genuine connections that allow me to be myself.”**

Adaptive Sports Connection participant



Help grow our  
impact by making  
a gift today.

**rei  
cooperative  
fund** **action**

**On a journey to build connections,  
joy and belonging outside.**