

ZION NATIONAL PARK (UT)



Sofia Nicholson spent the first eighteen years of her life in the beautiful ponderosa pine forests of Flagstaff, Arizona. For college, she moved across the country to attend Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. While completing a degree in English, she also strengthened her interest in the wilderness of her home. This led to her senior thesis project: a literary analysis called, “A Fight for Paradise: Exploring America’s Conflicted Relationship with Nature through the Glen Canyon (Dam) Controversy”. After graduating, she returned to her beloved southwest where she worked at a charter school in Flagstaff for two years. While an assistant teacher and then the 6th grade teacher, Sofia strengthened her skills in experiential and environmental teaching methods. She planned and led several multi-night field trips, including a geology-focused trip to Arches and Canyonlands National Parks as well as a riparian ecology-focused San Juan River trip. Since leaving teaching in 2016, Sofia has gone on many adventures. She spent three months volunteering on organic farms in Ireland. Then, she moved to Alaska for nine months where she worked as a science educator at Sitka Sound Science Center. Sofia’s journey continued as she took community college science classes and taught local elementary students about Northern Arizona’s ecosystems. Next, she became a canoe guide in Colorado. Before accepting the CVA, she spent twenty-two days on the Colorado River volunteering on an endangered humpback chub research trip with the USGS. Sofia has always aspired to protect wilderness and to inspire others to do the same; the CVA gives her the opportunity to work towards this goal on a bigger scale than ever before.