

March 28th - November 1st

TRAILS CHALLENGE 2026



QUALITY OF LIFE
30TH ANNIVERSARY
EDITION!

Photo Credit: Scott Robertson, Previous Trails Challenge Participant

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for signing up for the third annual Carson City Trails Challenge! Carson City is home to many beautiful Parks, Open Spaces and trails. With views of the Carson River, the surrounding mountain ranges, the vast amounts of wildlife, and more, there is so much of the great outdoors to explore right here in our own backyard. The Carson City Trails Challenge is a free program that was launched by the Carson City Parks, Recreation & Open Space Department on June 1st, 2024 in celebration of National Trails Day. The purpose of launching this program was to encourage local individuals and families, of all ages and abilities, to explore the many Open Spaces and trails here in Carson. With almost 300 participants signed up to walk, run, hike, bike, and paddle the local trails in the first year, this Department was overjoyed by the amount of enthusiasm for this new program.

This year, the 2026 Trails Challenge is themed to celebrate the 30-Year Anniversary of Carson City's Quality of Life Initiative (QOL). In 1996, the residents of Carson City voted to implement a 1/4 cent sales tax to provide dedicated funding to acquire open space land and develop and maintain new park and recreation facilities, including trails. Since the inception of the QOL, Carson City has acquired over 7,000 acres of Open Space to protect our floodplains, watershed, and wildlife habitat; preserve our amazing views; and provide abundant recreational opportunities. See the 'QOL Connection' in every trail description to learn how the Quality of Life Initiative has helped to make Carson City such a great place to live, work and play! Also, watch for QOL-related events and programs throughout the year, including a celebration at Silver Saddle Ranch in October!

In this guidebook you will find tips and tricks for hitting the trails, a carefully curated Trails List containing all trails accepted in this year's Challenge, and a Trails Log to log your mileage.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE CHALLENGE

- 1. Sign up** yourself and any other participants who will be joining you on your Challenge.
- 2. Read carefully** through the Trails Challenge Guidebook.
- 3. Hit the trails!** Pick trails from the carefully curated Trails List to complete at your leisure over the next few months. We recommend trying something new!
- 4. Get extra raffle tickets!** See "Win Prizes" section below for more information on how to get extra raffle tickets throughout your Challenge,
- 5. Log your miles!** Be sure to fill out your Trails Log as you complete your trails.
- 6. Turn in your log!** Once you have completed a minimum of 5 trails from the Trails List, submit your Trails Log before November 1st to be entered into the prize raffle.

PARTICIPATION

To ensure a fun and safe Trails Challenge, please review the following information and contact us with any questions/concerns you may have!

DETERMINE YOUR LEVEL OF TRAIL COMFORT

Before hitting the trails be sure to read thoroughly about the length, difficulty and suggested level of experience. For this guidebook, we have labeled each trail on the Trails List with a level of difficulty: easiest, easy, more difficult, and long distance challenge. Need further recommendations? Contact our main office at (775) 887-2262!

EASIEST - May be enjoyed by users of all ages and abilities, including adaptive hikers/riders.

EASY - May be enjoyed by most people, and may be an option for an adaptive user with a support hiker/rider.

MORE DIFFICULT - Users must be comfortable in mountainous terrain.

LONG DISTANCE CHALLENGE - An option for experienced hikers/riders seeking a longer and more remote experience.

PLAN YOUR OUTING

1. Choose a trail according to our Trails List that fits your level of comfort based on accessibility, mileage and difficulty.
2. Check weather ahead of time. Be cautious of snow, ice, heat and wind warnings.
3. Pack accordingly:
 - a. Bring plenty of water for all participants (including the dogs!).
 - b. Wear sturdy shoes and appropriate clothing for the weather and surroundings.
 - c. Bring sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat.
 - d. Bring a trail map or trail app with a map and description of the trail.

EXPLORING THE TRAIL

Be sure to stay on designated trails and share the trail with other users. In other words, Go Slow and Say Hello! To see the best way to share the trail with other users, click the link below to watch a fun video:

GO SLOW AND SAY HELLO!

OTHER THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Pack It In, Pack It Out! This includes picking up your dogs waste.
- Dogs, under the control of the owner, are welcome on most trails on the Trails List. **Watch for exceptions in the trail descriptions.**
- Read about the trails ahead of time to obtain important information on hours, amenities, rules, etc.

LOG YOUR OUTINGS

After each outing, be sure to fill out your Trails Log located at the end of this guide. In your Trails Log you will fill out what trail you completed, the date, the mileage, and any other thoughts or sights you encountered while out on the trail!

Once you have completed a **minimum of 5 trails** on the Trails List and your Trails Log is completed, submit it by emailing it elarsen@carsoncity.gov OR by dropping it off at the address below:

**Carson City Multi-purpose Athletic Center
1860 Russel Way
Carson City, NV 89701**

GUIDED WALKS

Keep an eye out for monthly local guided hike and walk opportunities offered through the Carson City Park Rangers, as well as community hikes and rides offered through Muscle Powered! We will be promoting the guided opportunities that line up with the Trails Challenge on our social media and through our monthly newsletter.

WIN PRIZES!

For an extra chance to win a prize in the Trails Challenge, there are a couple of different ways to earn extra tickets for the end of Challenge Prize Raffle!

- **Show off your Challenge!** Post a picture that you took while out on your Challenge, tag us and use the hashtag #CCTrailsChallenge. When you complete your Challenge, tell us you shared a post and participants will be awarded **one*** extra raffle ticket. Participants must also complete the Trails Challenge in order to receive their extra raffle ticket.
- **Show off your photography skills!** Take pictures while out on the trails and submit them via email to elarsen@carsoncity.gov to be entered into a quarterly photo contest. Winners will be selected by a team of CCPROS staff, and will get **one** extra raffle ticket. There will be one winner per quarter (spring, summer and fall). Participants must also complete the Trails Challenge in order to receive their extra raffle ticket. Photos **MUST** have been taken during that quarter.

[Photo Submission Dates: Friday May 8th, July 17th, and October 9th]

- **NEW - Hike with the Park Rangers!** The Carson City Park Rangers host 1-2 interpretive programs per month. Trails Challenge participants who join the Park Rangers for one of their programs and send picture proof to elarsen@carsoncity.gov will receive **one** extra raffle ticket. Participants must also complete the Trails Challenge in order to receive their extra raffle ticket.
- **NEW - Learn while you hike!** Carson City trails have a lot of great interpretive signage about local history, geology, flora and fauna, and more! Our Trails List this year highlights where some of these signs are currently located. See "**BONUS**" in some of the Trail Descriptions. Take a picture of you or with your hiking group next to one of these indicated signs to receive **one** extra raffle ticket. Participants must also complete the Trails Challenge in order to receive their extra raffle ticket.

****One** extra raffle ticket will be added for each participant who shares their Challenge on social media - not one per post.*

*Participants in the Trails Challenge whose names are pulled during the Prize Raffle will be allowed only **one** prize.*

Trail Name	Difficulty	Access	Description
<p>Waterfall Trail</p>	<p>More Difficult</p>	<p>Park at the Kings Canyon Trailhead, 4450 Kings Canyon Road (top of the paved portion of Kings Canyon Road).</p>	<p>This short 1/3 mile trail begins right by the restroom and takes you to the beautiful Kings Canyon Waterfall. Hikers only - no bikes and no horses! Dogs are prohibited as this is a source of Carson City's drinking water.</p> <p>★ QOL Connection: This trail travels through the North Kings Canyon Open Space, acquired in 2006.</p>
<p>Bob's - Vice Rim - Seven Steps Loop</p>	<p>More Difficult</p>	<p>Park at the Foothill Drive TH, 2190 Foothill Drive, just off of W. Winnie Lane.</p>	<p>These three singletrack trails make a nice, and relatively easy, 2.4 mile loop on the west side of town above Western Nevada College. Built and maintained by Muscle Powered volunteers. Visit musclepowered.org if you want to help!</p> <p>★ QOL Connection: The western portion of these trails pass through the Eagle View Open Space, acquired in 2018 through a last-minute deal that saved it from private development.</p>
<p>Long Ranch Park Trails</p>	<p>Easiest</p>	<p>Park at Long Ranch Park, 435 Longview Way.</p>	<p>Approximately 4-miles of paved pathways winding through the Long Ranch residential area.</p> <p>★ QOL Connection: Park and trail maintenance is partially funded by the Quality of Life Initiative.</p>
<p>C-Hill FEMA Trail</p>	<p>Easy</p>	<p>Park at the McKay Drive Trailhead, 1499 McKay Drive, at the west end of McKay Drive.</p>	<p>Built as a fire break, this is a popular 0.4 mile trail. It provides access to view the annual sheep grazing fuels reduction project in the spring. Great views of Carson City and the Capital Dome in the fall. You can also view the progress on the new C-Hill trail, currently under construction by Muscle Powered volunteers.</p> <p>★ QOL Connection: This trail travels through the C-Hill Open Space, acquired to help protect this Carson City landmark.</p>
<p>Lincoln Bypass</p>	<p>Long Distance Challenge</p>	<p>Park at the Kingsview Trailhead, (intersection of Kingsview Way and Kings Canyon Road). You can also park a block away at Long Ranch Park, 435 Longview Way.</p>	<p>So named because it "bypasses" Kings Canyon Road which is part of the historic Lincoln Highway. The trail is 4.2 miles long, but from here you could begin a singletrack journey of over a thousand miles to Canada or Mexico! Beautiful views of Borda Meadow. Connects with the Ash-to-Kings Trail at the upper terminus. The tread surface is soil and rock, average grade is 7% with grades up to 21%, and the width is 18".</p> <p>★ QOL Connection: This trail was built in part by Muscle Powered volunteers and in part by funding from the Recreational Trails Program and the Quality of Life Initiative.</p>
<p>Capital-to-Tahoe Trail</p>	<p>Long Distance Challenge</p>	<p>Access is from Ash-to-Kings Trail on the east end or Tahoe Rim Trail on the west end. There is no motor vehicle access to the trail at either end.</p>	<p>This 9.8 mile long premier regional trail was just completed in 2023. It is accessed from the Ash-to-Kings Trail or Tahoe Rim Trail and is VERY REMOTE so it requires a very lengthy commitment by riders or hikers with significant backcountry experience. Average grade is 6% with grades up to 19%. The tread surface is soil and rock and the width is 18". Highest elevation is almost 8,400'. Bring plenty of water and snacks and be prepared for changes in weather.</p> <p>★ QOL Connection: This trail was build in part by Muscle Powered volunteers, and in part by funding from the Recreational Trails Program and Quality of Life Initiative.</p>

Trail Name	Difficulty	Access	Description
Wildhorse - Pale Rider Loop	More Difficult	Park at the north end of Centennial Park, 3666 Centennial Park Drive.	With a southern exposure, this 2.2 mile loop is typically accessible year-round. The volcanic terrain is very rocky, so be cautious, especially when riding a mountain bike. Average grade is 6%, but grades reach as high as 20%, and the width is 18". Wild horses are almost always present; do not approach them. ★ <i>QOL Connection: This trail was built by Muscle Powered volunteers with support from Carson City's trails program and the Quality of Life Initiative.</i>
V&T Trail	Easiest	Park at the Murphy Drive Trailhead, 2999 Murphy Drive, just west of Western Nevada College.	This wide, flat, paved trail follows a one-mile segment of the historic Virginia and Truckee Railroad alignment. ★ <i>QOL Connection: Maintenance of this trail is funded in part by the Quality of Life Initiative.</i>
V&T Trail - South Lakeview Grade Segment	Easy	Park at the V&T Trailhead, 3350 Murphy Drive, north end of Murphy Drive off of Coombs Canyon Road.	This short 0.4 mile hike on the historic Lakeview RR Grade takes you to an overlook with a historical sign called "Moving Through Time". Note- the RR grade continues north to Hobard Road, but passes through private property. The City does not have a public easement for this segment of trail so travel beyond the historic sign, though popular, is not authorized. BONUS: Send us a photo of you or your family or group next to the Moving Through Time panel to receive an extra raffle ticket! ★ <i>QOL Connection: The Quality of Life Initiative pays the annual license fee for this trail which is not on City lands.</i>
Foothill Trail and V&T Trail Extension	More Difficult	Park at the Foothill Trailhead, 1539 Medical Parkway (behind the Cancer Center) or the Hobart Road Trailhead, 3601 Lakeview Road (at the entrance to Lakeview Estates).	Beginning at the Foothill Trailhead, this 1.1 mile trail takes you past the "Bee Hotel", through Rose Canyon, and along part of the historical V&T RR Grade. Enjoy historic interpretive signs along the way. Average grade is 7%, with grades up to 15%. The tread surface is soil and rock, and the width is 18". This trail is made possible through partnerships with Carson Tahoe Health and the Eagle Valley Children's Home. Please respect private property by remaining on the trail. No horses! ★ <i>QOL Connection: These trails were built using Quality of Life funds.</i>

Trail Name	Difficulty	Access	Description
<p>Prison Hill Trail West</p>	<p>Easiest</p>	<p>Park at the renovated Koontz Lane Trailhead, 2690 Koontz Lane. This Trailhead now has a vault toilet and shaded picnic table.</p>	<p>This 2.5 mile trail along the west side of Prison Hill is one of Carson City's newest trails. With a firm compacted surface and 10' width, it is accessible to everyone. It's perfect for parents with strollers and for those with three-wheeled adaptive mountain bikes. Look for four interpretive panels along the way to learn about Prison Hill geology and wildflowers, and the history of the landmark letter 'S' and Stewart Indian School.</p> <p>BONUS: Send us a photo of you or your family or group next to one of the interpretive panels to receive an extra raffle ticket!</p> <p>★ <i>QOL Connection: Built with funding from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act, this trail lies within the Prison Hill Recreation Area, Carson City's largest Open Space property with over 2,500 acres!</i></p>
<p>Odyssey Trail</p>	<p>More Difficult</p>	<p>Park at the renovated Koontz Lane Trailhead, 2690 Koontz Lane. This Trailhead now has a vault toilet and shaded picnic table.</p>	<p>Odyssey: (noun), 'a long and adventurous journey'. This trail was built by Muscle Powered volunteers and begins at the Koontz Lane Trailhead. First thing, before you begin your hike or ride, read the "Geology of Prison Hill" panel. Then follow the signs as you head up the hill to the Prison Hill Saddle. Look for the Prison Hill "Monolith" as you continue east from the Saddle. From the Monolith, the trail continues it's ascent to the crest of Stegosaurus Ridge where it currently ends at an overlook of the upper end of Dead Truck Canyon. Note: A yet unfinished extension will eventually take the trail into the canyon, then up to the Prison Hill Summit, and back around to the Trailhead.</p> <p>★ <i>QOL Connection: Built by Muscle Powered volunteers, this trail lies within the Prison Hill Recreation Area, Carson City's largest Open Space property with over 2,500 acres!</i></p>
<p>Carson River Trail</p>	<p>Easy</p>	<p>Park at the Morgan Mill Preserve Open Space (5597 Morgan Mill Road) and head south along the trail, or park at Carson River Park (2013 Carson River Road) and head either north or south. You may also access this trail from Riverview Park (603 Marsh Road at the east end of 5th Street).</p>	<p>This is a beautiful 5 mile (10 mile R/T) hike, bike ride or horse ride along the Carson River, from the Morgan Mill Preserve Open Space to the Mexican Dam. Along the way you can learn about floods, floodplains, and the cultural and natural history of the Carson River corridor through a series of interpretive panels and high-water markers. Great for fall colors! Dogs must be on a leash for the Buzzy's Ranch segment!</p> <p>BONUS: Send us a photo of you or your family or group next to one of the interpretive panels or high-water markers to receive an extra raffle ticket!</p> <p>★ <i>QOL Connection: This trail passes through six Open Space properties, all acquired by Carson City to protect the Carson River floodplain, preserve wildlife habitat, scenic landscapes, and provide recreational opportunities.</i></p>
<p>East Silver Saddle Ranch</p>	<p>Easy</p>	<p>Park at the East Silver Saddle Ranch Trailhead (4600 Sierra Vista Lane) and hike north. Alternatively, you can park at the North Trailhead (3360 Sierra Vista Lane) and hike south.</p>	<p>This trailhead provides easy access to the river and there is an unmarked trail that begins at the north end of the parking area and extends for about 1/2 mile to a second small trailhead and river access point.</p> <p>★ <i>QOL Connection: This is one of Carson City's lesser-known Open Space properties!</i></p>

East Side Trails (Continued)

Trail Name	Difficulty	Access	Description
Moffat Open Space	Easy	Park at the Moffat Open Space, 4021 Lepire Drive.	First, check out the artistic Sun Dial, then take the very short dirt trail to the top of the hill for a scenic view, and then return to take the paved trail (just to the east) for a pleasant walk through some interesting volcanic rocks which geologists call " <i>metamorphosed andesite volcanic breccia</i> ". You will also walk past a historic flume that carries Mexican Ditch water across Eagle Valley Creek. Lastly, imagine thousands of emigrants passing through this very spot on their way to California during the 1849 Gold Rush! ★ QOL Connection: This is Carson City's very first Open Space property, acquired in 2000!

South Side Trails

Freeway Multi-Use Path	Easiest	Park at Pete Livermore Sports Complex, (1555 Livermore Lane). Parking is on the right as you enter the complex.	This paved path travels north for 4.3 miles, all the way to Silver Oak Drive in North Carson City, with some surface street connections in the E. William St/U.S. 50 East area. Just go as far as you want to go! ★ QOL Connection: This path winds through four of Carson City's Parks and Open Space properties!
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Water Trail

Carson River Aquatic Trail		Park at either of the East Silver Saddle Ranch Trailheads, 3360 Sierra Vista Lane or 4600 Sierra Vista Lane, or the Carson River Park Trailhead, 5013 Carson River Road. Take out at Morgan Mill River Access, 5567 Morgan Mill Road.	This lovely flatwater float to Morgan Mill can be up to 4.4 miles long, depending on where you put-in. It is appropriate for canoes, kayaks, and small rafts when the river is flowing at a minimum of 400 cfs. Always paddle in a group and always wear a lifevest. Wear appropriate clothing and be prepared to get wet. Use a dry bag for your gear. Do not float the river when it is running high and fast. Danger- Do not go beyond Morgan Mill. Class II and III rapids downriver. That segment is only for experienced boaters in appropriate watercraft. All users should download the Aquatic Trail Map from carsoncity.gov/trails (navigate to Carson River Area and then to Carson River Aquatic Trail where you can click on a link). ★ QOL Connection: This water trail flows through nine of Carson City's Open Space properties!
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New this year - Lake Tahoe Area!

Tahoe Rim Trail to Snow Valley Peak	Long Distance Challenge	Park at the Spooner Summit Trailhead (north side) and head north on the Tahoe Rim Trail.	While this trail does not begin in Carson City, it does take you to Carson City's high point, Snow Valley Peak, where you will be rewarded with amazing views of Carson City and Lake Tahoe! This hike is 12 miles round-trip. Bring plenty of water and snacks and be prepared for changes in the weather. Bicycles are prohibited on this section of the Tahoe Rim Trail. ★ QOL Connection: From the summit of Snow Valley Peak you will experience an amazing view of Carson City and you can reflect on why Carson City is such a great place to live, work, and play!
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New this year - Indoor Track!

Multi-purpose Athletic Center (MAC) Walking Track	Easiest	Park at the Robert "Bob" Crowell Multi-Purpose Athletic Center (MAC), 1860 Russell Way. Hours Mon-Fri, 6:30am-8:00pm; Sat-Sun, 9:00am-5:00pm.	Bad weather outside? No worries, you can walk indoors on the second-floor track at the MAC for free! BONUS: Send us a selfie of you on the MAC track to receive an extra raffle ticket! ★ QOL Connection: Funding for construction of the MAC was supported in part by the Quality of Life Initiative!
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TRAILS LOG

*Please fill out a minimum 5 trails you completed off of our Trails List
in order to complete the Challenge!*

Name of Trail: _____ **Date(s) Completed:** _____

Other Thoughts (sights seen, thoughts while out on the trail, etc.) :

_____ **Miles Completed:** _____

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