

# Carson Valley Trails Association

## 2023 Trail Operations Overview and 2024 Trail Work Plan

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# Carson Valley Trails Overview-2023



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## **2023 Bently Heritage Trail System Overview**

1) Thousands of snapped willows across the trail were cut and removed.



***Before***



***After***

2) Encroaching growth of willows, roses, sagebrush and rabbitbrush was brushed out.



***Brushing***



3) Boardwalk damages from several flood events were repaired.



***Boardwalk damage***



***Repair work***



***Boardwalk damage***



***Repair work***



4) Flooding events have permanently washed away several trail sections.



*Trail section gone*



*Trail sections gone*



5) An enormous amount of annual maintenance is necessary to keep the trail clear of brush, and to keep boardwalks functioning through floods and freeze/thaw cycling. For these reasons, and extremely low use, the trail length was reduced:

- a) Continuous vegetative growth from early spring into fall quickly covers many sections of trail. Although biannual removal of willow, rose, sagebrush and rabbitbrush occurs, the clearing is short term, and regrowth in the floodplain is rapid. Many labor-intensive trail work hours and work days are required each year to keep the trail relatively clear of vegetation.
- b) Movement of the Carson River has eliminated seven trail sections in past years. Realignment has occurred but sometimes with the same result or needing moved into denser vegetation areas that get overgrown quickly.
- c) Damage to boardwalks occur from routine flooding and regular freeze/thaw soil movement. These boardwalks allow people to walk across sections of trail that take longer to dry out after storms and floods. The repair and replacement of this infrastructure is sometimes frequent and time-consuming.
- d) Past cattle grazing, particularly during mid-late fall, has caused extensive post-holing of the trail, making it difficult and treacherous to walk on. These holes are often several inches deep in cement-like clay soil, and can sometimes take days to repair across long trail sections.
- e) Being in a floodplain, this trail floods on occasion, preventing access in many areas.
- f) Trail use is very minimal even with additional boardwalks across wet areas, wayfinding maps and directional signs. Adding more trail has only increased maintenance load without any increase in use. Trail use is only around 1% of other CVTA trail systems, and often receives no daily use. There are several causes for the low use. The trail is on a conservation easement on private property that only allows foot traffic, no bikes, equestrians or dogs. The tread turns to slippery mud with the slightest bit of moisture, which often prohibits trail use for days or weeks at a time. The poor soils can make the trail unusable during long stretches in winter. Flooding is sometimes an annual event and prevents any trail access. During the warmer season, the heat, mosquitos, ticks and lack of shade can prevent enjoyable use of the trail. With limited use, invasive hoary cress and other forbs blanket trail sections, which make it hard to follow and difficult to walk through.

Following are examples of the ongoing maintenance necessary to keep the trail open for a very limited amount of use.



***Boardwalk damage/maintenance***





***Boardwalk damage/maintenance***



***Boardwalk damage/maintenance***



***Cattle postholes***





*Trail overgrown-lack of use and rapid growth*



*Trail overgrown-lack of use and rapid growth*





*Trail overgrown-lack of use and rapid growth*

### **2024 Bently Heritage Trail System Work Plan**

- ✓ Routine brushing and boardwalk maintenance.
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## 2023 Clear Creek Trail System Overview

1) Pre-flood preparations were done on waterbars and ephemeral creek crossings prior to a couple flood events.



*Drainage maintenance*

2) Two damaged trail sections from flood events were repaired and drainage improved on the lower Clear Creek Trail.



*Before*



*After*





*Before*



*After*

3) The 4.1-mile James Lee Loops was constructed and open.



*James Lee Loops Construction*





*James Lee Loops Construction*



*James Lee Loops Construction*



4) Trail junction signs were installed on the James Lee Loops.



*Junction signs installed*

5) New kiosks were installed at the Jacks Valley School Trailhead, south side of the Jacks Valley Road Trailhead and at the Spooner Summit Trailhead.



*Jacks Valley School Trailhead kiosk*





*Jacks Valley Road Trailhead kiosk*



*Spooner Summit Trailhead kiosk*

6) The entire 30-mile Clear Creek Trail System had routine maintenance completed twice including drains, brushing, and clearing of rocks and debris.





*Trail maintenance*



*Trail maintenance*



7) Eleven fallen trees were removed from the trail.



*Before*



*After*



*Trees removed*





*Trees removed*



*Trees removed*





*Tree removed*

8) Brush mastication work damaged a couple sections of the James Lee Loops. These areas were repaired.



*Before*



*After*



9) Trail maps and signage were updated, printed and installed on all trailhead kiosks.

10) A 30-foot realignment was completed on the upper Clear Creek Trail to relocate the trail off a series of embedded boulders, reduce grade and move the trail further away from a seasonal snow drift.



*Realignment*

11) A 70-foot section of the James Lee Loops was armored with rocks to maintain the critical edge and trail width.



*Tread armoring*



12) A 20-foot section of the James Lee Loops was armored with rocks to maintain the critical edge and trail width.



*Tread armoring*

13) A 70-foot section of the Clear Creek Trail between Cliff Rock and Finger Gap Rock was realigned to avoid a blind turn and remove the trail off slickrock. This improves sightline and safety for all trail users.



*Realignment*



## 2024 Clear Creek Trail System Work Plan

- ✓ Routine brushing, benching and tread work.
  - ✓ A short drainage crossing improvement may occur on the Clear Creek Trail where a normally dry crossing has become more permanent due to increased water use, water diversions and upslope development.
  - ✓ A realignment may occur on the Clear Creek Connector. Upslope retention basin installations now prevent extreme water flows from continuously eroding a drainage crossing which will allow the trail to realign at a more direct route and less elevation change.
  - ✓ Continue efforts to provide adequate and safe parking at the Clear Creek Connector Trailhead.
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## **2023 Fay-Luther/Jobs Peak Ranch Trail System Overview**

- 1) Routine storm damages were repaired on the old road segments of the trail system.



***Trail damage repaired on road segments***



***Trail damage repaired on road segments***





*Trail damage repaired on road segments*

- 2) Two fallen trees were removed from the Interpretive Loop.
- 3) All 225 waterbars were cleaned out several times and brushing completed throughout the trail system.
- 4) Cobble, sharp and exposed rocks/boulders were removed on various trails.



*Rocks removed*





***Rocks removed***

5) A half dozen large boulders were removed from the FLJPR Trail south of the Valley View Loop junction to provide safer footing, maneuvering and passage for equestrians.

6) The 1.1-mile Appaloosa Trail was completed, connecting the mid-point of the Jeffrey Pine Trail to the north end of the Lonesome Trail. This trail provides an additional stacked loop option and further disperses trail users.



***Appaloosa Trail construction***





***Appaloosa Trail construction***



***Appaloosa Trail construction***

7) Tread widening and removal of roots, rock and slickrock was completed on the Grand View Loop to provide safer equestrian passage. Waterbars were also replaced with grade reversals on many areas to eliminate ongoing cleanout maintenance and prevent further trail rutting.





*Root, rock and slickrock clearing*

8) Several realignments were completed. These generally provide a more enjoyable and less steep route with far less maintenance needed. Most bypass old road segments that rut and entrench from captured water over long lengths. Aligning the formal trail to a long-term sustainable location that contours the landscape eliminates the need to continuously rebuild waterbars and repair storm damaged tread. Most road segments remain open to use to further disperse users and provide additional user options, but will no longer be maintained. Some realignment benefits include:

- a) Eliminates continuous waterbar maintenance
- b) Contours the terrain and blends into the landscape instead of counter to it
- c) Meets trail sustainability standards for trail longevity
- d) Prevents excessive, redundant and unnecessary long-term maintenance
- e) Frees up valuable maintenance time
- f) Regularly diverts water off the trail through grade reversals instead of capturing water for long lengths that cause ruts and further entrenching
- g) Gives the user experience a more trail-like feel instead of a road feel
- h) Less steep than road segments
- i) Greatly reduces soil displacement and transport
- j) Provides a more scenic and enjoyable route
- k) Bypasses slippery slickrock sections for better footing
- l) Less icy in winter due to flatter grade and less water flow and collection





*Rutted and entrenched examples*



*Rutted and entrenched examples*





*Sustainable contoured examples*



*Sustainable contoured examples*





*Realignment*



*Realignment*





*Realignment*



*Realignment*





*Realignment*

### 2024 Fay-Luther/Jobs Peak Ranch Trail System Work Plan

- ✓ Routine brushing, tread and drainage work.
  - ✓ Work with partners to potentially realign a portion of the Fay Luther/Jobs Peak Ranch Trail to a more enjoyable, scenic and sustainable location with far less maintenance.
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## 2023 Genoa Trail System Overview

1) Eighteen fallen trees were removed from the trail system.



*Trees removed*



*Before*



*After*





*Before*



*After*



*Trees removed*





*Trees removed*



*Before*



*After*



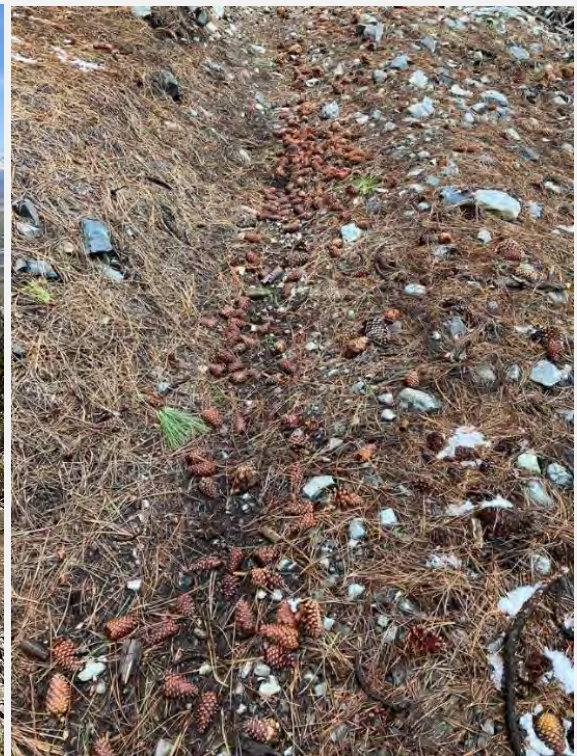


*Before*



*After*

2) The entire trail system was cleared of rockfall, slough and debris.



*Rock and debris clearing*



3) Two large boulders that slumped and blocked the Genoa Loop were removed.



4) A sign post crushed by a fallen tree was replaced.





5) An exposed tie road anchor for a support wall was re-anchored.



*Anchor repositioned*

6) Thousands of protruding rocks and boulders were extracted from the trail system to provide safer and more enjoyable access for mountain bikers, and better footing for hikers and equestrians.



*Rocks and boulders removed*





***Rocks and boulders removed***



***Rocks and boulders removed***





***Rocks and boulders removed***

7) All retaining walls were cleaned out.



***Before***

***After***

8) An 80-foot and 90-foot realignment was completed on the Sierra Canyon Trail to replace steep 35% grades to sustainable 8% grades. A longer quarter-mile realignment was also completed to replace a sustained 17% grade with a 7% grade. These provide safer downhill bike speeds and removes unnecessary elevation gain and loss.





*Realignment*



*Realignment*



*Realignment*



## **2024 Genoa Trail System Work Plan**

- ✓ Routine tread maintenance, brushing, slough and rock cleanup.
  - ✓ Brushing will occur on the upper few miles of the Sierra Canyon Trail.
  - ✓ A short realignment may occur on the Genoa Loop in Schoolhouse Canyon to bypass unnecessary elevation gain and loss
  - ✓ A realignment alternative route may occur on the Eagle Ridge Loop to bypass switchbacks and lessen grade.
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## 2023 River Fork Ranch Trail System Overview

1) The East Brockliss Loop at the Nature Conservancy's River Fork Ranch Preserve was cleared of brush and flooding debris.



*Trail brushed out*

2) Kiosk map updates were coordinated with The Nature Conservancy's River Fork Ranch Preserve.



*Kiosk maps*

## 2024 River Fork Ranch Trail System Overview

✓ Routine brushing and tread repair.

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### 2023 Pinyon Trail Overview

- 1) Dozens of snow-loaded snapped limbs across the trail were removed.
- 2) Rock removal, brushing and tread maintenance was completed on the trail.



*Routine maintenance*

### 2024 Pinyon Trail Work Plan

- ✓ Routine rock removal, brushing and tread maintenance.