



TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Spring 2026

Connecting people to the outdoors through a system of trails

Understanding E-Bikes and the Rules on Local Trails



Powerful and plentiful, the growing trend of e-bikes has taken the bicycling world by storm. By merging traditional biking with modern motorized technology, e-bikes enhance the cycling experience for many riders, making them a choice for commuters who save money on fuel, recreational riders who want to go farther and older riders who want to stay active despite limited capabilities.

At CVTA, we're often asked if e-bikes are allowed on our trails. Since we don't own the land beneath our trails, we must refer people to the landowners, who, in most cases, are the U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management. Before opening non-motorized trails to e-bikes, local agencies typically conduct environmental analyses and public engagement to determine the appropriate use of the land.

Currently, Class 1 e-bikes (classes explained below) are not regulated on our trails, as our local USFS and BLM offices continue to work on official rules. Our Genoa and Clear Creek trail systems are owned by our local USFS office, who are waiting on national guidelines which may take a few years before officially opening these trails to Class 1 e-bikes. However, Pinyon Trail is governed by BLM, who are expected to outline rules allowing Class 1 e-bikes this year. The Fay Luther Trail System is the only CVTA trail where e-bikes are formally not allowed, as it is a trail that is heavily trafficked by horses and riders.

In short, we don't make the rules — but we're happy to provide information about e-bikes to help you make the right choices for safety and cycling goals.

Too Fast or Wrong Class? Understanding E-Bike Classes.

E-bikes are equipped with two types of assistance: pedal assist and throttle assist.

- **Pedal assist**, as the name suggests, activates as you pedal, giving a boost to your speed. The harder you pedal, the more support the motor supplies proportionally to your effort. It's like riding a bicycle regularly — but with magically stronger legs, allowing you to maintain higher speeds while still reaping the fitness benefits of conventional biking.
- **Throttle assist**, located on the handlebars, allows motor activation without pedaling, providing instancy and ease of acceleration. The convenience and effortlessness of throttle assist make these bikes a great option for commuters in city traffic.

Because there's so much variance in e-bike's speed and power, most states, including Nevada, have adopted the three-class system to help distinguish e-bikes from other motorized vehicles such as mopeds. Nevada law defines e-bikes as a two-wheeled device that contains an electric motor of not more than 750 watts and meets the criteria of one of three classifications:



Class 1 (low speed, pedal assist): If you're hoping to use an e-bike where they are allowed on non-motorized trails/single track trails, you'll want to shop for e-bikes in this category. Most major mountain bike brands now sell Class 1 e-bikes. They are strictly pedal assist for speeds up to 20mph.



Class 2 (low speed, throttle/pedal): Class 2 e-bikes have a maximum speed of 20mph and are equipped with throttle assist in addition to pedal assist. These are more popular for daily commutes and trips around town.



Class 3 (higher-speed, pedal assist): Class 3 e-bikes allow for faster speeds (up to 28mph) via pedal assist only. These bikes are usually restricted to roads, bike lanes and certain paved trails.



Class 4 (AKA E-Motos): With motors larger than 750W and no top speed, these bikes do not fit into Nevada's definition of e-bikes and are considered motorized vehicles that must be licensed, registered and insured. Beware of E-Motos, such as Sur-Rons, that market themselves as e-bikes to dodge safety requirements for motorized vehicles. These bikes do not meet the classification standards of e-bikes and also do not meet the legal safety requirements of street-legal motorized vehicles, such as mirrors, signals and headlights, heightening their potential for collision. While intended for off-road use, these bikes are not allowed on bike trails due to the toll their power output and torque take on trail maintenance.

Accessories or Necessities? E-Bike Safety Equipment.

There's no underestimating the importance of safety gear for cyclists of all kinds — but higher speeds mean higher stakes. Particularly for Class 3 e-bikes that can reach up to 28mph, the riders have less reaction time and are more vulnerable to the harder impacts that come with high speed riding.

Without protection, e-bike riders' bodies will take the brunt of any impacts or falls to the body. It's important to wear protective, padded clothing, such as elbow guards and knee pads, when riding at high speeds to protect from injuries. Additionally, a nice pair of cycling gloves can not only provide better grip and control, but can also protect your hands in case of a fall.

Helmets have been proven to reduce the risk of head injuries by over 80%. E-bike helmets differ from standard bike helmets and are designed for higher-speed riding, increased impact absorption and MIPS technology for rotational force protection to decrease the risk of concussions. When choosing a helmet, check for the proper certifications for e-bikes, such as the NTA 8776 certification. These thick-shelled helmets provide more coverage at the temples and back of the head in addition to higher impact absorption technology.

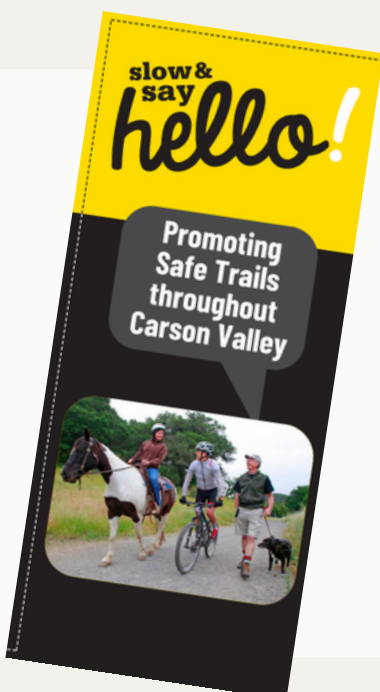
Normally, on a motorized trail, you can hear a vehicle coming, but an e-bike hurtling at you at 28mph is completely silent. To prevent collisions, e-bike riders should increase their visibility and sound with a bell or horn and bright front and rear lights, regardless of time of day.

E-bikes on Tahoe Trails

While our local USFS and BLM offices are yet to determine official rules for the use of e-bikes on trails, there are several e-bike friendly trails (including some popular TAMBA trails) in the Lake Tahoe basin and in Truckee. In January 2026, the USFS LTBMU signed the final decision notice for the Basin Wide Trails Analysis Project, which proposes the building of 45 miles of new multi-use trails in the Lake Tahoe basin and opening 112 miles of existing trails around the basin to class 1 e-bikes. This decision is expected to be implemented in the summer of this year.

The jury is still out for e-bikes rules on CVTA trails. As e-bikes continue to grow in popularity and official rules of use on our trails becomes a reality in the Carson Valley, we will be among the first to let you know.

More information on e-bike rules in Tahoe: <https://tamba.org/trails/e-bikes/>



HELP US PROMOTE SAFETY AND CIVILITY

Visit our trail safety page to learn more about Slow & Say Hello and download a helpful brochure:
<https://tinyurl.com/CVTAAsafety>



CVTA's Upcoming Events Offer Something for Everyone.

How many have you added to your calendar?

We are in the middle of a very active CVTA events season with lots of opportunities for our community to connect with us and soak up the beautiful Spring weather. We're excited to have you join us at any and all of the following events:

Clear Creek Trail Member Hike Series

After a rainy April that caused us to cancel our first of three unique Clear Creek Trail hikes, we are thrilled to continue the series in May. These hikes led by CVTA Board Member Mary Winnette were created to cover the amazing vistas and varying landscapes of the Clear Creek trail from top (Spooner Summit) to bottom (Jacks Valley) in sections.

This month we will hike the Clear Creek Connector Trail to Cliff Rock and Beyond on Wednesday, May 13. This will be a moderate 10-mile or so group hike with a 1325' elevation gain and a mix of chaparral and wooded landscapes, offering scenic views and a pleasant outdoor experience. As of the writing of this newsletter, there were only a few spaces available and all ages and abilities are welcome—but no dogs please due to the number of participants.

The final hike in the Clear Creek trail series will take place Wednesday, June 3, following the upper section of the Clear Creek Trail to a spectacular view at Five Valleys Viewpoint and Cliff Rock. Starting at the Spooner Summit Trailhead on the south side of Highway 50, you'll travel about 10 miles through a beautiful wooded landscape featuring jeffrey pine, white fir, incense cedar, sugar pine, aspen, and willow. This section offers panoramic views and scenic overlooks.



EVENT DETAILS

Members are invited to REGISTER for these hikes on the CVTA website (log-in required):

Clear Creek Connector Trail to Cliff Rock and Beyond

Date: Wednesday, May 13

Time: 9am-1:30pm



Clear Creek Trail to Five Valleys Viewpoint and Cliff Rock

Date: Wednesday, June 3

Time: 9am-2pm

2026 Annual Meeting & Social Event

Our annual social is back at a brand new location at Minden Mercantile! Thursday, May 14 we invite you to join us to celebrate public trails, mingle with fellow outdoor enthusiasts, and find out what's new with Carson Valley Trails Association. You can look forward to updates on trail systems and upcoming events, taco bar by Lady Griller Catering, no-host beer and wine bar by CV Flyte, and raffle prizes. We're excited to connect with our community and give back to those who

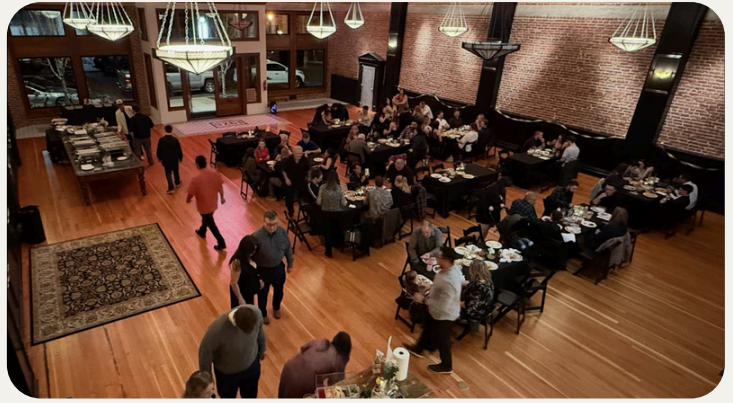
generously support our efforts with this event. This event is **free and open to the public**, so bring all your friends and fellow trail enthusiasts.

EVENT DETAILS

Date: Thursday, May 14

Time: 5:30pm-8pm

Location: Minden Mercantile
1600 Esmeralda Ave, Minden, NV



Beginning Nature Photography

Join us for a relaxed and inspiring morning on May 16 at River Fork Ranch as we explore the basics of nature photography, led by local photographer Kim Hunter Steed of American West Photography. Whether you're using a smartphone or a digital camera, this session will help you see the outdoors through a more creative lens and learn the basics of camera settings, composition tips, and lighting without any fancy equipment required. This is a casual, beginner-friendly, hands-on experience with plenty of time to practice, ask questions, and enjoy the scenery.



EVENT DETAILS

Members are invited to REGISTER on the CVTA website (log-in required).

Date: Saturday, May 16

Time: 8am-10am

Location: River Fork Ranch Preserve

Trail Ready Dogs: Skills for Safe and Calm Hiking

While this workshop is human-only, it's all about dogs! In this two hour session led by Kendall Brown of Custom K-9 Service Dogs, you'll learn skills needed for safe, calm, and enjoyable experiences when hiking with your dog to limit stress and unpredictability. You'll learn how to better understand your dog's behavior and body language on trail, navigate common challenges like wildlife and dog-to-dog encounters, and set both you and your dog up for success before you even leave the trailhead.

EVENT DETAILS

Members are invited to REGISTER on the CVTA website (log-in required).

Date: Saturday, May 24

Time: 10am-12pm

Cost: \$35

Location: River Fork Ranch Preserve



Spoker Ride

Our second-annual Spoker Ride is just around the corner, taking place Saturday, June 6. For mountain bikers, the Carson Valley will become a game board, as you follow a 10-mile route through James Lee Park with poker card stations along the way.

After the ride, we'll enjoy food and beverages from Kombi Bites & Sips and Double Barrel Draft Wagon. The top three winning poker hands, as judged by local card shark "Ace," will collect prize packages of cash, merchandise, and gift certificates from local business sponsors. All ages and abilities are welcome as always and you can register now for \$40 per rider.



EVENT DETAILS

Registration: tinyurl.com/SpokerRide

Date: Saturday, June 6

Time: 9am-2pm (Ride starts at 10am)

Location: James Lee Trailhead, Lee Memorial Park, Carson City

Run the Valley 10k/5k/Family Fun Run 2k

Come join the fun for the annual Carson Valley Trails Association Run the Valley Trail 10k, 5k and Family 2k run in beautiful Carson Valley, Nevada and support your local trails! Non-CVTA members: Registration for the 10k/5k includes a 1-year Individual Membership to the Carson Valley Trails Association. Joining this run helps us grow our organization and support local multi-use trails.

EVENT DETAILS

Registration: tinyurl.com/RunCVTA

Date: Saturday, September 26, 2026

Time: 10:00 – 10:30am

Location: James Lee Trailhead, Lee Memorial Park, Carson City



Trails Report



Here's a summary of work completed by our trail crew led by Jeremy Vican from January through March. A recurring theme you'll notice in this report is a distinct effort to make our trails safer for bike riders and everyone who shares the trails with them. Improvements include wider turns, reduced grades and better sightlines.



Before



After

Bentley Heritage Trail System: Routine brushing occurred on the entire trail.

Clear Creek Trail System: Slickrock was chiseled back a couple feet at a climbing turn between Knob Point and Clear Creek Junction to provide a wider, safer turning radius for bikers. In addition, a short section of trail on a bend was widened and shrubs cut back for a better sightline of oncoming trail users.

Nine fallen trees were removed along with an immense amount of embedded rocks.

Fay-Luther/Jobs Peak Ranch Trail System: General tread, brushing and drainage maintenance was completed on the entire trail system. One fallen tree removed from the Grand View Loop.



During



After

Genoa Trail System: The Sierra Canyon Trail was improved in many places for bikers including wider turns and numerous realignments to improve grade, flow, and visibility. The Genoa Loop and Eagle Ridge Loop were also improved with widening and realignments throughout. A short section of trail above Eagle Ridge Trailhead was widened and an accumulated rockfall berm removed to prevent continuous capture of fallen rocks.

Five fallen trees were removed along with routine clearing of fallen rocks and sluff.

Pinyon Trail System: Two fallen trees were removed from the trail. Fallen rocks were removed from the entire trail.



Before and after



After



Recent Events



CVTA was proud to be a part of the festivities during Genoa's Western Heritage Days on April 24.



Juan Guzman and Judy Larquier provided a presentation about CVTA to the United Women of Faith at the CV Methodist Church in April.



New CVTA display at the Douglas library.



Judy Larquier led a bird walk with Doug Stinson at the Nature Conservancy's River Fork Ranch on May 9th





CVTA Welcomes Joel Potter to the Board of Directors

Joel Potter is a lifelong Carson Valley resident with a deep-rooted appreciation for the open spaces and trail systems that define the area. Joel joins us as our new VP/Fund Development. In this position, he is primarily responsible for managing fundraising activities and securing financial support from individuals and businesses for CVTA.

As you can see here, Joel is an avid mountain biker and he believes trails are where community, recreation, and stewardship come together. Say "Hi" if you see him out on our trails.

2026 CVTA OFFICERS AND BOARD

President: Erica Roselius

Vice President: Bill Rogers

Treasurer: Terri Willoughby

VP/Membership: Lee Elson

VP/Chief Information Officer: Michael Hartstein

VP/Trail Operations: Jeremy Vlcan

VP/Outreach and Publicity: Judy Larquier

VP/Fund Development: Joel Potter

Directors-at-Large:

Laura Ammons

Juan Guzman

Dianne Jennings

Mary Winnette

Emeriti:

Lori Chitwood

Mary Bennington

Barbara Slade

Your annual membership dues and donations to the Carson Valley Trails Association, a Nevada 501(c)(3) organization, may be tax deductible pursuant to the provisions of section 170.c. of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 170.c. All proceeds support trail construction and maintenance, project planning, community events and trail access in the Carson Valley.