

# ADVENTURE



NORTHEASTERN NEVADA



2024 GUIDE

*Day trips*

you don't  
want to miss

*The best  
trails*

in the Ruby  
Mountains

*Weekend  
getaways*

Read our  
listings inside

A PUBLICATION OF THE ELKO DAILY FREE PRESS

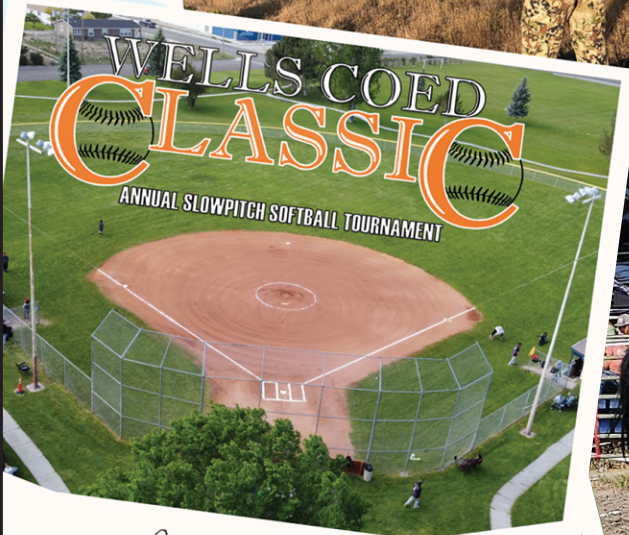
Welcome to

# WELLS

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Annual Slowpitch Softball Tournament



Wells JR Rodeo



Angel Lake Hiking & Fishing



Fun Run & Car Show



4th of July Parade, Block Parties, Fireworks!

**JUNE 28<sup>TH</sup> – 29<sup>TH</sup>**  
Softball Tournament

**JULY 4<sup>TH</sup>**  
Parade, Fireworks,  
Block Party @ Park

**JULY 26<sup>TH</sup> – 28<sup>TH</sup>**  
Wells Fun Run & Car Show

**AUGUST 3<sup>RD</sup> – 4<sup>TH</sup>**  
Wells Jr. Rodeo



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# Welcome

to our annual Adventure Guide for 2024.

This year, we're chock-full of places to visit and things to do in, around and near Northeastern Nevada.

We include the staples, like the California Trail Interpretive Center and Northeastern Nevada Museum, as well as day or weekend trips for the adventurous, like the Sun Tunnels in Western Utah that you'll need a high-clearance vehicle to reach and the trails of Cave Lake State Park outside of Ely.

You'll have a gaggle of hikes to choose from in the guide, including an easy half-mile walk to see the Hickison Petroglyphs between Eureka and Austin, or, for the more experienced hikers, you can check out the Thomas Creek Trail, which our guide says, "As the trail is situated above the rushing currents of Thomas Creek, it offers plenty of areas for hikers to gaze over the edge of a cliff at waterfalls and rapids down below.

"While the trail is well-marked, it contains a few steep climbs, so is best for hikers with at least moderate experience." In other words, it requires some stamina.

We also mention several drives for a day or weekend, like to Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge a couple hours outside of Elko, weather permitting, or up to Shoshone Falls Park, a city park in Twin Falls, Idaho, where the Snake River flows over a ledge taller than Niagara Falls.

And don't forget to check out Safe Haven Wildlife Refuge, a nonprofit about 160 miles from Elko that is home to exotic animals like tigers taken from people who shouldn't have had them in the first place, as well as native animals unable to return to the wild.

We hope you enjoy this year's edition of our Adventure Guide. Keep it all year as a go-to resource full of articles, photos and advertisements designed to get you outdoors.



**Keith Kohn**  
Editor, Elko Daily Free Press



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**RESERVATIONS**

# Adventure Guide

## More than 3 dozen of the best day & weekend trips around the Northeastern Nevada area

BY LYDIA SNOW | LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

**N**ow that spring is here, day trips and weekend getaways for outdoor fun is just around the corner. Here's the Elko Daily Free Press staff's look at over three dozen places to get out and see in Northeastern Nevada, Western Utah and Southern Idaho.

Just remember to gas up the vehicle, grab bottles of water and your sunglasses as you get out and explore the beauty of our region.

### 1. CALIFORNIA TRAIL INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Just off I-80 in western Elko, the California Trail Interpretive Center is a free museum with a wealth of Great Basin history.

Exhibits allow visitors to contemplate the trials faced by covered wagon travelers, introducing them to the rough conditions they encountered.

Native American heritage and Gold Rush history are on display, as well.

The Donner Party presentation uses audiovisual storytelling to share the tragic downfall of a covered wagon group stranded in the snow of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in 1846 and 1847.

The California Trail Interpretive Center off Interstate 80 is eight miles west of Elko.

ELKO DAILY FILE



Behind the main museum building, nature trails bring visitors up the juniper-covered hills and provide them with a sweeping view of the Nevada plains and mountains and the Humboldt River. Part of this view is the western end of the one-time Hastings Cutoff, which emigrants used as a shortcut to California.

The California Trail Interpretive Center hosts monthly events with family-friendly crafts and activities, a calendar of which can be accessed on the museum's website at [www.california-trailcenter.org](http://www.california-trailcenter.org).

## 2. NORTHEASTERN NEVADA MUSEUM

This downtown Elko destination merges art, history and nature through two floors of detailed exhibits.

In addition to the rotating art exhibits, a permanent exhibit of Western art by Will James and Edward Borein has horses leaping off the canvases. To see evocative photographs of American landscapes, check out the works of renowned photographers Ansel Adams and Edward Weston.

With a labyrinth of themed displays, the expansive history gallery includes a recreation of the original Elko Daily Free Press office, Native American artifacts, antique firearms, history of train track and road development in Elko and even a denim tuxedo belonging to Bing Crosby.

The Wanamaker Wildlife Wing features over 180 taxidermies of animals from Africa, Australia and more, laid out in habitat displays simulating mountains, jungles and savanna.

Don't miss the gift shop, which sells paintings and photography from local Nevada artists.



MUSEUMELKO.ORG

An original Pony Express cabin, right, is one of many Western artifacts that can be viewed at the Northeastern Nevada Museum.



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The entrance gate of Clover Valley Cemetery.

## 3. ELKO HISTORIC CEMETERIES (ELKO CITY, CLOVER VALLEY)

Elko City Cemetery is rich in history, with sections once managed by the Masons and Odd Fellows. Another section of the cemetery was once set aside for Chinese laborers from the Central Pacific Railroad.

Lewis "Broadhorns" Bradley, the second governor of Nevada, is buried at Elko's downtown cemetery complex, as well as bitter rivals Arne Parus and John Winters, whose arguments over water rights led

Parus to shoot and kill Winters in 1920. Visitors can also see the grave of early Elko police officer John J. Ellis, who froze to death on the job in 1874. Also, the Russell Mausoleum intrigues with its elegant stained glass.

For those interested in seeing a cemetery with a more secluded and rural location, State Road 232 takes drivers past cow-filled ranchlands a few miles outside Wells, eventually leading to the Clover Valley Cemetery, a small property tucked next to the slopes of the Ruby Mountains.



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**Above:**  
Sunset at the Spring Creek Marina path on Feb. 11, 2024. The marina area has a 32-acre lake with a pier and an 8-acre park with a playground and exercise equipment. The looping trail around the lake is 1½ miles.

#### 4. SPRING CREEK MARINA

This is a great place to talk walks with your family, especially during the mornings and evenings. This outdoors gem consists of a 32-acre lake with a pier and an 8-acre park with a playground and exercise equipment.

The 1½-mile loop trail makes its way around the lake, closely following the bank.

Swans, ducks and geese are often visible on the surface of the water. The marina offers spectacular views of sunrises and sunsets, which reflect into the lake. It also offers an unhindered perspective of the nearby Ruby Mountains.



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**Above:**  
Shore of South Fork  
Reservoir, facing toward  
South Fork Dam.

## 5. SOUTH FORK RESERVOIR AND DAM

South Fork Recreation Area is an ideal pick for a relaxed afternoon in the wilderness. Located about a 30-minute drive from Elko, the site is managed by the Nevada State Parks and has a small fee per vehicle.

There are great opportunities for trout and bass fishing, along with many other outdoor recreation options, like hiking and picnicking.

The South Fork Recreation Area features several points of interest for hiking, camping or boat launching. The banks of the 1,640-acre reservoir are ripe for exploration, with over eight miles of trails following the sparkling water.

Visitors can walk along the South Fork Dam and view the reservoir on one side and the Upper Humboldt River flows on the other.

Fishing along the Humboldt below the dam is good, but often becomes busy.



## 6. SOUTH FORK MEADOWS TRAIL

The Humboldt Trail is a 2.9 mile loop which passes through two different kinds of terrain: flatter brushy areas and the banks of the South Fork of the Humboldt River. With its flat, gravel-based surface, the trail is more relaxing than challenging. A pavilion halfway along the trail offers a place to take a break and gaze at the river currents. A deer sighting is possible.

Located just past South Fork State Recreation Area, the trail is free to access.

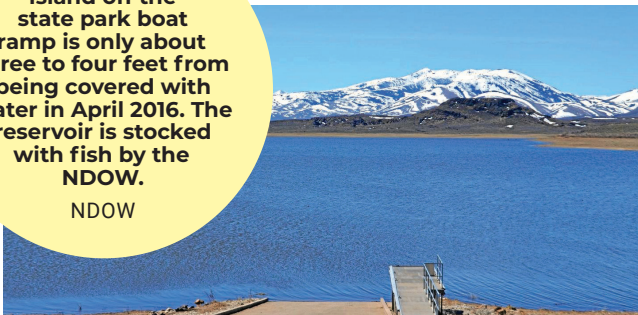


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Participants in the Nevada Outdoor School Bookworm Trail Trip head down the South Fork Meadows trail.

The island off the state park boat ramp is only about three to four feet from being covered with water in April 2016. The reservoir is stocked with fish by the NDOW.

NDOW



## 7. WILD HORSE RESERVOIR

About an hour's drive north of Elko on State Road 225, Wild Horse Reservoir is a mountain gem ripe with fishing and boating opportunities. The nearby Amy's Bar and Grill offers a convenience store option for travelers. Further down the road, Wild Horse Resort includes space for RV camping.

In the winter, the reservoir freezes over with thick ice. The annual Wild Horse Fishing Derby brings fishing enthusiasts to the area.

The Wild Horse Dam at the mouth of the reservoir demonstrates the power of the rushing Owyhee River waters as they leave the reservoir. Keep driving down State Road 225 to enjoy a twisty path through tall, sheer cliffs on either side of the river. Wild Horse Crossing Campground is nestled along the Owyhee River, offering a remote camping space.

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**The front entrance of the Hotel Lamoille, March 11, 2024.**

## 8. HOTEL LAMOILLE

This three-suite log cabin hotel dates back to 1955 and is nestled in the remote town of Lamoille, a stone's throw from the entrance to Lamoille Canyon and its endless outdoor adventure opportunities. Rooms are up for reservation through Airbnb. Each room is furnished with a sleeper sofa as well as a microwave, coffee maker and mini fridge.

The hotel is also available for weddings and other private events. The Pine Lodge restaurant next door is an apt choice for hosting formal dinners. For a more casual dining choice, give the quaint diner atmosphere of O'Carrolls Bar and Grill a try.

## 9. LAMOILLE CANYON

Lamoille Canyon Scenic Byway follows the glacier-sculpted Ruby Mountain landscape, passing by sheer drops and closely flanked by majestic cliffs which rise thousands of feet into the sky. Many of the peaks of Lamoille Canyon are over 2 miles high.

Along with Camp Lamoille and Powerhouse Campground, the canyon is also dotted with trails which climb through the ancient geology and aspen forests, each of them directly accessible from the road.

After a 12-mile drive, the route through the canyon eventually leads to Road's End Trailhead, where hiking possibilities abound.



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**The sun hangs over the entrance to Lamoille Canyon. This is the mountainside that Talbot Trail climbs. Photo taken Nov. 3, 2023.**

**Wildflowers found along the Island Lake Trail, from left: coneflower, monument plant, and giant hyssop.**

LARRY HYSLOP



## 10. ISLAND LAKE TRAIL

This trail is ideal for visitors who are looking for a hike to complete in a relatively short period of time. It is adventurous enough to satisfy road trippers hungry for an afternoon hike, while not too exhausting thanks to a roundtrip under four miles.

Offering a straightforward switchback with a gradual mountainside ascension, the trail presents an impressive elevation gain for its short distance, quickly bringing hikers a Ruby Mountain panorama which spreads out beneath them.

The hike ends at a glacial tarn lake situated almost 10,000 feet above sea level. A tiny island in the middle gives the lake its name. Some hikers choose to bring rods and reels to Island Lake for the good fishing.



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The view of Liberty Lake (p.12) is a reward for hikers after they ascend the Ruby Crest National Recreation Trail up and into Lamoille Canyon.

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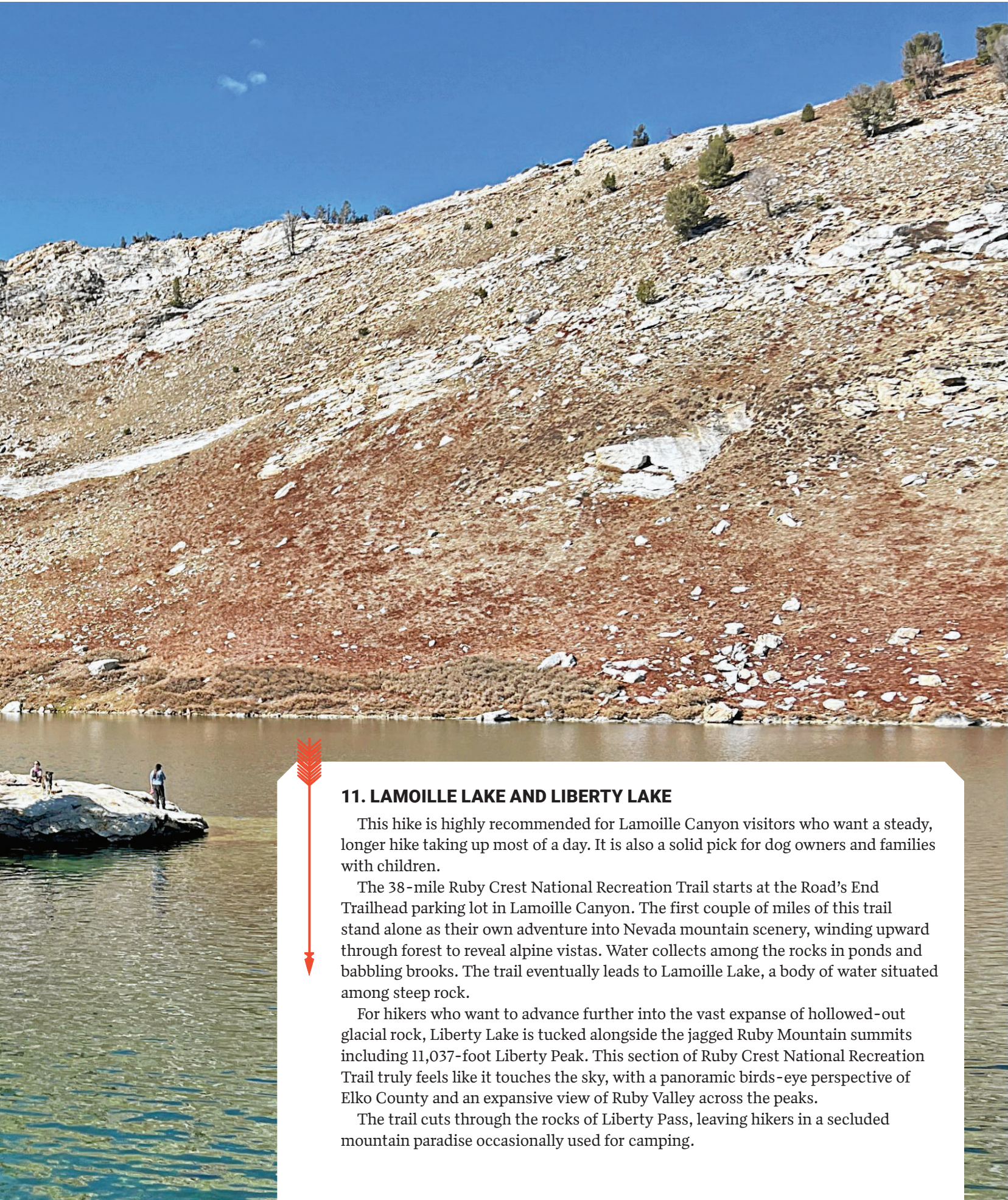
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**Below: The Ruby Crest National Recreation Trail starts at the Road's End Trailhead parking lot in Lamoille Canyon. It skirts by Lamoille Lake and for the daring takes you up to Liberty Lake. LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM**



## 11. LAMOILLE LAKE AND LIBERTY LAKE

This hike is highly recommended for Lamoille Canyon visitors who want a steady, longer hike taking up most of a day. It is also a solid pick for dog owners and families with children.

The 38-mile Ruby Crest National Recreation Trail starts at the Road's End Trailhead parking lot in Lamoille Canyon. The first couple of miles of this trail stand alone as their own adventure into Nevada mountain scenery, winding upward through forest to reveal alpine vistas. Water collects among the rocks in ponds and babbling brooks. The trail eventually leads to Lamoille Lake, a body of water situated among steep rock.

For hikers who want to advance further into the vast expanse of hollowed-out glacial rock, Liberty Lake is tucked alongside the jagged Ruby Mountain summits including 11,037-foot Liberty Peak. This section of Ruby Crest National Recreation Trail truly feels like it touches the sky, with a panoramic birds-eye perspective of Elko County and an expansive view of Ruby Valley across the peaks.

The trail cuts through the rocks of Liberty Pass, leaving hikers in a secluded mountain paradise occasionally used for camping.



CONTRIBUTED

**Favre Lake is one of the many alpine lakes in Elko County yielding good fishing.**

## 12. FAVRE LAKE AND CASTLE LAKE

If the sparkling waters of Lamoille Lake and Liberty Lake leave hikers wanting to view even more remote mountain lakes, they can take the Ruby Crest National Recreation Trail even further.

The trail winds downwards through forested rock to glacial tarns which host the Kleckner Creek.

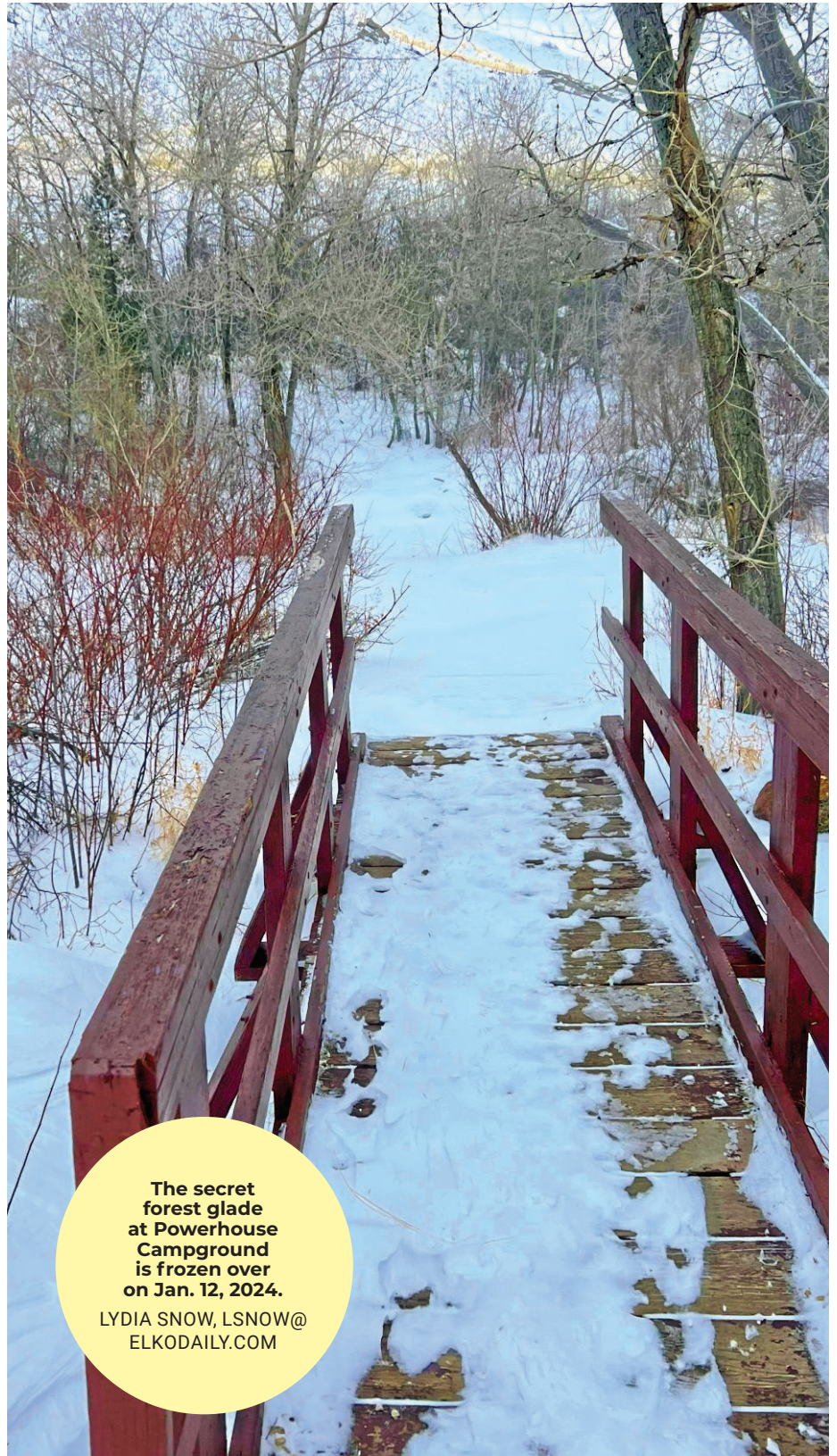
As these lakes require an 11- or 12-mile roundtrip to reach, they are recommended of those who want a hike which is challenging in terms of distance but spectacular in terms of views.

## 13. POWERHOUSE CAMPGROUND AND TRAIL

Just inside the mouth of Lamoille Canyon, Lamoille Creek creates a forested oasis where small rapids flow under charming bridges, making it an attractive place for photography. For adventurers interested in an accessible camping location near the town of Lamoille, Powerhouse Campground fits the bill.

On the other side of Lamoille Canyon Scenic Byway from Powerhouse Campground, the out-and-back Powerhouse Trail offers a rapid elevation gain through multiple switchbacks, then swings out over the crest of the Ruby Mountains, following the curvature of the rising peaks.

A view of the canyon mouth on one side and a view of the ranchland around Lamoille on the other side make Powerhouse Trail a solid choice for hikers interested in a sweeping view from a high elevation.



**The secret forest glade at Powerhouse Campground is frozen over on Jan. 12, 2024.**

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#### 14. THOMAS CANYON CAMPGROUND, THOMAS CREEK TRAIL

Beginning at a forested campground which straddles Lamoille Creek, this approximately 4-mile round trip is a must-do for hikers who enjoy a trail with rocky terrain mixed in. Thick spots of forest flank the trail, which ends at a secluded pond complex full of beaver dams.

As the trail is situated above the rushing currents of Thomas Creek, it offers plenty of areas for hikers to gaze over the edge of a cliff at waterfalls and rapids down below.

While the trail is well-marked, it contains a few steep climbs, so is best for hikers with at least moderate experience.



#### 15. CAMP LAMOILLE

Campers who want a wild-feeling experience roasting marshmallows among thick vegetation may want to take their RVs down to Camp Lamoille. A 19-acre camp managed by the Elko Lions Club, it is nestled closely alongside Lamoille Creek and the Ruby Mountain peaks.

The creek rapids are just a short stroll away, ready to be waded through.

# Ruby Mountain Balloon Festival

Elko & Spring Creek, NV



September 20-22, 2024

## Schedule of Events

9/20 - 7:00am

Balloons Over Elko

9/20 - 6:00pm

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9/21 & 9/22 - 7:00am

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## 16. CHANGING CANYON TRAIL

For the younger members of the family who are not ready for a hike like Lamoille Lake, the Changing Canyon Trail is a half-mile nature trail loop through the shade trees growing along Lamoille Creek.

Of course, the trail is also ideal for Lamoille Canyon visitors who want to break up the pace of their day with a 10-minute nature walk.



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Angel Lake offers one of Elko County's most versatile recreation areas, blending a mountain peak spectacle with lakeside activities.

## 17. ANGEL LAKE

Angel Lake offers one of Elko County's most versatile recreation areas, blending a mountain peak spectacle with a variety of lakeside activities.

Stop for gas in Wells and then head up the steep, winding road to this 13-acre Ruby Mountain lake cradled amidst dramatic rock cliffs. The drive to the lake is a reward in its own right, heading along

the adventurous route of Forest Service Road 98 with its rapid elevation changes.

The lake itself allows for strolls around the banks, rafting and fishing. A 26-site lakeside campground provides an opportunity for immersive weekend escape only an hour's drive from Elko.

A hiking trail cuts into the cliffs above Angel Lake, heading to the smaller Smiths Lake.



Along the trail to Winchell Lake, hikers are rewarded with a close-up view of the Humboldt Wilderness rock formations.

## 18. WINCHELL LAKE

With a trailhead situated halfway to Angel Lake on Forest Service Road 98, Winchell Lake Trail offers an elevated mountainside ecosystem to explore, passing through the scraggly trees, mossy rocks and stubby bushes which cling to the Ruby Mountain heights. This trail is ideal for hikers who want an off-the-beaten-path option rarely visited by tourists.

The peaks of the Ruby Mountains loom over one side of the trail, with the other side offering an expansive view of the flatlands outside Wells. Opportunities for spectacular sunset scenery abound.

The Angel Creek Campground, just off Forest Service Road 98, makes for a nearby stay to the trail.

The trail zig-zags horizontally along the mountainside, with occasional sharp changes in elevation, so prepare for a lengthy excursion about seven miles in total. Luckily, shady glens and babbling brooks provide oases along the trail. Keep an eye out for many colors of foliage.

There are few more immersive ways to see the Ruby Mountains unfold firsthand than to make the 50-mile drive from Elko to Wells..

LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM



## 19. RUBY MOUNTAIN SIGHTSEEING ALONG I-80

There are few more immersive ways to see the Ruby Mountains unfold firsthand than to make the 50-mile drive from Elko to Wells. The peaks capture the colors of sunrise, with acres of ranchland unfolding at their base. Around Halleck, the Ruby Mountains extend as far as the eye can see, crowning the landscape.

It may be difficult to keep your eyes on the road, but please do, or pull over at a rest area or exit.



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The entrance to McIntyre Ranch, along Highway 229 between Halleck and Austin.

## 20. DRIVE 229 FROM HALLECK TO AUSTIN

This 20-mile stretch of road entertains with its rapid change in terrain.

Beginning on flat ranchland with a railroad crossing, State Road 229 cuts through vast fields and winds toward the Ruby Mountains, passing by the entrance road to the Soldier

Creek area. The road begins to rise through the terrain around Secret Peak, following the sharp turns of Secret Creek and eventually grading along a cliff above the creek.

Cows are often visible grazing down below.

Soon enough, the road plateaus off in the rural ranching community of Arthur. Continue driving past Arthur to enter the Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge.



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Just outside of Wells, State Road 232 begins a path through ranchland and toward Clover Valley.

## **21. CLOVER VALLEY FARMLAND DRIVE DOWN 232**

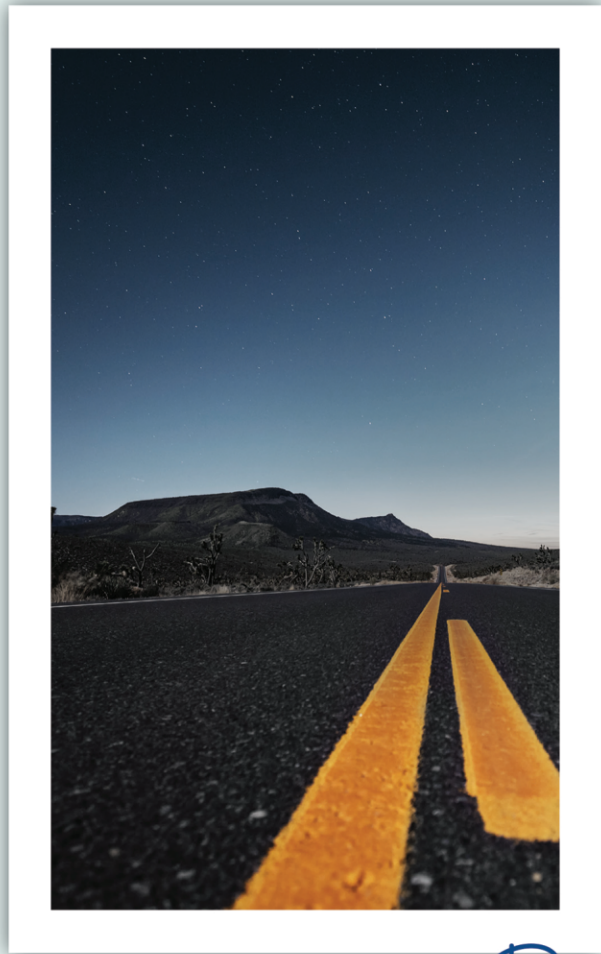
In need of a peaceful morning drive which passes through ranches full of cows?

Just outside Wells, State Road 232 offers a cozy drive through the ranches at the base of

the Ruby Mountains. Quaint old buildings, galloping horses, wooden barns, hundreds of cows and maybe the occasional pronghorn are some of the possible sights to see.

A brief unpaved section at the end of the road connects to Highway 93.





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## 22. SOLDIER CREEK TRAIL

Usually open to visitors from May to November, Soldier Creek is an excellent choice for Elko residents searching for a secluded hiking retreat. A dirt road follows Soldier Creek through a wooded canyon, eventually leading to a trailhead.

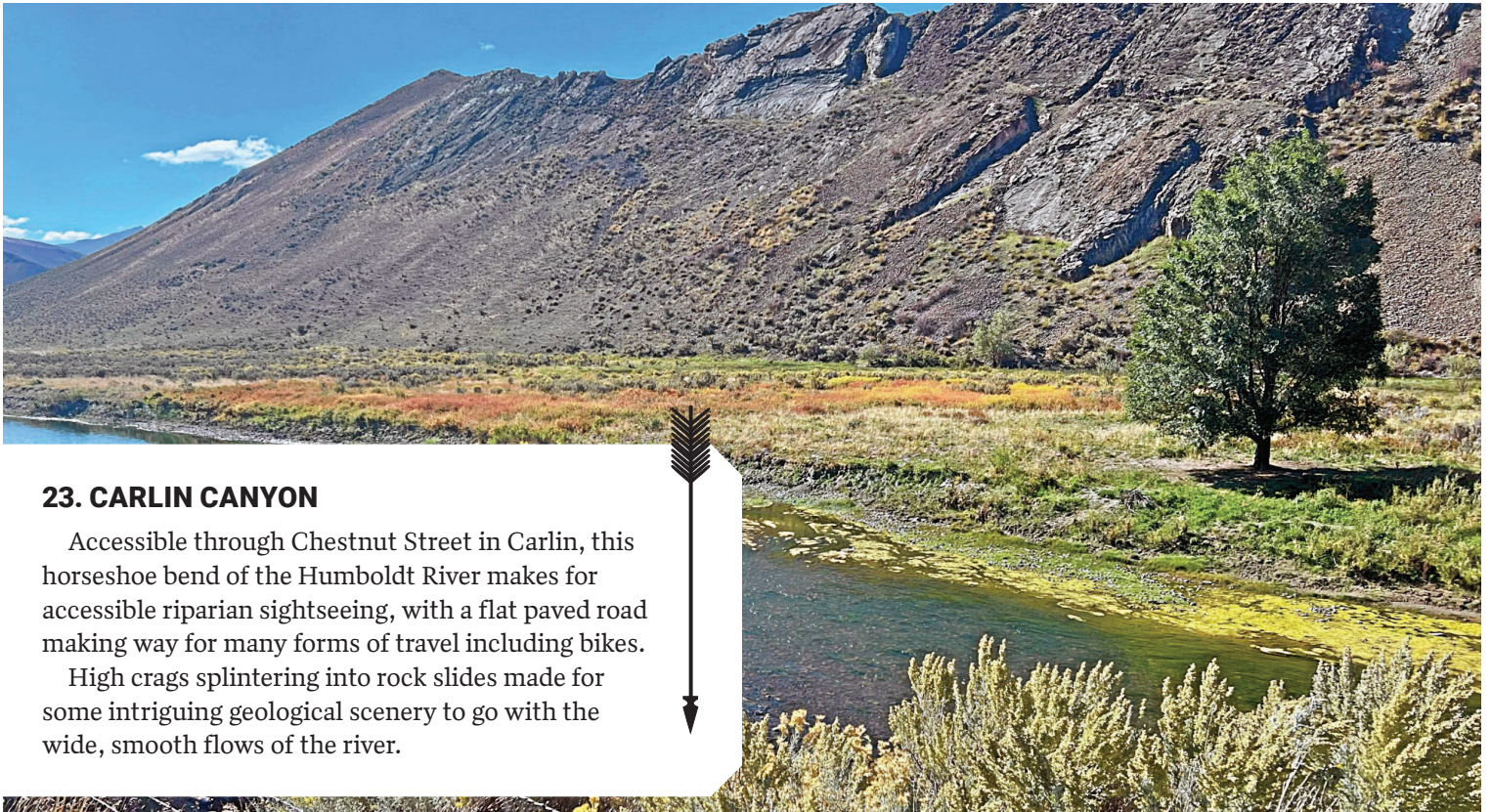
The 10-mile roundtrip Soldier Creek Trail hike cuts up past rocky crags and evens out on top of the Ruby Mountains, passing through grassy meadows and eventually leading to Soldier Lake and Robinson Lake.

Soldier Creek Trail mostly follows the winding route of its namesake creek, offering placid views of flowing water.

However, even if hiking is not on the agenda, Soldier Creek makes for a relaxing visit, with wilderness views easily accessible along its scenic dirt road.

**The 10-mile roundtrip Soldier Creek Trail hike cuts up past rocky crags and evens out on top of the Ruby Mountains, passing through grassy meadows and eventually leading to Soldier Lake and Robinson Lake.**

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### 23. CARLIN CANYON

Accessible through Chestnut Street in Carlin, this horseshoe bend of the Humboldt River makes for accessible riparian sightseeing, with a flat paved road making way for many forms of travel including bikes.

High crags splintering into rock slides made for some intriguing geological scenery to go with the wide, smooth flows of the river.



**Above: The Humboldt River flows in Carlin Canyon.**  
LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

On the edge of downtown Carlin, the Chinese gardens feature a fish pond with comfortable benches, presenting plenty of room for quiet meditation and nature walks.



### 24. CARLIN CHINESE GARDENS

On the edge of downtown Carlin, these gardens feature a fish pond with comfortable benches, presenting plenty of room for quiet meditation and nature walks.

An extensive, twisty maze path through thick shrubs offers a more mystery-filled option for outdoor exercise. Wanderers may find a dead end or perhaps a hidden bridge.



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## 25. ELKO COLONY OFF-ROAD TRAILS

Hidden behind the Elko Colony neighborhood, miles of crisscrossing steep dirt roads make for an ATV and quad bike playground.

With a combination of hilly, squiggly trails cutting through brush or sharp mountainside drops leading down to the bed of Eight Mile Creek, the change in terrain makes for a challenge sure to please the eager off-roader.



**Right:**  
Hidden behind the Elko Colony neighborhood, miles of crisscrossing steep dirt roads make for an ATV and quad bike playground.

LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM



## 26. RUBY LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (FISHING AND OFF-ROADING)

Almost a two-hour drive from Elko, this 39,928-acre wildlife refuge is a truly remote recreational getaway, combining meadows, marsh and mountains.

Ruby Valley Road passes by several lake “units” dotted with boat landings, marsh trailheads and fishing piers.

Birdwatching is a popular activity as well, with

flocks of waterfowl constantly interacting with the lake. Over 200 species of birds have been documented at Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, so bring a camera.

Ruby Lake is home to the Relict Dace native fish species as well.

The Ruby Lake wilderness once hosted the Pony Express route. Visitors can see the Pony Express trail site south of Y Pond.

**The Ruby Mountains reflect into Ruby Lake in March 2024.**  
LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

**Below:** While visitors to Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge can access it through State Route 229 in an 80-mile drive, an alternate dirt road route takes dramatic twists and turns through a geological dip in the Ruby Mountains. A highlight of the drive is the unusual, immense rock formations which look like what would happen if giant boulders fell out of the sky. LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM



## 27. HARRISON PASS

While visitors to Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge can access it through State Road 229 in an 80-mile drive, an alternate dirt road route takes dramatic twists and turns through a geological dip in the Ruby Mountains. A highlight of the drive is unusual, immense rock formations which look like what would happen if giant boulders fell out of the sky.

With several RV-friendly camping spots along the route, Harrison Pass is a viable option for a weekend getaway.

Harrison Pass is only safe to access in warmer weather.



## 28. METROPOLIS GHOST TOWN

As Elko County is rich in history, it contains faint vestiges of past civilization.

The 1910-built town of Metropolis once hosted a railroad spur and a population of around 700. However, failure to obtain water rights led the town's economy to spiral.

Two ruins are still standing: the Lincoln School arch and the concrete foundations of the Metropolis Hotel. Urban explorers and photographers will delight in the eerie imagery of history gone by.

An isolated cemetery still sees occasional burials.

### **LEFT:**

**The arch of Metropolis' Lincoln School once beckoned students into a stately place of learning. Now, it is covered in graffiti and stands alone.**

**Photo taken Jan. 25, 2024.**

LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

**29. WEST WENDOVER AND WENDOVER (MILITARY MUSEUM, VOLCANO PEAK AND BONNEVILLE SALT FLATS)**

West Wendover, Nevada, and Wendover, Utah, straddle the state line and offer a gateway to the surreal scenery of the Bonneville Salt Flats.

While it is now a travel stop along I-80, the area once housed some of the most important military developments of the 1940s.

Downtown, the Historic Wendover Airfield Museum offers technological and weaponry artifacts of 1940s bomber training. This very airfield was the starting point of the Enola Gay unit, which dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and assisted in the Nagasaki bombing.

The B-29 maintenance hangar and the Brinkman Service Club Dance Hall are preserved specimens of the one-time airfield residents' busy lives. The Fairchild C-123K featured in the movie "Con Air" is on display for visitors to walk inside.



LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

**The Historic Wendover Airfield Museum offers technological and weaponry artifacts of 1940s bomber training. The airfield was the starting point of the Enola Gay unit.**



LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

**The Eureka Opera House, built in 1880, is a cultural gem tucked in the middle of downtown Eureka.**

**30. EUREKA**

Highway 50 and State Road 278 intersect at this former silver and lead mining town, which had a population of 10,000 in 1878.

A guided tour around the town explores a charming Old West-styled main street, including a historic train car and outhouse.

The Sentinel Museum preserves the workings of a late-1800s newspaper office.

The 1880 Eureka Opera House is a highlight of the downtown, with a backstage area covered in countless signatures from music and theater acts who have passed through.



LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

### 31. HICKISON PETROGLYPHS

At Hickison Petroglyphs Recreation Area, a half-mile nature trail allows visitors to get up close to the ancient petroglyphs carved into rock, which take the form of people, landscapes and animals. The petroglyphs are believed to date back around 10,000 years to the Western Shoshone people.

Along with the historical aspect, the trail also offers opportunity for exploration of uniquely shaped rock formations and for climbing up juniper-covered hillsides.

Located along Highway 50 between Eureka and Austin, the petroglyph site makes for an ideal stop between the two cities.

**Above:**  
The Hickison Petroglyphs can be found along Highway 50 between Eureka and Austin. An accessible nature trail brings visitors up close to the petroglyphs.



NORTHEASTERN NEVADA MUSEUM



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**Art Exhibits**  
Will James, Edward Borein, Ansel Adams, Edward Weston



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Nevada's largest collection of wild animals from around the world



**August 2nd  
Jurassic Park  
(PG-13)**

**Classic Film Fest  
in the Park**

Films begin at dusk



**August 9th  
Neverending Story  
(PG)**



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 \$5/duck  
Tentative date: late July

Mine developer Anson Stokes built Austin's eccentric Stokes Castle as a summer home in 1896.

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### 32. AUSTIN (STOKES CASTLE)

The former silver rush town of Austin sits at the corner of Highway 50 and State Road 305 and is home to a 19th-century cemetery as well as historic churches.

The most striking feature of the town, though, is Stokes Castle, an abandoned stone tower built in 1897 by mine developer Anson Stokes. The Stokes family only lived in the castle for a few weeks before leaving town.

### 33. ELY (RAILROAD MUSEUM)

A welcoming stop for travelers along Highway 50, downtown Ely is a treat to explore, filled with around two dozen murals and sculptures celebrating local history and heritage.

The East Ely Railroad Depot Museum, made of the Nevada Northern Railway depot in the city. It presents a historic 1905 train depot experience with several antique locomotives and a two-story station building.

Hometown Pizza offers cozy diner ambiance and pizzas with flavors such as pesto and bacon ranch.



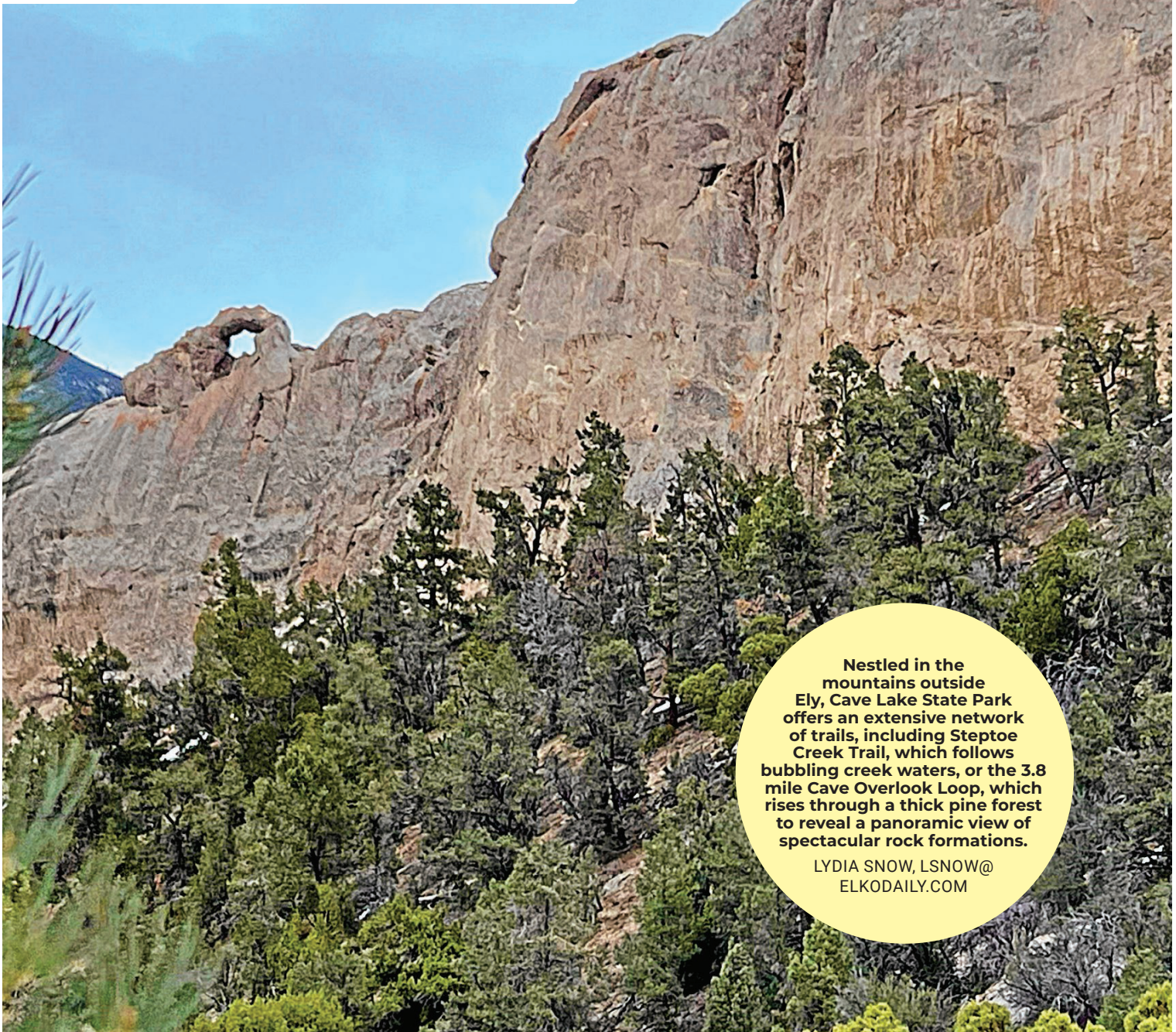
EAST ELY RAILROAD DEPOT MUSEUM

Visitors to the East Ely Railroad Depot Museum can peruse what was considered to be “state of the art” office equipment used during the railway’s operation, like an original mimeograph and telegraph, as well as a vast document collection.

### 34. CAVE LAKE STATE PARK

Nestled in the mountains outside Ely, Cave Lake State Park offers an extensive network of trails, including Steptoe Creek Trail, which follows bubbling creek waters, or the 3.8 mile Cave Overlook Loop, which rises through a thick pine forest to reveal a panoramic view of spectacular rock formations including the massive Square Top.

While Cave Lake is currently drained as part of an environmental refurbishment project, the trails and surrounding nature are still open to guests.



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**Above:**  
Sunny the tiger in a spacious tiger habitat with climbing platforms at Safe Haven Wildlife Sanctuary on Feb. 14, 2024.

### 35. SAFE HAVEN WILDLIFE REFUGE

Located around 40 miles from Winnemucca and 160 miles from Elko, this 320-acre facility provides spacious habitats to exotic animals confiscated from private ownership as well as native wildlife unable to return to the wild.

Lions, tigers, bears, cheetahs, foxes, servals and bobcats are just some of the animals guests can see on guided tours of the refuge.

Each animal has a personalized and enriching habitat. Features include swimming pools climbing platforms and heated dens.



LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

The Ruby Mountains reflect into Ruby Lake in March 2024.

## 26. RUBY LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (FISHING AND OFF-ROADING)

Almost a two-hour drive from Elko, this 39,928-acre wildlife refuge is a truly remote recreational getaway, combining meadows, marsh and mountains.

Ruby Valley Road passes by several lake “units” dotted with boat landings, marsh trailheads and fishing piers.

Birdwatching is a popular activity as well, with flocks of waterfowl constantly interacting with the lake. Over 200 species of birds have been documented at Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, so bring a camera.

Ruby Lake is home to the Relict Dace native fish species as well.

The Ruby Lake wilderness once hosted the Pony Express route. Visitors can see the Pony Express trail site south of Y Pond.





LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

**Nine miles east of the Nevada state line in Utah, the Sun Tunnels were created by artist Nancy Holt in the 1970s. The four 18-foot-long concrete tunnels are placed to capture the sun as it rises on solstice days. You may need a high-profile vehicle and will need a full tank of gas.**

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Created by artist Nancy Holt in the 1970s, these four 18-foot-long concrete tunnels are placed to capture the sun as it rises on solstice days. They also create an unusual visual frame for sunrises and sunsets, causing them to attract travelers who enjoy gazing at the sky.

Dozens of round holes in the concrete are positioned so as to create the shapes of constellations as the sunlight shines through them.

The Sun Tunnels are along a muddy road through a cattle grazing area, so high-clearance vehicles are advised. Nine miles east of the Nevada border, they are isolated in the wilderness of the Utah desert, so a full tank of gas is also necessary.

### **37. SNAKE RIVER (CENTENNIAL WATERFRONT PARK)**

Want to experience the Snake River's many recreation opportunities while framed on either side by vast canyon walls? Centennial Waterfront Park offers views of Twin Falls' Perrine Bridge from below and is a launch point for boating, canoeing, paddle boarding, kayaking and river tours.

The park's placement at the bottom of the Snake River Canyon makes for awe-inspiring scenery, with small waterfalls toppling down the sheer rock faces.

Many hiking trails weave among the jagged riverside rock formations. The nearby Canyon Springs Gold course weaves along the river bank. For visitors to Twin Falls who want to be fully immersed in the local river views, the Centennial Waterfront Park area is an excellent introduction.

Shoshone Falls Park is known as the “Niagara of the West” because its falls, at 212 feet, are actually taller than that eastern namesake.

KEITH KOHN



### 38. SHOSHONE FALLS, DIERKES LAKE

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As you weave down switchbacks to get to the entry, you'll have views of what's to come.

And what's to come is an Idaho waterfall taller than Niagara Falls along the New York-Canada border. The 212-foot falls is one of the largest natural waterfalls in the United States. It is known as the Niagara of the West.

There are many lookouts and trails to wander, but keep your pets safe, as the fall off a ledge won't end well.

The thaw of spring brings the strongest flows of the Snake River to the falls and mist rises over much of the facing observation lookouts.

From Northeastern Nevada, this is an excellent day trip, since the park is open from dawn to dusk. Leave early and still make it back home that night.

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### **39. CRANE FALLS**

This Snake River fishing and motorboating destination in Idaho presents a recreational oasis tucked amidst unusual rock formations. It is an apt place for seeing the majesty of the Snake River in a more secluded setting.

### **40. BRUNEAU DUNES STATE PARK** (shown above)

Amidst the green pastoral farmland of southern Idaho, a desert landscape appears out of nowhere to present a geological surprise: The tallest single structured sand dune in North America, reaching 470 feet in height.

For a one-of-a-kind recreational activity, the dunes are safe for sledding and sand boarding. A 2-mile loop trail circles Dunes Lake and brings visitors close enough to the main dune complex to climb the sand.

On Fridays and Saturdays in April through October, the Bruneau Dunes Observatory offers tours where guests can view the night sky through its telescopes.

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This hydroelectric dam forms a reservoir surrounded by lakeside camping areas such as Cottonwood Park and North Park Campground in Idaho. Those interested in camping right next to the dam can do so at Scout Park.



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**Below:** This small Southern Idaho park provides a downward view of the sheer walls of Bruneau Canyon, where Bruneau River rapids course past trees 800 feet below. A walk is at the canyon's edge. LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM



#### **42. BRUNEAU CANYON OVERLOOK**

A hidden gem in southern Idaho, this small park provides a downward view of the sheer walls of Bruneau Canyon, where Bruneau River rapids course past trees 800 feet below.

A walkway follows the edge of the canyon.

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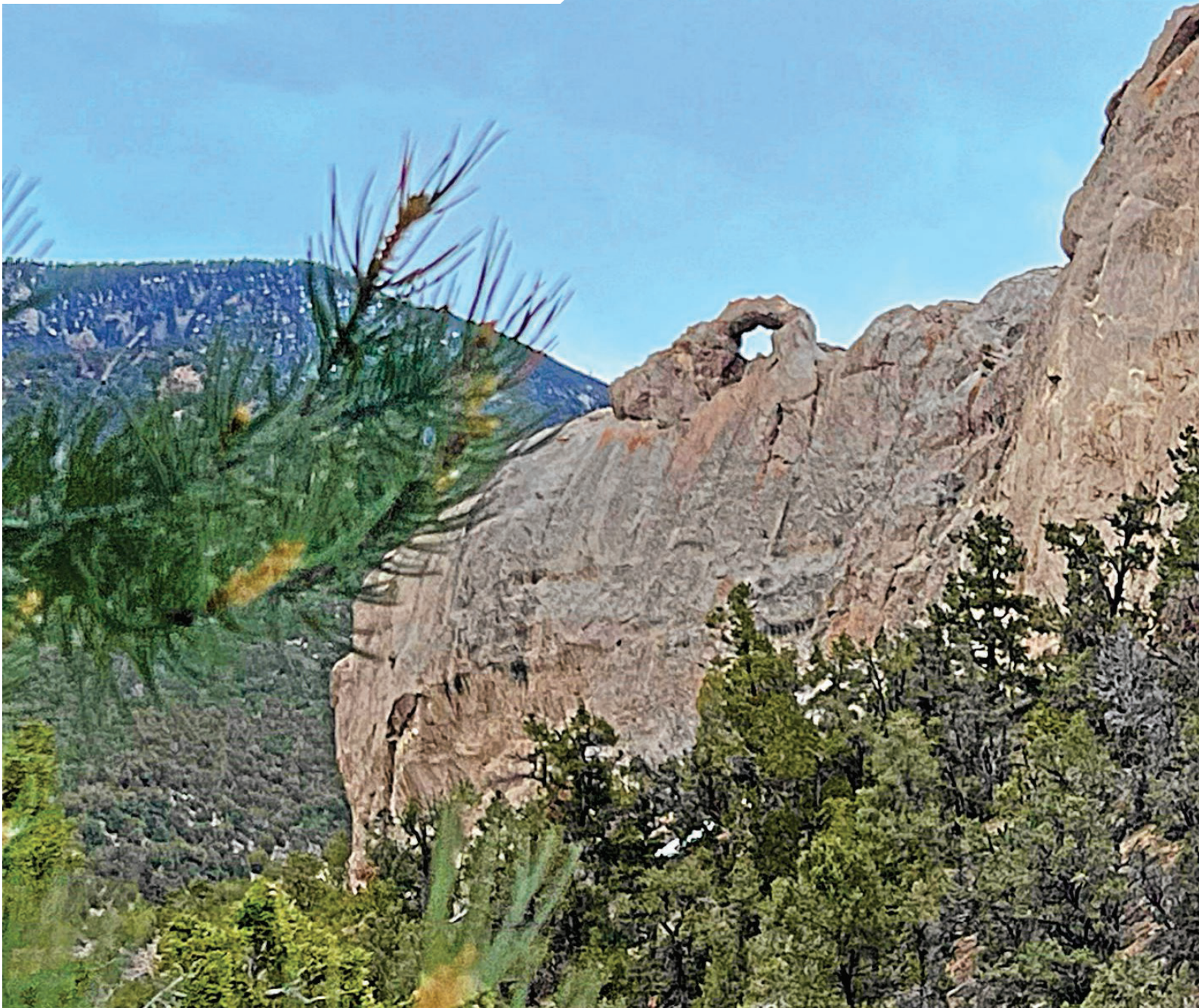
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Check out our Facebook page for all summer events! 775-738-3418 | 1515 Idaho St. Elko, NV  
www.museumelko.org | Proceeds support museum's free projects & programs.

### 34. CAVE LAKE STATE PARK

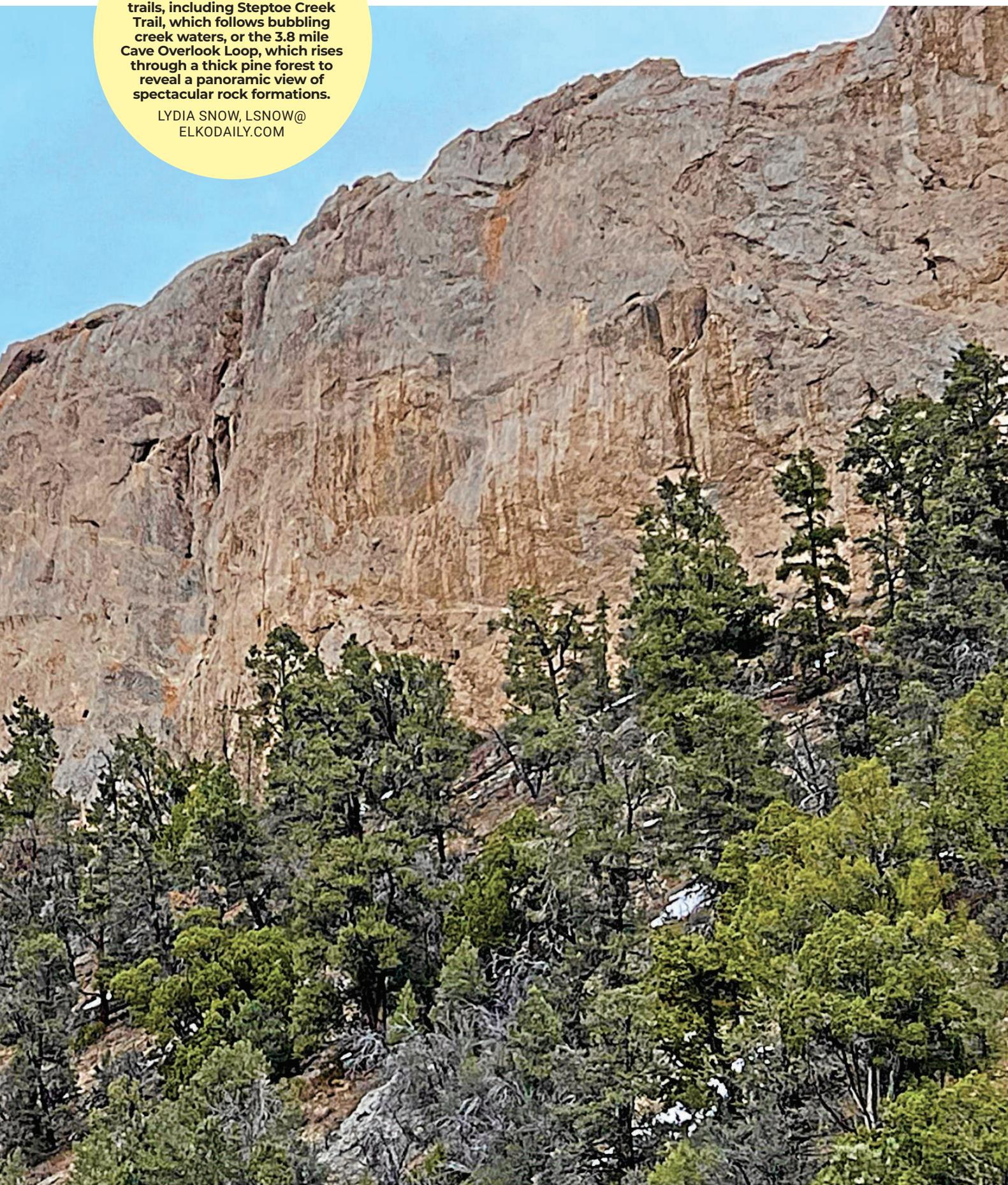
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**49<sup>th</sup> Annual Lamoille Country Fair**

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**Below:** This small Southern Idaho park provides a downward view of the sheer walls of Bruneau Canyon, where Bruneau River rapids course past trees 800 feet below. A walk is at the canyon's edge. LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM



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A walkway follows the edge of the canyon.

# nature walk

## 10 GREAT SPOTS TO STROLL IN ELKO COUNTY

BY LYDIA SNOW | [LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM](mailto:LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM)

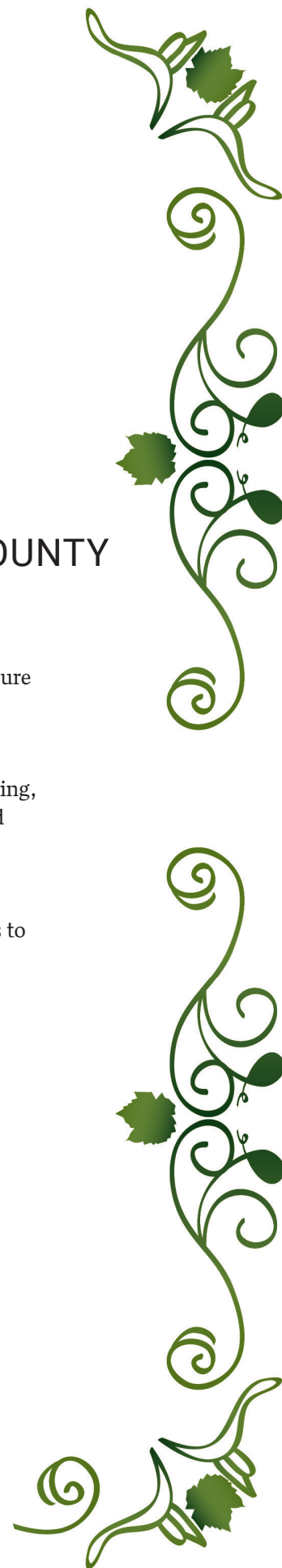
**W**hen you can't get out of town, you can always find adventure just walking in and around the city.

“Walking or biking to school can cut traffic congestion from children being driven to school. It is also healthy. Physical activity at an early age, such as walking or bicycling, helps reduce heart disease, diabetes and other obesity-related illnesses,” said Rebecca Kapuler, the Nevada Department of Transportation multimodal planning assistant chief.

Here are 10 areas around Elko County offering opportunities for walks in nature, whether for a few blocks or a few miles. All walking options have ties to local plants and animals.



LYDIA SNOW, [LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM](mailto:LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM)  
“The Watchful Shepherd” statue at the Northeastern Nevada Museum on Dec. 15, 2023.





LYDIA SNOW , LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

Sunset at the Spring Creek Marina path on Feb. 11, 2024.

1

## ELKO CHAMBER TO NORTHEASTERN NEVADA MUSEUM

This quick stroll passes by the Watchful Shepherd statue and the Kelly Ostler Horizon Hospice Memorial Rose Garden. Plenty of shade trees line the sidewalk. Elko families may enjoy viewing the old livery stable or the two antique horse-drawn wagons on display.

2

## SPRING CREEK MARINA

Highly recommended for families who enjoy morning or evening walks, this outdoors gem in Spring Creek consists of a 32-acre lake with a pier and an 8-acre park with a playground and exercise equipment.

The mile-and-a-half loop trail makes its way around the lake, closely following the bank.

Swans, ducks and geese are often visible on the surface of the water. The marina offers spectacular views of sunrises and sunsets, which reflect into the lake. It also offers an unhindered perspective of the nearby Ruby Mountains.



A view of the historic Carlin Canyon and Humboldt River, pictured on Oct. 22, 2021.

KARL KLEIN

3

### CARLIN CANYON

Carlin's Chestnut Street passes under a freeway bridge, revealing a view of the Humboldt River's currents as they rush around the horseshoe bend of Carlin Canyon. Walk along the road and gaze down the river embankment towards the line of trees shading the bank and the crumbly mountainside across the water.

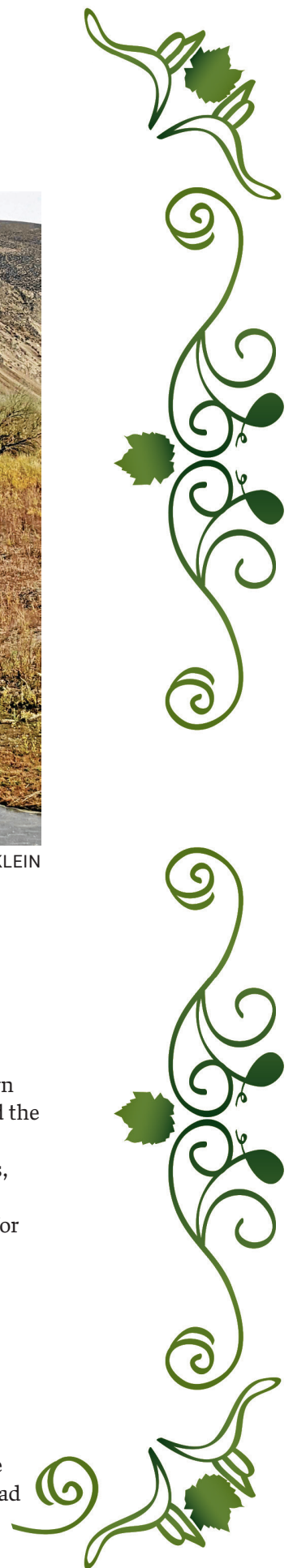
The other side of the road is hemmed in by jagged rock formations, which are worth a gaze or two upward. Without any direct freeway access, this area tends to be light on visitors, making it an apt place for spending time alone in nature.

4

### CARLIN CHINESE GARDENS

On the edge of downtown Carlin, these gardens feature a fish pond with comfortable benches, presenting plenty of room for quiet meditation and nature walks.

An extensive, twisty maze path through thick shrubs offers a more mystery-filled option for outdoor exercise. Wanderers may find a dead end or perhaps a hidden bridge.



## 5 CALIFORNIA TRAIL INTERPRETIVE CENTER PATHS

Behind the California Trail Interpretive Center’s museum, these clearly-marked pathways ascend the juniper-covered hillside and offer a sweeping panorama of the Humboldt River valley below.

They also provide a view of the site of the Hastings Cutoff shortcut, which pioneers traveled on in the 19th century. Interpretation signs placed along the route offer historical facts about the area.



Eclipse viewers gather by the covered wagon at the California Trail interpretive Center on Oct. 14. LYDIA SNOW, LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM

## 6 PEACE PARK

At about 8 acres in size, this park blends small grass hills – perfect for a picnic – with an accessible pathway meandering through sagebrush and crossing Eightmile Creek with two bridges.

The park is split into different areas representing peaceful values, with various symbolic landmarks along the path. The Universal Peace Wheel, an art installation which features symbols of peace from several religions, is a centerpiece of the Peace Park experience.



Mountain View Park in Elko.

GOOGLE

7

## MOUNTAIN VIEW PARK

Interested in running around a grass field rather than strolling down a sidewalk or nature trail?

This tucked-away suburban park offers a wide-open area with soccer goals.

Mountain View Park is also a prime area for playing fetch with dogs.



LYDIA SNOW, [LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM](mailto:LSNOW@ELKODAILY.COM)

Snow coats the ground and trees of Elko's Peace Park (p. 53).





SOUTH FORK STATE RECREATION AREA/SOUTH FORK CANYON NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY LOCATION. SUBMITTED

**8 SOUTH FORK STATE RECREATION AREA TRAILS**

With coves and points along its perimeter, as well as small snippets of beach, the South Fork Reservoir is fit for a few hours of exploration.

For a small parking fee, visitors can follow a system of trails along the shoreline's features.

The South Fork Dam Trail allows them to walk along the top of the dam structure and see the reservoir's water flow through to the other side where it becomes the South Fork Humboldt River.

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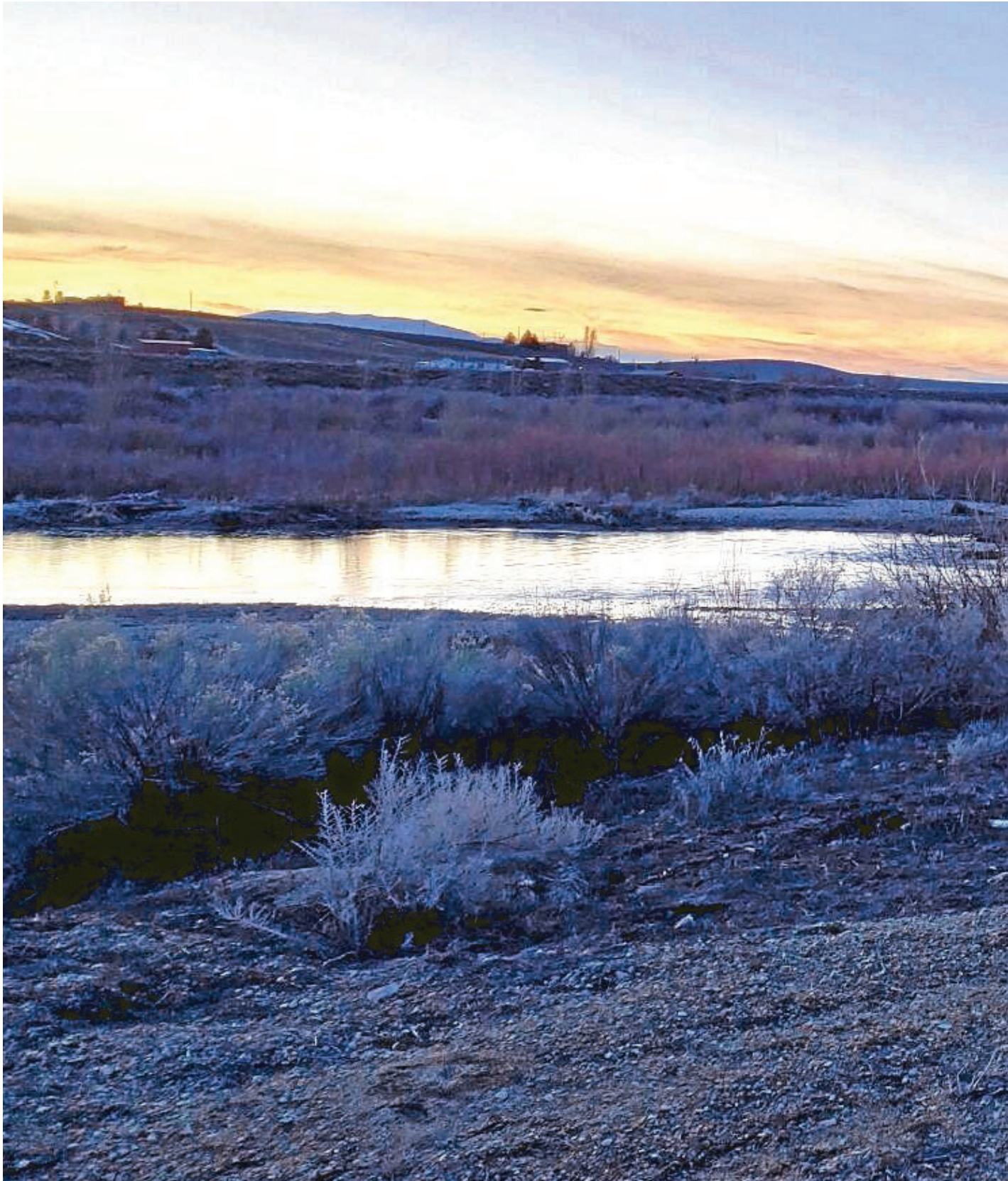
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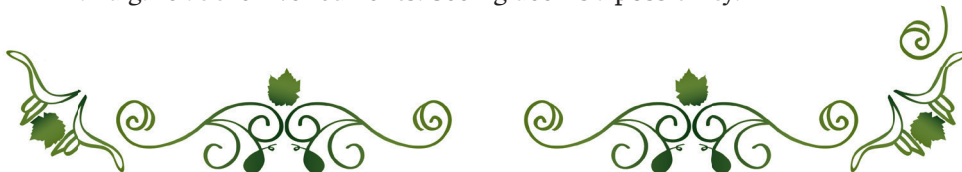
**Below:** The sun sets behind the South Fork Meadows Humboldt Trail at South Fork State Recreation Area, a 2.9-mile loop that passes through different types of terrain. NEVADA OUTDOORS SCHOOL



## **SOUTH FORK MEADOWS HUMBOLDT TRAIL**

Just below the South Fork Reservoir, the Humboldt Trail is a 2.9 mile loop which passes through two different kinds of terrain: flatter brushy areas and the banks of the South Fork Humboldt River.

With its flat, gravel-based surface, the trail is more relaxing than challenging. A pavilion halfway along the trail offers a place to take a break and gaze at the river currents. Seeing deer is a possibility.





USFWS

The Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge lies at the southern end of Ruby Valley in northeast Nevada. Flanked on the west by the rugged and scenic Ruby Mountains, it is one of the most remote refuges in the lower 48 states. Identified as one of the 500 “Globally Important Bird Areas” by the American Bird Conservancy, Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge serves as one of the most critical waterfowl nesting areas in the Great Basin and intermountain West. The South Marsh supports the highest concentration of nesting canvasbacks in North America.

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## RUBY LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

At the fishing and birdwatching area in the center of the refuge, visitors can walk along the side of the fish ponds and watch flocks of birds land on the water.

Over 200 species of birds have been documented at Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, so bring a camera.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY NEVADA OUTDOOR SCHOOL.  
**Fourth-grade students attend a Nevada Outdoor School trout release education session at the Carlin Chinese Gardens (p. 52) on April 18, 2023.**



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FOR FULL EVENT SCHEDULE



## SATURDAY

Golf Tourney	8:00AM
Kick-off	2:00PM
Handball Games	6:00PM
Live Music	9:00PM

## SUNDAY

Mass	10:00AM
Bread Contest	11:00AM
Picnic Lunch	12:00PM
Dance Performances & Rural Sport Exhibition	1:00PM

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