



County History



County History

Carson City County

Pioneer Abraham Curry arrived in Eagle Valley in 1858 and soon thereafter surveyed and platted a town site. The farsighted, optimistic, and astute Curry set aside 10 acres expressly for the construction of a capitol complex before the formation of the Nevada Territory in 1861. Carson City is named for the nearby Carson River, which explorer John C. Fre'mont named after his scout, Christopher "Kit" Carson during the 1843-1844 expedition. Carson City was soon designated both the territorial capital and county seat of Ormsby County.



Carson Street

U.S. President Abraham Lincoln, recognizing the importance of Nevada's silver and gold ore to the Union's Civil War effort, and the importance of the fast approaching presidential election, President Lincoln signed the proclamation that ushered Nevada into statehood on October 31, 1864. Carson City was selected as the state capital at the constitutional convention and it has retained that honor to the present day. Following the discovery of gold and silver on the nearby Comstock Lode in 1859, Carson City became a thriving commercial center. The booming mines in Virginia City, Gold Hill, and Silver City resulted in quartz reduction mills being built along the Carson River to process the ore. Lumber for mine timbers and cordwood was provided from the Sierra Nevada mountains around Lake Tahoe. The Virginia and Truckee Railroad was built in 1870 to connect the Comstock mines with the river mills, and to bring lumber and supplies back to the mines. The United States Mint in Carson City was completed in 1869; it is today the site of the Nevada State Museum.

Lyon County

Lyon County was created on November 25, 1861, as one of the original nine counties of the Territory of Nevada. The county's name is believed to commemorate a hero of the Indian wars, Captain Robert Lyon, who came to Nevada in June of 1850. Major communities in Lyon County include Yerington, Fernley and Dayton.

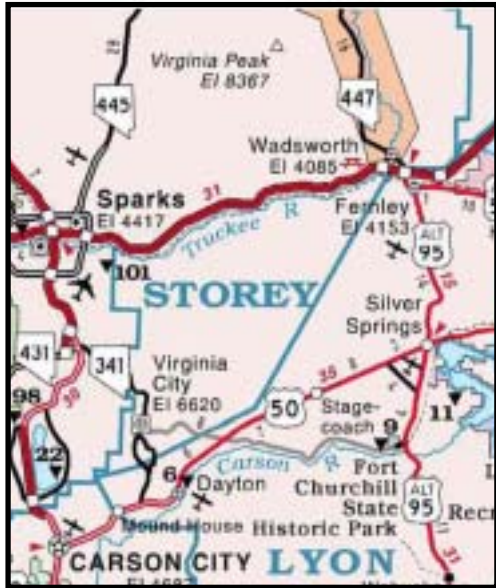
Yerington currently serves as the Lyon County seat, and is located in the center of the lush Mason Valley agricultural area. Fernley was established as the canal township in 1904, as farmland was being irrigated as part of the Newlands Project. Due in large part to the development of two industrial parks, the Tahoe Reno Industrial Park, located at the Tracy-Clark Station exit on I-80, and the Western Nevada Industrial Park, located on the east side of town near the East Main Street exit on I-80 Fernley's population has grown significantly. The recent growth spurt led Fernley to incorporate on July 1, 2001. Dayton is one of Nevada's earliest settlements situated along the Carson River it was a stopping place for California bound pioneers. Gold was discovered at the mouth of Gold Canyon near Dayton in 1849, which subsequently led to prospecting in the canyons to the west at Gold Hill and Virginia City. The Sutro Tunnel was dug through four miles of mountain for the purpose of draining hot water out of Virginia City mine shafts. One of the first water projects in the county was the construction of the Reese ditch in 1856. The purpose of the ditch was to carry water from the Carson River to the entrance of Gold Canyon where it was used for placer mining. For many years the town of Dayton prospered as a mill and trading center and was the county seat for Lyon County until 1911.



Amazon.com Fernley



Smith Valley



Storey County

Storey County was created on November 25, 1861, as one of the original nine counties of the Territory of Nevada. Virginia City is best known for the Comstock Lode that produced nearly \$400,000,000 in silver and gold during the Comstock mining era between 1859 and 1893. The Comstock Lode marked one of the richest silver strikes in North American history, and began a population influx to western Nevada, which rapidly accelerated the demands for the region's natural resources. In 1876, the region had a population of 23,000 which represented 37% of the state population by 1930, the population had dwindled to only 500 residents, signifying the "boom and bust" economy of the region. Due to the large population in Storey County the economies of the Truckee Meadows, Carson Valley, Carson City, Douglas County, and Churchill County benefited. In addition, Virginia City supplied much of the necessary capital to build San Francisco.



Alcoa Plant



Virginia City

Churchill County

Churchill County was created on November 25, 1861, but, it remained attached to Lyon County for judicial and revenue purposes. It did not become a distinct county until 1864, at which time La Plata was selected as the county seat. The county was named after Fort Churchill, which was built along the lower Carson River shortly after the Pyramid Lake War of 1860.

Another early settlement in Churchill County was Stillwater. The town originated as an overland stage station in 1862, and was granted a post office in 1865, in 1867 it took over county seat designation. Farmers in the area developed one of the state's first irrigation systems to supply mining camps with farm produce. Today the area is home to the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, which contains nearly 77,000 acres of lands managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Reclamation Act of 1902, signed by U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt, created the Lahontan Valley Irrigation District. Beginning with the completion of the Derby Diversion Dam on the Truckee River, a 31.5 mile canal to the Carson River and Lahontan Dam, the Newlands Project became the focus of homesteading and farming activity in western Nevada.

The city of Fallon began as a dusty crossroads on Mike Fallon's ranch. In 1896, a post office was established, and by 1903 Fallon had captured the County Seat from the town of Stillwater. The wood-frame courthouse, built that same year, is still in use today, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The courthouse was recently restored to its original condition.



NAS Fallon



Truckee River

Washoe County

In the late summer of 1844, the Truckee River route became an alternate route for California-bound emigrants such as the Stephen-Murphy-Townsend Party. By 1859, C.W. Fuller established Fullers Ferry, which consisted of a small lodging house, a ferry, and a bridge at a location that would later become the center of Reno. In 1868, the Central Pacific Railroad generally followed the Truckee River's course from Truckee, California. Railroad officials soon platted the town around the newly-constructed railroad. The town's name was chosen by railroad officials to honor a slain Civil War officer, General Jesse Reno. The advent of the Central Pacific Railroad in 1868 effectively brought the era of the wagon train to a close.

Sparks Reno's eastern neighbor city was named in honor of John Sparks, Elko County rancher and Governor of Nevada. It sprang into existence in 1903 as a new division point on the Southern Pacific Railroad. The Truckee Meadows has long served as a focal point for economic activity in northern Nevada. Reno's early fortune was tied to mining, milling and lumbering activities. Washoe County was always prosperous compared to other areas because of the railroad gambling was not prosperous until after World War II.



Victorian Square