

THE HIGHWAY 50 SURVIVAL CHALLENGE

In July 1986, *Life* magazine described Nevada's Highway 50 from Ely to Fernley as the "Loneliest Road in America." *Life* said there were no attractions or points of interest along the 287-mile stretch of road and recommended that drivers have "survival skills" to travel the route.

But Nevadans knew better. They knew that Highway 50 was wide and open — but also one of the state's most scenic and historic corridors. They knew it retraced the route of the Pony Express and Overland Stagecoach trails and passed through some of the best-preserved 19th century mining towns in the state. They also knew it was filled with recreational opportunities ranging from riding off-road vehicles on the slopes of Sand Mountain to mountain biking on trails around Austin.

And they knew it really wasn't so lonely.

The Highway 50 Survival Guide is a challenge to travelers to learn for themselves about America's Loneliest Road. Take the trip across Nevada's heartland, stop in the five largest towns (Fernley, Fallon, Austin, Eureka and Ely) to get your Official Highway 50 Survival Guide validated and discover it for yourself.

If you dare.



Reno

FERNLEY

27 Miles

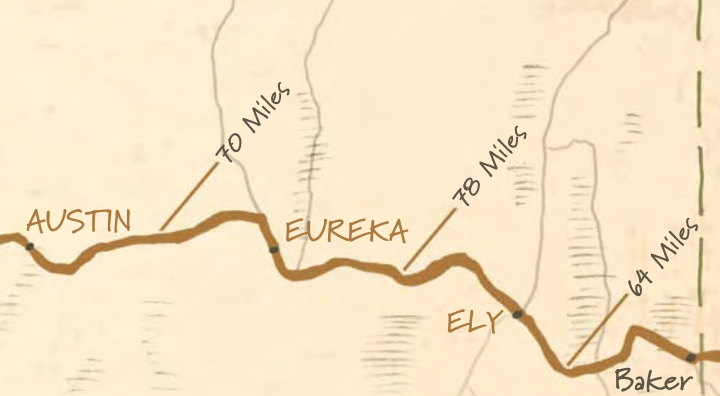
FALLON

112 Miles

★
Carson City

WELCOME TO

HWY 50



“It’s totally empty,” says an AAA counselor. ‘There are no points of interest. We don’t recommend it.’ The 287-mile stretch of U.S. 50 running from Ely to Fernley, Nev., passes nine towns, two abandoned mining camps, a few gas pumps and the occasional coyote. ‘We warn all motorists not to drive there,’ says the AAA rep, ‘unless they’re confident of their survival skills.’”

- **Life magazine describing Nevada’s U.S. 50 as the Loneliest Road in America, July 1986.**





HERE'S HOW TO BECOME A LONELIEST ROAD SURVIVOR

As you travel the route, take your Highway 50 Survival Guide to any participating chamber of commerce, business, museum or visitors center in Fernley, Fallon, Austin, Eureka and Ely that displays a sign proclaiming "Validate Your Highway 50 Survival Guide Here." A complete list of participating locations can be found in the back of this booklet.

At each stop, have the back flap in your guide validated with each community's official stamp.

When you've had the flap stamped in each community, fill in your name and address, tear off the back flap, which doubles as a postage-paid postcard, and drop it in the mail to the Nevada Commission on Tourism.

In return, you'll receive an official Highway 50 Survivor certificate and a souvenir to commemorate your successful journey across the Loneliest Road in America.

Also, feel free to drop us a line telling us about your Highway 50 adventure. The best letters will appear on the Nevada Commission on Tourism's Highway 50 Survival Guide Web site, www.travelnevada.com.

HIGHWAY 50 SURVIVAL GUIDE

The journey across America's Loneliest Road begins with you. While it's true that Highway 50 is lonely — and, according to *Life* magazine, you could need survival skills to make the trip — that doesn't mean there isn't anything out there. Whether you're embarking on the trip from the east or west, Nevada's Highway 50 is your pathway to the real Nevada.

However, Highway 50 is more than just a road. It's a link to unsurpassed recreational opportunities including hiking, climbing, mountain biking, motorcycle touring, off-roading, horseback riding, sandboarding and camping. RVers will enjoy exploring the road's scenic, wide-open vistas, friendly full-service communities and historic mining and railroad towns.

From the west, Highway 50 enters Nevada at beautiful Lake Tahoe, home of world class hotel-casinos and many of the country's best ski resorts. From there, the road passes through Carson City, Nevada's state capital, which boasts a large historic district, and historic Dayton, one of the state's oldest settlements and home of Dayton State Park, which offers camping, picnicking, hiking and biking.



FERNLEY

Located on Alternate Highway 50, where the Loneliest Road in America intersects with Interstate 80, Fernley offers plenty of roadside motels, casinos, restaurants and gas stations. Here, travelers can stock up on supplies before heading out onto the Loneliest Road.

INFO: Fernley Chamber of Commerce,
775-575-4459, www.fernleynvchamber.com



FALLON

Fallon is one of Nevada's agricultural centers, famous for its delicious "Hearts of Gold" cantaloupes. The region is also one of the state's premier bird-watching areas, particularly at the Stillwater Wildlife Refuge, 15 miles north of Fallon.

Visitors will find a number of historic and recreational attractions in the Fallon area:

- Fort Churchill, 10 miles south of the intersection of Highway 50 and U.S. 95, was built in 1860 by the U.S. Army to provide protection for western Nevada settlers. Now a state park, it offers a visitor center and campground.
- Lahontan State Reservoir, 15 miles west of Fallon, offers fishing, water sports and camping.
- Grimes Point/Hidden Cave, 10 miles east of Fallon, is an archaeological site containing prehistoric Native



American rock carvings called petroglyphs. Hidden Cave, open for guided tours, has yielded many important Indian artifacts.

- Sand Mountain, 32 miles east of Fallon, is a two-mile long mound of sand rising several hundred feet that is popular with ATV riders and sandboarders (it's like snowboarding on sand).
- The Old Shoe Tree, 48 miles east of Fallon, is a giant cottonwood filled with hanging shoes. The tradition is said to have started following an argument between newlyweds, during which one tossed the other's shoes into the tree. When they reconciled, the other reciprocated, and folks have been tossing their footwear into the tree ever since.

**INFO: Fallon Convention & Tourism Authority,
775-423-4556, www.fallontourism.com**



AUSTIN

Once one of Nevada's most prosperous mining camps, Austin has managed to retain its 19th century character. Today, Austin is one of Central Nevada's most popular mountain-biking areas and gateway to the Toiyabe Mountains, which offer pristine hiking and overnight camping.

Among the reminders of the town's glorious past:

- Austin's churches include St. George's Episcopal Church, consecrated in 1878 and still in use, the former St. Augustine's Catholic Church, erected in 1866, and the former Methodist Church, also built in 1866.
- Stokes Castle, located at the western edge of town, is an unusual, three-story rock tower (now abandoned) built in 1897 by a member of the family that owned many of the town's mines.
- Gridley Store was constructed in 1863 by merchant Reuel Gridley, who is best remembered for losing an election bet and carrying a sack of flour through town. He auctioned the sack numerous times to raise money for the Sanitary Fund, forerunner of the Red Cross, eventually raising thousands of dollars.
- Historic Pony Express and Overland Stagecoach sites are located along Highway 50 between Austin and Fallon. Sites can be found at Cold Springs, Middlegate and Sand Springs.

**INFO: Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce,
775-964-2200, www.austinnevada.com**





EUREKA

Few Nevada mining towns have survived the ravages of time as well as Eureka, a mid-19th century silver mining center. Visitors will find dozens of historic sites in one of Nevada's best preserved mining towns:

- Eureka Opera House, built in 1880, is a picturesque brick structure that has been fully restored and now serves as a convention center and gallery.
- Eureka Courthouse, which opened in 1879, has been restored and is still the county courthouse.
- Eureka Sentinel Museum houses a collection of local and regional historic displays and artifacts in the former Eureka Sentinel newspaper offices, built in 1879.
- Eureka's cemeteries, located southeast of the town, include more than a half-dozen burial grounds representing various social organizations, religious and ethnic groups.

INFO: Eureka Opera House,
775-237-6006, www.co.eureka.nv.us



ELY

This historic mining and railroad community has evolved into one of eastern Nevada's recreational hubs. Within miles of this full-service community, you'll find Cave Lake State Park, a popular spot for fishing, hiking, camping and mountain biking as well as the Schell Creek Range, noted for its hunting.

Other Ely area attractions:

- Nevada Northern Railway is an early 20th century shortline railroad that once served local copper mines. In addition to touring the former depot, railroad offices and rail yard, visitors can ride the train on selected dates.
- White Pine County Public Museum is a repository of historic displays tracing the area's history and development. Several local historic buildings have been relocated to the museum grounds.
- Ward Charcoal Ovens is a state park housing six 30-foot high, beehive-shaped stone ovens built in 1873 to provide charcoal for local mines. The park offers picnicking and rustic hiking and biking trails.

**INFO: Bristlecone Convention Center,
775-289-3720, www.elynevada.com**





B A K E R / GREAT BASIN NATIONAL PARK

At the eastern end of Highway 50 in Nevada is the tiny hamlet of Baker, which offers limited services and accommodations. Baker serves as the entrance to Great Basin National Park, home of Lehman Caves, which contain fascinating limestone formations.

The park's attractions also include Wheeler Peak, site of a permanent glacier, and several groves of Bristlecone pine trees, the world's oldest living things. Visitors will find developed hiking trails, campgrounds and an interpretive center.

INFO: Great Basin National Park,
775-234-7331, www.greatbasinpark.com



Validate your Highway 50 Survival Guide at one of the following locations in each community or any participating business that proudly displays a sign proclaiming, "Validate Your Highway 50 Survival Guide Here."

AUSTIN

Lander County Courthouse
122 Main St., Austin, NV 89310
775-964-2447

ELY

Bristlecone Convention Center
150 Sixth St., Ely, NV 89301
775-289-3720

Nevada Northern Railway Museum
11th St. and Ave. A, East Ely, NV 89315
775-289-2085

White Pine Chamber of Commerce
636 Aultman St., Ely, NV 89301
775-289-8877

White Pine County Public Museum
2000 Aultman St., Ely, NV 89301
775-289-4710

EUREKA

Eureka Opera House
31 S. Main St., Eureka, NV 89316
775-237-6006

Eureka Sentinel Museum
10 N. Monroe St., Eureka, NV 89316
775-237-5010

FALLON

Churchill County Museum & Archives
1050 S. Maine St., Fallon, NV 89406
775-423-3677

Fallon Convention & Tourism Authority
100 Campus Way, Fallon, NV 89406
775-423-4556

Greater Fallon Chamber of Commerce
85 N. Taylor St., Fallon, NV 89406
775-423-2544

FERNLEY

Fernley Chamber of Commerce
70 N. West St., Fernley, NV 89408
775-575-4459

