

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FERNLEY SWALES ON THE TRUCKEE RIVER ROUTE OF THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL	
8,500 BC	First Americans occupy shores of receding glacial Lake Lahontan.
1833, Oct.	Joseph Walker expedition crosses the Carson sink near Fallon. (Mummy at Spirit Cave, Grimes Point, dated at 10,600 years before present.)
1843, Jan. 16	Fremont Expedition leaves the Big Bend of the Salmon Trout (Truckee) River and crosses the Fernley Swales on the way south to the Carson Sink.
1844	Stephens-Townsend-Murphy party (11 wagons, 26 men, 8 women, 16 children) cross the Forty-Mile Desert to the Big Bend of the Truckee River, following directions given them at the Humboldt sink by Paiute Chief "Truckee".
1845, Spring	Mountain man Caleb Greenwood led a pack party through the Fernley Swales to establish the new route over Stephens (Donner) Pass.
1845, year end	Estimated 250 emigrants through the Fernley Swales on the Truckee River Route of the California Trail.
1846, Oct. 15	The ill-fated Donner Party through the Fernley Swales.
1846, year end	Estimated 1,500 emigrants through the Fernley Swales.
1848, Jan.	Gold discovered in California at Sutter's Fort.
1848, August	A party of the 'Mormon Battalion', returning to Salt Lake from Placerville, blazes a trail eastward across Carson Pass, follows the Carson River to near today's Silver Springs, then joins the Truckee River Route at the Big Bend of the Truckee River. After traveling east through the Swales they meet emigrant wagons heading west and the news of the discovery of gold and the new easier route over Carson Pass starts to divert westbound emigrants from the Truckee River Route.
1849, year end	Estimated 9,000 emigrants through the Fernley Swales compared to 12,000 taking the new Carson River Route.
1850	Nevada City Road opened, increased traffic through the Fernley Swales.
1850, Nov.	Waldo Relief Party from Sacramento finds thousands of suffering emigrants across the Forty-Mile Desert.
1850, year end	Estimated 4,500 emigrants through the Fernley Swales; 40,500 on the Carson River Route.
1851	Beckwourth Trail opened, increased traffic through the Fernley Swales.
1852	Heness Pass Road opened, increased traffic through the Fernley Swales.
1864	Truckee River Route improved across Donner Pass.
1868, July 6	July 6. Central Pacific Railroad from California reaches Wadsworth.
1869, May 10	May 10. Central and Union Pacific Railroads joined at Promontory, Utah, opening the transcontinental railroad to westward migration.
1902	Central Pacific Railroad relocated from the Swales south to Hazen for construction of the Newlands Irrigation Project
1903	Railroad tracks and ties removed from the Fernley Swales; wagon traffic moves to the abandoned railroad bed.
1903, June 26	Tom Fitch and Marius Krarup in a 12 H.P. Packard through the Swales on the first transcontinental auto trip from San Francisco to New York across Nevada.
1914	Lincoln Highway (today's US-50) named.
1917	New Nevada Department of State Highways designates the abandoned Central Pacific railroad grade as Nevada Route 1. The Lincoln Highway designated as Nevada Route 2.
1920	Nevada Route 1 designated as the Victory Highway from San Francisco to New York City

1928	Hobbs Guide to the Victory Highway: "The 93 miles between Sparks and Lovelock ... is mostly over an old railroad grade. It is narrow, somewhat rough... ."
1929	Nevada State Highway map adds the title "US-40" to Nevada 1 (Victory Highway) and "US-50" to Nevada 2 (Lincoln Highway).
1932	Victory Highway route moved south through Fernley, named US-40
1965	I-80 completed
1992	California Trail designated by National Park Service as a National Historic Trail
1998, June 13	First Fernley Swales cleanup organized by Tom Fee, Oregon-California Trails Association
2001	Land exchange from BLM to Wade Corporation establishes a 133-acre Historic Preservation Easement for a 1-mile section of the California Trail and Central Pacific grade.
2001-2013	Annual Fernley Swales cleanups, either in June or September
2017, Summer	California Trail display installed near I-80 Exit 48
2017, Sept. 30	Annual Fernley Swales cleanups resumed