

Genoa trail provides plenty of recreation sans snow



Views into the farm lands of the Carson Valley dominate the trail. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

GENOA – Layers were coming off relatively quickly – it was that warm. The ground was barren, even the higher elevations didn't have much white stuff. It's not supposed to still be hiking season.

Five us and that dog named AJ ushered out 2017 with a hike instead of a snowshoe. And today, the same trek would be possible. Things might be different later this week, but because the hike was outside the basin, odds are it will still be do-able this weekend and beyond.

With Mother Nature being spastic this winter, one has to climb a bit for snow, or drop in elevation to hike. We chose the latter on New Year's Eve.

The Eagle Ridge Loop (6.5 miles) is part of the larger Genoa Trail System. A number of options are available, including connecting to the Tahoe Rim Trail.



Barb gets a better view from the one rock outcropping along the way. Photo/Kathryn Reed

It's like a different world from Tahoe. Pine trees still dot the landscape, but they are more dispersed and intermingled with other flora. The brown grasses provide their own beauty. With the expansive views, it's easy to see across the valley to the Pine Nuts.

Trail markers at key locations were welcome, especially since none of us had been there before. We also had **printed out a map**, which was good for deciding where to park, start and have our bearings on the trail.

Much of the route is single track, hardpack dirt. It's in great condition.

Mountain bikers are allowed here; a few were making their way up as we were descending. The climb (elevation gain is 1,775

feet) would have had me pushing the bike, and the narrowness of the trail at times would have made me uncomfortable. But mountain biking isn't my sport, either.

The one creek crossing quenched AJ's thirst, though bring water for your canine companions because they'll need it. A substantive wood bridge ensured us two-leggeds didn't have to get wet.

The only real downside to the hike is that it requires walking on pavement to get back to the car, including a stretch along Jacks Valley Road. Still, the shoulder is wide enough to feel safe.



A mountain biker makes his way up the Eagle Ridge Loop.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, take Highway 50 east to Stateline. Take Kingsbury Grade to the Carson Valley. Turn left on Foothill Road. Go through Genoa, then turn left on Centennial Drive.

Park at the corner of Snowshoe Lane. The trailhead is at the end of the lane.