

THE POWER OUTLET

FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER of the SEATTLE ELECTRIC VEHICLE ASSOCIATION

"Education, demonstration, proliferation"

Since 1980



Seattle Electric Vehicle Association

SeattleEVA.org



The Power Outlet is a monthly update about electric vehicle activities in Seattle and around the State of Washington

*The Seattle Electric Vehicle Association (SEVA) is a non-profit organization of volunteers serving the Puget Sound region in Washington State since 1980. SEVA's mission is to **educate, demonstrate and proliferate the adoption of electric vehicles**. Monthly meetings are free and open to anyone interested in electric vehicles, and paid memberships are encouraged.*

SEVA has a [Facebook](#) page, too! Please like and follow us for up-to-the-minute updates.

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- **Support** – Four ways to support SEVA's efforts to transition to electric transportation
- **Resources** and links to Washington EV clubs, associations, charging networks and everything you need for the best electric driving experience and for the future of sustainable transportation.

SEVA members help win a brief reprieve for Yakima Valley Trolleys

Yakima Valley Trolleys, the last historical intact and operational electric interurban trolley railroad in the country, got a new operating agreement last month, thanks in part to the advocacy of several SEVA members. The interurban status is still very much at risk, however, because the City voted on Feb. 17 not to spend city transportation funds on the 6th Avenue project, SEVA President Stephen Johnsen reported.

For the Yakima City Council meeting on Jan. 20, several SEVA members carpooled in a Tesla Model X and a Cybertruck over to Yakima to testify in support of saving the

trolley line. Stephen said a room full of citizens and students rallied in support, too. Kids wrote letters and supporters waved hand-lettered signs. The council then voted 6-1 to renew the operating agreement, but the city still needed to figure out how to fund the street rebuilding project.

On Feb. 17, the council voted 5-2 to not allow any of the city road repair funds to be used for the trolley tracks. They apparently did leave the option to re-add the tracks back into the plan before the actual construction begins in 15 months if the YVT can come up with the extra \$5 to \$7 million required for keeping the tracks. This means the YVT effectively has about 12 months to find funding to keep the tracks connecting it to Selah, or else the country will lose this last historic electric interurban railway. Anyone with grants or other ideas for funding can contact the

YVT: www.yakimavalleytrolleys.org or reach out on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/yakimavalleytrolleys>

While in Yakima, the SEVA volunteers got a tour of the trolley barn full of original equipment and motors from 1907. Then they stopped to charge up at the 300kW+ Tesla charging station in Yakima before heading back west of the mountains.



*Stephen Johnsen shared photos of SEVA's road trip to Yakima to support the vintage trolley line.
Photo by Grace Reamer*

Changes at Tesla

Last month, Tesla announced that it would be ending production of the Model S sedan, first produced in 2012, and the Model X SUV, built on the same chassis and introduced in 2015. According to Tesla, the Model S and X production line at the Fremont factory in California will be retooled to produce the Optimus robot. Tesla is introducing other changes as well, such as eliminating the option to purchase the full self-driving package in favor of offering it as a monthly subscription. SEVA President Stephen Johnsen also reported that Tesla has started taking steps to end all free supercharging for most older Teslas that have salvage or rebuilt titles, even taking it away from cars that had been able to fast charge after an accident. Former SEVA President Jay Donaway confirmed that his salvaged 2013 Model S lost its free Supercharging, and it also lost all fast charging capability, including via a CHAdeMO adapter at non-Tesla charging stations.



FEATURE OF THE MONTH

Are you prepared to evacuate with your EV?



Yu-Chen Chu is part of a team conducting EV evacuation research at the UW. Photo by Grace Reamer

A University of Washington research project is looking for help from EV drivers. The federally funded research project is evaluating EV evacuation preparedness behavior and vulnerability during wildfires.

“We all know that wildfires have become more intense in the west,” said Yu-Chen Chu, a PhD student in the Department of Urban Planning at UW who is working on the research. She explained that most existing research has not considered the special needs of EV users. The new research will help inform future EV infrastructure investment and emergency policies by identifying vulnerabilities in areas at risk of experiencing wildfires. She asked SEVA members for help with the research.

“As EV adoption grows and wildfires become more severe, it is increasingly important to ensure that charging infrastructure and emergency planning can adequately support large-scale evacuations,” Yu-Chen observed.

During February, the UW team is designing a survey for EV drivers, and they plan to distribute it in March and April. They want to hear from EV owners and leaders who live in Okanogan, Chelan, Kittitas, Yakima and Klickitat counties, which are considered to have the highest wildfire risks in the State of Washington. Anyone interested in participating in the survey and research project should contact Yu-Chen at ychu24@uw.edu.

SPOTLIGHT ON ROAD TRIPS

Winter road trip through the West generates list of tips

One of the top pieces of advice that SEVA President Stephen Johnsen offered after returning from an EV road trip is not to block the few pull-through charging stations if you are not hauling a trailer. On a trip from Seattle to Phoenix and back, Stephen and his father encountered more than one occasion when EV drivers pulling a trailer had to get creative in order to charge their car or truck.



A family from Quebec charged up at a solar-powered station and took advantage of a pull-through space while hauling a camping trailer. Photo by Stephen Johnsen

On their journey, they met a family of five from Quebec with their 2016 Model X towing an 1,800-pound AltoSafari teardrop camping trailer. They had taken the setup all over the U.S., Mexico and Central America. To make sure they would be able to charge anywhere, they carried a full set of charging adapters, and they also had a 15-foot Supercharger adapter cable that allows them to access a back-in charging space if a pull-through space is not available.

Driving to Arizona in a 2015 Model S and new Ford Lightning, Stephen and his father found the Tesla charging network to be the most reliable. They appreciated the way the Lightning details how much energy is going to each of the truck's functions. A Rivian adventure charger was the best experience they had besides Tesla

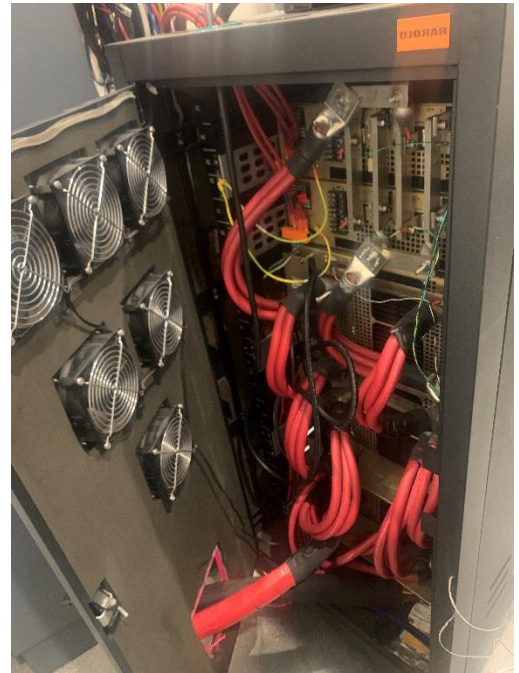
Superchargers, because it uses any credit card. The state-installed charging stations in California and Nevada, however, were very unreliable. Stephen advised it was helpful to check the PlugShare user reviews about operability. He also said a stop at a GM Energy station was one of the worst experiences with poor customer service. Thankfully another station at the location worked. SEVA member Mark Schnell reported, however, that his road trip last summer in his GM Denali EV had no problem with GM charging stations.

A highlight of the trip, Stephen said, was a visit to the [Electric Goddess](#) battery/contactors/connector/cell testing laboratory in Los Angeles. Luke Workman and his wife, Erika, gave them a



Stephen with Luke and Erika Workman at their Electric Goddess lab in Los Angeles. Photos by Stephen Johnsen

tour of their equipment that includes up to 6,500 amps continuous discharge capabilities as well as cell cycling. They embed temperature sensors into battery cells and test thermal runaway. They also do a lot of testing for satellites and space missions, Stephen said.



Here are some tips from Stephen for the best EV road trip experiences:

- Let the car's nav system direct you where and when to charge. Tesla's system works great, Ford's is pretty good, too; Nissan is not as reliable. A Better Route Planner (ABRP) app is helpful.
- If the car has a gauge showing the estimated state-of-charge percent for arrival at your destination, then watch the power usage and adjust your speed if your battery level isn't keeping up with the estimate.
- On some EVs, navigating to a charging station will automatically preheat the battery for optimum charging speed.
- Charging speed is generally faster the warmer the battery is and the emptier it is. On the 2015 Tesla Model S85, unless you arrived at a Supercharger at less than 10 percent SOC, the charging is VERY slow.
- Increase tire pressure and monitor pressures as you drive. Colder temperatures typically lead to lower tire pressures and less efficiency. Use lighter-weight wheels and tires to improve range and handling.
- When you are running low on charge and worried about making it to the next charging station, just slow down.
- Always check the elevation gain and how it will affect your range. The Ford Lightning even has the option of showing an altimeter for real-time elevation monitoring as you travel!
- Stay at hotels with charging available on site and do any fast charging soon after arriving so that it will be quicker while the battery is still warm. Then leave it overnight on the L2 at the hotel to save time and wake up to a full charge.

EVENTS

Drive Electric Earth Month - Bellevue College will once again host SEVA's DEEM event in April. SEVA plans an exhibit of at least a dozen EVs right outside of the student union building, where hundreds of students and faculty cross the campus daily. Event details and sign-up to come soon at [Drive Electric Earth Month](#).



Greenwood Car Show – June 27 - save the date! SEVA once again will be exhibiting at the Greenwood Car Show, the biggest car show in the Northwest. The show is on the last Saturday in June on Greenwood Avenue. More details to come soon [here](#).

POLICY REPORT

Direct EV sales effort revived in Olympia

With just three weeks left in the 2026 legislative session, we have some progress to report from Olympia this week. The lobbyists for Rivian have reached a compromise with the auto dealers association on a bill that finally would allow direct EV sales in Washington. The legislation is drawn very narrowly so that only Rivian and Lucid would be eligible to provide sales directly from the manufacturer, in addition to Tesla, which already was authorized. Senate Bill 6354 is sponsored by Sens. Liias and King and had a hearing in the Senate Transportation Committee. It also requires Rivian and Lucid to maintain in-state service centers and to acquire dealers licenses. Read the text [here](#). Sign up to register your position [here](#).

In addition, the state's supplemental transportation budget for the 2025-27 biennium proposes to add \$13 million for EV charging infrastructure. Senate Bill 6005 and House Bill 2306 are sponsored by Transportation Committee chairs Sen. Liias and Rep. Fey. The bills direct \$13 million of the carbon emissions reduction account to grants for installation of community EVSEs. Grants will go to local governments, tribes and utilities for level 2 and above charging facilities, with priority to (1) multi-family housing, (2) publicly available locations, (3) schools and school districts, (4) government buildings and public hospitals, and (5) other eligible projects. The bill directs \$2 million of the total to tribes, and \$175,000 is reserved for a pilot project to convert take-home state fleet vehicles to electric. Read the text [here](#) and [here](#). Sign up to register your position [here](#) and [here](#).

It takes just a minute to sign in with the online [Committee Sign In](#) portal to register your support or opposition to a bill, submit a comment for a public hearing, or sign up to testify online on a Senate or House bill. You also can call and e-mail your state senators and representatives directly - find your district, names and e-mail addresses at www.leg.wa.gov.

CLUB NEWS

Plug-In North Central Washington has a great round-up of testimonials about the use of EVs for work, from hauling vegetation off-road for the Nature Conservancy to operating police vehicles. New registration numbers also show the number of EVs in Chelan and Douglas counties has quadrupled in the past six years. Also find updates on charging station installations and how to rent an EV work truck. Read all about it [here](#).

Coltura's social media video campaign to advocate driving electric is taking off. Check out SEVA member Kevin Boze talking about the engineering advantages of EVs [here](#). If you would like to help with your own advocacy video, send it to info@coltura.org. Read more about Coltura's work in their latest [newsletter](#).

Seattle Electric Vehicle Association meets at 7 p.m. the second Tuesday of every month at rotating locations. The next meeting is on Tuesday, **March 10, 2026** at MASA Synagogue in the old Rainier Brewery building in south Seattle. The address is 3100 Airport Way South, Building 8, Unit, 110. Gather to share cars at 6:30 p.m. Bring a friend. Open to everyone! At the February Annual meeting, SEVA Treasurer Charlie Tsai presented the annual financial report, which showed a balance of \$1,000 more than last year, thanks in part to memberships and a donation from the Johansen Family Foundation. Two new SEVA Board members were elected – Paul Kahle as Vice President and Grace Reamer as Secretary. Board President Stephen Johnsen thanked outgoing officers Rob Mathewson and Eric Eskilson for their two years of service.

Please share your club news as well as your personal journey into the world of electric driving, along with photos. SEVA would like to spotlight profiles of EV pioneers in our newsletter. Please send your stories and photos to gvreamer@gmail.com

SUPPORT

Please support SEVA and its outreach and advocacy activities with a donation. Your financial donation will help us reach more policymakers, funders and drivers statewide to advocate electric mobility, and will support expansion of our online resources. SEVA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, and any contribution you make is fully tax-deductible. Here are four ways you can help:

1. Make a one-time online donation through PayPal at [DONATE](#).
2. You also can make a direct contribution by check. The check should be made out to SEVA and mailed to our SEVA Treasurer at: P.O. Box 92, Renton, WA 98057-0092.
3. Register and contribute annual dues as a member of SEVA at [MEMBERSHIP](#).
4. Join us! Bring yourself, your EV and your enthusiasm for driving electric to our monthly meetings, events and car shows and share your knowledge and passion.

RESOURCES

SEVA aims to maintain a comprehensive list of the EV advocacy efforts ongoing in Washington, so we count on you to keep our lists and our website updated with the most current information. Following are the organizations and efforts we have compiled so far in Washington that have a presence online and on social media:

Websites:

- Drive Electric Washington – DriveElectricWA.org
- Seattle Electric Vehicle Association - SeattleEVA.org
- Plug-In America - PlugInAmerica.org
- Electric Auto Association - ElectricAuto.org
- Forth - ForthMobility.org
- Plugshare - Plugshare.com
- National Drive Electric Week - DriveElectricWeek.org
- Drive Electric Earth Day - DriveElectricEarthDay.org
- Plug In North Central Washington - PlugInNCW.com
- Coltura – Coltura.org
- Thurston Climate Action Team - ThurstonClimateAction.org
- Tesla Owners of Washington - TeslaOwnersWA.org

Social Media:

- [Northwest Tesla Owners](#)
- [Seattle Nissan Leaf Owners](#)
- [Seattle Tesla Model 3 Owners](#)
- [Seattle Electric Vehicle Association](#)
- [Seattle Tesla Model Y Owners](#)
- [Pierce County Electric Vehicle Information Exchange](#)
- [Spokane/Coeur d'Alene Tesla Club](#)
- [Inland NW Tesla Owners Group](#)
- [PNW Tesla](#)
- [Central Washington University EV Club](#)
- [Seattle Chevy Bolt/Bolt EUV Owners](#)
- [San Juan Islands Electric Vehicles](#)
- [Mid-Columbia Electric Vehicle Association](#)

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