

NEWS



Forest Service

*United States
Department of
Agriculture*

Lassen National Forest

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, December 1, 2008
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LAS 09-05

Lassen National Forest Snowmobile Route Restrictions Begin December 26

Lassen National Forest snowmobile routes are closed to all wheeled vehicles including All Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) until March 31, 2009. Lassen National Forest has six major designated snowmobile areas with 477 miles of groomed trails on the Forest. According to Michael Zunino Patrol Captain for the Lassen, "We are concerned about resource protection and visitor safety." "Wheeled vehicles create ruts on groomed trails which result in hazardous conditions for snowmobilers.

Violation of the road and trail closure is not only dangerous, but it can be costly as well. The punishment for violating the order is up to a \$5,000 for an individual, \$10,000 for an organization or imprisonment for not more than six months or both in addition to the cost associated with restoring the trail.

Funding for the snowmobile trails maintenance and grooming comes from the State of California Off Highway Vehicle Division. According to Zunino "This funding allows the Lassen to maintain one of the largest groomed snowmobile trail systems in California." Visitors are reminded any vehicle use is restricted in designated wilderness areas.

Snowmobiling on Lassen National Forest snow routes can be a great and fun experience for many, however, it is wise to ride safely. The following are some ways for everyone to be safe: Always check the weather forecast; never ride alone; make sure you tell someone where you are going and when you will be back; obtain a map of your destination and determine which areas are open to snowmobiles; ride only where permitted and respect private property; wear a helmet, eye protection and other safety gear; respect the environment and try not to disturb wildlife; and always use common sense and courtesy when on the trails.

In the event you do get stranded, "Stay with your vehicle." said Captain Zunino. "It is much easier to find a vehicle in the forest than a person on foot." Vehicles can also provide some shelter from

the elements. While waiting for help to arrive, signal your distress by using emergency flashers and tying a handkerchief or flagging on the antenna or mirror. Be sure to keep the tailpipe clear and a window open while periodically running the engine for warmth.

Additional information about restricted areas or current conditions may be obtained by calling (530) 257-2151 or go to www.fs.fed.us/r5/lassen.

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