



Forest
Service

Lake Tahoe Basin
Management Unit

35 College Drive
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 543-2600
(530) 543-0956 TTY

Date: November 30, 2012

To: File

From: Nancy J. Gibson, Forest Supervisor NJG

Re: Winter Vehicle Use Restrictions (Forest Order 19-12-9)

This Forest Order will restrict winter vehicle use in the areas shown as closed on the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Recreation and Snowmobile Guide Map. It is to be issued under authority of Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations Section 261.50(a) and (b).

Winter vehicle restrictions respond to the need to protect the natural resources and to maintain public safety. Approximately 75% of the Lake Tahoe Basin is National Forest. Receiving over 5 million visitors a year the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) is also an urban forest, where residential areas are adjacent to public lands. This visitation and urban interface, in addition to the popularity of the forest as both a summer and winter recreation destination, have required resource managers to address the need for effective recreation use management and a resource protection program to balance that visitation and recreation use with associated impacts, and develop and implement management strategies that permits visitor use without compromising resource and aesthetic integrity or conflicting with adjacent urban areas.

The LTBMU has identified a range of management strategies for managing winter motor vehicle recreation use within the National Forest. Those actions are a part of the overall Forest management strategy. Accordingly, there is a need for a Forest Order to address areas where resource or public safety concerns may exist. A key guideline for the LTBMU is to manage recreation use while protecting environmental attributes. Actions to achieve that include regulation of the type and amount of use.

Monitoring has shown that unmanaged winter motor vehicle use often occurs adjacent to urban areas, inside designated wilderness areas and inventoried roadless areas, and across sensitive resource areas. This Order prohibits particular use of over-snow vehicles and other motor vehicles on certain trails and in the closed areas. This Order will be in effect until November 30, 2013, only when there is snow on the ground.

Snowmobiles generate a number of impacts that support a need for restrictions and management oversight. Specific impacts from over-snow vehicle use include the effects on:

Wildlife: The Lake Tahoe Basin is home to a variety of wildlife, fish and plant species, some of which are classified as “threatened” by the US Fish & Wildlife Service, or “sensitive,” by the US Forest Service (Regional Forester). In addition, the Basin provides suitable habitat for a variety of species that include such special interest species as the Bald Eagle, California Spotted Owl,

Northern Goshawk, as well as mule deer and black bears. Resource studies have concluded that snowmobiles can have a detrimental effect on wildlife, particularly if that disturbance is unpredictable when and where it occurs. This supports designating specific areas for snowmobiling.

Noise: There is an extensive urban interface with National Forest System lands inside the Tahoe Basin. Numerous snowmobile noise studies have been conducted on these lands and the LTBMU Forest Plan provides noise emission standards. The specific areas designated for snowmobiling minimize noise impacts to urban areas such as residential neighborhoods.

Public Safety: The Lake Tahoe Basin has many uses, ranging from developed ski resorts to designated Wilderness areas, within a relatively small forest area. Areas to be designated for snowmobilers are those that will minimize conflicts with other uses.

In addition, areas that were not within the public land base when the Forest Plan was adopted in 1988 (e.g. High Meadows and Incline Lakes), need to be addressed. When appropriate, these areas will follow those standards and guidelines (regarding recreational uses) as described in the contiguous Management Area. Note that management of the High Meadows acquisition will be consistent with the Freel Management Area; as a primarily non-motorized area where the undeveloped character of the area will be maintained and recreation development will be constrained to the minimum. Since public recreational use of the High Meadows area has not been an established nor traditional use of these (until recently) privately owned lands, the area will be managed to provide public access without expanding motorized recreation uses, pending future review of this management area during the Forest Plan revision. In addition, the fact that the primary portal point from Pioneer Trail into the High Meadows area remains in private ownership adds to the potential of public recreational intrusions on these private lands. This adds to the need to minimize authorizing motorized use pending the clear establishment of property boundaries and a review of potential resource impacts from any new activity.

Another, more recent addition to the National Forest land base is the approximately 754-acres of land commonly known as the "Incline Lake Property." This previously privately owned land area was acquired in 2008, and consequently has not been addressed in the LTBMU Forest Plan or in previous winter vehicle orders or restrictions. This land area in July 2008 was closed to all public access by Forest Order (LTBMU Order No. 19-08-10, and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Order No. 04-17-08-H-T) to ensure public safety and resource protection within the identified Incline Lake Property. The bi-forest Order was issued as a precautionary measure to ensure the public would not enter the property while court-ordered demolition and restoration activities were occurring. The Order in addition to facilitating public safety was also intended to provide protection of the resources. That Order did expire on November 30, 2008. A winter motor vehicle restriction is needed as an interim measure until the land area adjacent to Third Creek and Ginny Lake drainage and Incline Lake can be evaluated for resource conditions and a formal management plan be developed to address both resource protections needs and recreation management opportunities and constraints. The proposed action has been discussed with the Carson Ranger District recreation staff and District Ranger and they support the proposed winter restrictions on lands administered by the LTBMU. They will be continuing their existing policy of allowing winter motorized access on the Humboldt-Toiyabe portion of the north section of Tahoe Meadows.

This Forest Order continues the direction as established in the existing LTBMU Land and Resource Management Plan. The Order maintains the Forest direction (as initially described within LTBMU Forest Order 19-03-10) and re-affirmed on November 25, 2008 (Forest Order 19-08-12 "Winter Vehicle Restrictions") and November 3, 2010 (Forest Order 19-10-08).

FOREST ORDER PROVISIONS:

1. Using or possessing an over-snow vehicle off National Forest System roads in the areas shown as closed on Exhibit A.
2. Using an over-snow vehicle on National Forest System roads in the areas shown as closed on Exhibit A.
3. Using a motor vehicle on National Forest System roads in the areas shown on Exhibit A and on the trails listed on Exhibit B.

All of the Management Areas closed as shown on Exhibit A & B were evaluated for the need for winter over-snow vehicle restrictions in the Environmental Impact Statement accompanying the LTBMU Land and Resource Management Plan (current Forest Plan).

Desolation Wilderness: Closed to all motorized use. (Page IV-64)

East Shore Beaches Management Area: Maintain closure to over-snow vehicles. (Page IV-69)

Echo Lakes Management Area: Maintain closure to over-snow vehicles (winter). (Page IV-75)

Emerald Bay Management Area: Closed to over-snow vehicle use. (Page IV-81)

Freel Management Area: The area north of Fountain Place Road is closed to all over-snow vehicles. The area south of Fountain Place Road is open to over-snow vehicles. (Page IV-97)

Fallen Leaf Management Area: Closed to over-snow vehicles east of Fallen Leaf Road to South Lake Tahoe and north of Tahoe Mountain, north of Highway 89 and at Angora Lakes (Page IV-89)

Heavenly Valley Management Area: Maintain closure to OHV/OSV use (Page IV-107)

Marlette Management Area: Closed to over-snow vehicles except the Slaughterhouse Canyon Area. (Page IV-119)

Meeks Management Area: Maintain closure to OHV/OSV use. (Page IV-134)

Meiss Management Area: Closed to all motor vehicles (Page IV-140)

Mt. Rose Management Area: Open to over-snow vehicles except within designated wilderness. (Page IV-144)

Roundhill Management Area: Open to over-snow vehicles except in Rabe Meadow and the vicinity of Round Hill Pines Resort. (Page IV-149)

Tahoe Valley Management Area: Open to over-snow vehicles except for areas around Grass Lake, Waterhouse Peak, Christmas Valley and in the vicinity of Pioneer Trail and Black Bart. (Page IV-159)

Urban Lots Management Area: Closed to over-snow vehicle activity. (Page IV-164)

REASONS FOR CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDING THE DECISION

This action has been categorically excluded from further documentation in accordance with the Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook FSH 1909.15 Chapter 30. This decision falls under section 31.12(1): Categories Established by the Chief: "Orders issued pursuant to 36 CFR Part 261 - Prohibitions to provide short-term resource protection or to protect public health & safety." I have concluded that this decision may be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA) under the National Environmental Policy Act. This action falls within the category identified in 36 CFR 220.6(d)(1) – prohibitions to provide short-term resource protection or to protect public health and safety – and does not require documentation in a decision memo, decision notice or record of decision. Pursuant to 36 CFR 215.12(f), this decision is not subject to administrative appeal.

As per 36 CFR 220.6(b), the mere presence of one or more of these resource conditions does not preclude use of a categorical exclusion. It is the existence of a cause-effect relationship between a proposed action and the potential effect on these resource conditions and if such a relationship exists, the degree of the potential effect of a proposed action on these resource conditions that determine whether extraordinary circumstances exist.

Resource Conditions that should be considered in determining whether extraordinary circumstances related to a proposed action are:

1. Federally listed threatened or endangered species of designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species – There are no potential effects of this decision on listed wildlife, fish and plant species. Prohibitions on winter over-snow vehicles are expected to be beneficial to listed wildlife, fish and plant species.
2. Flood plains, wetlands or municipal watersheds – There are no flood plains, wetlands or municipal watersheds located within the authorized winter over-snow vehicle riding areas.
3. Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas or national recreation areas – There are no potential effects of this decision on congressionally designated areas, wilderness study areas or national recreation areas, as all areas will remain open to non-motorized winter access under existing management guidelines in these areas.
4. Inventoried roadless areas or potential wilderness areas – There are no potential effects of this decision on inventoried roadless areas or potential wilderness areas, as all areas will remain open to non-motorized winter access under existing management guidelines in these areas.
5. Research Natural Areas – No research natural areas will be affected by this action.
6. American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites – There will be no effect or impact to American Indian religious or cultural sites. Alaskan sites do not apply to the California-Nevada region.
7. Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas – There will be no effect to archaeological sites or historic properties or areas.

Scoping contacts regarding the action have included:

Nevada State Parks
California State Parks
Tahoe City Public Utility District
Douglas County Parks and Recreation
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
Eldorado National Forest
Tahoe National Forest

Internal consultation included:

Gina Thompson: Recreation & Lands Staff Officer, LTBMU
Mike LeFevre: Planning Staff Officer, LTBMU
Ronald Thompson: FPO, LTBMU OHV Patrol
Gary Barnett: Patrol Captain, LTBMU & Tahoe National Forest
Laura Clarke: Law Enforcement Officer – LTBMU
Frank Machler: Law Enforcement Officer - LTBMU

In summary, all of the contacts expressed support for the decision. Contacts with Law Enforcement officers reflected there have been numerous and frequent incidents with unmanaged winter vehicle activities during past winter periods on the LTBMU.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The Forest Order will be implemented December 1, 2012 through November 30, 2013.

Further information regarding this decision can be obtained from:

Don Lane: Supervisory Recreation Forester 530-543-2621
Gary Barnett: Supervisory Law Enforcement Officer 530-543-2735
35 College Drive South Lake Tahoe, California 96150



**USDA Forest Service
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Winter Vehicle Restrictions
Forest Order No. 19-12-9**

Pursuant to 16 USC 551 and 36 CFR 261.50(a) and (b), and to protect natural resources and provide for public safety, the following acts are prohibited within the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. This Order is effective from December 1, 2012 through November 30, 2013. The prohibitions contained in this Order apply only when there is snow on the ground.

1. Using or possessing an over-snow vehicle off National Forest System roads in the areas shown as closed on Exhibit A. 36 CFR 261.56.
2. Using an over-snow vehicle on National Forest System roads in the areas shown as closed on Exhibit A. 36 CFR 261.54(a).

Pursuant to 36 CFR 261.50(e), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

1. Persons with a permit from the Forest Service specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission.
2. Any Federal, State or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty.

These prohibitions are in addition to the general prohibitions contained in 36 CFR Part 261, Subpart A.

A violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than 6 months or both. 16 USC 551 and 18 USC 3559, 3571, and 3581.

Done at South Lake Tahoe, California, this 30th day of November 2012.

NANCY J. GIBSON

Forest Supervisor
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit



United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service

Snowmobile Guide

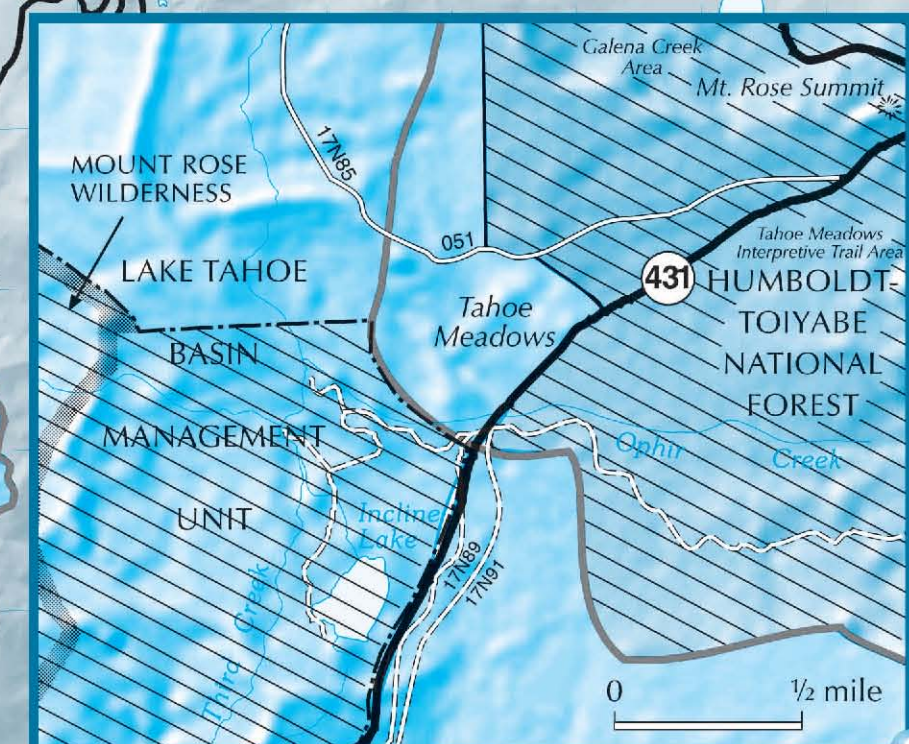
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

EXHIBIT A

2012-2013 Forest Order No: 19-12-9



To Truckee, 8 Miles



USDA Forest Service
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Winter Vehicle Restrictions
Forest Order No. 19-12-9

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- Using an over-snow vehicle on National Forest System roads in the areas shown as closed on Exhibit A. 36 CFR 261.54(a).

Pursuant to 36 CFR 261.50(c), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

- Persons with a permit from the Forest Service specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission.
- Any Federal, State or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty.

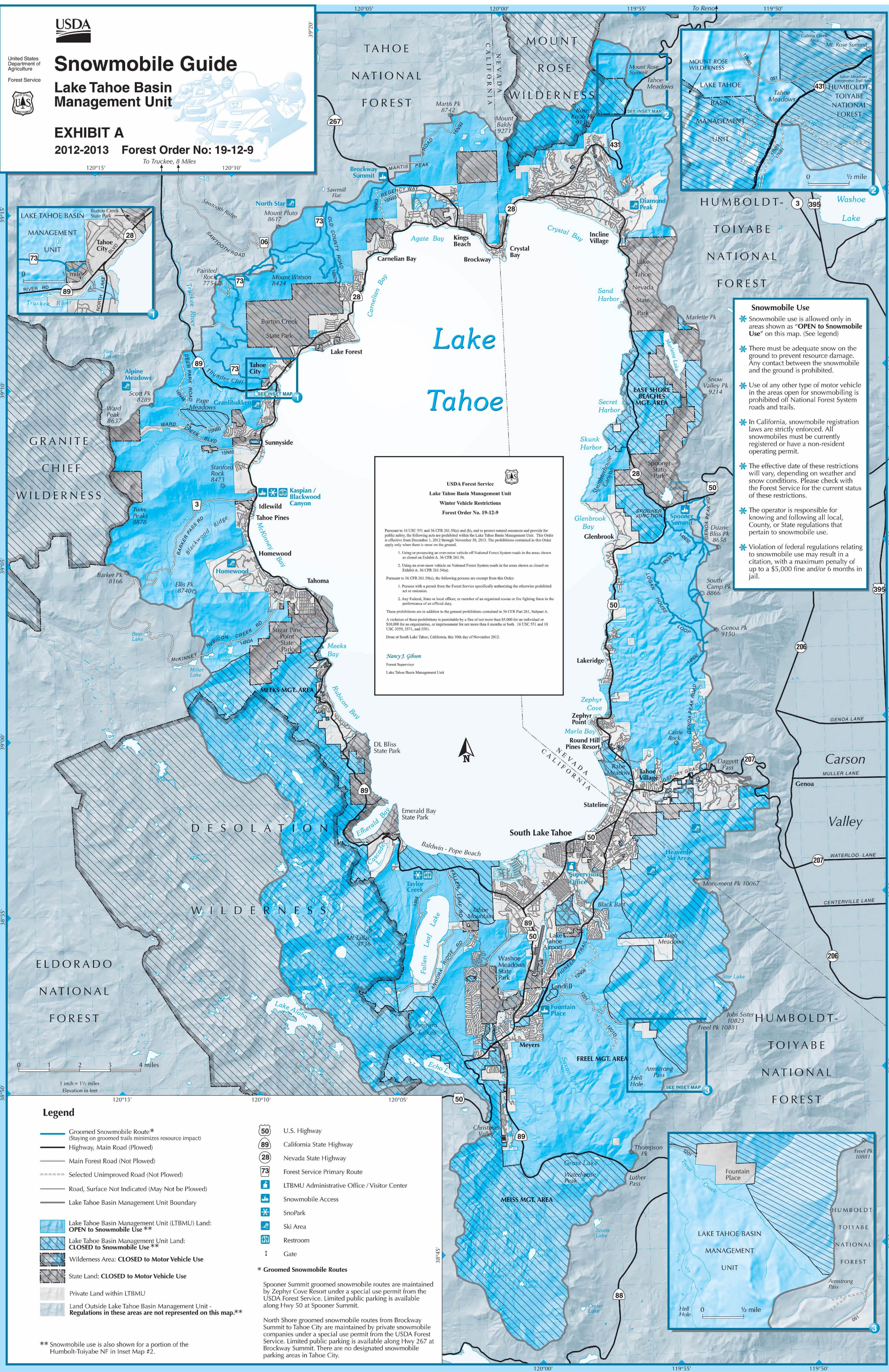
These prohibitions are in addition to the general prohibitions contained in 36 CFR Part 261, Subpart A. A violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than 6 months or both. 16 USC 551 and 18 USC 3559, 3571, and 3581.

Done at South Lake Tahoe, California, this 30th day of November 2012.

Nancy J. Gibson
 Forest Supervisor
 Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

Snowmobile Use


- Snowmobile use is allowed only in areas shown as "OPEN to Snowmobile Use" on this map. (See legend)
- There must be adequate snow on the ground to prevent resource damage. Any contact between the snowmobile and the ground is prohibited.
- Use of any other type of motor vehicle in the areas open for snowmobiling is prohibited off National Forest System roads and trails.
- In California, snowmobile registration laws are strictly enforced. All snowmobiles must be currently registered or have a non-resident operating permit.
- The effective date of these restrictions will vary, depending on weather and snow conditions. Please check with the Forest Service for the current status of these restrictions.
- The operator is responsible for knowing and following all local, County, or State regulations that pertain to snowmobile use.
- Violation of federal regulations relating to snowmobile use may result in a citation, with a maximum penalty of up to a \$5,000 fine and/or 6 months in jail.



Legend

- Groomed Snowmobile Route* (Staying on groomed trails minimizes resource impact)
 - Highway, Main Road (Plowed)
 - Main Forest Road (Not Plowed)
 - Selected Unimproved Road (Not Plowed)
 - Road, Surface Not Indicated (May Not be Plowed)
 - Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Boundary
 - Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) Land: OPEN to Snowmobile Use**
 - Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Land: CLOSED to Snowmobile Use**
 - Wilderness Area: CLOSED to Motor Vehicle Use
 - State Land: CLOSED to Motor Vehicle Use
 - Private Land within LTBMU
 - Land Outside Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit - Regulations in these areas are not represented on this map.**
 - U.S. Highway
 - California State Highway
 - Nevada State Highway
 - Forest Service Primary Route
 - LTBMU Administrative Office / Visitor Center
 - Snowmobile Access
 - SnoPark
 - Ski Area
 - Restroom
 - Gate
- * Groomed Snowmobile Routes**
- Spooner Summit groomed snowmobile routes are maintained by Zephyr Cove Resort under a special use permit from the USDA Forest Service. Limited public parking is available along Hwy 50 at Spooner Summit.
- North Shore groomed snowmobile routes from Brockway Summit to Tahoe City are maintained by private snowmobile companies under a special use permit from the USDA Forest Service. Limited public parking is available along Hwy 267 at Brockway Summit. There are no designated snowmobile parking areas in Tahoe City.


** Snowmobile use is also shown for a portion of the Humboldt-Toiyabe NF in Inset Map #2.



United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service

Snowmobile Guide

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit



2012-2013

USDA Forest Service
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Winter Vehicle Restrictions
Forest Order No. 19-12-9

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- Using an over-snow vehicle on National Forest System roads in the areas shown as closed on Exhibit A. 36 CFR 261.54(a).

Pursuant to 36 CFR 261.50(c), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

- Persons with a permit from the Forest Service specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission.
- Any Federal, State or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty.

These prohibitions are in addition to the general prohibitions contained in 36 CFR Part 261, Subpart A. A violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than 6 months or both. 16 USC 551 and 18 USC 3559, 3571, and 3581.

Done at South Lake Tahoe, California, this 30th day of November 2012.

Nancy J. Gibson
Forest Supervisor
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

USDA Forest Service Offices:

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (South Shore)
35 College Drive
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150-4500
(530) 543-2694
TTY (530) 543-2694
www.fs.usda.gov/lbmu

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (North Shore)
855 Alder Ave.
Incline Village, NV 89451
(775) 831-0914
www.fs.usda.gov/lbmu

Eldorado National Forest
Pacific Ranger District
7887 Highway 50
Pollock Pines, CA 95726
(530) 644-2349
TTY (530) 647-5407
www.fs.usda.gov/eldorado

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
Carson Ranger District
1536 South Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701
(775) 882-2766
www.fs.usda.gov/htnf

Tahoe National Forest
Truckee Ranger District
9646 Donner Pass Rd.
Truckee, CA 96161-2949
(530) 587-3558
TDD (530) 587-6907
www.fs.usda.gov/tahoe

Travel Information

When traveling in California, call 1-800-427-ROAD (7623) or visit www.dot.ca.gov/hq/roadinfo/ for current information on the condition of California State Highways.

When traveling in Nevada, call: 1-877-NVROADS (687-6237) or visit: www.nevadadot.com/traveler/roads for current information on the condition of Nevada State Highways.

Emergencies call 911

Local Medical Facilities:

South Shore:
Barton Memorial Hospital
2170 South Avenue
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 541-3420

Tahoe Urgent Care
2130 Lake Tahoe Boulevard
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 541-3277

North Shore:

Tahoe Forest Hospital
10121 Pine Avenue
Truckee, CA 96161
(530) 587-6011

East Shore:

Carson Valley Medical Center
1107 Highway 395
Gardenville, NV 89410
(775) 782-1500

Groomed Snowmobile Trails

Not all the trails shown on this map are groomed. Also, be aware that regularly groomed snowmobile routes may appear ungroomed. This can occur under the following circumstances:

- Just after a snowstorm and the groomer has not yet reached the trail you plan to ride.
- During a heavy snowstorm, snow depths of two or more feet can accumulate in just a few hours and bury a freshly groomed trail. Be sure to check weather forecasts before venturing out.

If you would like current grooming condition information, call the local Ranger District Office for the area you plan to ride. See list of District Offices under the map title.



Tread Lightly!

Winter Code of Ethics:

- I will be a good sportsman. I recognize that people judge all winter recreationists by individual actions. I will give assistance to those in distress.
- I will plan my outing according to my ability, endurance and equipment. I will check local weather conditions. I will tell someone where I am going and when I expect to return.
- I will keep to the right when encountering another winter recreationist. I will yield the right of way to traffic moving downhill.
- I will slow down and use caution when approaching or passing. When stopping, I will not block the trail.
- I will learn to recognize winter trail signs, blazes and maps. I will respect and obey designated trails, closed areas and private property.
- I will park considerably, taking no more space than needed, without blocking other vehicles and impeding access to trails. I will carpool when ever possible to conserve energy.
- I will not damage living trees, shrubs or other natural features.
- I will pack my litter out.
- I will not harass wildlife.
- I will pick up after and control my pets.

Sno-Park Permit Sales Outlets

Lake of the Sky Outfitter's Inc
1023 Emerald Bay Rd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA.
(530) 541-1027

Tahoe Dave's Ski & Board
8299 N. Lake Blvd
Kings Beach, CA 96143
(530) 546-5800

Tahoe Paradise Chevron
2986 Highway 50
Tahoe Paradise, CA 96150
(530) 577-1127

USDA Forest Service Office/LTBMU
35 College Drive
So. Lake Tahoe, CA 96150-4500
(530) 543-2694

Kyburz Mini Mart
13686 Hwy 50
Kyburz, CA
(530) 293-3232

Explore Tahoe
Heavenly Village
South Lake Tahoe, CA
(530) 542-4637

Sno-Park Program
PO Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001
(916) 324-4442

Wildlife

Winter offers you the chance to see animals that are seldom observed in the summer. Because food is scarce in the winter, many mammals are forced to forage during the daytime. Also, it is much easier to see birds and mammals against a backdrop of white snow. The secret to seeing winter animals is being quiet and looking around you in the tree branches, along tree trunks, and in clearings. Pay attention to tracks in the snow!

Marten, ermine, coyotes, wolverine, bobcats, Douglas squirrels and snowshoe hares may be seen in winter. Many other mammal species are forced to hibernate for at least part of the winter.

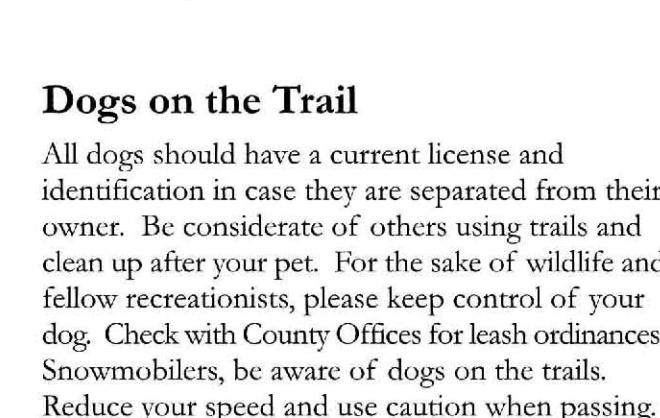
Most songbirds are not adapted to the harsh winter conditions in the Sierra Nevada and must fly south to Mexico, Central America, or South America. Although these birds are gone for the winter, resident birds like the Clark's nutcracker, mountain chickadee and red-breasted nuthatch are still present. Most of these birds are quite vocal and, if you listen carefully, you shouldn't miss them.



Sign indicating snowmobile use is permitted in the area.



Responsible dog owner.



Riding slowly through a residential area.

Dogs on the Trail

All dogs should have a current license and identification in case they are separated from their owner. Be considerate of others using trails and clean up after your pet. For the sake of wildlife and fellow recreationists, please keep control of your dog. Check with County Offices for leash ordinances. Snowmobilers, be aware of dogs on the trails. Reduce your speed and use caution when passing.

All are Welcome

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Non-Resident Permits

California honors out of state registration for snowmobiles, but vehicles brought in from states that do not have registration programs are required to obtain a non-resident OSV permit. Non-resident permits can be purchased at the following locations:

South Shore: Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
35 College Dr.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150-4500
(530) 543-2694

North Shore: Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Incline Village, NV 89451
(775) 831-0914

Truckee: Mountain Hardware
11320 Donner Pass Road
Truckee, CA 961601
(530) 587-4844

Nevada: Michael's Cycle Works
2680 South Carson Street
Carson City, NV
(775) 883-6111



Practice Safe and Responsible Snowmobiling

- Never consume alcohol or drugs before snowmobiling.
- Keep to the right at all times, especially in turns.
- Operate at safe and responsible speeds.
- Use your lights at all times to improve visibility.
- Stay out of areas where snowmobiling is prohibited.
- Avoid travel on unfamiliar frozen bodies of water.
- Using extra caution at night.
- Become familiar with the snowmobile that you are going to ride.
- Keep your snowmobile properly maintained.
- Always wear a helmet and adequate clothing.
- Become familiar with the terrain.
- Check the weather forecast before you leave.
- Never ride alone.
- Let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.
- Carry emergency supplies and learn survival techniques.
- Know your whereabouts at all times by carrying a map and knowing how to read it.

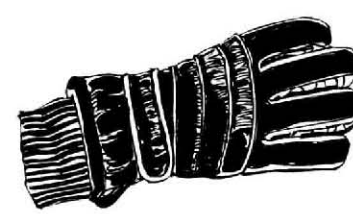
Snowmobiling in the Lake Tahoe Basin

Welcome

Snowmobiling is a popular activity on the National Forest lands around the Lake Tahoe Basin whenever there is adequate snow coverage on the ground to prevent resource damage. Wilderness, selected roadless areas, small urban lots and developed ski areas are closed to all motorized vehicles. It is your responsibility to be aware of where you are at all times by carrying a map and knowing how to read it. Look for a snowmobile symbol at trailheads indicating snowmobile use is permitted in the area.

California Snowmobile Registration

California state law requires all snowmobiles to be registered under the OSV (over snow vehicle) registration program. See your local Department of Motor Vehicles for registration information. The money collected through the permit program is distributed throughout the state to develop and maintain OSV trails and facilities. Fines for riding an unregistered snowmobile can be expensive.



Backcountry Use and Inherent Risks

The Forest Service encourages a broad range of recreation activities and based on comments by users over the past 20 years, realizes the importance of keeping the backcountry open.

Backcountry winter recreation is similar to other high-risk outdoor activities, such as mountaineering and white-water kayaking, because participants must match their skill level to the prevailing conditions. Going into the backcountry involves inherent risks. Risks can be minimized when individuals take personal responsibility to educate, prepare and equip themselves to deal effectively with changeable backcountry conditions.



Sharing Routes

In some areas of the forest, skiers, snowshoers and snowmobilers must share the same routes and areas. The following suggestions will provide safe routes for everyone:

- Operate snowmobiles at minimum speed near skiers or snowshoers. Maintain minimum speed until you are well beyond those on foot.
- Skiers and snowshoers should realize that snowmobile operators generally cannot hear approaching trail users. On steeper terrain, snowmobiles are generally limited to the developed trail surfaces. Use courtesy and respect so that all trail users can safely enjoy their winter travel.

Hypothermia

As many as 85 percent of outdoor recreation fatalities are caused by hypothermia.

Hypothermia is a rapid, progressive, physical and mental collapse due to chilling of the body. Hypothermia is greatly intensified by wetness, wind, exhaustion and hunger.

Symptoms

Watch for early signs in your companions! Victims are usually not aware of their hypothermia.

Normal Body temp: 98.6° F

- Stuttering.
- Uncontrolled shivering and unreasonable behavior.
- Reduced mental awareness, incoherent speech.
- Reduced muscle coordination, slurred speech, stiffness and stumbling walk.
- Shivering may stop.
- Stupor.
- Death-like coma.
- Death.

Body temp: 81.0° F

Sno-Parks

A Place to Park in Snow Country.

In order to park in a Sno-Park area, a vehicle must have a California Department of Parks & Recreation Sno-Park permit displayed on the dashboard. A day permit is good at any Sno-Park on the date for which it is issued. A season permit can be used at any Sno-Park during the entire winter season. Any vehicle not displaying a valid permit is subject to a citation.

Oregon and California have a reciprocal agreement allowing permits from one state to be used at a Sno-Park in the other state.

Permits are sold at a wide variety of sporting goods stores throughout California, at various businesses located near the Sno-Parks, at selected units of the State Park System, and (for members only) at all Northern California State Automobile Association offices. To find out where to buy a permit, you can call the Sno-Park Program office hotline at (916) 324-1222 or go on the internet to: www.ohv.parks.ca.gov and click on the Sno-Park link.

The annual Sno-Park season officially lasts from November 1 to May 30, with some date adjustments based on snow conditions.

Sno-Park parking is first come, first serve.

Avoid Avalanche Hazards

For current avalanche conditions, call (530) 587-3558 or go on the internet to: www.sierraavalanchecenter.org

- Avalanche information is updated as conditions change.
- Large or small, avalanches are deadly! Terrain, weather and your judgement are important factors to avoid getting caught in an avalanche. Avalanche forecasts apply outside developed ski areas.
- Avalanches are most common on 30 to 45 degree slopes.
- Smooth slopes without tree cover are more dangerous.
- Generally, avalanches occur in the same areas year after year. Watch for avalanche paths, steep open gullies and slopes, pushed over small trees, and trees with limbs broken off.
- South facing slopes are more dangerous in the spring and on warm sunny days.
- High marking (climbing very steep slopes) significantly increases the risk of being buried in an avalanche!

Storms

A pleasant outing can turn into a miserable ordeal if a winter storm catches you unprepared. Storms can develop in less than thirty minutes. You can be faced with a life threatening situation, even though you may only be a short distance from help. Because of the weather, trail markers are not always visible. Be prepared to backtrack if you lose the trail. Always check weather forecasts before starting out.

The National Weather Service forecast is at: www.wr.noaa.gov/reno or (775) 673-8100

Lake Tahoe Weather is at: www.wunderground.com/US/CA/Lake_Tahoe.html

To Treat Hypothermia

- Actively, but gently re-warm the victim.
- Get the victim out of wind, rain and cold.
- Move to a campfire or inside a dry sleeping bag.
- Give the victim hot drinks (no caffeine or alcohol).
- Remove wet clothes, if possible.

Snowmobiling in Residential Areas of the Tahoe Basin

Snowmobiling is a winter sport growing in popularity. Residents and visitors alike can access many acres of National Forest Lands around the Lake Tahoe area. As with any recreational activity, conflicts can occur when users are close to homes and private lands.

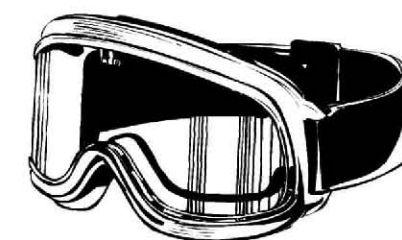
The following are common practices and may be helpful when snowmobiling in the Lake Tahoe area.

- If you are starting near a residential area, please show respect for homeowners by keeping "warm-up" time brief; noise and exhaust can be very annoying!
- Avoid riding close to homes!
- Ride only during reasonable hours, early morning and late evening and night rides can cause considerable noise disturbances!
- Be aware of private land and homeowner boundaries. You must obtain written permission from the landowner to access private land!
- There must be adequate snow cover on the ground to prevent resource damage!
- Be considerate of other recreational users; X-country skiers, snowshoers and others share many of the same routes. Slow down when encountering others!
- Avoid riding over small trees and brush and crossing streams; delicate stream banks can be easily damaged!
- Motorized vehicles are prohibited on National Forest urban lots.

Excessive noise, private land, snow coverage, urban lot closures and resource damage statements are enforceable by County, State and Federal regulations.

Avalanche Likelihood

- 80 percent of all avalanches occur during and shortly after storms.
- Snow falling at a rate of 1 inch or more per hour increases avalanche danger.
- Storms starting with low temperatures and dry snow, followed by rising temperatures are more likely to cause avalanches (the dry snow creates a poor bond and cannot support the weight of heavy, wet snow on top).
- Sustained winds of 15 miles per hour or more increase the danger of an avalanche on the leeward (usually north) slope due to heavy accumulation of snow caused by wind deposition.



The Cooling Power of Wind Speed

Expressed as "Equivalent Chill Temperature"

mph	Temperature								
Calm	40	30	20	10	5	0	-10	-20	-30
Equivalent Chill Temperature									
5	35	25	15	5	0	-5	-15	-25	-35
10	30	15	5	-10	-15	-20	-35	-45	-60
15	25	10	-5	-20	-25	-30	-45	-60	-70
20	20	5	-10	-25	-30	-35	-50	-65	-80
25	15	0	-15	-30	-35	-45	-60	-75	-90
35	10	-5	-20	-35	-40	-50	-65	-80	-100
40	10	-5	-20	-35	-45	-55	-70	-85	-100
Danger			Increasing Danger				Great Danger		

Trailhead Locations

