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## April 2016 Newsletter

# Lassen Snowmobile Restriction Analysis Continues



The Lassen NF is the first of five National Forests to release their Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Over-Snow Vehicle use.

The public comment period for the Lassen NF plan is over.

[Click here to read comments submitted by SAC.](#)

The Lassen OSV Draft EIS is quite lengthy, but the first 20 pages of the Draft EIS Part 1 summarizes the proposals. Click on links below to view the documents and maps.

[Draft EIS Part 1](#)

[Draft EIS Part 2](#)

[Forest Service Proposed Trails and Areas Map](#)

[Forest Service Proposed Groomed Trails Map](#)

[Alternative 3 Map \(The Skiers Alternative\)](#)

A decision on the Lassen OSV Plan is expected in December 2016. The Tahoe, Stanislaus, Eldorado, and Plumas NFs will follow.

For more information on the other forests OSV proposals, see [page 2](#).



### Inside this issue:

Subpart C: Snowmobile Restrictions	2
Plumas NF OHV Lawsuit Update	3
Subpart A: More Road Closures	4

## Subpart C: Snowmobile Restrictions



*Kettle Rock Saddle full moon ride, photo by Loren Kingdon*

Five National Forests in California (Lassen, Tahoe, Plumas, Eldorado, and Stanislaus) are developing restrictions for Over Snow Vehicles (OSVs) on our public lands. See [page 1](#) for details on the Lassen NF proposal.

It appears that all five forests involved in this process are proposing minimum snow depth restrictions of 6" on groomed trails and 12" for cross country areas and ungroomed roads.

Additional restrictions are being proposed on individual forests:

### Tahoe NF

The Tahoe NF is proposing to eliminate OSV use in some areas. The most concerning part of their plan are restrictions regarding crossing the Pacific Crest Trail in the Lakes Basin area. In the Tahoe NF proposal there are only two legal crossings proposed north of I-80, which eliminates safe access to thousands of acres of popular snowmobiling areas west of the PCT. While we respect the spirit of the PCT, it should be noted that crossing the PCT at a 90 degree angle is legal. The two crossings that have been proposed by the Forest Service are unacceptable and unsafe, so SAC proposed additional crossings to the Tahoe NF. [Click on this link to see the Tahoe Proposal.](#) Their Draft Environmental Impact Statement is expected to be released in October 2016. [Click here to read SAC's response to the initial Tahoe proposal.](#)

### *Links to information for the other Forests:*

[Plumas NF Notice of Intent](#) The Plumas Draft EIS is expected to be released Feb. 2017.

[Lakes Basin Proposal map](#) (Plumas NF)

[Bucks Lake Proposal map](#) (Plumas NF)

[SAC's response to the Plumas Notice of Intent](#)

[Eldorado Notice of Intent](#)

[Stanislaus scoping package](#)



## Plumas NF Lawsuit Update



On March 30, 2016 our attorney filed a Motion for Summary Judgement in Federal Court. [Click here to view the Motion for Summary Judgement.](#) This motion states the facts of the case and asks the judge to rule in our favor.

The hearing on this motion will be held July 28, 2016 in Sacramento.



The partnership of Plumas County, Butte County, the California Off-Road Vehicle Assoc., and Sierra Access Coalition filed a lawsuit in federal court March 18, 2015 challenging the Plumas NF Off-Highway Vehicle Travel Management Plan.

The plaintiffs are being represented by Damien Schiff of [Pacific Legal Foundation](#) in Sacramento.



Subpart B of the Plumas NF Travel Management Plan, signed in August 2010, closed 873 miles of the 1107 miles of roads and trails that were inventoried for the study. By Forest Service definition, an OHV is any motorized vehicle (car, truck, motorhome, motorcycle, quad, etc) so there is a great impact to the public.



Our lawsuit makes several claims against the Plumas National Forest including:

- Failure to coordinate with local governments,
- Inadequate analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act,
- Failure to provide the public with a scientific basis for the Record of Decision,
- Failure to analyze effects to the human environment and socioeconomic impacts,
- Inadequate response to public comments,
- Failure to provide information requested by SAC under the Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA)
- and other violations of law and regulation

[Click here to view our complaint filed March 18, 2015.](#)



## Subpart A: Main Road Closures

Forest Service Travel Management is split into three phases.

- Subpart A for main forest roads.
- Subpart B for the undesignated roads and trails (these are the routes in SAC's current lawsuit) ([see pg. 3](#)).
- Subpart C for Over Snow Vehicles (OSV)

There has been a separate study for each of the three phases of Travel Management for motorized vehicle restrictions.



*Between Subpart A and Subpart B, a total of 1595 miles of roads and trails are either closed or planned to be closed on the Plumas N.F. Click on the links below to view maps of the new proposed closures. Everything in red is proposed to be closed under Subpart A:*

For the eastside of the forest:

[http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5424415.pdf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5424415.pdf)

For the westside of the forest:

[http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5424416.pdf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5424416.pdf)

Several public meetings were held beginning in 2013. Representatives from Congressman LaMalfa's office were at the meetings and met with representatives of SAC. The Congressman clearly opposes the Forest Service's proposed road closures.

At a Plumas Co. Board of Supervisors meeting, Todd Johns of the Plumas Co. Sheriff's Dept. said the department is very concerned about these proposed road closures because they will affect Search and Rescue operations. The position of the Plumas Co. Sheriff's Dept. is that they want all roads in the forest to remain open.



SAC is concerned that the proposed road closures will not only affect people who drive in the forest, but will also affect our local economy. Roads in the forest were built years ago to provide an infrastructure for logging and thinning, and if the roads are obliterated it will likely be too expensive to build new roads for future project operations. In recent years, we have seen projects that require road building being cancelled because of the cost. Cancellation of projects, or portions of projects, will cause further damage to our local economy, schools, and tourism.

Many roads that access your favorite spots to hike, fish, hunt, cut firewood, go 4-wheeling, ride bicycles, watch wildlife, go rockhounding, look at wildflowers, go for a picnic, or drive into the forest for a multitude of special activities are in jeopardy.