

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES

Lake Tahoe Basin



Off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation is a popular activity for locals and visitors alike to the Tahoe Basin. It is a sport that includes 4-wheel drive vehicles, motorcycles, and all terrain vehicles (ATV's).

The following pages contain descriptions and maps of the legal routes of travel. OHV use at Lake Tahoe is an activity that the Forest Service manages to ensure conflicts are minimized and that sensitive soils and other resources are protected.

Help us keep your public lands open, please ride responsibly by; respecting gates and posted closures, avoiding wildlife, being courteous to other users; staying on designated routes.

Legal Requirements to Ride

Vehicle Registration

If you are a California resident your vehicle **must** be registered with the Dept. of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The DMV will issue you a **red or green sticker** ID that is to be properly placed on the vehicle as per DMV regulations. Both red and green stickers are valid year round in the basin. Street legal vehicles/motorcycles are not required to have a red/green sticker, however current registration is required.

Out Of State Un-Registered Vehicles

Out of state visitors must purchase a "Non-Resident" permit if their off highway vehicle is not currently registered in their home state. The permit costs \$10 per year and is issued by the Forest Service or the OHMVR Division throughout Arizona, California and Nevada. Contact the Forest Service at (530) 543-2694 or OHMVR at (916) 324-4442 for more information and outlet locations.

Muffler

All vehicles **must** be equipped with a muffler that meets State and Federal sound standards of **96 decibels** effective January 1, 2003. Older moto-cross (MIX) bikes do not meet these sound requirements.

Spark Arrester

Your OHV **must** have a Forest Service approved spark arrester. The newer model MIX (water cooled) motorcycles are meeting sound requirements, but do not have spark arresters.

Note: Be considerate of nearby residents, "warm - up" cycles on trails away from camps, houses, etc.

Did You Know?

Motorized vehicles are permitted on designated routes

Gate Closures: Roads and trails are seasonally closed to motorized vehicles (with the exception of machines designed for over snow use) to protect natural resources.

- Red and green sticker vehicles are prohibited on paved roads.

To Ride in California:

- **Riders under 18**, operating an ATV, must have a safety certificate in their possession or be under the direct supervision of an adult who has a California Safety Certificate.
- **Persons under 14**, operating an ATV, must have a safety certificate **and** be under the direct supervision of an adult.
- All ATV riders **must** wear a safety helmet.
- Operators of ATVs not manufactured for two people are **not allowed to carry passengers**.

Safety First!

You are encouraged to take the following equipment every time you use your OHV: seat belts, roll bar, nylon tow strap, fire extinguisher, first aid kit, flashlight, C.B. radio with channel 19, maps, jackets, and PLENTY of water and snacks to last you for a good day's hike in case you have to walk out after a breakdown. Be sure you have enough fuel for the entire day. Remember, you can ride an OHV farther in one hour than you can walk in a day.

National Forests belong to a variety of users. Trails are shared by hikers, horses and mountain bikes. Please use caution and courtesy when encountering another user. Enjoy your ride!

Tools of the Trade

Even if you're only planning on a short ride, bring along some tools such as: screwdrivers, hammer, small tire pump, patch kit, specialty wrenches, pliers, tow strap, extra U-bolts for the axles, etc. A simple tool may be all you need to keep you riding instead of walking.

Questions? Contact the Forest Service at:

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
35 College Drive
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 543-2600 (Voice)

OHV TRAILS IN THE LAKE TAHOE BASIN

TRAIL NAME	VEHICLE TYPE	DISTANCE (MILES)	DIFFICULTY
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SOUTH SHORE

1. SAND PIT, 12N14	MOTORCYCLE, ATV	0.3	MODERATE
2. SAWMILL POND, 17E48	MOTORCYCLE, ATV	1.0	EASY
3. TWIN PEAKS TRAIL, 1230	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	1.5	MODERATE/TECHNICAL
4. CEDAR TRAIL	MOTORCYCLE, ATV	2.0	MODERATE/TECHNICAL
5. POWERLINE ROAD, 12N08	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	3.5	EASY
6. HIGH MEADOWS TRAIL, 18E33A	MOTORCYCLE, ATV	1.0	EASY
7. CORRAL TRAIL UPPER, 18E14	MOTORCYCLE, ATV	0.6	MOST DIFFICULT
CORRAL TRAIL LOWER, 18E14	MOTORCYCLE, ATV	0.9	MORE DIFFICULT
8. HELLHOLE ROAD, 12N01D	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	2.2	EASY/MODERATE
9a. SEWINDER	MOTORCYCLE	1.2	EASY/MODERATE

WEST SHORE

9b. MCKINNEY/RUBICON, 14N04	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	3.5	DIFFICULT
10. NOONCHESTER, 14N34A	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	2.65	MODERATE
11. BUCK LAKE ROAD, 14N40	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	2.4	DIFFICULT
12. MIDDLE FORK, 15N38 BLACKWOOD CANYON	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	2.5	MODERATE

NORTH SHORE

13. MT WATSON 73E	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	6.5	EASY/MODERATE
14. KINGS BEACH 18E18	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	2.7	EASY/MODERATE

EAST SHORE

15. GENOA PEAK ROAD, 14N32	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	9.5	MODERATE
16. LOGAN HOUSE, 14N33	MOTORCYCLE, ATV, 4X4	6.5	MODERATE
17. KINGSBURY STINGER, 18E39.3	MOTORCYCLE, ATV	2.8	MODERATE

If you would like to find out more information on becoming a better OHV rider or to obtain additional trail information, enclose a self addressed stamped envelope and contact one of the agencies below:

Department of Parks and
Recreation
Off-Highway Motor Vehicle
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA
94296-0001
(916) 324-4442

OHMVR Commission
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296
(916) 324-5801

Lake Tahoe HiLo's 4WD
Club
P.O. Box 8248
South Lake Tahoe, CA
96158
www.laketahoehilos.com

North Tahoe Trail Duster
4WD
P.O. Box 906
Carnelian Bay, CA 96140
(530) 525-1250
www.cal4wheel.com/trailduster/trailduster.html

1. **Sand Pit:** This area offers off trail travel within close proximity to Highway 50 and South Lake Tahoe. Motorcycles and ATVs can all take advantage of the hill climbs and jumps. This area is quite challenging and is one of the most popular in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Sandpit and Twin Peaks Trail is open to public use from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. This area is closed from November until May.

2. **Sawmill Pond:** Sawmill Pond Trail is a short connecting trail for motorcycles and ATVs only. It connects the Sand Pit to Twin Peaks Trail. The Sandpit and Twin Peaks Trail is open to public use from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. This area is closed from November until May.

3. **Twin Peaks Trail:** The Twin Peaks Trail is an excellent 4X4 and ATV route. The trail is wide in most spots and while not very challenging for motorcycles it will test 4X4s to their maximum. Two rock hill climbs provide expert level technical challenges and are considered a 4WD test piece. An easier alternate route around both rock sections allows access to the top. The top of Twin Peaks has an exceptional view of Lake Tahoe and is a great place to take the family for a picnic. It is one of the most popular 4X4 spots on the south shore of Lake Tahoe. The Sandpit and Twin Peaks Trail is open to public use from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. This area is closed from November until May.

4. **Cedar Trail:** Cedar Trail is an easy motorcycle/ATV trail. The trail has a few technical sections and some nice vistas. It connects the Powerline Trail to the mid-section of Corral Trail. ***(Please share the trail with mountain bikes.)***

5. **Powerline Road:** The Powerline Road follows the utility corridor from Fountain Place Rd to the end of High Meadow Trail and continues on to Columbine Rd. Four wheel drive vehicles may use the road from Fountain Place to Columbine Rd (12NO8). Motorcycles and ATVs may use the section from 12NO8 to High Meadows Rd (12N21). ***(Please watch for other trail users and be courteous.)***

6. **High Meadows Trail:** The High Meadows Trail extends from Powerline Road to High Meadows Road and is open to ATVs and motorcycles. This is a short but fun section of banked turns that is an out-and-back for motorized vehicles. The trail is an extension of the Powerline Trail which is a popular mountain bike and hiking trail, but closed to motorized use (not to be confused with the Powerline Road). ***(Please share the trail with mountain bikes.)***

7. **Corral Trail:** The Corral Trail, although relatively short is a very challenging trail open to motorcycles and ATVs. The trail was designed for technical, precision type riding, not high speed. It links the Powerline Trail with Fountain Place Road and crosses over Trout Creek. The upper section is more technical than the lower section. The terrain climbs sharply in spots, with many cutbacks and switchbacks through heavily forested sections. ***(Please share the trail with mountain bikes.)***

8. **Hellhole Road:** 12NO1D is an out-and-back route that begins 3.8 miles up Fountain Place Road and is available for 4X4 motorcycles and ATVs. Pretty views of the surrounding area are offered at the top of the road, a perfect setting to rest or have a picnic.

9a. **Sidewinder Trail:** Sidewinder Trail is a fun motorcycle (no ATVs) trail. The trail is narrow and has many climbing turns and is designed for technical precision-type riding. ***(Please share the trail with mountain bikes.)***

9b. **McKinney/Rubicon:** This nationally known, difficult 4X4 route leads from Loon Lake to Lake Tahoe, a distance of approximately 22 miles. The narrow passages, rocky climbs and an occasional mud hole keep the trail rated as **MOST DIFFICULT**. The trail is recommended for short wheelbase vehicles with all skid plates in place, and even then, you can expect scratches and/or dents. From Highway 89, south of Homewood, turn west onto McKinney Rubicon Springs Road. Take the first left on Bellevue and then the second right on McKinney Road (follow sign to Miller Lake). Bear left on McKinney-Rubicon Springs. Go straight at the stop sign and you're at the McKinney-Rubicon Trail/Miller Lake Road. Approximately 1 mile up the windy single lane paved road you will find the staging area and the end of pavement. There are toilets located at the trailhead. Good fishing and camping conditions on the Lake Tahoe side of the trail are found at Miller, Buck Lake and Richardson Lake. Campfires and the use of stoves require a California Campfire Permit, available from any Forest Service office. Backcountry hiking into Desolation Wilderness requires a visitor permit. The trail usually is free of snow by late June and remains open until the weather closes it again during October or November. **There is a county ordinance that closes the trail the last weekend of July and the first weekend of August for the annual run of the Jeepers Jamboree.**

10. Noonchester: Travel 0.7 miles up the McKinney- Rubicon Trail/Miller Lake Road and turn right where you see the sign "Single lane road not maintained for passenger car use." When you cross the bridge, you are on the Noonchester Mine Road. The trail ends in a large circular turnabout approximately 2.5 miles from the beginning. There are fantastic views of Lake Tahoe from Mt. Watson to Rubicon Peak. You can also look down upon Quail Lake and Homewood Ski Area. Do not take the trail past the turnabout. This private maintenance road leads into Homewood Ski Area.

11. Bucks Lake: Bucks Lake Road junction is 1/4 mile from the staging area on McKinney Rubicon Trail. Keep your eyes open for wildlife! Turn left at 1.5 miles up Bucks Lake Trail and continue another 0.2 miles to campsite at Bucks Lake. Park and enjoy the view. You can hike the small hill to the east for views of Tahoe from Cave Rock and Genoa Peak to Heavenly Valley. **Note:** The trail that continues past Bucks Lake turnoff heads toward Ellis Peak, but is very difficult because of large rocks. Do not attempt unless you have a custom 4X4 with clearance to spare.

Blackwood Canyon Road: From Highway 89, turn west at the Kaspien Picnic area and drive in 2.5 miles to the staging area. Parking, primitive camping, picnic tables, BBQ stands and vault toilets. ***(Potable water is not available, please pack all garbage out.)***

12. Middle Fork. Blackwood Canyon Trail: If you continue past the staging area, you will be on the Middle Fork Trail, 15N41. This is a good intermediate trail for motorcycles, 4X4, and ATVs. There are several steep sections near the top. Approximately halfway is a small meadow above the 7,000 foot elevation mark. Look for the many different wildflowers found along the wetter sites. The trail comes out near the base of Barker Peak. From the upper flats at the top of the trail, there are views of Ellis Peak, Barker Peak, Barker Meadows, Devil Peak, and Steamboat Mountain as well as a small glimpse of Lake Tahoe.

13. Mt. Watson: Mt. Watson route is a well developed system of dirt and paved roads. From Lake Tahoe, take Highway 267 from Kings Beach towards Truckee. At Brockway summit, turn left onto paved 73E road. (Green and red sticker vehicles prohibited on paved roads.) Drive 6.5 miles and turn left on dirt road. Follow this road up to the top of Mt Watson. Walk the 100 yards to the peak for fantastic views of Lake Tahoe!

14. Kings Beach OHV Area: Beaver St. off Highway 28 and Forest Service road 16N52 off Highway 267 may be used to access the OHV area. There are beginning through advanced levels of motorcycle trails here. The lower trail system area is good for beginners to get acquainted with their machines.

15. Genoa Peak Road: 14N32 offers the most spectacular views of any road in the entire Lake Tahoe Basin. This route connects Spooner Summit to Kingsbury Grade offering 9.5 miles of jeep road. Access for this trail is behind the Nevada Division of Transportation Maintenance Station near Spooner Summit, off Highway 50 and North Benjamin off Kingsbury Grade.

16. Logan House Loop: 14N33 begins off the Genoa Peak route in the vicinity of Genoa Peak and later reconnects with the same route. The loop travels through remote country dotted with aspen groves. Fall colors are a spectacular highlight of this route.

17. Kingsbury Stinger: Route for M/C and ATVs only. Access for this trail is off the southern end of the Genoa Peak road 14N32. Turn west onto a spur road about 0.5 miles from the beginning of the Genoa Peak Road (see #15). Watch for sections of dust during late summer. ***(Please share the trail with mountain bikes.)***

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