



# Winter Recreation

## Eldorado National Forest

The Eldorado National Forest provides easy access to plenty of terrain perfect for winter recreation. Whether you prefer back-country skiing, snowshoeing, downhill skiing, snowmobiling, or just playing in the snow you can find a place on the forest to enjoy yourself.

Take advantage of the beautiful winter outdoors and get out of your house and play. Remember to be prepared. Check with the local office or our website for local regulations and closures, weather and road conditions, specific area information or maps before you go.

### Traveling In The Forest

In 2008, roads and trails on the Eldorado were designated for wheeled motor vehicle travel. Vehicle travel off these designated roads and trails is prohibited. In addition:

*All dirt roads and trails are closed to motor vehicle use between January 1 and March 31. The Seasonal Closure may be longer if roads or trails are wet and susceptible to damage. This closure is intended to protect water quality and prevent rutting and damage to these roads and trails. Visit the Forest's website or call one of our offices for current status.*

Approximately 600 miles of paved and gravel roads are not affected by the closure. The Rock Creek area near Georgetown has its own seasonal closure policy and procedures.

The Motor Vehicle Use Map is a free map available at any of the Eldorado National Forest offices and on our website. This map shows the roads and trails on the Eldorado National Forest that are designated for motor vehicle use and which ones are restricted during the seasonal closure.

Public wheeled over-the-snow travel is specifically prohibited on the following routes: all designated snowmobile routes and cross-country ski trails on the ENF, Loon Lake Campground Road (13N17); Chipmunk Bluff Road (13N19); and Robbs Peak Road (13N31).



### Be Prepared

- ◆ A travel **checklist** should be followed to guarantee a safe and well-planned trip, and to reduce the possibility of needing to be rescued. Clothes, sunglasses, sunscreen, food, water, first aid kit, map, compass, headlamp, fire starter material/matches, emergency survival equipment, vehicle service supplies (anti-freeze, tire chains, ice-scraper, something for traction) should all be part of your standard equipment.
- ◆ **Water** is often difficult to find in winter. All that is available may be what you can carry in containers or melt from snow. The body loses as much as two to four quarts of fluid per day under exertion. Be equipped to melt snow (metal pot and fire starting material or stove).
- ◆ **Clothes** should be chosen for warmth, weight and wind protection. Daytime and nighttime temperatures may have a spread of 80 degrees F between the low and high temperature. To adjust to the change, dress in layers that are warm, lightweight and can be added or removed according to temperature.
- ◆ **Before leaving home**, notify a responsible person of your travel plans; including a map with your route clearly marked. Check back with this person when you return. If you are overdue, this person can notify the County Sheriff At 530.626.4911.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# Back-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing

## Highway 50 Corridor



For more information and trail maps check out the **individual** Recreation Opportunity Guides for these areas at: [www.fs.usda.gov/eldorado](http://www.fs.usda.gov/eldorado)

### Loon Lake Winter Recreation Area

You can enjoy a variety of winter recreational opportunities, including back-country skiing, snow play, snowshoeing and ski mountaineering. This area has open bowls, ridges and wooded drainages surrounded by mountain peaks. Ridges and peaks offer panoramic views of Loon Lake, Crystal Basin and the Crystal Mountain Range. Elevations range from 6,410 feet at lakeshore to 6,863 feet at the summit of Wentworth Peak. Good-to-excellent snow conditions can exist from December to April and offer a range of ski touring from easiest to most difficult.

To reach this area, travel 20 miles east of Placerville on Highway 50 to the Ice House Road (8.5 miles east of Pollock Pines), then north on Ice House Road 30 miles to Loon Lake. There are several parking areas. No fees.

### Strawberry Canyon Nordic Trail System

Strawberry Canyon Nordic Trail System encompasses 11 miles of cross-country ski trails for beginner to intermediate cross-country skiers. This system is located approximately 1/4 mile west of Strawberry along Highway 50 at the 42-Mile River Access Site. The area has restroom facilities, a trailhead information sign, and limited public parking.

### Echo Lakes - Johnson Pass Cross-Country Ski Trail System

The Johnson Pass cross-country ski trail system has 3.1 miles of posted trail including three loop trails and one trail that leads you to the Echo Lake. To access the trails at Johnson Pass from U.S. Highway 50, if traveling east, drive 1 1/2 miles past the Sierra-At-Tahoe sign towards Echo Summit. Turn left onto the Johnson Pass road which has the Echo Lakes sign. Travel approximately 1/2 mile until you come to the Sno-Park on the south side of the road. The parking lot is part of the California Sno-Park system and requires a permit. Permits are not available at the trailhead so pick one up in advance.

### Echo Summit Cross-Country Trail System

The Echo Summit Cross-Country Ski Trail System features 3.2 miles of posted trails including two ski trails and two loop trails. To reach this trail system from Placerville on eastbound U.S. Highway 50, travel 2.8 miles past the Sierra-at-Tahoe sign towards Echo Summit. You will turn right onto the Echo Summit Road. An entrance fee is required. This parking area is no longer part of the California Sno-Park system so sno-park passes are not accepted. The new facility name is **Adventure Mountain, Lake Tahoe**. Visit them at: <http://adventuremountaintahoe.com/>. Or call (530 577-4352)

### Echo To Kirkwood Cross-Country Ski Trail

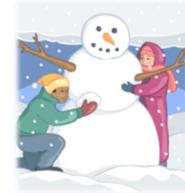
The Echo to Kirkwood Cross-Country Ski Trail is a classic ski tour, which extends from Echo Summit on Highway 50 south to the Caples Lake/Kirkwood area on Highway 88. The route includes steep climbs and descents combined with rolling gentle terrain along the crest. Skiers will experience old-growth forests, rolling hills, meadows, exposed high alpine ridges and will have the opportunity to observe a variety of wildlife. It offers spectacular scenery with panoramic views of Lake Tahoe, the Crystal Range, Caples Lake, and Round Top. The recommended travel direction is from Echo Summit south to Highway 88.

- ❖ Parking is available at Snow Play area, known as the Echo Summit Adventure Mountain on the south side of Highway 50 at Echo Summit. This facility is no longer part of the state Sno-Park system so sno-park passes are not accepted. Entrance fee required.
- ❖ Parking is also available at Kirkwood's Schneider Camp parking area with a parking permit only. Parking permits can be obtained at the Kirkwood Cross-Country Center located on Highway 88 at Kirkwood between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily.



## Back-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing

# Highway 88 Corridor



### Anderson Ridge Trail System (Easy/Intermediate):

Approximately eight miles of trail are located in this system. The Anderson Ridge Trail system offers skiers a tour up and around Anderson Ridge over rolling terrain. Blue diamonds and wooden signs mark the trail. Access this trail system from the Iron Mountain Sno-Park on the north side of Highway 88. Snowmobilers and skiers share the area around the Sno-Park.

### Leek Springs Trail (Intermediate):

Beginning at the Iron Mountain Sno-Park, the first part of the trail is shared with snowmobilers and is often groomed. The eight mile roundtrip trail follows Plummer ridge over gently rolling terrain to the Leek Springs Lookout. Orange and blue diamonds mark the trail. On a clear day the view from the top is spectacular.

### Meiss Meadow area:

Access the Meiss Meadow area from Meiss Sno-Park on the north side of Highway 88 just before Carson Pass. This route is unmarked. The route generally follows the Pacific Crest Trail north from the Sno-Park and travels over a pass which allows a view of Lake Tahoe on a clear day.

### Woods Lake Trail (Easiest):

Access this trail from Meiss Sno-Park. The trail is an enjoyable two-mile, downhill ski to Woods Lake following the Woods Lake Road. The trail is marked, beginning across the highway from the Sno-Park, with blue diamond markers on trees. Woods Lake is frozen and covered with snow during the winter. Do not trust the ice to support your weight. It is not recommended to ski or otherwise go out on any frozen lake!



### Wilderness Boundary Trail (More Difficult):

Access this trail from the Carson Pass Sno-Park on the south side of Highway 88. The trail travels south to the Mokelumne Wilderness boundary, then runs west along the boundary before dropping downhill to intersect the Woods Lake Road. The trail also runs south from Woods Lake Road and travels up the drainage between Woods Lake and Winnemucca Lake. It stops at the Wilderness boundary. This trail is marked by blue diamond markers attached to trees.

### Mokelumne Wilderness area:

Part of the Carson Pass Area is within the Mokelumne Wilderness which allows only non-motorized activities such as snow-shoeing and cross-country skiing. Mokelumne Wilderness offers skiing through forested mountainsides, around alpine lakes, and over open timberline landscapes as well as opportunities for very challenging downhill terrain.

In order to give visitors a wilderness experience there is minimal directional signing and there are no blue diamond marked ski trails. You are responsible for your own route-finding. You must be able to navigate with map and compass and possess advanced mountaineering skills. Explore on your own to the extent your personal skills allow.

### Kirkwood Cross Country and Snowshoe Center

At over 7,800 feet, Kirkwood's Cross Country and Snowshoe Center offers over 80km of groomed trails with stunning views of the High Sierra and is conveniently located 35 miles south of Lake Tahoe.

[www.kirkwood.com](http://www.kirkwood.com)

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[www.fs.usda.gov/eldorado](http://www.fs.usda.gov/eldorado)

## Snowmobiling



### General Forest Winter Snowmobile Travel

Winter is a beautiful time to explore the Eldorado National Forest. Miles of roads and trails offer excellent opportunities for winter enjoyment. With a minimum snow pack of 12 inches, snowmobile travel is permitted in most areas, barring any ground contact.

Winter motorized travel is **not allowed** in Wilderness areas, some areas bordering the wilderness, and Loon Lake. In addition, some areas are restricted to designated roads and trails only, such as those surrounding Sierra at Tahoe, Kirkwood complex, and over Little Round Top. Check with a Forest office for questions regarding specific areas. An Off-Highway Vehicle license "Greensticker" is required.

### Silver Bear Snowmobile Trail System

Depending on snow levels and weather conditions, 20-55 miles of groomed routes in the Silver Bear snowmobile trail system are maintained throughout the winter. The System consists of several out and back and loop trails suitable for day outings.

- ❖ **Iron Mountain Staging Area:** Travel east from Jackson on Highway 88 for approximately 40 miles. Turn left on Mormon-Emigrant Trail Road to reach the Iron Mountain Staging area. The parking area is a part of the Sno-Park system and requires a permit. Purchase permit before visit. Purchase your Sno-Park permit in advance and display on vehicle. **Snow-Park permits not sold on site.**

## Downhill Skiing



### Sierra at Tahoe

Located on Highway 50, Sierra at Tahoe is one of Lake Tahoe's largest ski resorts with over 2,000 skiable acres, serviced by ten chairlifts, including three express quads. Activities include downhill skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, events, weather reports, lessons, clinics, equipment rentals, day care, lodging, restaurants, and an awesome Tube Park. [www.sierraattahoe.com](http://www.sierraattahoe.com)

### Kirkwood Ski Resort

Located on Highway 88, Kirkwood offers a wide variety of activities, such as: downhill skiing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, instruction, clinics, equipment rentals, lodging, restaurants, Slide Mountain Tube Park, sleigh rides, and dog sledding. [www.kirkwood.com](http://www.kirkwood.com)

## Office Locations

### Amador Ranger District

17 miles east of Jackson on Highway 88  
26820 Silver Drive  
Pioneer, CA 95666  
(209) 295-4251

### Georgetown Ranger District

3 miles east of Georgetown on Wentworth Springs Road  
7600 Wentworth Springs Road  
Georgetown, CA 95634  
(530) 333-4312

### Supervisor's Office

Placerville Drive/Forni Road exit, (behind Midas store)  
100 Forni Road  
Placerville, CA 95667  
(530) 622-5061

### Placerville and Pacific Ranger Districts

7 ½ miles east of Placerville on Highway 50 – Cedar Grove (Exit #54)  
4260 Eight Mile Road  
Camino, CA 95709  
(530) 644-2324

### Emergency

Highway Patrol, Sheriff, Ambulance	911
El Dorado County Sheriff (day)	(530) 621-6600
Alpine County Sheriff (day)	(530) 694-2231
Amador County Sheriff (day)	(209) 223-6500

### Information

El Dorado Nordic Ski Patrol	(530) 647-1825
P.O. Box 1113, Pollock Pines, CA 95726	
Cal Trans (Road Conditions)	(800) 427-7623
<a href="http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/roadinfo">www.dot.ca.gov/hq/roadinfo</a>	

**Forest Service Avalanche Center**  
[www.fsavalanche.org](http://www.fsavalanche.org)

**Central Sierra Avalanche Hazard Ratings**  
[www.sierraavalanchecenter.org](http://www.sierraavalanchecenter.org) (530) 587-2158