

OHV Laws: Riding Requirements

Stanislaus National Forest

ROG 16-81; 05/12



Our two most important concerns for Off-Highway Vehicle riders in the Stanislaus National Forest are:

- That all enjoy the experience in safety and with consideration for others in the Forest, and
- That no resource damage to the Forest occurs as a result of riding.

Legal Operation of OHVs

All OHV vehicles that are operated on public lands must be registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The registration is approximately \$52 and is valid for a two-year period. Monies derived from this process go to an OHV fund used for the acquisition of new OHV areas, development and operation of existing OHV areas, the enforcement of rules/regulations and protection of the natural resources.

DMV will issue a Green or Red sticker for off-road vehicles. Vehicles that can be operated both on- and off-highway will be given a street-legal license. No registration is required for vehicles used on closed courses only. Trails and roads, however, normally remain open in the Forest during events like the Polecat Enduro, held on the Mi-Wok Ranger District. In such "open" events, registration is required on all participating vehicles.

Registration Requirements

In order to operate any type of motorized vehicle off-highway on public land, you must have one of the following:

Street Legal License Plate

If you want to operate a four-wheel drive vehicle or dual-purpose motorcycle on-highway and off-highway, you must have a street-legal license plate.

Green Sticker or Red Sticker

If you are going to operate any motorized vehicle off-road only, you must have either a Green or Red Sticker issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles. This includes go-carts, sand rails, dune buggies, etc.

The Green Sticker allows vehicles to operate on public land all year. The Red Sticker is for motorcycles and ATVs model year 2003 and newer that fail to meet the emission standard established by the California Air Resources Board. If the vehicle has a 3 or a C in the eighth position of the Vehicle Identification Number, then it does not meet the emission standards. As a result, the vehicle will be issued a Red Sticker.

The Red Sticker indicates that these vehicles can only be operated during certain times of the year. The Mi-Wok Red Sticker Vehicle operating season is from Oct 1st through May 31st (as determined by the California Air Resources Board). From June 1st through Sept 30th, any motor vehicle registered with a Red Sticker cannot legally operate on the Mi-Wok Ranger District. **OHV areas on the Summit Ranger District are open all year to Red Sticker vehicles.**

To find out when you can operate your vehicle in other areas, call the Ranger District nearest the specific riding area you want to visit. You can also check the California OHV Division web site at:

www.ohv.parks.ca.gov



Closed Course Competition

Some courses can be designated as a closed course. It is not necessary to have any type of vehicle registration to compete on a closed course. The Department of Motor Vehicles, however, does require that you obtain a Transportation Permit to transport your vehicle to and from the event site. The Mi-Wok Ranger District has never hosted a closed course competition under recreation special use permit. These events are usually held in arena-type facilities.

Non-Resident Permit

As of January 1, 1998, you will need to buy a special Non-Resident OHV Permit if you are not a California resident and your OHV or snowmobile is not registered in your home state. Non-Resident OHV Permits can be purchased through the mail by contacting:

California State Parks
OHMVR Division
Non-Resident Permit Program
1725 23rd St. Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001
(916) 324-4442
e-mail: www.ohv.parks.ca.gov

Possession of Alcohol

It's illegal to possess an open container of an alcoholic beverage while riding in or operating an off-highway vehicle. Vehicle Code sections 23220, 23322, 23223, 23225 and 23226 have been amended to include public lands. The intent of these laws is to make possession of alcohol in a vehicle the same whether you are driving on a highway or off-highway.

The new laws are designed to reduce alcohol-related accidents, but they also provide for vehicles such as four-wheel drives and snowmobiles to transport such items in locked containers or even ice chests, if they are secured in a manner that is not accessible to the occupants or the operator. Responsible OHV enthusiasts do not drink and drive.

Recap of Major OHV Rules

- Motorcycles must be equipped with a US Forest Service-approved spark arrester and adequate muffler, both in working order. (PRC 4442)
- You may not drive a motor vehicle in a manner that endangers the safety of other

persons or their property. (CVC 38305, 38314, 38316a, 38317)

- Any vehicle operated between sunset and sunrise must display at least one headlight that enables an operator to see clearly 200 feet ahead and one red taillight visible for 200 feet. (CVC 38350, 38345)
- No motor vehicle shall exceed 15 MPH within 50 feet of any campground, campsite or concentration of people or animals. (CVC 38310)

This is only a partial list of regulations pertaining to OHVs. For a complete listing, see Division 16.5 of the California Vehicle Code, available at DMV offices.

Individual Responsibility

You are responsible to know all of the applicable regulations regarding use of OHV on public lands.

If you have additional questions about OHVs, please contact any of the offices listed below:

Supervisor's Office

19777 Greenley Road
Sonora CA 95370
(209) 532-3671
FAX: (209) 533-1890

Mi-Wok Ranger District

24695 Hwy 108
PO Box 100
Mi-Wuk Village, CA 95346
(209) 586-3234
FAX: (209) 586-0643
TDD: (209) 586-0262

Groveland Ranger District

24545 Hwy 120
Groveland, CA 95321
(209) 962-7825
FAX: (209) 962-7412
TDD: (209) 962-6406

Summit Ranger District

#1 Pinecrest Lake Road
Pinecrest, CA 95364
(209) 965-3434
FAX: (209) 965-3372
TDD: (209) 965-0488

Calaveras Ranger District

5519 Hwy 4
PO Box 500
Hathaway Pines, CA 95233
(209) 795-1381
FAX: (209) 795-6849
TDD: (209) 795-2854