

Court upholds vehicle restrictions in Tahoe National Forest

By Denny Walsh, Sacramento Bee

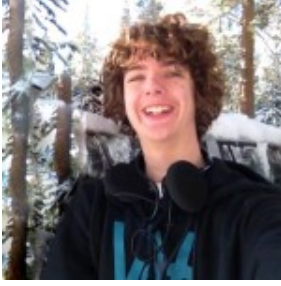
A federal appeals court has ruled that the U.S. Forest Service was on solid legal ground when it put more than 90 percent of “user-created” miles off-limits to motorized vehicles in Tahoe National Forest.

The forest service’s 2010 action generated disbelief and anger among off-highway vehicle owners, who sued the service’s umbrella agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as well as the service itself and three of its officials, alleging a variety of procedural defects arising out of an environmental impact analysis underpinning the dramatic mileage reduction.

A broad array of environmental advocacy organizations cheered the development and intervened on the side of the government in the lawsuit, filed in Sacramento federal court in 2012.

[Read the whole story](#)

Body of Sugar Bowl instructor recovered



Carson May

The body of Sugar Bowl ski instructor Carson May was found today about one-quarter mile out of bounds in an avalanche-prone area near the original search site.

May had been missing since Jan. 14. Friends last saw him that day skiing in whiteout conditions on the back side of the resort. The 23-year-old from Davis was not working at the time.

Members of the Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue, and El Dorado County Search and Rescue along with their search dogs, and Sugar Bowl ski patrol made the discovery about 11am Feb. 29.

This had been May's third year working at Sugar Bowl; he had been a season pass holder prior to that.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Gas leak delays ski day at Heavenly

Most of the California side of Heavenly Mountain Resort was shutdown first thing this morning because of a gas leak.

A groomer just after midnight Feb. 29 discovered a broken pipe to a propane tank.

This was in the corral area that is accessed off the gondola where the groomers fuel up.

“We delayed the opening of the lower California lifts this morning due to a gas leak on that part of the mountain. We wanted to take every precaution to ensure the safety of our guests, and after receiving approval from the local fire department, we have resumed normal operations,” Coop Cooper, spokesman for the resort, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

According to Lake Valley fire department, there was no threat to buildings or people.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Slightly Stoopid, Steve Miller Band coming to Tahoe

Two veteran acts of the Harveys Outdoor Summer Concert Series are returning this summer – Slightly Stoopid and the Steve Miller Band.

Slightly Stoopid will take the stage July 2 at 6pm. Tickets for the general admission show are \$37.50.

The Steve Miller Band plays Aug. 18 at 7pm. Tickets range from \$39.50 to \$139.50.

Body of ZC woman recovered near Emerald Bay



Carolyn
Batchelor

The body of a Zephyr Cove woman who had been missing for nearly two weeks was recovered Feb. 27 from Inspiration Point near Emerald Bay.

According to El Dorado County sheriff's deputies, the death of Carolyn Batchelor, 69, does not appear to be suspicious. However, the cause of death remains under investigation.

Her body was found partially buried under snow. The search area consisted of steep and rugged terrain with 1 to 2 feet of fresh snow from a storm that came in at the time she went missing.

Her vehicle was found in same area off Highway 89 on Feb. 19, two days after she was last seen.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Road beat: Lexus crossover SUV worth a drive



The Lexus NX-200 is full of power. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

It is not unusual for Lexus to go parts bin shopping in the Toyota factory when it develops new product, as the new Lexus NX200t is an example. It doesn't mean the result is a gussied up Toyota RAV4 upon which chassis the NX is based. About the only shared parts in the NX's case is the basic chassis demonstrated by their shared wheelbase of 104.7 inches. At that point all similarities end.

Even the new twin scroll turbocharged inline 2.0L four-cylinder engine is all new. Of course it's a 16 valve DOHC unit that knocks down 235 horses between 4,800-5,600 rpm while pounding out 258 pounds of twist between 1,650 to 4,000 rpm.

Actually, even at 4,800 rpm which is peak hp, the engine is still making 257 pounds of twist, so the torque curve is basically flat to peak hp which continues for another 800 rpm. That is a beautiful power curve, perfectly linear, although in reality you can feel the boost come on strong. A six-speed torque converter automatic does the cog swapping, that sometimes seemed a little too eager to hunt for gears.



Specifications

Price \$34,480 to about \$45,000 plus \$925 for destination

Engine

2.0L DOHC 16 Valve
turbocharged inline four 235
hp @ 4,800-5,600 rpm
258 lb-ft of torque @
1,650-4,000 rpm

Transmission

Six speed torque converter
automatic

Configuration

Transverse front engine/
FWD/AWD

Dimensions

Wheelbase 104.7 inches
Length 182.3 inches
Width 73.6 inches
Height 64.8 inches

Track (f/r) 62.2/62.2 inches
Ground Clearance 6.9 inches
Weight (fwd/awd) 3,940/4,050
pounds
GVWR (fwd/awd) 5,090/5,200
pounds
Tow capacity 2,000 pounds
Fuel Capacity 15.9 gallons
Cargo capacity (second row
up/down) 17.7/54.6 cubic
feet
Wheels (std/F Sport)
17X7/18X7.5 inches
Tires (std/F Sport)
225/65X17; 225/60X18;
235/55X18 (summer tire)
Steering lock to lock
2.68 turns
Turning circle 37.4 feet
Co-efficient of drag 0.34

Performance

0-60 mph 7.33 seconds
50-70 mph 3.96 seconds
50-70 mph uphill 5.46
seconds
Fuel economy EPA rated
22/28/25 mpg
city/highway/combined.
Expect 29-30 mpg on the
highway at legal speeds and
26 mpg in suburban driving.

Outside is a slick body done in the L'finesse theme that is well proportioned and edgy. And it is slick with a low 0.34 co-efficient of drag. Not being a fan of the Lexus themed grill, that is the only negative with respect to the overall design, but that's just one man's opinion. I still like its

overall appearance and is quite trendsetting as you will see in its competition from Infiniti.

As a compact crossover utility vehicle length is just 182 inches but it stands with a muscular width of 74 inches which masks its tall 65 inches of height. Ground clearance good at 7 inches.

Performance is very good for this FWD version notwithstanding its 3,940 pounds of curb weight. Zero to 60 mph requires just 7.33 seconds. Passing performance is also very good with a 50-70 mph run took just 3.96 seconds while the same run up a 6-7 percent grade only slows that time by exactly 1.5 seconds to 5.46 seconds. Throttle response has just a bit of turbo lag, but once at full boost (perhaps a delay of a tenth of a second or two), the acceleration hits pretty hard. The overall (performance) driving experience is very good. Torque is well controlled to the point of not being an issue.

For a crossover CUV fuel economy is near excellent. While the EPA rates this FWD version at 22/28/25 mpg city/highway/combined, the NX does at least 10 percent better. On the highway at 70 mph the NX averaged 32 mpg. On a two way Placerville to South Lake Tahoe run the NX averaged 28.3 mpg and overall mpg was 26. No guilt here.

Since my tester was the upgraded FWD F Sport it came with F Sport tuned sport suspension and one inch bigger 18X7.5 inch wheels and F Sport summer tires (235/55 series). Basic suspension is already a state of the art MacPherson strut affair up front plus a trailing link, double wishbone set up in the rear. Good stuff. There is a premium cost of \$2,100 for the F Sport, but it does give the NX sharp handling, especially if you compare it to a RAV4. Sure it may not be the epitome of performance and handling, it is the epitome of polish and I am not talking about the paint finish, which by the way also happens to be exquisite. Steering is extremely quick with just 2.68 turns lock to lock and its turning circle

is reasonably tight at 37 feet. In the twisties, the NX is perfectly at home with good steering accuracy, well controlled body roll and oodles of cornering power. It is a sporty drive.

Ride quality is very smooth and on the firmer side. About the only intrusion is the summer tires on coarse roads, otherwise it is Lexus quiet. Some drivers might find the NX a bit firm, but for those drivers who like driving the ride quality is thoroughly enjoyable. The engine spins a slow 2,000 rpm at 70 mph.

With its four-wheel disc brakes (front ventilated) it stops from 40 mph in 41 feet which puts it in the benchmark class. Eight air bags, standard backup camera, ABS, traction control, VSC and more come standard. About the only major items missing from my test ride were the options of blind spot warning and lane departure warning.

Now to perhaps the best part, the interior. Seat design was trick, beautiful and comfortable. Opening the door should be an impressive experience and with the NX, it is. Materials are all of Lexus quality, even the seats were done in NuLuxe (their name) that was so good, I assumed it was leather. It was that good. Real leather is an option.

Full instrumentation (tach and speedo) is laid out in a sporty fashion just enhancing the whole package. About the only interior issue is the Lexus mouse system, it makes simple things too complicated. Rear seating for two is roomy, less roomy for three. There is still almost 18 cubic feet of cargo volume behind the rear seat and when folded flat your Home Depot space grows by almost 40 cubes to about 55.

The price of admission is under \$35 large. Add 2,100 for the F Sport and its "F" badges plus \$925 for the boat ride from Japan. Standard equipment includes even a power driver's and passenger seats, dual zone A/C. In other words, the base car comes extremely well equipped as it is a Lexus. My ride had

about nine options like a Q-Compatible wireless charger for \$220. Buy it as it eliminates wires. Two of the major items were an \$1,100 tilt and moonroof and a \$2,140 Nav Package which includes an improved audio system. I have never been in a Lexus that even with the standard audio didn't sound like Carnegie Hall. Total for my tester was \$43,230 all in.

Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.

Yosemite National Park not allowed on merchandise

By Kurtis Alexander, San Francisco Chronicle

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK – The trademark spat that is prompting the National Park Service to change the names of a handful of treasured sites at Yosemite, including the Ahwahnee Hotel and Curry Village, has taken a startling turn – to the park's gift shops.

Merchandise embossed with the name "Yosemite National Park," from T-shirts to coffee mugs to pens, will be pulled from store shelves this week because of claims by the park's outgoing concessionaire that it owns the name for commercial purposes, according to the park's new operator, Aramark, which is based in Philadelphia.

Aramark officials, who on Tuesday take the reins of Yosemite's many hotels, restaurants and shops from longtime management company Delaware North, plan to begin selling souvenir items

with the name “Yosemite” instead of “Yosemite National Park.”

Read the whole story

Tahoe woman dies skiing at Squaw

An Olympic Valley woman died skiing at Squaw Valley on Saturday.

Elizabeth Danel, 62, was on a run off the Headwall chairlift on the afternoon of Feb. 27 when she fell.

Although she was wearing a helmet, resort officials said she sustained multiple injuries after sliding into the trees.

Authorities said she was unconscious when rescue crews arrived. Ski patrol and Squaw Valley fire paramedics were unable to revive her.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Barton hosting lecture on diabetes

Managing diabetes will be the subject of a March 9 lecture at Lake Tahoe Community College.

Jessica Perasso and Dana Dose with Barton Nutrition Services

will talk about:

- Potential complications of diabetes
- Why blood sugar control is important
- The effects of exercise on diabetes management
- What routine care helps you stay healthy.

The free talk will be from 6-7pm in the Aspen Room.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Max

Max is an 8-year-old Dachshund with loads of personality.

This guy has a nice, soft, super deep bark for being so little. It's pretty funny the first time you hear it.

Very sweet boy, and beautiful fur. He walks nicely on the leash, and does well with other dogs and children. He qualifies for our senior for seniors discount. He needs a secure fenced yard or to be on a runner when outside.

Max is neutered, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and

vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– *Karen Kuentz*