

Weather, traffic to challenge drivers in Sierra

Caltrans is alerting motorists traveling in the Sierra foothills, to mountain areas or over the Donner or Echo summits during the New Year's weekend to be prepared for travel delays.

Roads in the basin are already clogged with visitors. Plan on lots of extra time to get to your destination.

Cold temperatures and alternating bands of precipitation are predicted to arrive Friday night and continue through Tuesday morning, resulting in winter driving conditions, even at lower elevations.

The National Weather Service is predicting up to 1 to 2 feet of snow for summit passes with snow levels dropping to foothill elevations on Monday. Chain controls on Interstate 80 over Donner Summit and on Highway 50 over Echo Summit should be anticipated as well as possible chain controls on local roadways as snow levels drop. Very cold temperatures are likely to create icy and slippery conditions, just as holiday travelers are heading out for New Year's activities or heading home after the holiday weekend.

Caltrans' snow removal crews will be working throughout the storm on summit passes and impacted Caltrans roadways. Caltrans permitted and trained chain installers on Interstate 80 can be identified by a reflective sign with their bib number.