

Date: November 1, 2015

Subject: Order No. 15-12
Los Padres National Forest
National Forest System Road Closure

To: File

From: Robert Baird, Forest Supervisor 

This document explains my rationale and the regulatory basis for implementing a road closure on West Cuesta Road (Forest Road 29S28). This closure will be in effect from November 1, 2015 until October 31, 2016.

West Cuesta Road has significantly deteriorated due to erosion, high use and lack of maintenance over the years. The roadway has multiple large potholes, deep ruts and vegetation blocks visibility along many roadway curves which creates a safety threat to motor vehicle operators. Failure to restrict use of motorized vehicles will continue to threaten public safety until road repairs can be made. West Cuesta Road (Forest Road 29S28) is outlined on the attached map.

I have determined that a motorized vehicle closure of West Cuesta Road (Forest Road 29S28) is the most viable course of action considering the road conditions and potential for public motor vehicle operation safety issues. The current road condition does not pose a significant public safety threat to non-motorized, pedestrian access as it is in a condition that would be similar to what is found in undeveloped areas of National Forest System lands and non-motorized trails. Therefore, the closure order will only pertain to motorized vehicle use. Public access on foot, horse or non-motorized bicycles will continue to be allowed.

The order includes an exemption for residents, owners and lessees to access their property as needed by utilizing this road. Considering the familiarity of the road by the users and the number of people covered by the exemption, I have concluded that the reduction in traffic is such that the users can maneuver the hazards more safely without the added risk of unfamiliar visitors. Many of these residents, owners and lessees have been advised of the situation.

I have concluded that this decision may be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA) under the National Environmental Policy Act. This action falls within the category identified in 36 CFR 220.6(d)(1) – prohibitions to provide short-term resource protection or to protect public health and safety – and does not require documentation in a decision memo, decision notice, or record of decision. I have determined that there are no extraordinary circumstances associated with this temporary closure. Implementation of the decision may begin immediately.