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News Release

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Whitney Portal Road Reconstruction Planned for 2016 *Significant Impacts to Access, Parking*

The Whitney Portal Road Reconstruction is planned for the 2016 season under a funding request from Inyo County. The road will be re-paved and needs significant repairs for safety. The project begins just west of Lone Pine and ends just east of Whitney Portal.

Whitney Portal is the most popular trailhead on the forest; with hikers applying, by lottery, to ascend the tallest mountain in the contiguous United States. Mt Whitney is also the southern terminus of the John Muir Trail (JMT).

“There is no way to complete this project without having a significant impact on visitors to the Whitney Portal area,” said Ed Armenta, Forest Supervisor. “The road has only one ingress/egress and the already limited parking will be much reduced. Accessing the area may be, at times, difficult and frustrating. Your planning and patience will help complete this very important project.”

Visitors have long used roadside parking as an overflow. During construction near Whitney Portal, this roadside parking will not be available.

Construction delays will be up to three hours, twice a day. Visitors to Whitney Portal should anticipate that there may not be a parking space available.

Visitors to Whitney Portal should consider carpooling, being dropped off by friends, or shuttle services available from the Lone Pine area.

Visitors who want to hike Mt. Whitney are strongly encouraged to enter the lottery since walk-in permits will not be issued when parking is unavailable. Please apply via www.recreation.gov.

See attached for tips for planning your trip to Whitney Portal this year.

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