



File Code: 2670
Route To:

Date: JUL 15 2016

Subject: Regional Order No. 16-02

To: File

There are 18 National Forests in California, totaling approximately 20 million acres, with about 43,300 miles of roads open to public motor vehicles. Forest Service Law Enforcement personnel are responsible for patrolling these National Forest System roads and ensuring that those who use these roads are doing so in a safe and careful manner. The purpose of this Regional Order is to provide Forest Service Law Enforcement personnel authority to prohibit careless and reckless operation of vehicles on National Forest System roads and restrict commercial hauling activity on National Forest System roads. As discussed below, this Regional Order will provide for the safety of forest visitors traveling these roads. It will cover all National Forest System roads under my jurisdiction within the State of California and will be in effect from July 16, 2016, through July 15, 2018.

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.

The prohibited acts identified in this Regional Order have been the source of substantial danger to individuals traveling on National Forest System roads and has resulted in both personal injury and/or loss of life. The balance of this memorandum discusses my rationale for these prohibitions.

Careless/Reckless Vehicle Operation:

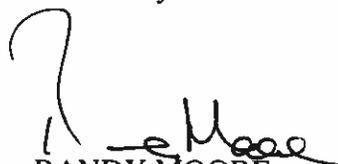
Based on information provided by Region 5 Forest Service Law Enforcement patrol officers and managers, careless and reckless vehicle operation on National Forest System roads is common place. Drivers are emboldened on these rural roads to test the limits of their vehicle speed and handling capabilities. The unfortunate collateral effect is fatalities and serious bodily injury due to careless and reckless vehicle operation. Data collected from LEIMARS shows that from 2000 to 2010 there have been over 1600 careless and reckless vehicle operation incidents documented by Region 5 Forest Service Law Enforcement personnel alone. Prohibiting the reckless operation of vehicles on National Forest System roads will give Forest Service Law Enforcement personnel the tools necessary to significantly increase the safety of these roads.



Commercial Hauling:

The Pacific Southwest Region manages a network of roughly 47,000 miles of NFS roads. These roads provide public, commercial and administrative access to National Forest System lands within the Region. Use of these roads for various commercial purposes has been regulated for a number of years, most recently by Regional Order 98-2 issued by the Regional Forester on July 13, 1998. Regional Order 98-2 is no longer in effect.

Commercial use of the NFS road network is regulated by issuance of Road Use Permits (FS-7700-41). There are two primary reasons that Forests issue these permits: (1) The permitting system provides Forest road managers a means to manage public safety conflicts between commercial users, the public and our administrative traffic and (2) The permit allows the Forest Service to exercise control over the commercial use operations on the road to minimize impacts on natural resources. Examples include soil erosion that spills into streams adjacent to Forest Service System roads and exposure of subsurface tree roots near roadways.



RANDY MOORE

Regional Forester Pacific Southwest Region

Enclosure