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File Code: 2670
Route To: File

Date: August 25, 2016

Subject: Forest Order No. 05-15-00-16-11 – Recreation Site and Road Closure

From: Dean A Gould, Forest Supervisor

This document explains my rationale and the regulatory basis for implementing a recreation site and road closure Order on the Sierra National Forest.

The purpose of this Forest Order is to protect public safety and natural resources due to the unprecedented number of hazard trees present and the associated risk on the Sierra National Forest. Due to the extremely large volume of tree mortality in the areas addressed by the Order, this Order will prohibit use of recreation sites and roads in those locations. High risk of hazards to the public are expected in these areas since they would be directly in the path of potential falling dead trees that could lead to property damage and injury or death to a person. Salvage logging and tree falling operations will be taking place to improve conditions. These efforts will remove weakened trees in and adjacent to recreation sites and roads, preventing conditions from rapidly worsening over the next three to five years as more snags deteriorate and fall.

Although the Forest is addressing fallen trees where possible, some forest roads included in this Order are blocked entirely at present and need to be re-opened prior to entry by tree-falling crews. Additionally, while falling and salvage operations are taking place, Forest Service employees, logging contractors, and other equipment operators will be using forest roads listed in the Order that are one-lane and in severely sloped locations. The combination of hazard trees being present combined with frequent hauling, mid-road logging equipment, and road repair equipment constitutes an unacceptable safety risk to the public in the roadways and recreation sites listed in this Order. Closure of these roads and recreation sites will not only allow for present public safety but will allow the work to get done in a timely manner for fire prevention and possible suppression efforts.

As of June 8, 2016 the hazards listed above have been mitigated at both Dorabelle Campground and Lakeside Picnic Area. Therefore these locations have been removed from the Order and exhibits making them open to public use.

As of June 30, 2016 the hazards have also been mitigated at Wishon Point Campground. Hence, this location has been removed from the Order and exhibit making it open to the public. However, hazards listed above are still present in Lupine Cedar Campground and Black Rock Campground making them unsafe for public use. As a result, these campgrounds have been added to the Order and exhibit making it closed to public use.

As of July 13th hazards have been mitigated and work is complete at Recreation Point Campground. Accordingly, this location has been removed from the Order and exhibit making it open to the public.

Tree-falling crews have also completed work in both Denver Church and Little Denver Church picnic areas as of July 21, 2016. Therefore, both of these locations have been removed from the Order and exhibits making them open to the public.

As of August 23, 2016 hazards have been mitigated and work is complete in Lupine Cedar Campground. Hence, this location has been removed from the Order and exhibits making it open to the public.

We have discussed this Order with Madera County Sheriff's Office and California Land Management, no concerns were expressed.

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)(l) - 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.

Forest Order No. 05-15-00-16-11
Sierra National Forest
Recreation Site and Road Closure

Pursuant to 16 USC 551 and 36 CFR 261.50(a) and (b), and to provide for public safety and to protect natural resources, the following acts are prohibited within the Sierra National Forest. This Order is effective from August 26, 2016, through May 26, 2017.

1. Going into or being upon the Recreation Sites listed below and shown on Exhibits A, B and C.

   Bass Lake Ranger District
   Fish Creek Campground
   Spring Cove Campground
   Crane Valley Group Campground
   Jerseydale Campground
   Rock Creek Campground
   Placer Campground
   Mammoth Pool Campground
   Ross Cabin

   High Sierra Ranger District
   Gigantea Campground
   Black Rock Campground

   36 CFR 261.58(b).

2. Being upon any National Forest System road listed below and shown on Exhibits A, B and C.

   Bass Lake Ranger District
   Forest Road No. 7S024, beginning at the intersection of County Road No. 426 and continuing due east to its intersection with Forest Road No. 7S066IA.

   High Sierra Ranger District
   Forest Road No. 11S07, beginning at the intersection Rancheria Creek and continuing due south to its terminus at Wiesman Spring.

   36 CFR 261.54(e).

Pursuant to 36 CFR 261.50(e), the following persons are exempt from the Order:

1. Persons with a valid permit from the Forest Service authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission.

2. Any Federal, State, or local Officer or member of an organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty.

3. Owners or lessees of private land to the extent necessary to gain access to their land.

4. Persons with a contract from the Forest Service authorizing work within the closed areas and on the closed roads are exempt from the prohibitions listed above to the extent authorized by the contract.

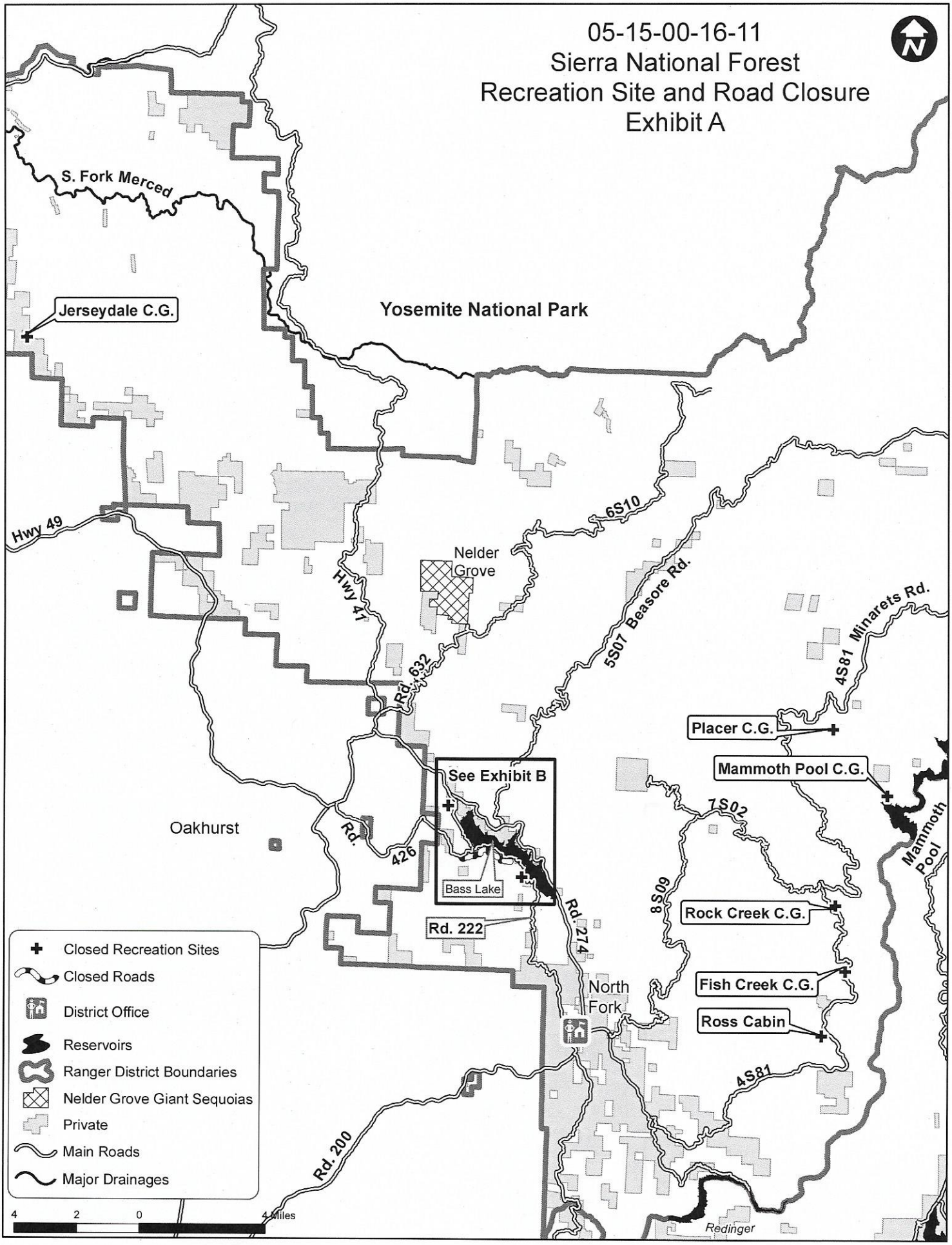
These prohibitions are in addition to the general prohibitions contained in 36 CFR Part 261, Subpart A.

A violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than $5,000 for an individual or $10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than six months, or both. 16 USC 551 and 18 USC 3559, 3571, and 3581.

Executed in Clovis, California on August 25, 2016.

DEAN A GOULD
Forest Supervisor

This Order supersedes Order No. 05-15-00-16-10, dated July 22, 2016.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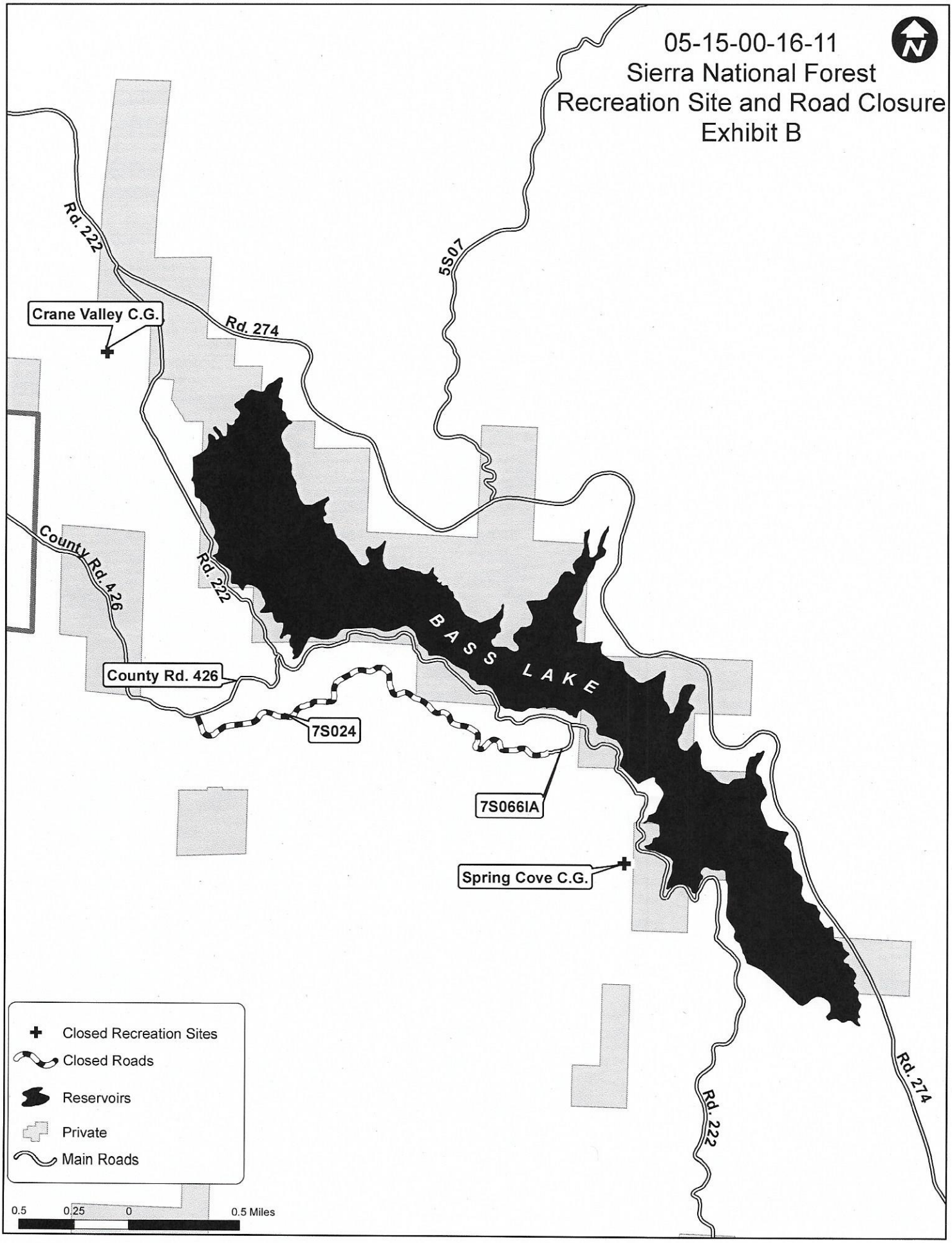
Sierra National Forest
Recreation Site and Road Closure
Exhibit A
S. Fork Merced
Jerseydale C.G.
Yosemite National Park
Hwy 49
Hwy 41
Nelder Grove
6S10
5S07 Beasore Rd.
4S81 Minarets Rd.
Rd. 632
Placer C.G.
Mammoth Pool C.G.
See Exhibit B
Oakhurst
Rd. 426
Bass Lake
Rd. 222
Rd. 274
7S02
8S09
Mammoth Pool
Rock Creek C.G.
Fish Creek C.G.
Ross Cabin
North Fork
4S81
Rd. 200
Redinger
Closed Recreation Sites
Closed Roads
District Office
Reservoirs
Ranger District Boundaries
Nelder Grove Giant Sequoias
Private
Main Roads
Major Drainages
4 2 0 4 Miles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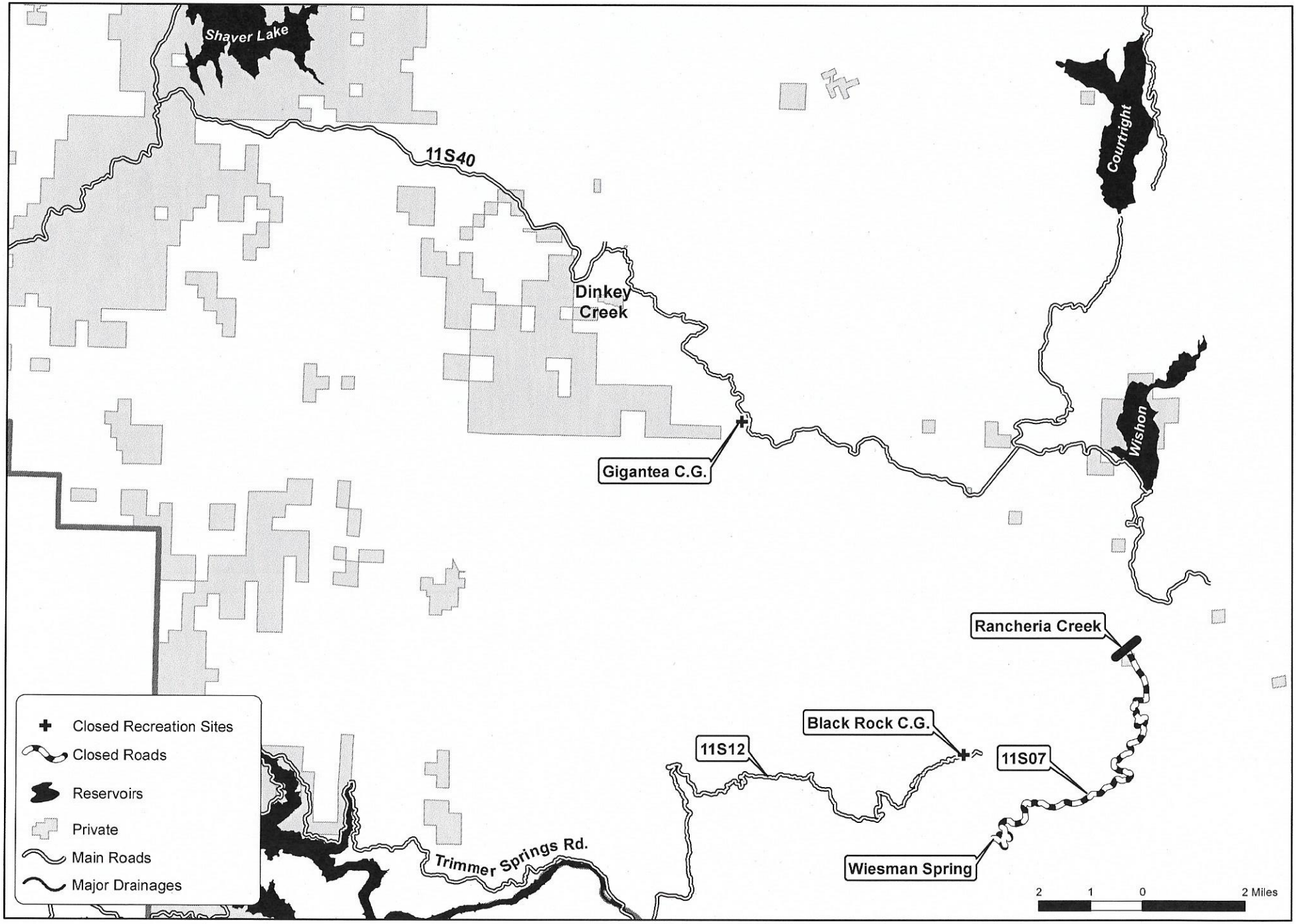
Sierra National Forest
Recreation Site and Road Closure
Exhibit B
N
Rd. 222
5S07
Crane Valley C.G.
Rd. 274
County Rd. 426
Rd. 222
BASS LAKE
County Rd. 426
7S024
7S066IA
Spring Cove C.G.
Rd. 222
Rd. 274
Closed Recreation Sites
Closed Roads
Reservoirs
Private
Main Roads
0.5
0.25
0
0.5 Miles

05-15-00-16-11
Sierra National Forest
Recreation Site and Road Closure
Exhibit C