

EXHIBIT B
Temporary Closure 01-16-595
Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests
Alpine Ranger District
Assessment of Need

Background: Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest has planned and implemented a number of hazardous fuels abatement projects to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires and to improve habitat and water quality. The Nutrioso 2 Prescribed Burn Project is a 3,212 acre project targeted to reduce the wildfire risk for the community of Nutrioso. The Forest intends to use helicopter-based ignition in order to expedite the project and reduce the duration of smoke impacts to nearby communities. The use of aerial ignition sources increases the risk to the public if in the project area. The proposed order will restrict all entry into the affected area by the public until the hazardous conditions are successfully mitigated.

- 1) **Purpose:** The temporary closure contains the purpose of:
 - a. To assure the protection of public health and safety by temporary prohibiting the recreational use of the described area during prescribed burning activities.

- 2) **Scope of the Order:** Estimated to be until approximately November 12, 2016, but due to the uncertainty of weather and fuels conditions, the Order will be in place until December 31, 2016. This order may be rescinded prior to this date if the threat to public safety is minimal.

- 3) **How interested or potentially affected persons will be informed:** Closure Orders will be posted at the Alpine Ranger District Office, all forest roads and trails accessing the affected area, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests Supervisor's Office, and on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests website. The Forest will publish a news release for media coverage.

NEPA Compliance: This Order falls under FSH 1909.15, 32.12, (1): *Orders issued pursuant to 36 CFR part 261 – Prohibitions to provide short-term resource protection or to protect public health and safety*, per 36 CFR 220.6(d)(1). This Order will not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. The Order is necessary to provide for public safety, resource protection, and restoration activities for the duration of the project.

Civil Rights Impact Statement: This Order does not constitute a “major action” as defined in FSH 1709.11, 31.1, Exhibit 01. It temporarily affects the land within the Nutrioso 2 Prescribed Burn Closure Area by restricting access and recreational use due to safety issues associated with prescribed burning activities.

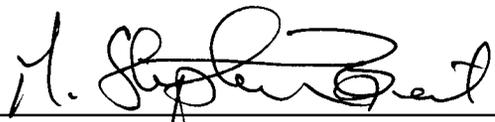
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October 28, 2016

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October 28 2016