

File Code: 2670
Route To: File

Date: June 18, 2018

Subject: Forest Order No. 05-15-52-18-04 – Sand Flats Trail Closures

From: Dean A Gould, Forest Supervisor 

This document explains my rationale and the regulatory basis for implementing a temporary trail closure Order on trail numbers 26E212, 26E213, 26E214, 26E215, and 26E216 on the Sierra National Forest.

The purpose of this Forest Order is to prevent further damage to several trails and the surrounding natural resources. Heavy spring rain and snow events resulted in persistent flooding on several Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) trails that are accessed via 8S42 at the Sand Flats OHV area. During trail clearing in preparation for trail opening, Forest Service Staff documented significant trail flooding and determined that use would result in trail tread and natural resource damage if opened for use in their current condition. Natural resource damage that would occur includes, but is not limited to, damage to soils, vegetation, and hydrology as a result of vehicle use.

OHV trails 26E212 (Coyote Lake), 26E213 (Red Mountain), 26E214 (Strawberry Lake), 26E215 (West Lake), and 26E216 (Mirror Lake) will be closed temporarily. The OHV trails in the area are not currently passable nor safe, and the closure will protect the trails and resources. The Forest staff will be routinely surveying the trails to identify when flooding has subsided and soils are sufficiently dry to allow for vehicle use without causing damage.

Scoping efforts included discussions with OHV user groups and clubs that typically use these trails. They understood the above mentioned concerns and impacts if the trails were to be opened as normally scheduled. They requested the order be cancelled as soon as the trails are safe and can be used without significant resource damage occurring.

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.



Forest Order No. 05-15-52-18-04
Sierra National Forest
Sand Flats Trail Closure

Pursuant to 16 USC 551 and 36 CFR 261.50(b), and to protect natural resources, the following act is prohibited within the Sierra National Forest. This Order is effective from June 19, 2018, through July 13, 2018.

Operating any motor vehicle upon the National Forest System trails listed below and shown on the attached map.

Forest Trail No. 26E215 (West Lake OHV Route)
Forest Trail No. 26E216 (Mirror Lake OHV Route)
Forest Trail No. 26E214 (Strawberry Lake OHV Route)
Forest Trail No. 26E212 (Red Lake OHV Route)
Forest Trail No. 26E213 (Coyote Lake OHV Route)

36 CFR 261.55(b).

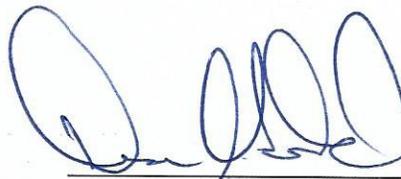
Pursuant to 36 CFR 261.50(e), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

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 firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.
3. Persons with a contract or volunteer agreement from the Forest Service authorizing work on the closed trails are exempt from this prohibition to the extent authorized by the contract or agreement.

This prohibition is in addition to the general prohibitions contained in 36 CFR Part 261, Subpart A.

A violation of this prohibition 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 June 18, 2018.



DEAN A GOULD
Forest Supervisor

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