

File Code: 2670
Route To: File

Date: July 20, 2018

Subject: Forest Order No. 05-15-00-18-14 – Fire Restrictions

From: Dean A Gould, Forest Supervisor 

This document explains my rationale and the regulatory basis for implementing temporary fire restrictions on the Sierra National Forest.

The criteria for activating fire restrictions through Forest Orders are based on National Fire Danger Rating System indices, fuel moisture conditions, and increasing human-caused ignitions.

The Sierra National Forest utilizes two indices from the National Fire Danger Rating System, the Burning Index (BI) and the Energy Release Component (ERC), as threshold criteria for issuing fire restrictions. The Forest Service has determined that these indicators are reliable measurements for predicting increased fire behavior, large fire potential and fire ignition. Current conditions across the forest reflect BI and ERC indices at levels which would provoke these occurrences.

The totality of all these factors result in a higher probability of fires starting from activities prohibited by this Order and suggest that any wildfires would burn with extreme intensity and behavior. Furthermore, the Sierra National Forest has experienced an upward trend in human-caused fires. Preventing additional fires through this Order and its prohibitions will provide for public safety and protect natural resources. Per the Sierra National Forest Fire Restriction and Emergency Closure Plan, current conditions meet the criteria for issuing fire restrictions for all areas of the Sierra National Forest.

Line Officers as well as Forest Fire Management and Prevention Staff have assessed Recreation Sites and Wilderness Areas on the Forest. Those areas that lack flammable material or have had flammable materials removed to prevent fire ignitions from escaping into the wildland are listed in Exhibits A and B.

Scoping efforts include the Sierra National Forest Fire Management staff consulting with Forest Staff Officers, Line Officers, interagency partners, local government cooperators and the adjacent National Forests and National Parks regarding increasing fire danger across the central sierras.

Additional information to include the Sierra National Forest Fire Restriction and Emergency Closure Plan referenced above can be found at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/sierra/alerts-notices>, or by calling 559-297-0706.



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.

SIERRA NATIONAL FOREST
Forest Order No. 05-15-00-18-14
Fire Restrictions

Pursuant to 16 USC 551 and 36 CFR 261.50(a) and (b), and to provide for public safety and protect natural resources, the following acts are prohibited within the Sierra National Forest. This Order is effective from July 21, 2018, through the end of the official 2018 fire season.

1. Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, or stove fire, except within the Designated Wilderness Areas listed in Exhibit A or the Designated Recreation Sites listed in Exhibit B. 36 CFR 261.52(a).
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, or within the Designated Wilderness Areas listed in Exhibit A or the Designated Recreation Sites listed in Exhibit B. 36 CFR 261.52(d).
3. Welding, or operating acetylene or other torch with open flame. 36 CFR 261.52(i).
4. Operating or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting device that is properly installed, maintained, and in effective working order in accordance with U.S. Forest Service Standard 5100-1. 36 CFR 261.52(j).

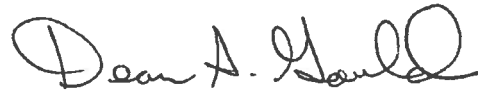
Pursuant to 36 CFR 261.50(e), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

1. Any Federal, State or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.
2. Persons with a permit from the Forest Service specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission. Persons with a valid California Campfire Permit are not exempt from the prohibitions listed above. However, persons with a valid California Campfire Permit may use a portable lantern or stove using contained gas, or pressurized liquid fuel with a fuel shut off valve.
3. Persons with a Special Use Permit from the Forest Service for a recreation residence on the Sierra National Forest may use a campfire or stove fire at their recreation residence.

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

A violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5000 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 July 20, 2018.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dean A. Gould". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D".

DEAN A GOULD
Forest Supervisor

FOREST ORDER 05-15-00-18-14
Sierra National Forest
Exhibit A – Designated Wilderness Areas

<u>BASS LAKE RANGER DISTRICT</u>
Ansel Adams Wilderness

<u>HIGH SIERRA RANGER DISTRICT</u>
John Muir Wilderness
Kaiser Wilderness
Dinkey Lakes Wilderness
Monarch Wilderness
Ansel Adams Wilderness

FOREST ORDER 05-15-00-18-14
Sierra National Forest
Exhibit B – Designated Recreation Sites

<u>BASS LAKE RANGER DISTRICT</u>		
Bowler Campground	Granite Creek Campground	Rocky Point Day Use Area
Chilkoot Campground	Greys Mountain Campground	Soquel Campground
Clover Meadow Campground	Kelty Meadow Campground	Summerdale Campground
Denver Church Day Use Area	Lakeside Day Use Area	Sweetwater Campground
Dirt Flat Campground	Little Denver Church Day Use Area	Whiskers Campground
Dry Gulch Campground	Little Jackass Campground	Whisky Falls Campground
Falls Beach Day Use Area	Lone Sequoia Campground	Willow Cove Day Use Area
Forks Campground	Nelder Grove Campground	Wishon Point Campground
Fresno Dome Campground	Pine Slope Day Use Area	
Gaggs Campground	Recreation Point Campground	

<u>HIGH SIERRA RANGER DISTRICT</u>		
Badger Flat Campground	Dinkey Creek Campground	Portal Forebay Campground
Badger Flat Group Campground	Dorabelle Campground	Rancheria Campground
Bear Cove Day Use	Dowville Day Use Area	Sample Meadow Campground
Billy Creek Lower Campground	Gravel Flat Campground	Sawmill Flat Campground
Billy Creek Upper Campground	Jackass Meadow Campground	Trapper Springs Campground
Bolsillo Campground	Kinnikinnick Campground	Upper Kings Group Campground
Bretz Mill Campground	Kirch Flat Campground	Vermillion Campground
Buck Meadow Campground	Kirch Flat Group Campground	Voyager Rock Campground
Catavee Campground	Lilypad Campground	Ward Lake Campground
College Campground	Marmot Rock Campground	West Kaiser Campground
Deer Creek Campground	Midge Creek Group Campground	Wishon Village RV Park and Campground
Mono Hotspings Campground	Mono Creek Campground	Haslett Basin Traditional Use Area