

**File Code:** 2350; 5300**Date:** March 27, 2020**Route To:****Subject:** Rationale for Developed Recreation Site Closures on the Rogue River-Siskiyou, Fremont-Winema, Umpqua, Willamette, Olympic, Mt Baker-Snoqualmie, Okanogan-Wenatchee, Colville, Deschutes, Ochoco & Crooked River Grassland, Umatilla, Siuslaw, Wallowa-Whitman and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area**To:** Forest Supervisors and Area Manager

To provide for the protection of public health and safety and prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Region is implementing a public safety closure for all developed recreation sites within the administrative boundaries of the forests listed above. This letter documents the rationale behind Forest Order No. 06-00-00-20-01 to prohibit public use of developed recreation sites on the specific forests.

This decision was based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as state and local health authorities. Recreation sites within the forests listed above experience extremely high levels of recreational use that make social distancing difficult, if not impossible. Observed behaviors, the proximity to large population centers, and the continued announcements of additional local, county, state, port, and federal closures in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, result in the likelihood that lands on forests listed above will become increasingly congested. The Forest Service is focused on ensuring the health and safety of our employees and the public while maintaining our ability to provide mission critical services including emergency response to fire, law enforcement, and support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This action aligns with the interests of our local and state jurisdictions and is consistent with both Oregon and Washington State Executive Orders.

This closure is an interim measure. I will continue to evaluate the emerging safety situation around COVID-19 and follow guidelines from the CDC, as well as state and local health departments, to ensure that the safety of our employees and our visitors is a priority.

I conclude 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 C.F.R. § 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 there are no extraordinary circumstances associated with this temporary closure. Implementation of the decision may begin immediately.

GLENN P. CASAMASSA  
Regional Forester

Enclosures (3)

cc: Dennis Benson, Jackie Parmer, Michelle Mitchell, Mercury 477711



## **Enforcement Plan**

**National Forests – Rogue River-Siskiyou, Fremont-Winema, Umpqua, Willamette, Olympic, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, Okanogan-Wenatchee, Colville, Deschutes, Ochoco & Crooked River Grassland, Umatilla, Siuslaw, Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur**

**Background:** To provide for the protection of public health and safety and prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Forest Service has decided to implement a public safety closure for all developed recreation sites within the forests listed above. This decision was made based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as state and local health authorities to be consistent with the States of Oregon and Washington Executive Orders. Recreation sites within the forests listed above experience extremely high levels of recreational use that make social distancing difficult, if not impossible. Use of forest areas along certain roads is also exceedingly high, both on and outside of developed recreation sites. As state and local parks in the area have closed in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, National Forest System lands are becoming increasingly congested. The Forest Service is focused on ensuring the health and safety of our employees, their families, and the public while maintaining our ability to provide mission critical services including emergency response to fire, law enforcement, and support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**Enforcement Plan:** The Forest Service will develop a communication plan to promote public awareness and understanding of the safety concerns surrounding recreation and COVID-19. Efforts will address key audiences including our partners and visitors. We will also provide online notification of the closure through website and social media platforms through **Forest PAO's**.

Forest Service staff will post closure signs at all recreation sites on NFS lands within forests listed above. **Developed Recreation Leads at field units will work with field staff to ensure sites are properly signed.**

Upon the signing of the order by the Regional Forester, media notifications and posting of the impacted areas, enforcement of this order will be performed by Law Enforcement Officers, Special Agents and Forest Protection Officers utilizing “Smart Patrol” tactics. Smart Patrol tactics include practice of standard officer safety tactics enhanced attention to CDC recommended practices recommended to reduce the spread of coronavirus. Within this context the immediate physical safety of officers, employees, and visitor safety always take precedence.

Appropriate, fair and impartial enforcement actions will be made to address violations of this order. These actions may include: education, verbal warnings, citations, or arrest. The goal of all enforcement activities associated with this order will be to gain voluntary compliance for the protection of forest users, employees and natural resources.

Action	Responsible Official	Date
Prepare and review proposed order	Dennis Benson	3/26/20
LEI Review proposed order	Andrew Coriell, Regional Patrol Commander	3/26/20
OGC review proposed order	OGC Assigns	
Approve proposed order(s)	Glenn Casamassa, Regional Forester	
Public outreach effort – website / social media	OCCE Assigns	
Post Order in accordance with 36 CFR 261.51	Forest Service Recreation Personnel	
Enforcement of closure order	LEOs and Forest Protection Officers	



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 GLENN P. CASAMASSA  
 Regional Forester  
 Pacific Northwest Region

**MAR 30 2020**

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 Date

**CIVIL RIGHTS IMPACTS ANALYSIS**  
**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
Forest Service  
Pacific Northwest Region (R6)  
**CIVIL RIGHTS IMPACT ANALYSIS**  
**Pacific NW, R6, Forest Public Safety Closure**

**National Forests – Rogue-River Siskiyou, Fremont-Winema, Umpqua, Willamette,  
Olympic, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, Okanogan-Wenatchee, Colville, Deschutes,  
Ochoco & Crooked River Grassland, Umatilla, Siuslaw, Wallowa-Whitman and  
Malheur**  
**ORDER # 06-00-00-20-01**

**Purpose**

The purpose for developing a civil rights impact analysis is to provide the Forest Service decision maker information concerning potential civil rights impacts of the proposed action. Civil rights impacts are those which could affect the agency's ability to ensure equal opportunity in employment and in delivery of programs and services.

**Favorable Impacts**

The proposed action would reduce the risk to public health posed by COVID-19.

**Unfavorable Impacts**

The proposed action would reduce recreation opportunities on the forests subject to this order until it expires or is rescinded.

**Mitigation Measures**

Forest Service will rescind order as soon as is reasonable, in coordination with local county and state orders regarding recreation site and area closures.

**Social Impacts**

The proposed action does not impose any unreasonable adverse impacts on the civil rights of any individuals. The area closure applies to all members of the public. The restriction is temporary and of general applicability, and supports the stay-at-home orders issued by the governors of Oregon and Washington, and by many local governments, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The benefits are reasonable, as compared to the unfavorable impacts.

**Net Civil Rights Impact**

No net negative Civil Rights impacts would occur because the public safety closure is general in applicability.



GLENN P. CASAMASSA  
Regional Forester  
Pacific Northwest Region

MAR 30 2020

DATE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE

National Forests – Rogue River-Siskiyou, Fremont-Winema, Umpqua, Willamette, Olympic, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, Okanogan-Wenatchee, Colville, Deschutes, Ochoco & Crooked River Grassland, Umatilla, Siuslaw, Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur

ORDER # 06-00-00-20-01  
FOREST ORDER  
OCCUPANCY AND USE

Pursuant to 16 USC 551 and 36 CFR 261.50 (a), and to provide for public health and safety, the following acts are prohibited in the areas described in this order within the administrative boundaries of each of the forests listed above. This Order will become effective upon signature and shall be in effect until September 30, 2020, unless rescinded.

**PROHIBITION:**

1. Entering or using a Developed Recreation Site or portion thereof **§ 261.58 (b)**

*Developed recreation site means an area which has been improved or developed for recreation,* § 36 CFR 261.2. Refer to individual National Forest's visitor use maps.

**EXEMPTIONS:**

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

1. Persons with a permit specifically 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 their official duties.
3. Volunteers and hosted enrollees (defined as any non-Forest Service employee who is officially participating in a Forest Service program).
4. Persons engaged in essential activities specifically allowed by Governors' orders in Oregon and in Washington.

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

Executed in Portland, Oregon, on this 27<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.



GLENN P. CASAMASSA  
Regional Forester  
Pacific Northwest Region

Violations of these prohibitions are punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 for an individual or \$10,000.00 for a corporation or imprisonment for not more than six months or both. Title 16 USC Section 551.