



FOREST ORDER No. STF-16-2020-08
USDA FOREST SERVICE
PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION
Stanislaus National Forest

Pursuant to 16 USC 551 and 36 CFR 261.50(a), and to protect natural resources and provide for public safety, the following acts are prohibited on the Stanislaus National Forest. This Order is effective from May 28, 2020, through November 30, 2020.

1. Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, or stove fire, except in open developed recreation sites. 36 CFR 261.52(a).
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material. 36 CFR 261.52(d).
3. Operating an internal combustion engine off paved, gravel or dirt National Forest System roads and trails, except boats on a water surface. 36 CFR 261.52(h).

Pursuant to 36 CFR 216.50 (e), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

1. Any Federal, State or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty.
2. 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 campfire pit, stove or lantern that uses gas, kerosene, jellied petroleum or pressurized liquid fuel, with a shut-off valve, in an area at least five feet from any flammable materials.
3. Persons with a valid 2020 Forest Products Removal Permit (firewood permit) from the United States Forest Service are not exempt from the prohibitions listed above, but may operate an internal combustion engine off National Forest System roads and trails only to the extent necessary to cut firewood, provided the cutting of firewood is done in compliance with the terms of the permit.
4. Persons with a valid Forest Service special use authorization for a recreation residence, resort, or organizational camp are exempt from Prohibition No. 1, while at their recreation residence, resort, or organizational camp.
5. Persons with a Forest Service non-special-use written authorization to conduct non-recreational activities, such as harvesting timber or forest products, or grazing livestock.



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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 6 months, or both. 16 USC 551 and 18 USC 3559, 3571, and 3581.

Executed in Sonora, California, this 29 day of May 2020.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jason Kuiken', written over a horizontal line.

Jason Kuiken
Forest Supervisor
Stanislaus National Forest
Pacific Southwest Region



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Stanislaus National Forest

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File Code: 1010
Route To: (1950)

Date: May 29, 2020

Subject: Forest Order No. STF-16-2020-08, COVID-19 Fire Restrictions

To: Project Files

From: Jason Kuiken, Forest Supervisor

I am issuing Forest Order No. STF-16-2020-08 as I have determined that it is necessary to issue fire restrictions within the Stanislaus National Forest to protect natural resources and to provide for public and employee safety by reducing potential exposure to COVID 19. This Order will prohibit campfires outside of open, developed Forest recreation sites; limit areas for smoking; and limit the operation of internal combustion engines. This Forest Order will be in effect from May 28, 2020 through November 30, 2020.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infection and potentially fatal disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus which leads to respiratory illness. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with once another (about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. As of May 22, 2020, the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported a total of 1,598,631 cases of COVID-19 nationwide (up from 1,324,488 since May 14, 2020) with 88,444 cases in California (up from 66,680 since May 14, 2020). While local cases remain small in number (currently 32 confirmed cases, up from 20 since April 27, 2020), many of the cases have been determined to be exposures from out-of-county. In addition, limited local testing has taken place.

California has seen rapid community spread of the coronavirus. On March 19, 2020, the Governor of California issued Executive Order N-33-20, which directs all individuals living in the state to stay home or at their place of residence. On May 7, 2020, California's Public Health Officer issued an order explaining California's path forward from this "Stay-at-Home" Order through implementation of its Pandemic Roadmap. This Roadmap identifies four stages of the pandemic: safety and preparation (Stage 1), reopening of lower-risk workplaces and other spaces (Stage 2), reopening of higher-risk workplaces and other spaces (Stage 3), and finally an easing of final restrictions leading to the end of the stay at home order (Stage 4). The STF includes lands in portions of four California counties: Tuolumne, Mariposa, Calaveras, and Alpine. Each of these counties are in Stage 2 and in alignment with the state guidelines for reopening.

As America and the State of California begin to open up again, suggested guidance for responsible public behavior consistent with continuing to prevent the spread of COVID-19 includes social distancing, frequent washing of hands, and the use of face coverings. To further protect first responders, the general public, and local communities, restrictions on traditional recreational activities such as the building and enjoyment of a campfire and limitations on



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smoking and the use of combustible engines are necessary.

Human-caused ignitions are a significant fire management challenge for the Forest and unintentional human-caused ignitions far outnumber intentional ones. When a forest fire ignites, the proximity of the Forest to large population centers and communities within the wildland-urban interface creates a situation in which the potential for catastrophic property damage and loss of life is high. In California, over the past ten years, escaped campfires have accounted for igniting 25% of all wildfires. Reducing the number of these starts will best enable us to successfully suppress the fires that do occur while protecting the safety of our employees and the community.

Our priority is to protect the health and well-being of our first responders and the public. This means that we are taking additional precautions now to prevent wildfire ignitions on the forest. These precautions include assessing the current availability of firefighting resources, reviewing the methods by which the agency fights fires, and issuing fire restrictions. Responding to wildfires compromises our firefighters' abilities to take precautions against the spread of COVID-19. If our fire crews do contract COVID-19 while responding to one fire, the capability of a response to future fires will be further reduced. Additionally, we as an agency who cares about our employees, strive to minimize the situations in which our firefighters may be exposed to or contract COVID-19.

In preparing this order, the following entities have been contacted or have otherwise offered their support of this action: CALFIRE, Sonora City Fire Department, Tuolumne County Administrator's Office / Office of Emergency Services; Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors; Public Health Officials from each County; Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office; Sonora Police Department; California Highway Patrol; and Calaveras County Sheriff's Office. The STF participates in conference calls / meetings taking place three times a week that include the entities above, as well as the following: Tuolumne Band of Me Wuk; Tuolumne County Schools; the Bureau of Reclamation and Yosemite National Park.

This Forest Order includes the following exemptions: 1) an exemption for any Federal, State or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty; 2) an exemption for those persons with a valid California Campfire Permit who desire to use a portable campfire pit, stove or lantern that uses gas, kerosene, jellied petroleum or pressurized liquid fuel, with a shut-off valve, in an area at least three feet from any flammable materials; 3) those persons with a valid 2020 Forest Products Removal Permit (firewood permit) from the United States Forest Service are not exempt from the prohibitions listed above, but may operate an internal combustion engine off National Forest System roads and trails only to the extent necessary to cut firewood, provided the cutting of firewood is done in compliance with the terms of the permit; 4) an exemption for persons with a valid Forest Service special use authorization for a recreation residence, resort, or organizational camp from Prohibition No. 1 of the order, while at their recreation residence, resort, or organizational camp; and 5) an exemption for persons with a Forest Service non-special-use written authorization to conduct non-recreational activities, such as harvesting timber or forest products, or grazing livestock.

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.