



Date: June 30, 2020

To: File

From: John F. Smith, Acting Forest Supervisor

Re: Forest Order No. 05-04-50-20-13

*JFS*

I am issuing Forest Order No. 05-04-50-13 to provide for public and employee health and safety by keeping Developed Recreation Group Campsites as well as two Developed Campgrounds located in remote areas on National Forest System lands within the Inyo National Forest closed through October 31, 2020. This closure may be terminated or extended depending on conditions.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious 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 one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. As a result, the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

California and the rural areas of Inyo and Mono County have seen a rapid community spread of the coronavirus. Typically, the Inyo National Forest and local counties welcome visitors and recreationists as tourism is the economic driver for the local area. With COVID-19, however, we join our local partners, including the in their concern regarding the potential for a large outbreak of COVID-19 and our ability to successfully respond as rural communities.

This decision was based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as state and local health authorities. Developed recreation within the Inyo National Forest have experienced an extreme level of recreational use. In some areas the increase in public use has been so great that adequate social distancing is simply not possible. Observed behaviors, and the continued announcements of other local, county, federal, and state, recreational opportunity closures in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, result in the high likelihood that the Inyo National Forest will become increasingly congested with recreational users in the coming weeks and months. 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 the emergency response capabilities of fire, law enforcement, and support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Developed recreation group campsites on the Inyo National Forest typically draw large groups of people at any given time creating mass gatherings and concentrated groups of forest visitors in these areas. As a result, these sites significant management oversight, especially during the high-use conditions now being realized. This management burden puts Forest personnel at additional risk of exposure to COVID-19. Due to lack of personnel it is necessary to closed two developed



campgrounds located in remote areas of the Inyo National Forest. These facilities are located in areas that timely and routine cleaning cannot occur.

Closing these developed recreation sites will help reduce additional unnecessary risks to the public exposed to community spread of COVID-19, first responders, and strain on the medical system during this pandemic.

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.

This Forest Order includes an exemption for persons with a Forest Permit for Use of Roads, Trails, or Areas Restricted by Regulation or Order (Form FS-7700-48). Authorization for entry under this exemption will only be provided if I or my delegate determine that the risk to personal health and safety is reasonable, considering the circumstances of the request. We may also require appropriate personal protective equipment and other necessary safety measures. I hereby delegate the authority to sign Form FS-7700-48 granting an exemption to this Forest Order to all Inyo National Forest Line Officers.

I have concluded that this decision may be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment 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.

ORDER NO. 05-04-50-20-13  
USDA Forest Service  
Inyo National Forest  
Developed Recreation Sites

Pursuant to 16 USC 551 and 36 CFR 261.50(a), and to provide for public safety, the following act is prohibited within the Inyo National Forest. This Order is effective from July 1, 2020, through October 31, 2020.

Entering or using a Developed Recreation Site, except trailheads and the Developed Recreation Sites listed in Exhibit A. 36 CFR 261.58(b).

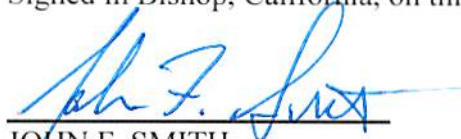
Pursuant to 36 CFR 261.50(e), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

1. Any Federal, State, or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty.
2. Persons with Forest Service Permit No. FS-7700-48 (Permit for Use of Roads, Trails, or Areas Restricted by Regulation or Order), specifically exempting them from this Order.

This prohibition is in addition to the general prohibitions 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.

Signed in Bishop, California, on this 30 day of June 2020.



JOHN F. SMITH  
Acting Forest Supervisor

ORDER NO. 05-04-50-20-13  
USDA Forest Service  
Inyo National Forest  
Developed Recreation Sites  
EXHIBIT A

**MONO LAKE RANGER DISTRICT**  
Obsidian Flat Group Campground  
Saddlebag Trailhead Group Campground

**MAMMOTH RANGER DISTRICT**  
Agnew Meadows Group Campground  
Pumice Flat Group Campground

**WHITE MOUNTAIN RANGER DISTRICT**  
Aspen Group Campground  
Big Pine Canyon Group Campground  
Bishop Park Group Campground  
Cedar Flat Campground  
Clyde Glacier Campground  
Grandview Campground  
Palisade Glacier Group Campground  
Rock Creek Lake Group Campground  
Table Mountain Group Campground

**MT. WHITNEY RANGER DISTRICT**  
Kennedy Meadows Campground  
Lone Pine Group Campground  
Whitney Portal Group Campground