



Forest Order No. STF-16-2020-19
Stanislaus National Forest
Temporary Camping, Occupancy, and Use Restrictions

Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 551 and 36 CFR 261.50(a), and to protect natural resources and provide for public health and safety, the following acts are prohibited within the Stanislaus National Forest. This Order is effective from September 19, 2020, through October 15, 2020.

1. Discharging a firearm, except while engaged in a lawful hunt pursuant to state, federal, or tribal law and regulations. 36 C.F.R. § 261.58(m).
2. Committing any of the prohibited activities listed below within the High and Moderate Fire Hazard Areas, as shown on Exhibit A and described in Exhibit B.

High Fire Hazard Area (Zone A):

- a. Camping. 36 C.F.R. § 261.58(e).
- b. Being in the area after sundown or before sunrise. 36 C.F.R. § 261.58(l).

Moderate Fire Hazard Area (Zone B):

- a. Camping, except for in open, developed campgrounds. 36 C.F.R. § 261.58(e).
- b. Being in the area after sundown or before sunrise (day use only). 36 C.F.R. § 261.58(l).

Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 261.50(e), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

1. 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.
2. Any Federal, State, or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty.

These prohibitions are in addition to the general prohibitions in 36 C.F.R. 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 six months, or both. 16 U.S.C. § 551 and 18 U.S.C. §§ 3559, 3571, and 3581.

Executed in Sonora, CA, this 19th day of September, 2020.



Jason Kuiken
Forest Supervisor
Stanislaus National Forest



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Stanislaus National Forest

19777 Greenley Road
Sonora, CA 95370
(209) 532-3671
FAX: (209) 533-1890
TTY/TDD: (209) 533-0765
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/stanislaus>

File Code: 1010
Route To: (1950)

Date: September 19, 2020

Subject: Forest Order No. STF-16-2020-19, Temporary Camping, Occupancy and Use Restrictions

To: Project Files

From: Jason Kuiken, Forest Supervisor

I have decided to issue Forest Order No. STF-16-2020-19, to prohibit some use and activities on the Stanislaus National Forest (STF). The order includes restrictions concerning where dispersed and developed camping may take place. Additionally, I have decided to temporarily restrict recreational target shooting. This Order will protect natural resources and provide for the public safety of forest visitors by limiting activities, occupancy, and use in high and moderate fire hazard areas within the Forest. The Order also limits the potential for new fire starts. This order is effective from September 19, 2020, through October 15, 2020.

California is experiencing an unprecedented and dire fire season. There are 18 National Forests in California, totaling approximately 20 million acres. Currently, 14 of 18 National Forests in the Pacific Southwest Region in California have large fires. Nearly all fires are now large, "complex" fires (a series of fires in close proximity to one another that have burned into a single large unit). In a typical fire season, California will see some 300,000 acres burn. This year, more than 3.1 million acres have already burned statewide.

Extreme weather conditions have made this situation significantly worse this year. Record high temperatures, unprecedented dry lightning events, and multiple heatwaves across the state have made conditions extremely dry and susceptible to fire ignition. Temperatures have reached over 100 degrees for most of the state several weeks running, even in areas along the coast that are typically cooler. In addition to the heat and high temperatures, significant wind events have occurred fueling blazes out of control.

Nationally, and within California, firefighting resources are operating at maximum capacity and there are significant shortages of resources. Our firefighting organization has been in Preparedness Level 5 (PL5), the highest level of fire response preparedness, for several weeks. All national Type 1 and Type 2 Incident Management Teams continue to be committed to ongoing incidents and are unavailable to respond to new large-scale wildfires. All fire engines and major firefighting equipment are already assigned to existing fires or positioned to prevent new fire starts from escaping initial attack. This scarcity of resources has caused the agency to seek assistance from the U.S. Army as well as other countries including Canada, Mexico, and Australia. This situation means that should additional fires ignite, the agency may not be able to respond in a timely manner, further risking life and property.



Caring for the Land and Serving People

Printed on Recycled Paper



The Stanislaus National Forest has experienced significantly increased levels of dispersed camping, which has resulted in an increase in illegal campfires. The potential for new fires to start and burn uncontrollably is extremely high right now. The combination of extreme fire conditions and weather, along with significant shortages in firefighting resources, poses a significant threat to communities and the visiting public. In addition, target shooting on the Stanislaus National Forest poses a significant threat to cause new fires to ignite.

National Forests in California have seen record numbers of visitors this summer. Reports indicate that use levels normally associated with peak holidays such as Memorial Day and the 4th of July are being seen every day throughout the summer. This level of visitation held true through the recent Labor Day weekend as well. Campgrounds and dispersed use areas are reported as full to capacity and overflowing. Overflow parking from parking areas spill into roadways. Conflicts between use groups have increased, as has criminal activity. Trash and human waste are collecting faster than staffs are able to clear and clean facilities. These visitor-use levels and related management issues further exacerbate a challenging fire situation creating a heightened level of risk.

In response to the fire and weather conditions – as well as to high visitation – the USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region issued Regional Order No. 20-07 on September 7, 2020, closing all southern California national forests (including the Stanislaus) to visitors and Regional Order No. 20-08, restricting use / activities for all northern California forests. On September 9, 2020, Regional Order No. 20-10 was issued closing all northern California forests in full. Regional Order Nos. 20-07 and 20-10 expired on September 14, 2020. New Regional Orders No. 20-12 and 20-13 – continuing full Forest closures for all CA national forests - were executed on September 14, 2020, with a termination date of September 21, 2020. Today, the Regional Forester issued Regional Order Nos. 20-14 and 20-15, which continue some of the same prohibitions.

Pursuant to Regional Order Nos. 20-14 and 20-15, Forest Supervisors on several Pacific Southwest Region forests have the flexibility to determine whether continued restrictions are needed. As such, Stanislaus National Forest staff have developed a local order tied to our historic High and Moderate Fire Hazard Areas (elevational zones). Public visitation and allowable use and activities are tied to the level of fire danger, as represented by these zones. Day Use Only will be allowed in the High Fire Hazard Areas (low elevations). Overnight camping will be authorized in open, Developed Recreation Sites only in the Moderate and Low Fire Hazard Areas. Dispersed camping will be allowed only in the Low Fire Hazard Areas (high elevations). Day Use activities and camping in Developed Recreation Sites are also allowed in Low Fire Hazard Areas.

Other considerations that the Stanislaus National Forest took into account in issuing this Order include: to date in 2020, all fires on the Stanislaus NF have been stopped during initial attack efforts (no large complex fires). Recently, daytime temperatures have averaged in the mid 80's, with nighttime temperatures dropping into the 50's. Relative humidity has increased. By implementing the prohibitions identified above and in the Order – while maintaining the ongoing Full Fire Restriction forest-wide – staff has determined that public use of Stanislaus NF lands

can be allowed in a safe manner that protects both natural resources and the visiting public. Many visitors to the Stanislaus NF are familiar with the respective fire hazard zones, as these areas represent our typical fire restriction areas on an annual basis.

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 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. I hereby delegate the authority to sign Form FS-7700-48 granting an exemption to this Forest Order to the STF District Rangers.

This order will be in effect until October 15, 2020. It may be extended if weather and fire conditions do not improve. Conversely, if weather and fire conditions change that are favorable to allowing additional activities with less restriction, the order may be terminated sooner.

The purpose of this closure is to protect members of the public. My staff has determined that anticipated effects of this proposed action would be administrative in nature. Contacts with local community leaders and area permittees were favorable. The Forest Service will install signs and post notices to alert the public to these prohibitions.

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.

cc: Mike Cone, Jim Junette, Sarah LaPlante, Ray Cablayan, Andy Welsh

**Forest Order No. STF-16-2020-19
Stanislaus National Forest
Temporary Camping, Occupancy and Use**

Exhibit B

High Hazard Fire Area

Area Description

The Stanislaus National Forest High Fire Hazard Area boundary begins at the top of the map (Exhibit A) at a point on the west boundary of the Mokelumne Wilderness .5 miles south of the east end of Salt Spring Reservoir, then continues due south across the SW ¼ of Section 6 and the NW ¼ of Section 7, T7N R17E, to its intersection with Forest Road No. 7N16, then continues 2 miles west along Forest Road No. 7N16 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 7N09, then continues 11 miles west along Forest Road No. 7N09 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 7N23, then continues 6 miles south along Forest Road No. 7N23 to its intersection with Highway 4, then continues due southeast to Forest Road No. 6N17, then continues 3 miles south along Forest Road No. 6N17 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 5N14, then continues 19 miles east along Forest Road No. 5N14 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 6N05, then continues 2 miles north along Forest Road No. 6N05 to Basin Creek, then continues 1 mile east along Basin Creek to the confluence with the Middle Fork Stanislaus River, then continues 4 miles northeast along the Middle Fork Stanislaus River to Donnell Lake, then continues 1.5 miles east along the south shore of Donnell Lake to Niagara Creek, then continues 1.5 miles south and east along Niagara Creek to its intersection with Highway 108, then continues 15 miles south along Highway 108 to Forest Road No. 4N26 (Crabtree Road), then continues 7 miles east along Forest Road No. 4N26 (Crabtree Road) to its intersection with Forest Road No. 4N33, then continues 8 miles southwest along Forest Road No. 4N33 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 3N01, then continues 15 miles east and then south along Forest Road No. 3N01 to its intersection with Reynolds Creek, then continues 0.6 mile due east to the Emigrant Wilderness boundary, then continues 6 miles south and east along the Emigrant Wilderness boundary to the Stanislaus National Forest boundary, then continues south along the boundary of the Yosemite National Park and the Stanislaus National Forest to the Merced River boundary of the Sierra National Forest and the Stanislaus National Forest, then continues west, north and east along the boundary of the Stanislaus National Forest to the SE 1/4 of Section 12, T7N R15E, then continues due south 0.5 mile, then continues east and northeast paralleling the Stanislaus National Forest northern boundary and the southern edge of Salt Springs Reservoir at a distance of 0.5 mile back to the starting point, as shown on the attached map (Exhibit A).

**Forest Order No. STF-16-2020-19
Exhibit B (Cont.)**

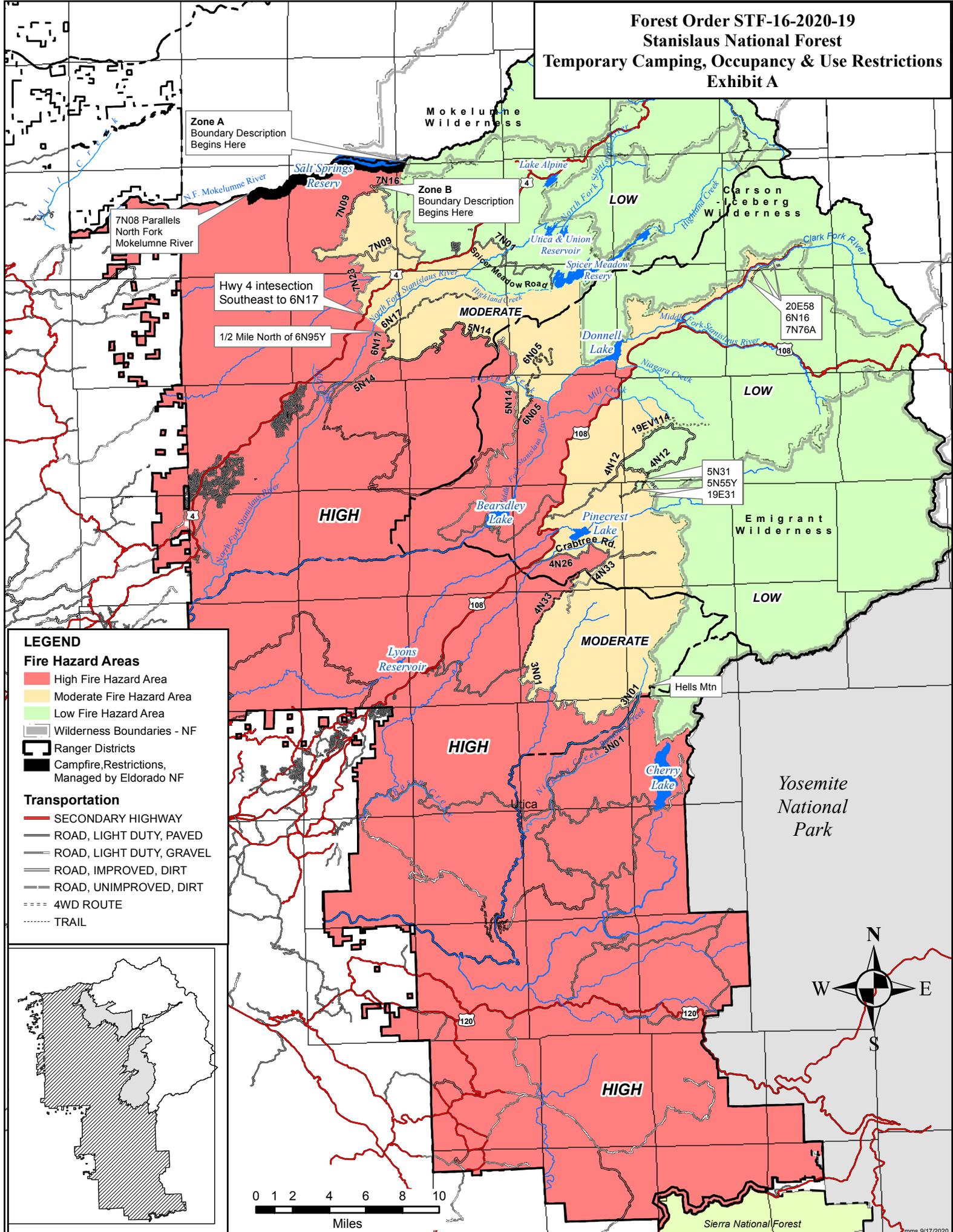
Moderate Hazard Fire Area

Area Description

The Stanislaus National Forest Moderate Fire Hazard Area boundary begins at the top of the map (Exhibit A) at the junction of Forest Road No. 7N16 and Forest Road No. 7N09 in Section 11, T7N R16E, then continues 10 miles southeast along Forest Road No. 7N09 to its intersection with Highway 4, then continues 3 miles east along Highway 4 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 7N01 (Spicer Meadow Road), then continues 3 miles south along Forest Road No. 7N01 (Spicer Meadow Road) to its intersection with the North Fork Stanislaus River, then continues 3 miles west along the North Fork Stanislaus River to its intersection with Highland Creek, then continues 6 miles southeast along Highland Creek to Spicer Meadow Reservoir, then continues 2 miles east along the south shore of Spicer Meadow Reservoir to its intersection with the Carson Iceberg Wilderness boundary, then continues 22 miles south and then northeast along the Carson Iceberg Wilderness boundary to its intersection with the Clark Fork River, then continues 2 miles west along the Clark Fork River to its intersection with Forest Road No. 20E58, then continues 1.5 miles west along Forest Road No. 20E58 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 6N16, then continues 1 mile west and southwest along Forest Road No. 6N16 to Forest Road No. 7N76A, then continues 0.5 miles southwest along Forest Road No. 7N76A to the end of the road, then continues 0.3 miles due west to the Clark Fork River, then continues 4 miles west along the Clark Fork River to its intersection with Forest Road No. 7N83, then continues 1 mile south along Forest Road No. 7N83 to its intersection with Highway 108, then continues 7 miles southwest along Highway 108 to Mill Creek, then continues 4 miles east along Mill Creek to its intersection with Forest Road No. 19EV114, then continues 2 miles west along Forest Road No. 19EV114 Road to its intersection with Forest Road No. 4N12, then continues 5 miles south along Forest Road No. 4N12 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 5N31, then continues 2 miles south and west along Forest Road No. 5N31 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 5N55Y, then continues east for 1 mile along Forest Road No. 5N55Y to its intersection with Forest Trail No. 19E31, then continues 1 mile south along the Forest Trail No. 19E31 to its intersection with the Emigrant Wilderness boundary, then continues 14 miles south along the Emigrant Wilderness boundary to 1/4 mile south of Hells Mountain, then continues 0.6 mile due west to Reynolds Creek and its junction with Forest Road No. 3N01, then continues 15 miles west along Forest Road No. 3N01 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 4N33, then continues 8 miles north along Forest Road No. 4N33 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 4N26 (Crabtree Road), then continues 7 miles west on Forest Road No. 4N26 (Crabtree Road) to its intersection with Highway 108, then continues 15 miles north on Highway 108 to its intersection with Niagara Creek, then continues 1.5 miles northwest along Niagara Creek to its intersection with the Donnell Lake south shore, then continues 1.5 miles west along the Donnell Lake south shore to the Middle Fork Stanislaus River, then continues 4 miles southwest along the Middle Fork Stanislaus River to its intersection with Basin Creek, then continues 1 mile along Basin Creek to its intersection with Forest Road No. 6N05, then continues 2 miles south along the Forest Road No. 6N05 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 5N14, then continues 19 miles north and east along Forest Road No. 5N14 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 6N17, then continues 2.6 miles north along Forest Road No. 6N17 to 1/2 mile north of 6N95Y, then

continues 1.5 miles due northwest across the North Fork Stanislaus River to the junction of Highway 4 and Forest Road No. 7N23, then continues 6 miles north along Forest Road No. 7N23 to its intersection with Forest Road No. 7N09, then continues 11 miles west and north along Forest Road No. 7N09 back to the starting point, as shown on the attached map (Exhibit A).

**Forest Order STF-16-2020-19
Stanislaus National Forest
Temporary Camping, Occupancy & Use Restrictions
Exhibit A**



Zone A
Boundary Description
Begins Here

Zone B
Boundary Description
Begins Here

7N08 Parallels
North Fork
Mokelumne River

Hwy 4 intesection
Southeast to 6N17

1/2 Mile North of 6N95Y

20E58
6N16
7N76A

5N31
5N55Y
19E31

LEGEND

Fire Hazard Areas

- High Fire Hazard Area
- Moderate Fire Hazard Area
- Low Fire Hazard Area
- Wilderness Boundaries - NF
- Ranger Districts
- Campfire Restrictions, Managed by Eldorado NF

Transportation

- SECONDARY HIGHWAY
- ROAD, LIGHT DUTY, PAVED
- ROAD, LIGHT DUTY, GRAVEL
- ROAD, IMPROVED, DIRT
- ROAD, UNIMPROVED, DIRT
- 4WD ROUTE
- TRAIL

