

FOREST ORDER NO. 12-06
LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST

Pursuant to 16 USC 551 and 36 CFR 261.50(b), and to protect threatened and endangered species, the following act is prohibited within the Santa Barbara Ranger District of the Los Padres National Forest. This Order is effective from August 8, 2012 through August 7, 2013. For the purpose of this Order a wheelchair is not considered to be a motorized vehicle.

Using any type of motorized vehicle on the Romero Camuesa Road (Forest Road No. 5N15.1), from the locked gate in the southwest ¼ of Section 26, Township 5 North, Range 26 West, San Bernardino Base and Meridian, northwest to its terminus, as shown on the attached map. 36 CFR 261.54(a).

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

1. Persons with a permit from the Forest Service 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 an official duty.

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.

Done at Goleta, California this 7th day of August, 2012.



Peggy Hernandez
Forest Supervisor
Los Padres National Forest

This Order supersedes Order No. 12-03, dated April 17th, 2012.



Date: August 7, 2012

Subject: Order No. 12-06
Los Padres National Forest
Romero Camuesa Road (5N15.1) Partial Closure

To: File

From: Peggy Hernandez

PA

For the reasons stated below, I have decided to supersede the existing Forest Order 12-03 executed April 17, 2012, and expand the closure to include an additional portion of the Romero Camuesa Road (5N15.1). The proposed Forest Order prohibits vehicle access west of the locked gate located in the W1/2, Sec 14, T5N, R26W, SBM on the Romero Camuesa Road (5N15.1). The purpose of this order is to protect wildlife and their habitat in this recreation area situated adjacent to and in riparian areas. This order is being proposed in collaboration with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Romero Camuesa Road provides one of the access ways between the Lower and Upper Santa Ynez Recreation Areas. The portion of the road that will be part of the closure order goes through one of the water crossings of Agua Caliente Creek. This road provides vehicular access to the following campgrounds: Middle Santa Ynez, P-Bar Flats and Mono. In March of 2012 District Ranger Doug Dodge and Resource Officer Valerie Hubbard informed me that a population of the federally threatened California red-legged frog bred upstream of the crossing and tadpoles have dispersed onto the crossing. Federally endangered arroyo toads have historically bred downstream of the crossing and suitable breeding habitat for the species has been found on the crossing. Mr. Dodge and Ms. Hubbard determined that in order to protect riparian dependent species, including the California red-legged frog, and wildlife breeding areas (pools), a portion of the Romero Camuesa Road, Forest Road 5N15.1, should be closed temporarily to public motor vehicle use.

On August 1, 2012, Ms. Hubbard surveyed the crossing again and confirmed the presence of California red-legged frog tadpoles. On August 2, 2012, District Ranger Bruce Emmens informed me of his recommendation to expand the closure of the Romero Camuesa Road to include the portion between Agua Caliente Creek to the gate at the junction with the Divide Peak OHV route (5N12), due to the historic increase in public use in the Upper Santa Ynez Recreation Area associated with the rifle hunting season for deer between August 11 through September 23, 2012. The rationale for the expanded closure is to prevent the anticipated public use in the Upper Santa Ynez Recreation Area with no campground facilities (toilets and campfire use sites) available, which would lead to public health and safety concerns of sanitation and unauthorized campfires, respectively.

Administrative use of the Agua Caliente Creek crossing would also be prohibited, except during emergency situations. The road from the crossing to the west will remain closed until April 17, 2013, but may be open sooner if surveys by a Forest Biologist do not detect any arroyo toad or California red-legged frog on the crossing. The road from the crossing eastward to the gate at the Divide Peak OHV route will remain closed until September 24, 2012, following termination of the hunting season.

The Forest Order is exempt from NEPA documentation under Category 1 in Section 31.12 of the NEPA Handbook. This category excludes "Orders issued pursuant to 36 CFR part 261 – Prohibitions to provide short-term resource

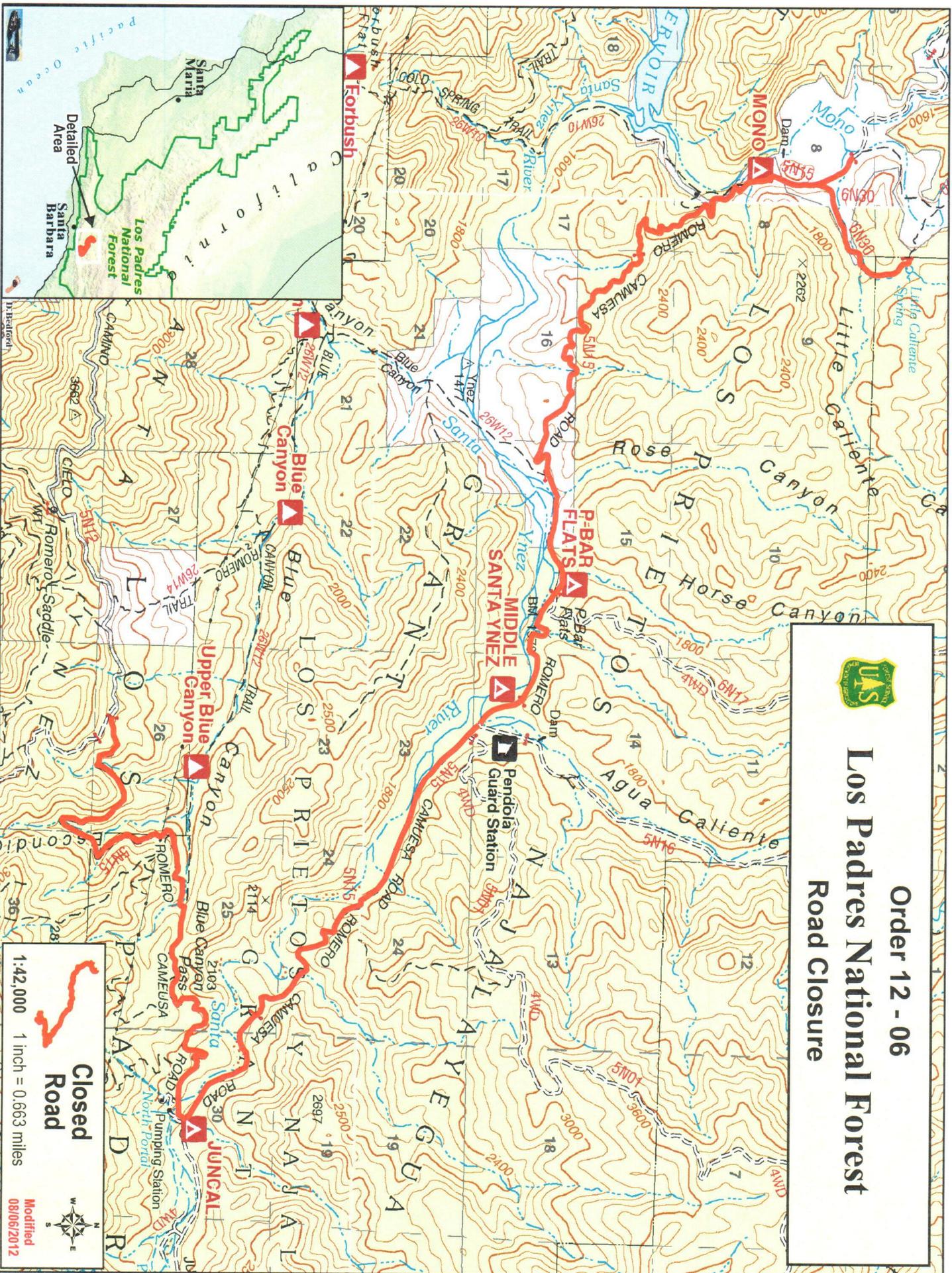
protection or to protect public health and safety” from documentation in an EIS or EA unless scoping indicates that there are extraordinary circumstances. In this situation, the closures are expected to be of a temporary nature until the Forest Plan revision develops long-term management direction. I have determined there are resource protection issues involved that are related to motor vehicle use on the Romero Camuesa Road. This Forest Order is exempt from NEPA documentation under Category 1 cited above. Interagency scoping for this proposal has failed to identify any extraordinary circumstances that would require further NEPA documentation at this time. This is not a project or activity implementing a land and resource management plan that is documented in a decision memo, decision notice, or record of decision.



Order 12 - 06

Los Padres National Forest

Road Closure



Closed Road

1:42,000 1 inch = 0.663 miles

Modified 08/06/2012

