The Forest Service is offering three webinars covering the process for Closures of National Forest System lands to Hunting, Fishing, or Recreational Shooting.

The Washington Office finalized Forest Service Manual (FSM) 5309.11 Closures of National Forest System lands to Hunting, Fishing, or Recreational Shooting directive on April 8, 2021. This revised directive implements Title IV of the John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act of 2019, which states that public land managed by the Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management is open to hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting, unless closed under certain procedures.

The National Forest System Policy Team and the Recreation, Heritage, & Volunteer Resources staff will host three 1.5-hour long webinars using Microsoft TEAMS. Enclosed is a flyer with the following scheduled dates and times:

- May 25, 2021 (12:00 Noon to 1:30 PM eastern standard time)
- June 10, 2021 (11:30 AM to 1:00 PM eastern standard time)
- June 16, 2021 (3:00 PM to 4:30 PM eastern standard time)

Promotional flyers will be circulated with additional information on how to connect and attend the webinars. Each webinar will have a designated Question and Answer session after the presentation. The directive was revised to establish the process for issuing closure orders, increase transparency and public communication, and increase communication with Fish & Wildlife Agencies, affected Tribes, and the shooting sports community.

These updates include a more significant role for public participation; codify the national practice on Federal lands of “open unless closed” to hunting, fishing, or recreational shooting into policy; and establish a process to temporarily or permanently close areas. The directive also includes adding a definition for emergency closures, which is needed to ensure the Forest Service has clear and transparent guidelines for closing an area to these recreational activities.

I encourage employees to attend one of the three identical webinar sessions to learn more about the revised directive. If you have any questions about the webinar, please contact James (Jay) Lowe, National Forest System Policy Team at james.lowe@usda.gov.
Signed by: TINA TERRELL  
TINA J. TERRELL  
Acting Deputy Chief, National Forest System  

Enclosure  

cc: Tracy Perry, Chris Boehm, Reed Robinson, William Carromero Marcano, James (Jay) Lowe