



Forest Order No. STF-16-2025-01

Stanislaus National Forest

Cherry Lake Camping Restrictions

Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 551 and 36 C.F.R. § 261.50(a) and (b), and to provide for public safety and protect natural resources, the following acts are prohibited within the Groveland Ranger District of the Stanislaus National Forest. This Order is effective from January 27, 2025, through December 31, 2026.

Camping, cooking, building a campfire, or storing fuel on National Forest Lands at, below or within 100 feet above the Cherry Lake high water mark (4702 feet elevation), or on the island within Cherry Lake, as shown on the attached map.

36 C.F.R. § 261.58(e), 36 C.F.R. 261.58 (cc), 36 C.F.R. 261.52 (a).

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

1. Persons with a 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 contained 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, California, this 23rd day of January 2025.

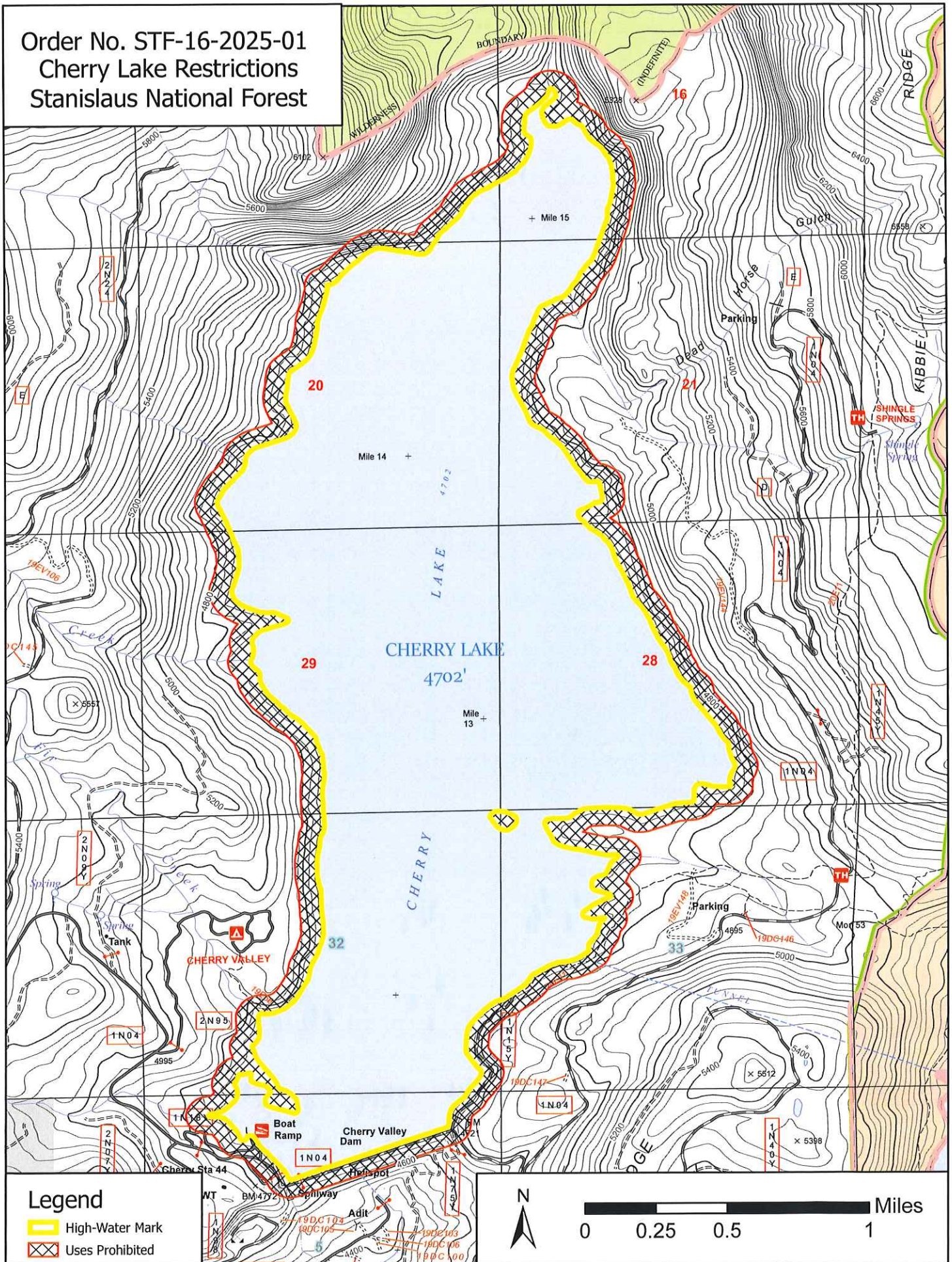


Jason Kuiken

Forest Supervisor

Stanislaus National Forest

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Date: January 23, 2025

Subject: Forest Order No. STF-16-2025-01, Cherry Lake Camping Restrictions

To: Project Files

From: Jason Kuiken, Forest Supervisor

I have decided to continue to implement the Cherry Lake Camping Restrictions from January 27th, 2025, through the end of the recreation season, December 31, 2026, as stated in Forest Order No. STF-16-2025-01. The previous order (STF-16-2024-13) expired December 31, 2024.

Cherry Lake is located on the Stanislaus National Forest, Groveland Ranger District in Tuolumne County, CA. Recreational water use is very popular, including boat-in camping; however, suitable dispersed camp sites for these activities are extremely limited due to rocky surfaces. The repeated use of these sites has led to heavy foot trampling of the existing vegetation, which has caused a significant loss of organic soils through erosion. All these dispersed campsites slope downhill towards the reservoir, directly contributing to the degradation of the water quality through sedimentation at various locations around the perimeter of Cherry Lake.

The City and County of San Francisco holds the water rights for the stored water in Cherry Lake, which is primarily used for hydropower generation as part of the Hetch Hetchy project. However, this water is also stored as a backup, secondary domestic water supply that can be used during times of drought or infrastructure issues. The California Department of Public Health regulates this domestic water supply to assure that the water is safe for human consumption. With portions of the shoreline littered with garbage and human fecal material, Hetch Hetchy staff identified these boat-in dispersed campsites as a potential source of sediment and bacteriological contamination to the City and County of San Francisco water supply.

Due to the remote and scattered manner of the dispersed campsites, and the fact the Forest Service patrol must boat to most of these sites, it has been determined that patrol work using existing rules and regulations has only been partially effective at dealing with this problem. In response to health concerns related to the impacts caused by repeated use at these dispersed campsites located within and just above the high-water line of Cherry Lake, the Forest Service recommending a District Order prohibiting camping within 100 feet of the high-water mark at Cherry Lake until a more permanent solution can be put in place.

Groveland Ranger District personnel regularly conduct education through signing, personal contacts and publications. Forest Law Enforcement Officers and Forest Protection Officers also seek compliance with the applicable rules by contacting visitors and issuing warnings and



violations notice when needed. No issues were raised during public scoping. Scoping with internal resource specialists determined that the anticipated effects of the actions would be beneficial to resources. The City and County of San Francisco has expressed concerns about the water quality in Cherry Lake, and supports the continuance of the previous Forest Order, (STF-16-2024-13).

My decision is to implement the continuance of the proposed action as described above for an additional period with a new Forest Order. The Forest Service has existing signs installed to alert the public to this prohibition and restriction. Minimal ground disturbance has occurred, and no other additional impact on any natural resources will occur with the continued implementation of this project.

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.

This order includes an exemption for persons holding 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 risks to public safety and natural resources are reasonable considering the circumstances of the request. I hereby delegate the authority to sign Form FS-770-48 granting an exemption to this order to the District Ranger of the Stanislaus National Forest.