


File Code: 5330
Route To: File

Date: July 22, 2022

Subject: Forest Order No. 05-15-51-22-17 – Sierra National Forest
Washburn Fire Closure

From: Dean Gould, Forest Supervisor 

This document explains my rationale and the regulatory basis for implementing Forest Order 05-15-51-22-17, hereby closing lands, roads and trails within the Sierra National Forest as a result of the Washburn Fire. This Forest Order will be effective from July 23, 2022, through August 1, 2022. This Order supersedes Forest Order No. 05-15-00-22-15.

On the evening of July 7, 2022, a wildfire ignited on the Washburn Trail in Yosemite National Park. By July 14, 2022, the Washburn Fire had grown from its original size of 10 acres to more than 4,416 acres at 23% containment. The Washburn Fire is now currently burning on the Sierra National Forest and is currently at 4,856 acres burned and 79% containment. The Fire is moving east along the South Fork of the Merced River, impacting wilderness, forest roads and popular recreation areas. The Fire has garnered significant firefighting and forest resources to prevent its spread. Exhibits A-C will identify the closure area and closed roads impacted by the Washburn Fire. The safety of firefighting resources and forest visitors is of most importance.

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. We may also require appropriate personal protective equipment and other necessary safety measures.

Scoping regarding this temporary closure involved discussions with multiple local, state, and federal agency cooperators. 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 C.F.R. § 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.

