

Date: June 14, 2023

To: File Code 1010

From: Forest Supervisor



Re: Forest Order No. 05-04-50-23-14; INYO NATIONAL FOREST. This order supersedes 05-04-50-23-01 dated April 18, 2023.

It is my decision to keep closed to wheeled motor vehicles certain National Forest System (NFS) Roads on the Inyo National Forest to protect natural resources and for public health and safety. Significant winter storms in February and March 2023 have resulted in extreme snowfall on the higher elevation terrain of the Forest and continuing rains/snow melt is affecting road conditions at lower elevations. District staff is currently working to determine to what extent damage has occurred, or if other obstacles, such as severe erosion cuts, rockslides, tree blowdown, etc. has impacted forest roads and infrastructure. These unknown obstacles are currently hidden under the blanket of deep snow. Due to the diligent efforts of Forest Service staff and many others, certain NFS Roads across the Forest have been cleared and can reopen, and we are seeking to make as much of the Forest once again accessible to visitors as soon as possible.

The National Forest System Roads identified in Exhibit A to this Order, however, must remain closed to wheeled motor vehicle use in light of persistent storm damage. Travel over snow-covered roads during melting conditions results in flowing water following the two ruts created by the vehicle(s), causing road damage and erosion. The Forest has already seen resource damage occurring when motorized wheeled vehicles travel off the roadway to avoid damaged sections. This puts the user in danger and causes damage to the surrounding areas. Due to earlier winter road damage across the Inyo National Forest, and across Forest Service's Region 5, additional road damage may not be repaired in a timely manner.

This Order will be terminated when road conditions allow for safe travel. This may occur when snow melt is completed, or when any damaged sections of road are repaired.

I have discussed this order with Inyo and Mono Counties, who are the agencies responsible for responding to search and rescue operations within these two counties, and with other local agencies / cooperators. This information will be disseminated through the Public Affairs office.

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.

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) and any administrative use by the Forest or its cooperators. 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. I hereby delegate the authority to sign Form FS-7700-48 granting an exemption to this order to the District Rangers of the Inyo National Forest.

FOREST ORDER NO. 05-04-50-23-14
INYO NATIONAL FOREST
FOREST ROAD CLOSURE

Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 551 and 36 C.F.R. § 261.50(b), and to provide for public safety and protect natural resources, the following act is prohibited within the Inyo National Forest. This Order is effective from June 15, 2023, through September 30, 2023.

Operating a wheeled motor vehicle on any National Forest System Road listed in Exhibit A.
36 C.F.R. § 261.54(a).

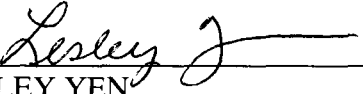
Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 261.50(e), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

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.
3. Persons with a Forest Service special use authorization for an electric transmission line, an oil or gas pipeline, communications site, or any other non-recreation special use.

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.

This order supersedes Order No. 05-04-50-23-01, dated April 18, 2023

Executed in Bishop, California this 14th day of June 2023.



LESLEY YEN
Forest Supervisor
Inyo National Forest

FOREST ORDER NO. 05-04-50-23-14
INYO NATIONAL FOREST
FOREST ROAD CLOSURE
EXHIBIT A

<u>WHITE MOUNTAIN RANGER DISTRICT:</u>
Forest Road 6S01 (Wyman Canyon Road)
Forest Road 6S02 (Silver Canyon Road)
Forest Road 7S10 (Coyote Flat Road from Bishop)
Forest Road 9S19 (Coyote Flat from Big Pine)
Forest Road 32E311, 32E303, 32E307, 32E302, 33E303 (area west of Warren Bench, accessible from Sugarloaf or Glacier Lodge Roads)
Forest Road 7S01/7S15 Buttermilk Loop (Closed at Horton Lakes Trailhead junction of 7S01A & 7S01 and at HWY 168 and 7S15)
Forest Road 4S01 (White Mountain Road, closed where road turns to dirt just past Schulman Grove Visitor Center)
Forest Motorized Trail 30E302 (Sand Canyon Trail)
<u>MONO RANGER DISTRICT:</u>
Forest Road 1S23 (Walker Lake Trailhead)
Forest Road 1N106 (Bohler Canyon Road)
Forest Road 1N16 (Horse Meadow Road)
Forest Road 01S131 (At the junction of Bald Mountain Road and junction of 01S70)
Forest Road 01S131A (At the junction of Bald Mountain Road)
Forest Road 01S131B (At the junction of Bald Mountain Road)

For assistance locating these National Forest System Roads, please see the Inyo National Forest Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUMs), which are available online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/inyo/maps-pubs/?cid=stelprdb5441969>. Paper copies are also available free of charge at each of the Forest Service Ranger Stations, and the Forest Supervisor's Office.