

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE
PISGAH & CHEROKEE NATIONAL FORESTS
APPALACHIAN & UNAKA RANGER DISTRICTS**

ORDER NO. 08-11-04-24-001

FOREST ORDER

Pursuant to the provisions of 16 USC § Section 551, and Title 36 CFR §Section 261.50 (a) and 261.50(b), the area of National Forest System lands in the “Black Bear Fire Area” located on the Appalachian Ranger District of the Pisgah National Forest and Unaka Ranger District of the Cherokee National Forest is closed to entry. The area is closed to entering or being present in the area, including on roads or trails, so to mitigate risks to public health and safety, to provide for disaster and safety operations, and to protect the resources while responding to and recovering from the Black Bear Fire. This Order is effective through December 31, 2023, or until rescinded by an authorized Forest Service official, whichever occurs first.

The area is signed closed from entering or being present is further indicated on the attached map. Only National Forest System lands are impacted by this closure.

On the Appalachian Ranger District, the Appalachian Trail is closed from 1-40 to Brown Gap including Groundhog Creek shelter.

The closure area can be described by the following perimeter:

- West of Cold Springs Creek Road (FSR148) and Browns Gap Road (FSR148A),
- South of the Appalachian Trail, and
- North of I-40 to the North Carolina State Line

On the Unaka Ranger District, the Appalachian Trail is closed from 1-40 to Brown Gap.

The closure area can be described by the following perimeter:

- North of the Appalachian Trail
- North of I-40 to Carmichael Tract Road (FSR225201)
- South of Carmichael Tract Road (FSR225201) to the Tennessee State Line
- South of Snowbird Road (FSR225202) to the Tennessee State Line, and
- South of Brown Gap Road (FSR2250) to the Tennessee State Line

All roads and trails on the closure perimeter and within the closure area are closed:

- Cold Springs Creek Road (FSR148)
- Browns Gap Road (FSR148A)
- Harmon Den Mountain Road (FSR352)
- Groundhog Road (FSR3522)
- Hickory Ridge Road (FSR357)
- Skiffley Creek Road (FSR3580)

- Chestnut Orchard Road (3580A)
- Carmichael Tract Road (FSR225201)
- Snowbird Road (FSR225202)
- Appalachian Trail (TR1-08)
- Groundhog Creek Trail (TR315), and
- Rube Rock (TR314)

The above prohibited acts are set forth in Title 36 CFR § Sections 261.53(e) Special Closures for Public Health or Safety

Pursuant to 36 CFR 261.50(e) the following persons are exempt from the above prohibitions:

1. Persons with a permit 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 their official duty.

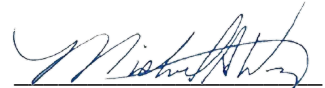
These prohibitions are in addition to the general prohibitions in 36 CFR Part 261, Subpart A.

Executed in Asheville, North Carolina, this 19 day of Nov. 2023.



James Melonas
Forest Supervisor
National Forests in North Carolina

Executed in Cleveland, Tennessee, this 19 day of Nov. 2023.



Michael Wright
Forest Supervisor
Cherokee National Forest

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 6 months, or both. 16 USC 551 and 18 USC 3559, 3571 and 3581.