

CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST

Seward Ranger District

Order No. 10-04-30-22-05

FOREST ORDER

Russian River East Area Special Closure

Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. 261.50(a), the following acts are prohibited on National Forest System lands of the Chugach National Forest. This Order is in effect from March 15th, 2022, through May 1st, 2022.

Going into or being upon the Russian River Public Safety Closure Area as shown on the attached map. (36 CFR 261.53(e))

Pursuant to Title 36 CFR 261.50 (e) the following are exempt from this order:

1. Any person with a permit authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission.
2. Any Federal, State, or local officer, or member of any organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty.

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

Executed in Anchorage, Alaska, this 15th day of March 2022.

/s/ Jeff Schramm
Jeff Schramm
Forest Supervisor
Chugach National Forest

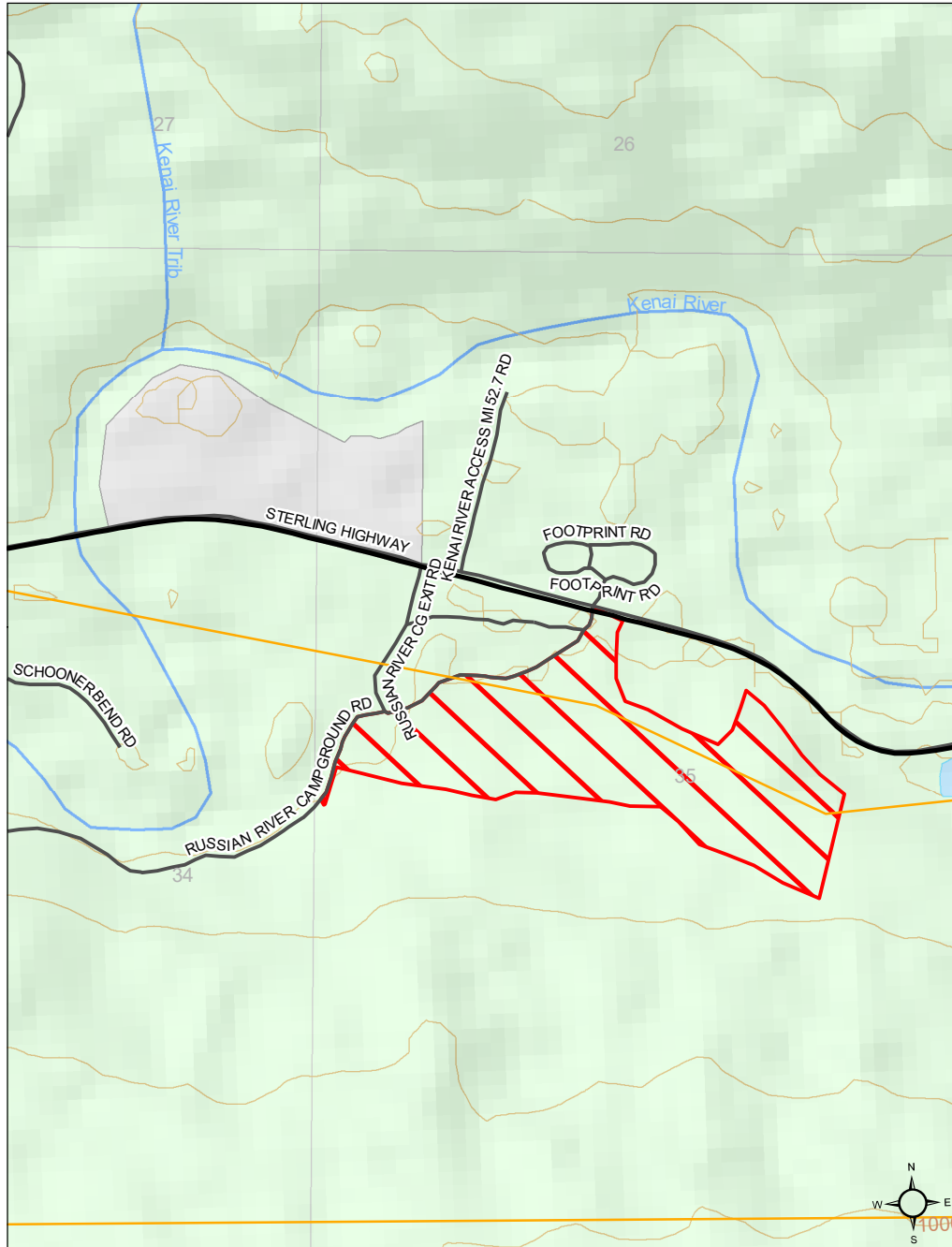
March 15, 2022
Date

Violations of these Prohibitions are punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for per 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 and 3571]

Chugach National Forest: Russian River Area Special Closure

Order No. 10-04-30-22-05

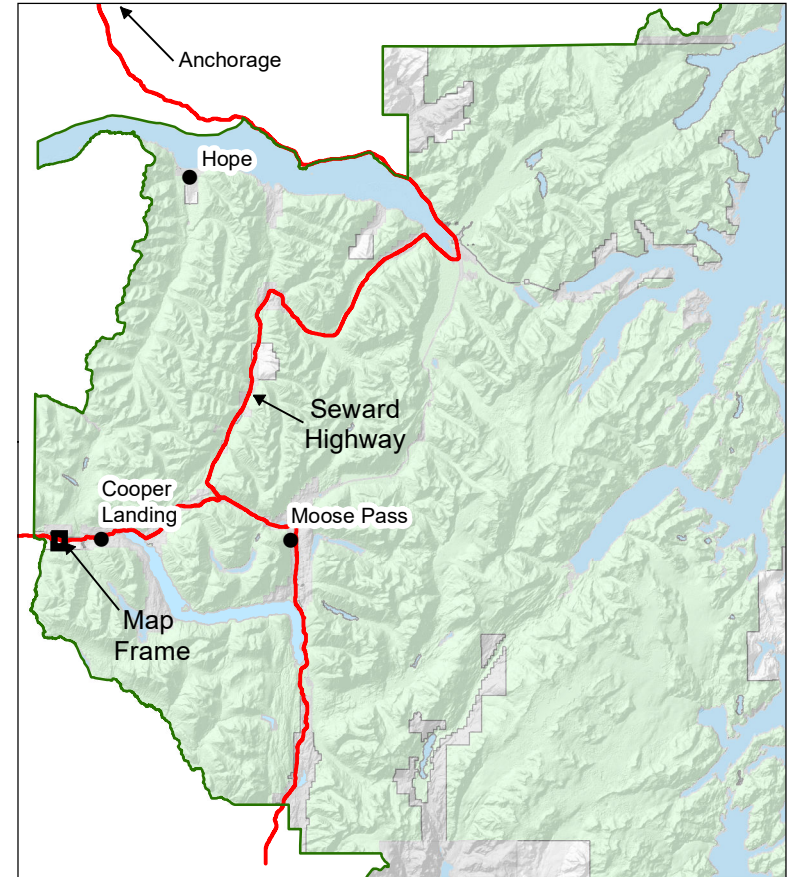
Attachment A



*This map is designed for determining closure areas and not intended for navigation.

0 0.25 0.5 Miles Map scale = 1:10,000

Locator Map



Legend

-  Highways
-  Roads
-  Closure Area
-  Other Ownership
-  National Forest
-  Sections
-  Forest Boundary
-  Streams
-  Powerline

File Code: 2610

Date: March 15, 2022

Route To: File

Subject: Forest Order – Russian River Beetle Mitigation Closure
From: Jeff E. Schramm – Forest Supervisor

I have decided to close the area of Russian River Campground entrance station and adjacent treatment areas, for the safety of work crews and the public. Wide-scale tree removal will begin the week of March 7th in and near Russian River Campground entrance station. Tree fallers and heavy equipment will be in use at the entrance station, parking and adjacent forest lands. The total area being treated is 58 acres. Work in the area is expected to begin this week and continue through late-April, depending on conditions.

I have concluded that this decision may be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment 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. Scoping included reaching out to the local Nordic ski/hiking group in Cooper Landing to coordinate our impacts to their season, news releases in local papers and internal conversations. I have determined that there are no extraordinary circumstances associated with this temporary closure. Implementation of the decision may begin immediately.

A spruce beetle outbreak on the Kenai Peninsula has led to a large number of dead or infested spruce trees in and around the campground. Forest health surveys show over 80% of spruce trees in the area are impacted by the outbreak. These trees are susceptible to dropping limbs and falling, creating overhead hazards to people and structures. Spruce beetles are a naturally occurring pest that given the right environmental conditions can kill trees across a wide geographical area.

As of now, the beetles are responsible for approximately 900,000 acres of dead and dying spruce in southcentral Alaska. Trees that have succumbed to beetle infestation can begin falling soon after mortality, creating overhead hazards for both people and infrastructure. The work being done in the Russian River area helps reduce overall fire and safety hazards on the Forest. Heavy equipment operations and falling trees during treatment pose a risk to anyone recreating in the area. This closure serves to mitigate that risk.

/s/ Jeff Schramm

Jeff Schramm
Forest Supervisor
Chugach National Forest

Enclosure- Forest Order No. 10-04-30-22-05

