

CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST

Seward Ranger District

Order No. 10-04-30-22-12

FOREST ORDER

Russian River Campground Area Closure

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 261.50(a) and (b), and to provide for public health and safety, the following acts are prohibited within the Seward Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest. This Order is in effect from August 16, 2022 through and including May 29, 2023.

Going into or being upon the Russian River Campground Closure Area as shown on the attached map and described below. (36 CFR § 261.53(e))

Being on Russian River Campground Road within the Russian River Campground Closure Area as shown on the attached map and described below. (36 CFR § 261.54(e))

Being on a trail within the Russian River Campground Closure Area as shown on the attached map and described below. (36 CFR § 261.55(a))

The Closure Area Boundary begins on Russian River Campground Road (RTE#6010270) at the intersection of the entrance and exit roads to the Sterling Highway. The Russian River Campground Road, Overflow Parking Lot, Upper and Lower Russian Lakes Trailhead Parking Lots, Pink Salmon Parking Lot, and Grayling Parking Lot are all closed. The Russian Lakes Trail will be closed from the Russian River Campground Road to the intersection of the Russian Lakes Trail Lower and Upper Parking Lot trails. All campground loops in the Russian River Campground and associated campground facilities will be closed. Access trails to the Russian River Campground from the Russian River Angler Trail will be closed at their intersections with the Angler Trail, as shown on the attached map.

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

1. Persons with a permit specifically 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.
3. Persons who are employed, contracting with, or otherwise retained by Qayaq Construction LLC and are engaged in a business, occupation, or trade relating to the road construction project.

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

Executed in Anchorage, Alaska, this 12th day of August 2022.

/s/ Jeff Schramm

August 12, 2022

Jeff Schramm

Date

Forest Supervisor

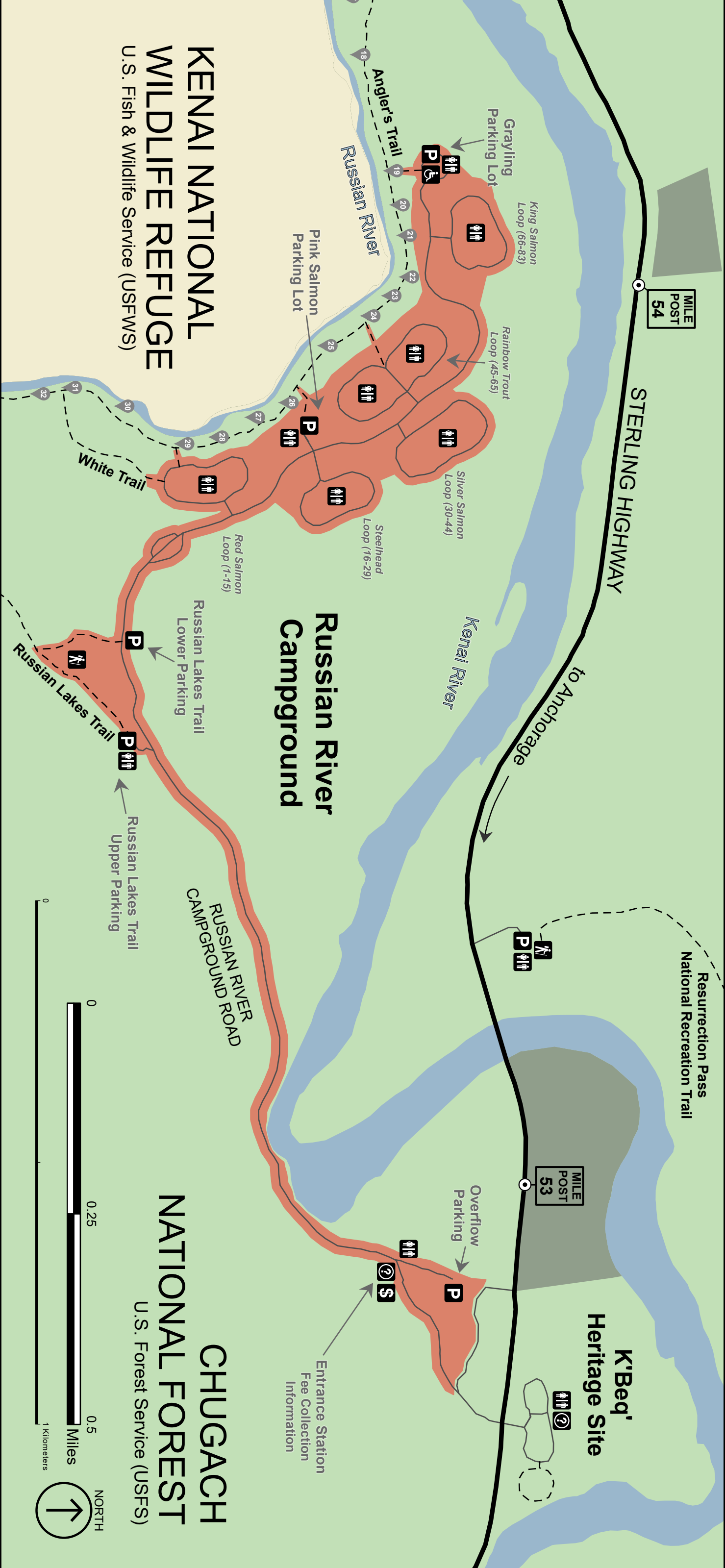
Chugach National Forest

A violation of these Prohibitions is 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, 3571, and 3581.]

Russian River Campground Closure

Order # 10-04-30-22-12



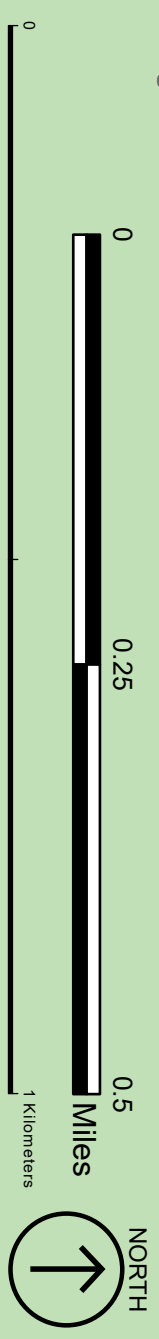
KENAI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Russian River Campground

CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST
U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

Legend

- P** Parking
- ♿** Wheelchair Accessible
- ♿** Restroom
- ℹ** Visitor Information
- \$** Fee Station
- ♿** River Access
- ♿** Trailhead
- Hiking Trail
- Road
- Sterling Highway
- ⊙** Mile Post
- Closed Area
- River
- Private Land
- Chugach National Forest
- Kenai National Wildlife Refuge





File Code: 2610
Route To:

Date: August 12, 2022

Subject: Forest Order - Russian River Campground Area Closure Justification

To: File

I have decided to close the area of the Russian River Campground, including the trails, roads, parking lots, campground loops, and other facilities within the campground as described below and in the forest order, to protect the public health and safety of forest users and construction crews.

The Russian River Campground Road will be experiencing major construction this coming fall, winter, and spring. Construction crews from Qayaq Construction, LLC will be reconstructing approximately one mile of the access road, to include installing a new retaining wall, expanding the existing shoulder, installing new pavement and safety railing, and reinforcing sections of the road embankment and hillside along the banks of the Kenai River. Moreover, during active construction heavy equipment will be in use at the entrance to the campground and on adjacent lands. Given the substantial nature of the work being performed, and the fact that operating heavy equipment near campers and other recreational users poses an obvious safety risk, it is necessary to close the Russian River Campground area to the public while the construction project is ongoing. Any public access to this area while the project is underway poses a clear, immediate, and continuous risk to the health and safety of both forest users and construction workers.

The closure area is shown on the attached map and is described below. The Closure Area Boundary begins on Russian River Campground Road (RTE#6010270) at the intersection of the entrance and exit roads to the Sterling Highway. The Russian River Campground Road, Overflow Parking Lot, Upper and Lower Russian Lakes Trailhead Parking Lots, Pink Salmon Parking Lot, and Grayling Parking Lot are all closed. Russian Lakes Trail will be closed from the Russian River Campground Road to the intersection of the Russian Lakes Trail Lower and Upper Parking Lot trails. All campground loops in the Russian River Campground and associated campground facilities will be closed. Access trails to the Russian River Campground from the Russian River Angler Trail will be closed at their intersections with the Angler's Trail. The Russian River Angler's Trail is not included in the closure area but access to the trail will only be available from the Russian River Ferry.

This order includes an exemption for persons holding a permit specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission—that is 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. I hereby delegate the



authority to sign Form FS-7700-48 granting an exemption to this order to the District Rangers of the Chugach National Forest.

I have concluded that this decision is 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. I have determined that there are no extraordinary circumstances associated with this temporary closure. No CRIA is needed. Implementation of the decision may begin immediately.

To determine the impacts of the closure order on various user groups, the scoping that was done included reaching out to the campground concessionaire, a local Nordic skiing and hiking group in Cooper Landing, news releases in local papers, and internal conversations with USFS employees with areas of expertise in subsistence, recreation, and fisheries. Scoping was also conducted with the adjacent Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

The area closure will remain in effect until May 29, 2023 unless rescinded before that date.

/s/ Jeff Schramm

JEFF SCHRAMM
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures: Closure order and Map



File Code: 2610
Route To:

Date: August 12, 2022

Subject: Requirements for Permit to Enter the Russian River Closed Area

To: File

The Russian River Campground area, including the trails, roads, parking lots, campground loops, and other facilities within the campground will be closed by Forest Order to protect the public health and safety of forest users and construction crews. **Order No. 10-04-30-22-12**

This order includes an exemption for persons holding a permit specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission—that is 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. I hereby delegate the authority to sign Form FS-7700-48 granting an exemption to this order to the District Rangers of the Chugach National Forest.

Authorization Criteria:

- Through the application process, the District Ranger will evaluate the need for the project based on public health and safety as well as the immediate need for the project.
- The application form FS-7700-0040 is required for requesting authorized access within the closure area.

The area closure will remain in effect until May 29, 2023 unless rescinded before that date.

/s/ Jeff Schramm

JEFF SCHRAMM
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures: Forest Order and Map

