

CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST

Seward Ranger District

Order No. 10-04-30-23-09

FOREST ORDER

Crescent Creek Area Special Closure

Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. 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 supersedes Order # 10-04-30-23-01 and is in effect from April 5th, 2023 through June 16th, 2023.

Going into or being upon the Crescent Creek Closure Area as shown on the attached map. (36 CFR 261.53(e))

Being on Crescent Creek Campground Road within the Crescent Creek Area Special Closure as shown on the attached map and described below. (36CFR 261.54(e))

The Closure Area Boundary begins on Quartz Creek Road (RTE#125010270) 50 feet north of the intersection of Quartz Creek Road and Crescent Creek then continues northeast along the west side of Quartz Creek Road for approximately 1550 feet to its intersection with the Forest Service ownership boundary, then continues west-northwest along the Forest Service ownership boundary for approximately 2500 feet to its intersection with a 50 foot buffer from Quartz Creek river-left bank full edge, then continues generally southwest along a 50 foot buffer from the Quartz Creek river-left bank full edge to its intersection with the Forest Service ownership boundary, then continues generally east along the Forest Service ownership boundary, but not past a 50 foot buffer from Crescent Creeks river-right bank full edge back to the starting point, as shown on the attached map.

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 4th day of April 2023.

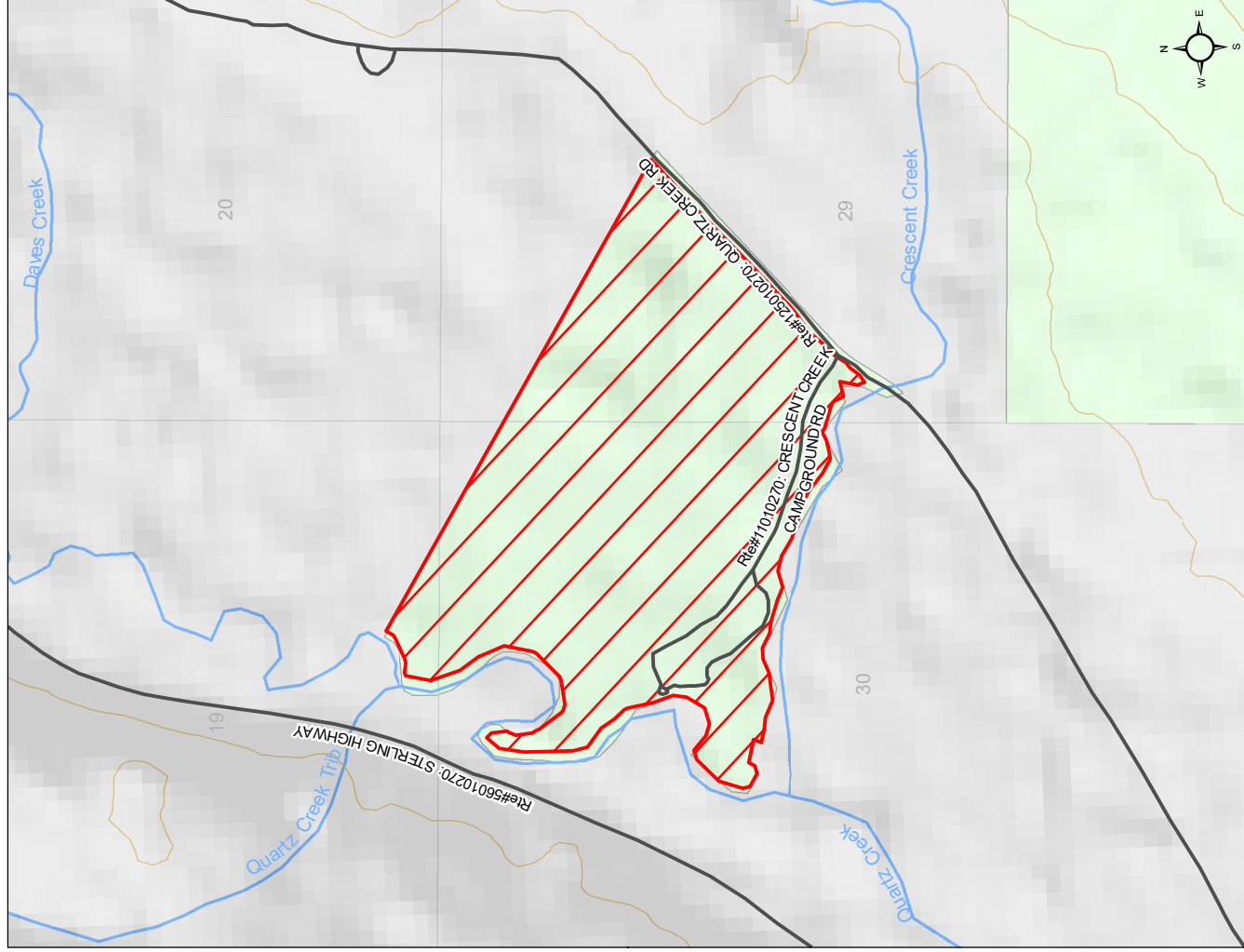
/s/ Jeff Schramm
Jeff Schramm
Forest Supervisor
Chugach National Forest

April 4, 2022
Date

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.]

Chugach National Forest: Crescent Creek Area Special

Closure Order No. 10-04-30-23-09

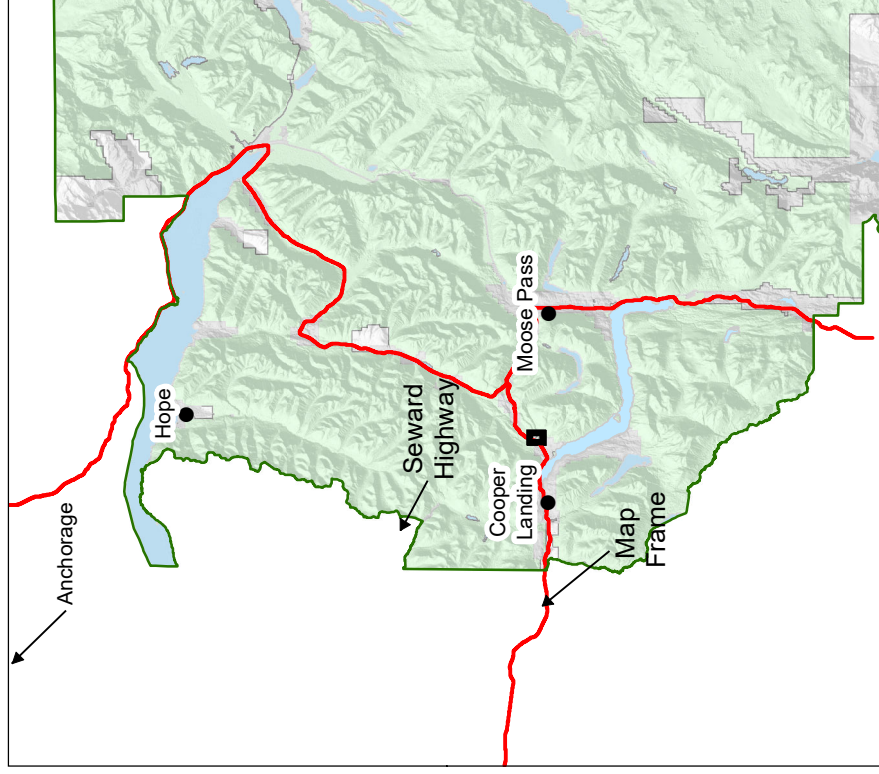


*This map is designed for determining closure areas and not intended for navigation.





0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Map scale = 1:10,000

Locator Map



Legend

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



File Code: 2610

Date: April 4, 2023

Route To: File

Subject: Forest Order – Crescent Creek Campground Beetle Mitigation Closure
From: Jeff E. Schramm – Forest Supervisor

I have decided to extend the duration of the area closure at Crescent Creek Campground, and adjacent Forest Service land, for the safety of the public and workers. Wide-scale tree mortality is present in the area and poses an immediate hazard to the health and safety of forest users in the area. Non-motorized winter/spring recreation activities normally take place at Crescent Creek Campground and necessitate the extension of this area closure to ensure public safety. This closure will remain in effect until the removal of hazard trees is completed. It is anticipated that wide-scale tree removal that began in the summer of 2022 will be completed by June 16th, 2023. Tree fallers and heavy equipment will be in use at the campground and adjacent lands. The Closure Area Boundary begins on Quartz Creek Road (RTE#125010270) 50 feet north of the intersection of Quartz Creek Road and Crescent Creek then continues northeast along the west side of Quartz Creek Road for approximately 1550 feet to its intersection with the Forest Service ownership boundary, then continues west-northwest along the Forest Service ownership boundary for approximately 2500 feet to its intersection with a 50 foot buffer from Quartz Creek river-left bank full edge, then continues generally southwest along a 50 foot buffer from the Quartz Creek river-left bank full edge to its intersection with the Forest Service ownership boundary, then continues generally east along the Forest Service ownership boundary, but not past a 50 foot buffer from Crescent Creeks river-right bank full edge back to the starting point, as shown on the attached map.

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. To coordinate our impacts to their season, scoping included reaching out to the campground concessionaire, local Nordic ski/hiking group in Cooper Landing, new releases in local papers and internal conversations. 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.

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 95% 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 Crescent Creek 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