

Order Number: # 03-09-05-24-02



**U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service
Prescott National Forest
Verde Ranger District**

**Black Canyon Recreation Area Emergency Closure for
Recreational Shooting for Public Health and Safety**

PROHIBITIONS

Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 551 and 36 C.F.R. § 261.50(a), the following act is prohibited on the National Forest System (NFS) lands in the Verde Ranger District, Prescott National Forest, described below and shown on the attached map incorporated into this Order as Exhibit A (the “Described Area”).

1. Discharging a firearm, air rifle, or gas gun. 36 C.F.R. § 261.58(m).

EXEMPTIONS

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

1. Persons with 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 or a written determination by a Forest Service authorized officer that a permit is not required under 36 C.F.R. § 251.50(e)(1) or (2).
2. Any Federal, State, or Local Officer, or member of an organized rescue or firefighting resource in the performance of an official duty.
3. Any person possessing a valid Arizona state hunting license engaged in a lawful hunt pursuant to state law.

DESCRIBED AREA

Beginning at the southeast corner of Section 30, Range 4 East, Township 15 North, then

following west approximately 0.47 miles to AZ State Route (SR) 260, then following northwest along the east side of SR 260 for approximately 2.2 miles to the intersection with Prairie Lane, then following Prairie Lane northeast for approximately 0.3 miles to the forest boundary at the section line between Sections 13 and 18, Range 4 East, Township 15 North, then following north along the east side of the forest boundary on section line 13/18 for approximately 0.7 miles to the forest boundary, then following east and south along the forest boundary for approximately 1.1 miles, to the Verde River, then following the west bank of the Verde River to the section line between section 20 and 29, then following the forest boundary west then south for approximately 1.2 miles to the point of beginning at the southeast corner of section 30, Range 4 East, Township 15 North.

PURPOSE

An emergency situation exists due to wildland-urban interface caused by increased residential and commercial development near the Described Areas. Specifically, the Described Area is in close proximity to residential communities and businesses surrounding the Skidmore, Black Canyon and Big Notti River Access Points (RAP). This has led to several instances of bullets fired from the Described Area entering residential structures located off the Forest. See details in Order Justification. Additionally, there has been increased recreational use (hiking, mountain biking, birding, solitude seeking) in and near the Described Area due to its close proximity to residential communities, and recreational shooting causes a significant risk to the health and safety of the individuals participating in other recreational activities in the area. While the Forest considers and prepares a permanent order to prohibit shooting in the area, this Emergency Order is necessary to protect public health and safety in and around the Described Area.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. This Order shall be in effect from Monday, May 6, 2024, at 06:00am through Saturday, November 2, 2024, at 6:00pm, unless rescinded.
2. A map identifying the Described Area is attached and made part of this Order as Exhibit A. For a digital version of this Order and Exhibit A, go to <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/prescott/alerts-notice>
3. Unless otherwise expressly defined in this Order, the terms used in this Order are defined by the regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture, 36 C.F.R. Chapter II, Parts 200-299. If there are terms in this Order that are not expressly defined in the Order or 36 C.F.R. Chapter II, Parts 200-299, their meaning shall be determined by their plain language definitions.
4. A violation of the above prohibitions is punishable as a Class B misdemeanor by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for organizations, or by imprisonment for not more than six months, or both. 16 U.S.C. § 551; 18 U.S.C. §§ 3559, 3571, and 3581.
5. Contact the Verde Ranger District in Camp Verde, Arizona, (928) 567-4121, and

Prescott National Forest Supervisor's Office in Chino Valley, Arizona, (928) 777-8000, for more information about this Order.

6. This Order supersedes any previous Orders prohibiting the same or similar acts in the same Described Area.

Signed and issued on May 2, 2024.

Sarah
Clawson

Digitally signed by Sarah
Clawson
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Sarah Clawson
Forest Supervisor
Prescott National Forest