

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE**

Klamath National Forest

Forest Order No. 05-05-22-06

Wilderness Area Restrictions

Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 551 and 36 C.F.R. § 261.50(a), and for the protection of natural resources and public safety, the following acts are prohibited on all National Forest System lands within the Trinity Alps Wilderness, Siskiyou Wilderness, Marble Mountain Wilderness, and Russian Wilderness areas of the Klamath National Forest. This Order effective from July 31, 2022, through July 31, 2024.

1. Storing unattended equipment, personal property, or supplies for longer than a 24-hour period. **36 C.F.R. § 261.57(f).**
2. Disposing of debris, garbage, or other waste. **36 C.F.R. § 261.57(g).**
3. Possessing or using a bicycle, wagon, cart, or other vehicle. 36 C.F.R. § 261.57(h).
4. Using a campsite or any other area within the Siskiyou Wilderness, Marble Mountain Wilderness, or Russian Wilderness Areas by a group of more than 15 persons. **36 C.F.R. § 261.58(f).**
5. Using a campsite or any other area within the Trinity Alps Wilderness by a group of more than 10 persons. **36 C.F.R. § 261.58(f).**
6. Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, or barbeque grill within the following Restricted Areas, as described below and shown on the attached maps, Exhibits A and B:
 - a. Exhibit A: Caribou Lakes Restricted Area. The boundary of the Caribou Lake Restricted Area begins at the northwest corner of Section 35, Township 37 North, Range 10 West, Mt. Diablo Base and Meridian; then continues east along the section line to its intersection with the northeast corner of Section 35; then continues south along the section line to its intersection with the southeast corner of Section 35, Township 36 1/2 North, Range 10 West; then continues west along the section line to the southwest corner of Section 35, then continues north along the section line back to the starting point.
 - b. Exhibit B: Devil's Punchbowl Restricted Area. The Devil's Punchbowl Restricted Area consists of all of Section 6, Township 16 North, Range 5 East, Humboldt Base and Meridian.

36 C.F.R. § 261.52(a).

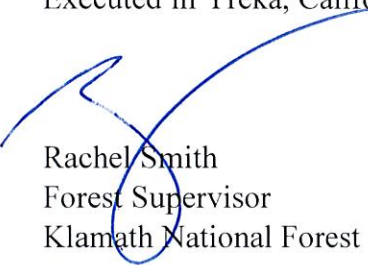
Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 261.50(e), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

- a. 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.
- b. Any Federal, State, or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or fire-fighting force performing an official duty.
- c. Persons with a valid California Campfire Permit are not exempt from the prohibitions listed above. However, persons with a valid California Campfire Permit may use pressurized liquid or gas devices (stoves, grills, or lanterns) with shut-off valves, in an area at least five feet from any flammable materials.

This prohibition is in addition to the General Prohibitions in 36 C.F.R. Part 261, Subpart A.

A violation of this prohibition 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 six months, or both. 16 U.S.C. § 551 and 18 U.S.C. §§ 3559, 3571, and 3581.

Executed in Yreka, California this 31st day of July, 2022.



Rachel Smith
Forest Supervisor
Klamath National Forest

This Order supersedes Forest Order No. 2020-05-19, which went into effect July 31, 2020.

Date: July 31, 2022

To: File

From: Rachel Smith, Forest Supervisor, Klamath National Forest *RS*

Re: Forest Order No. 05-05-22-06

This document explains my rationale and the regulatory basis for prohibitions within the Trinity Alps Wilderness, Siskiyou Wilderness, Marble Mountain Wilderness, and Russian Wilderness areas of the Klamath National Forest. This Order supersedes Forest Order No. 2020-05-19, which went into effect July 31, 2020.

Forest Order No. 05-05-22-06 will provide for resource protection in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the California Wilderness Act of 1984.

The 1995 Klamath National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan¹ (Forest Plan, as amended) provides direction for managing wilderness areas within the Klamath National Forest. Risks to natural resources exist now, as they did when the Forest Plan was signed, and so there is a continued need for an Order to protect the wilderness areas found in the Klamath National Forest as an effective tool for law enforcement.

The Forest Plan supports the need for issuance of this Order, per the excerpts below.

- Manage wilderness to maintain or enhance wilderness values. (pp. 4-7)
- Manage for wilderness characteristics, natural conditions, and ecological processes within each wilderness. (pp. 4-70)
- Provide recreationists a primitive and semi-primitive, non-motorized recreation opportunity. (pp.4-70)
- Manage recreational settings to generally achieve primitive or semi-primitive non-motorized [Recreational Opportunity Spectrum]² conditions. (pp. 4-73)
- Each wilderness looks natural, with human disturbances substantially unnoticeable. (pp. 4-70)

The Forest Service has observed that unattended storage of personal property for more than a 24-hour period within wilderness typically results in concentrated use of an area which could harden affected soils and cause an overall loss of wilderness scenic and solitude values. The storage location could be subject to overuse due to visitors' need to go to and from their stored supplies or property. Depending on the use, storage would also have the potential for environmental consequences to soil, water, or vegetation. It may also cause a health and safety issue if hazardous substances are carelessly left in wilderness. The Forest Service's observation is that these concerns typically do not arise if property is stored for less than 24 hours. The prohibition of storage of personal property by Order No. 05-05-22-06 will provide for the protection of natural resources, including wilderness values, and public safety.

¹ <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/klamath/landmanagement/planning>

² Primitive Recreational Opportunity Spectrum are defined as: Opportunity for isolation from man-made sights, sounds, and management controls in an unmodified natural environment. Only facilities essential for resource protection are available. A high degree of challenge and risk are present. Visitors use outdoor skills and have minimal contact with other users or groups. Motorized use is prohibited.

Disposing of debris, garbage, or other waste within wilderness would cause an overall loss of wilderness scenic value - "untouched by man." Disposal of debris, garbage, or other waste would affect soil or water conditions. It may also cause a health and safety issue because broken glass or cans could result in injuries to hikers or campers, and food waste could serve as an attractant for wildlife, resulting in increases in wildlife interactions with hikers or campers. The prohibition of disposal by Order No. 05-05-22-06 will provide for the protection of natural resources, including wilderness values, and public safety.

Mechanical transport is prohibited in wilderness areas by Wilderness Act Section 4(c). Bicycles, wagons, carts, or other vehicles are defined as mechanical transport. From a soil-conservation perspective, wheeled vehicles on trails can cause rutting and increased erosion, soil compaction, tread damage, damage to drainage structures, and damage to streambanks at stream crossings. Vegetation may also be damaged or destroyed from wheeled vehicle use off Forest System trails within wilderness. The prohibition of the possession or use of a bicycle, wagon, cart, or other vehicle by Order No. 05-05-22-06 will provide for the protection of natural resources.

The prohibitions against large group sizes in Forest Order No. 05-05-22-06 is necessary to meet the following Forest Plan standards and guidelines:

- MA2-1 To better emphasize wilderness values, manage each wilderness as an integrated resource with inseparable ecosystem parts. (pp. 4-70)
- MA2-2 Minimize the use of motorized equipment and mechanical transport of materials and personnel within wilderness. Carefully analyze the need for motorized equipment and obtain prior documented approval. Schedule such work to avoid disturbance to the public. (pp. 4-70)
- MA2-3 Wilderness values shall predominate if resource conflicts are identified. (pp. 4-71)

The Order is also necessary to continue trends towards the Forest Plan's desired future condition that "each wilderness looks natural, with human disturbances substantially unnoticeable." (Forest Plan, pp. 4-70)

Research on the impacts of group sizes in wilderness has established that large groups may impact natural resources in wilderness in three types of circumstances: in relatively undisturbed portions of a wilderness, concentrated use by a large group can cause substantial resource impacts; 2) large groups with horses and mules may cause impacts, particularly in less-disturbed portions of wilderness; and 3) large groups may impact campsite areas if the areas are not large enough to accommodate large groups (Monz et al. 2000)³. The wilderness areas on the Klamath National Forest include relatively undisturbed areas and areas where existing campsites are not large enough to accommodate large groups. Impacts to natural resources from large groups include: 1) larger areas of soil compaction and vegetation loss surrounding campsites caused by visitors creating new tent sites; 2) soil compaction and vegetation loss caused by visitors

³ Wilderness Party Size Regulations: Implications for Management and a Decision-making Framework by Christopher Monz, Joseph Roggenbuck, David Cole, Richard Brame, and Andrew Yoder in USDA Forest Service Proceedings RMRS-P-15-VOL-4. 2000.

establishing new user trails around campsites; 3) accelerated rates of soil erosion that increase the amount of sediment entering lakes or streams.

Since the risks to natural resources exist at a similar level as when the Forest Plan was signed, there is a continued need for an Order that limits the group size in wilderness areas to protect the natural qualities of wilderness character and other wilderness values.

Similarly, Forest Order No. 05-05-22-06 is necessary to continue to provide primitive and semi-primitive non-motorized recreation settings and protect visitors' opportunities for solitude. Primitive settings encompass large, wild, and predominately unmodified landscapes. Their size and configuration create remoteness from the sights and sounds of human activities, management, and development. Encounters with other users is very low, offering visitors the opportunity for solitude, self-reliance, closeness with nature, challenge, risk, and discovery (FSM 2311). Semi-primitive non-motorized settings are characterized by predominantly natural or natural-appearing landscapes. Interaction with other users is low. These settings provide opportunities for self-reliance and utilizing wildland skills (see Forest Service Manual section 2311). Large groups in wilderness would be inconsistent with the guidelines for encounters for both Recreation Opportunity Spectrum settings.

The 15-person group size limit for the Marble Mountain, Russian, and Siskiyou Wilderness Areas is reduced compared to the prior group size limit of 25 persons established by Regional Order No. 92-1, which was executed in 1992, and the subsequent Forest Order No. 2018-05-07, executed in 2018; however, it is consistent with the 15-person group size limit established in Order No. 2020-05-19, executed in 2020. The Forest Service has found that the 25-person restriction was no longer effective in protecting wilderness character or associated resources. This is evidenced by the majority of campsites within the wilderness areas having increased disturbance areas and expansions of their associated social trails. These expansions in campsite sizes and social trails has resulted in both soil compaction and vegetation loss throughout the wilderness areas. Compared to the 15-person group size, the 25-person group size reduces visitor opportunities for solitude and affects overall wilderness character and experience. The 15-person group size limit offers the same primitive and semi-primitive non-motorized recreation settings and opportunities in these three wilderness areas, while providing for improved wilderness character and experience and reducing associated impacts to natural resources.

The Trinity Alps Wilderness had a 10-person group size limit in effect through Regional Order 97-1 from June 13, 1997, through October 1, 2015, that applied to all areas within the wilderness, which is jointly administered by the Shasta-Trinity, Klamath, and Six Rivers National Forests. After the Regional Forester terminated this Order, the Klamath NF executed Order No. 18-05-007, which established a 25-person group size limit to be consistent with group size limits in other Klamath National Forest Wilderness areas. Order No. 05-05-22-06 will maintain the 10-person group size limit established in Order No. 2020-05-19, executed in 2020, and will continue to be consistent with the Shasta-Trinity National Forest's Forest Orders for maximum group size, which have remained at 10 persons. A group size limit of 10 is consistent with Forest Service Manual (FSM) policy for wilderness. (See FSM Policy 2320.3.6: "Manage each wilderness as a total unit and coordinate management direction when they cross other

administrative boundaries;" FSM Policy 2322.03.4: "Management direction shall be consistent for each wilderness that occurs in more than one State, Region, or National Forest.")

I have decided to establish site-specific prohibitions on campfires in Caribou Lake basin in the Trinity Alps Wilderness and Devil's Punchbowl basin in the Siskiyou Wilderness. My decision to establish these restrictions is based upon my assessment of the impacts to resource conditions that have been caused by visitors' long-term gathering of wood within these two lake basins, including over gathering and associated impacts to woody tree species. Campfire prohibitions are needed to protect the natural quality of wilderness character in two higher elevation lake basins where downed wood is scarce, visitors have depleted the downed woody material, and unacceptable damage to live trees is occurring. The objective of the Order is to prevent wilderness visitors from continuing to deplete wood resources in wilderness.

Within the Caribou Lakes Restricted Area, the Caribou Lakes basin's vegetation type is mostly comprised of barren granite and montane chaparral with isolated stands of whitebark pine and western white pine near the lakes and foxtail pine along ridgelines. Whitebark pine is a candidate species for the Endangered Species Act with very slow rates of growth. Decomposing wood from the trees is essential to nutrient cycling and soil development in its subalpine ecosystem.

Within Devil's Punchbowl Restricted Area, the Devil's Punchbowl basin is a glacial cirque containing two lakes whose vegetation type is also mostly comprised of barren granite and montane chaparral. Some fifteen conifer species occur in the area, including three rare species (i.e. Alaska yellow cedar, noble fir, and Brewer's spruce) whose Klamath National Forest populations grow only in very small stands in specific microclimates.

Forest Order No. 05-05-22-06 supersedes Order No. 20-05-19, effective July 31, 2022, in order to prohibit fires, barbeque grills, and campfires, while allowing for the use of pressurized stoves.

Visitors to these increasingly popular lake basin destinations have built wood campfires for decades. In recent years wilderness rangers have noted an increased number of fire rings in both lake basins. Most of the dead and downed wood surrounding the lakes at both basins has now been removed. Because the wood material has been removed, the subalpine ecosystems cannot replace the decomposing nutrients at the rate they have been consumed by visitors. In their search for firewood, some visitors have now begun to cut limbs from live trees and cut down trees to obtain firewood. The short-term impacts include damage to the conifer stands from limb and tree cutting, the visual impacts of fire rings and fire-scarred rocks, and soil erosion because most of the organic duff and litter has been burned in fires. The long-term impacts will be decreased survivability of these locally rare and slow-growing tree species, and a diminished natural quality of wilderness character. Forest Order No. 05-05-22-06, including campfire prohibitions in these restricted areas, will prevent further impacts to these rare species and habitats.

This Forest Order includes an exemption for persons with a Forest Permit for Use of Roads, Trails, or Areas Restricted by Regulation or Order (Form FS-7700-48), specifically exempting them from this Order. Authorization for entry under this exemption will only be provided if I or my delegate determines 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 Forest Order to all Rangers of the Klamath National Forest.

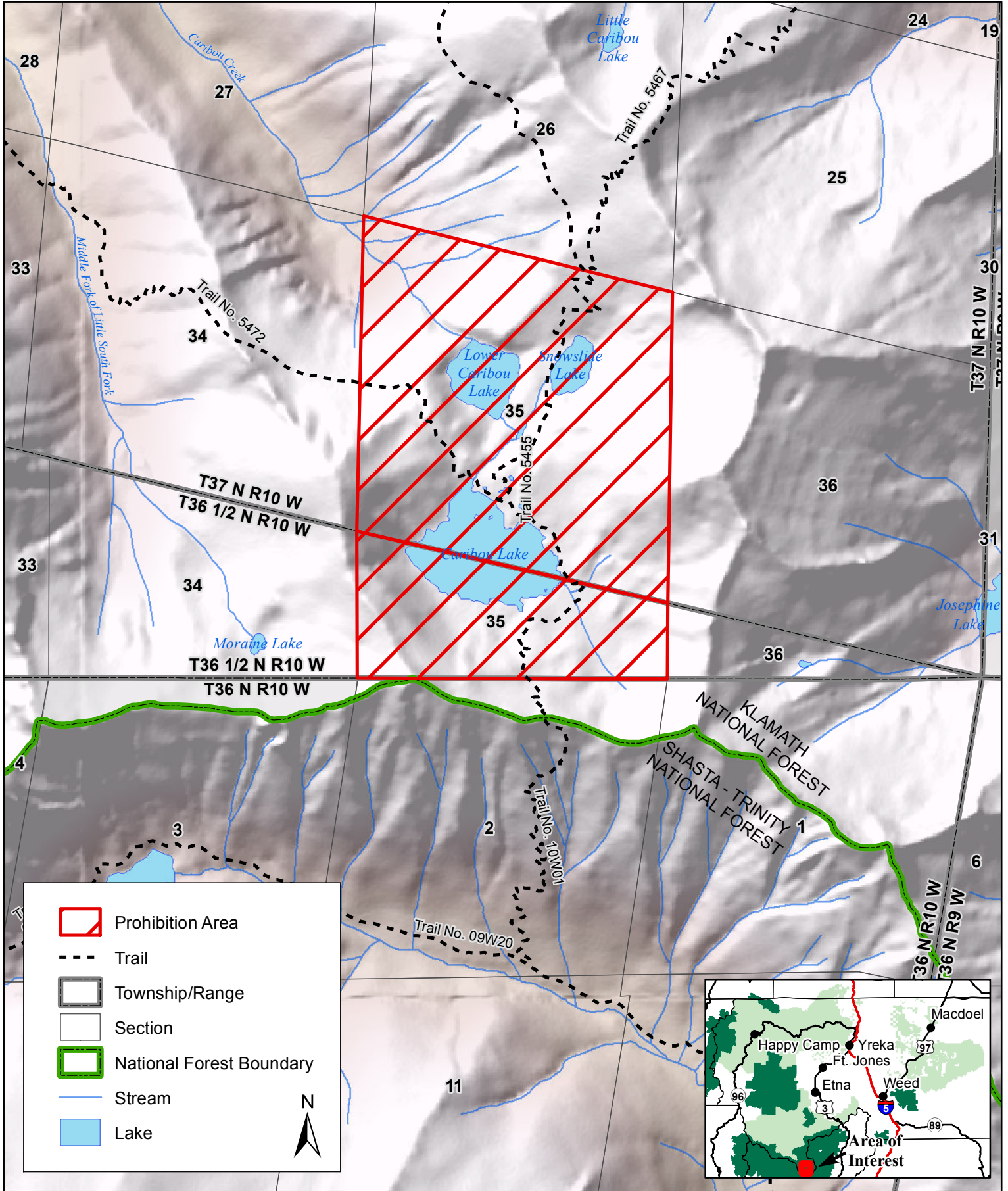
I have concluded that this decision may be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment under the National Environmental Policy Act. This action falls within the category identified in 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(d)(1) – prohibitions to provide short-term 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. Implementation of the decision may begin immediately.



Caribou Lakes Restricted Area - Trinity Alps Wilderness Klamath National Forest - Exhibit A



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Devil's Punchbowl Restricted Area - Siskiyou Wilderness Klamath National Forest - Exhibit B



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