

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE  
NORTHERN REGION  
Order # R1-2015-01

REGIONAL CLOSURE ORDER  
CAMPING RESTRICTIONS

Pursuant to Title 16 United States Code ("USC") 551, and Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations ("CFR") 261.50(a) and (b), the following acts are prohibited on all National Forest System lands administered as National Forests or National Grasslands within the Northern Region (Region 1) of the United States Forest Service in the states of Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The closure order will be effective as of January 1, 2015.

**Restricted Areas:** The Restricted Areas in Montana include the following National Forests:

<u>National Forests</u>	<u>National Forests</u>
Bitterroot	Beaverhead-Deerlodge
Custer-Gallatin	Flathead
Kootenai	Helena
Lewis & Clark	Lolo

**Restricted Areas:** The Restricted Areas in North Dakota and South Dakota include the following National Forests and National Grassland:

<u>National Grassland</u>	<u>National Forest</u>
Dakota Prairie	Custer

**PROHIBITIONS:**

1. Camping or otherwise occupying a single location on all National Forest Service System lands within the state of **Montana** for a period longer than 16 consecutive days. The term "location" means the occupied undeveloped or developed campsite and the lands within a 5 mile radius. After leaving the location, a minimum of 7 days is required before any group or persons from that group may reoccupy the original locations. **36CFR 261.58(a)**
2. Using or leaving camping equipment and or related supplies at any location on all National Forest System lands in the state of **Montana** for more than 16 consecutive days. The term "location" means the occupied undeveloped or developed campsite and the lands within a 5 mile radius. **36CFR 261.58(e)**
3. Camping or otherwise occupying a single location on all National Forest System lands within the states of **North Dakota** and **South Dakota** for a period longer than 14 consecutive days. The term "location" means the occupied undeveloped or developed campsite and the lands within a 5 mile radius. After leaving the location, a minimum of 5 days is required before any group or persons from that group may reoccupy the original location. **36CFR 261.58(a)**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE  
NORTHERN REGION  
Order # R1-2015-01

4. Using or leaving camping equipment and or related supplies at any single location on all National Forest System lands in the states of North Dakota and South Dakota for more than 14 consecutive days. The term "location" means the occupied undeveloped or developed campsite and the lands within a 5 mile radius 36CFR 261.58(e)

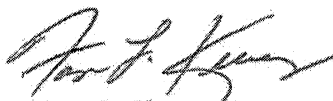
(Additional forest or site specific camping restrictions may be in place on any one forest to address specific area issues.)

**EXEMPTIONS:**

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

1. Persons with a Forest Service permit specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission.
2. Any Federal, State, or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty.
3. Forest Service employees in the performance of their official duties

Done at Missoula, Montana this 9 day of December, 2014.

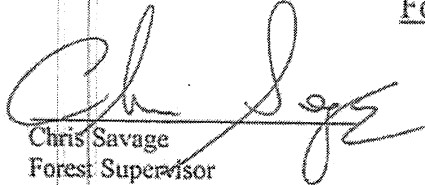



Faye L. Krueger  
Regional Forester  
Northern Region

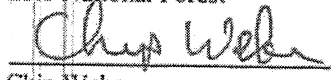
Violation of Title 36 Code of Federal Regulation ("36 CFR") regulations are punishable as a Class B misdemeanor, by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for a legal entity other than an individual, or imprisonment for not more than six (6) months, or both (16 USC 551 and 18 USC 3559 and 3571).

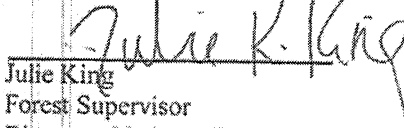
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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Forest and Grasslands Supervisors


  
Chris Savage  
Forest Supervisor  
Kootenai National Forest

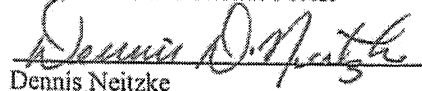
  
Tim Garcia  
Forest Supervisor  
Lolo National Forest

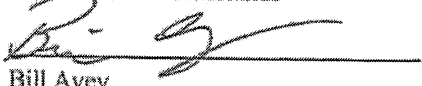
  
Chip Weber  
Forest Supervisor  
Flathead National Forest

  
Julie King  
Forest Supervisor  
Bitterroot National Forest

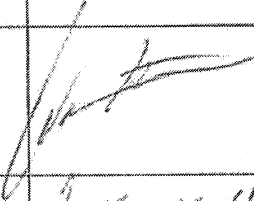
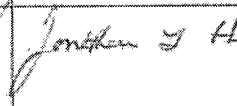
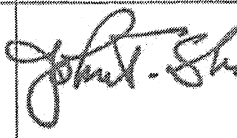

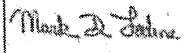
  
Melany Glossa  
Forest Supervisor  
Beaverhead Deerpodge National Forest

  
Mary Erickson  
Forest Supervisor  
Custer Gallatin National Forest


  
Dennis Neitzke  
Grassland Supervisor  
Dakota-Prairie Grasslands

  
Bill Avey  
Forest Supervisor  
Helena National Forest  
Lewis and Clark National Forest

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
 FOREST SERVICE  
 NORTHERN REGION  
 Order # R1-2015-01

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible Official</u>	<u>Signature &amp; Date</u>
Prepare proposed order	Appropriate Staff with LEI input	
Review proposed order	Jon Herrick Walter Merritt,	
Approve proposed order	Regional Forester: Faye Krueger	
Post order in accordance with 36 CFR 261.51	Region, Forest and district Staff	
Prepare news release for local media describing the order and management objectives	Regional and Forest PAOs	
NEPA Review	NEPA Coordinator	
Civil Rights Impact Statement	Civil Rights Coordinator	SEE ATTACHED CRIA
Office of General Counsel	OGC Staff	

Enforcement Plan approved for implementation:

  
 FAYE KRUEGER  
 Regional Forester  
 Northern Region

12/9/14  
 DATE

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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Civil Rights Impact Statement	Civil Rights Coordinator	<i>Melinda C. Wilson</i> 10/9/14
Office of General Counsel	OGC Staff	

Enforcement Plan approved for implementation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**FAYE KRUEGER**  
 Regional Forester  
 Northern Region

\_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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**ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS**

**1. Background:**

The Forests and Grasslands within the Northern Region all have forest closure orders addressing the issue of the amount of time the public may camp in one location (Length of Stay (LOS)) on the forests. These restrictions are necessary to address the issue of people occupying prime camping spots for unusually long periods of time. The LOS orders also serve to limit resource damage that is caused by long-term camping. Currently, there are several different LOS limits in place on each unit ranging from 14 to 16 days. This has led to a great deal of confusion to the general public and our cooperating agencies. Many of our forests share common boundaries and in many of these areas the two neighboring forests have different LOS limits which makes it difficult to explain to the public. This inconsistency makes it very difficult for our cooperators and partners (Game Wardens, Deputies, NPS, BLM, DNRC, and local law enforcement) to assist the agency in educating the public about our regulations. Likewise, we are often questioned by the public and our cooperators about the rationale behind the differences in the number of days listed on the current forest orders.

**2. Intent of order:**

The purpose of this closure order is to provide a consistent stay limit restriction on National Forest Service System lands within each state, which will clear up the confusion related to the differences between the LOS closure orders currently in place on each the forests and grasslands within the Northern Region. This order will consolidate the existing closure orders related to LOS on the Northern Region forests and grasslands in Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota. It will specifically make the stay limit a maximum of 16 days in Montana and 14 days in both North Dakota and South Dakota. It will also establish that an individual or group has to move a minimum of 5 air miles away from the original camping area. The simplification of the order and consistent stay limits within each state will help the agency gain better compliance with the regulations from the general public and more cooperation in the education and enforcement of the regulations from partner agencies. This closure order will be reviewed every two years for its validity and need to be maintained.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE  
NORTHERN REGION  
Order # R1-2015-01**

**3. Enforcement Plan:**

The following activities will occur in order to implement this special order in a manner that results in public compliance and safety.

- a) In compliance with 36 CFR261.5,1 this order will be posted in all forest supervisor offices and district offices within the Region. Additionally, closure signs will be placed on the affected forests in a manner which is clearly visible to the public.
- b) Emphasis will be placed on education upon implementation, but knowingly and willful violations will be addressed appropriately.
- c) Law Enforcement Officers, Special Agents and Forest Protection Officers will patrol region-wide to ensure compliance is met.
- d) Forests and LEI employees will work with our cooperating agencies to educate them on the regulation.

