

## Entiat Ranger District update for the Entiat Watershed Planning Unit

March 31, 2019

### Update on COVID-19 operations and closures:

- **Forest recreational closure:** To support state and local measures directing people to stay home to save lives, effective March 27, 2020, all Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest **developed recreation sites** were closed until such measures are lifted. Developed recreation sites now **closed include campgrounds, sno-parks, restroom facilities, and trailheads**. These closures are necessary to address the social distancing guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and to align with Governor Inslee's "Stay at Home and Stay Safe" executive order. The executive order says to stay home and to not travel for recreational purposes. More info and updates as closures are lifted can be found at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/okawen/alerts-notices/?cid=fseprd717017&width=full>

We know this is hard for folks that enjoy recreating on public lands, especially during quarantine. The goal is to avoid crowding that often happens at trailheads and goes against CDC guidelines for social distancing and our Governor's order. The forest is not closed so you can still visit dispersed rec sites. However, trailheads and developed areas (including restrooms) are closed. We are all in this together and we appreciate everyone's help in preventing the spread.

- How To Get Outside (During a Pandemic) — Outdoor Alliance Guidelines for recreating safely during the COVID-19 pandemic:

**How to Get Outside  
(during a pandemic)**

- 01** Make the health of others your number one priority.  
The COVID-19 pandemic is life and death for many people. Please conduct yourself in every respect with that in mind.
- 02** You can go outside. Cautiously.  
Don't go out if you're sick or have been in contact with those who have. Keep a safe distance from others. That includes in the car. Groups are out. Consider avoiding busy areas and times of day. Wash your hands. Follow CDC guidelines carefully.
- 03** Stay close to home.  
Like, as close as possible. Far away places or that recreation town an hour down the road are wonderful, but the further you travel, the more potential you have to spread illness. Shop and recreate in your neighborhood.
- 04** Keep it chill.  
It's not a good time to get hurt. Healthcare systems are overwhelmed, or soon will be. Please do not add to the burden.
- 05** Respect closures and be a good steward.  
If parks are closed, don't go. If parks are open, be mindful that areas might have limited maintenance. Pack out your trash, use the restroom before you leave the house. Check state guidelines and closures.

**OUTDOOR ALLIANCE**

<https://www.outdooralliance.org/blog/2020/3/24/how-to-get-outside-during-a-pandemic>

- **Office closures:** At this time, Ranger District and Supervisor's Office offices are closed to visitors. However, the Forest Service continues to remain operational and we are committed to the continuity of our mission. Our primary delivery of public service will occur through virtual means

(ie. telephone and online service). The majority of our employees are teleworking, so you can still call or email folks that you have been working with. Also, you can still call the Ranger District offices during office hours for information and assistance and the phone will be answered by a real person. More information (and where to access online resources for maps, etc) can be found at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/okawen/home/?cid=FSEPRD712407&width=full>

- **Summer employees:** To comply with “stay home, stay healthy” orders in many states, we have delayed the on-boarding of all of our summer temporary employees. This is dynamic situation and we will adjust as soon as possible, following state guidelines and keeping an eye on fire preparedness.
- **Spring prescribed burning postponed:** Along with the rest of the national forests in Washington and Oregon, spring prescribed burning on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest has been postponed until the fall. While frequent, low-intensity fire is essential to the long-term health of our forests and communities, employee and public health remains the top priority at this time.  
“We care deeply about our communities across the region and didn’t want to risk introducing smoke from prescribed fire into communities that may be affected by COVID-19,” said John Giller, Director of Fire and Aviation Management for the Pacific Northwest Region of the USDA Forest Service. “With this pause, we can better protect those who may also be in higher-risk groups for COVID-19, such as the elderly and those with underlying respiratory conditions.”

**Restoration Projects:** At this point, we are still planning implementing several restoration projects this summer:

- **Upper Burns Stream Restoration:** Partnership project with Yakama Nation located at the NFS boundary (about MM 26). This project will restore perennial flow to several existing side channels and will include large wood structures and revegetation. We are still finalizing the design but, at this point, it is planned to be a two-phased project that will be completed in 2021. Public scoping is currently open. If you did not receive a scoping letter and would like one, please email Mariah at [mariah.mayfield@usda.gov](mailto:mariah.mayfield@usda.gov).
- **Kloochman Creek Road decommissioning:** This project was part of the Tillicum Watershed Restoration Project and will remove a culvert on Kloochman Creek that is a barrier to fish. This is the last barrier in the Tillicum sub-watershed and will allow access to several more miles of stream. With all the barriers removed, we are hoping we will begin to see Tillicum Creek and its tributaries being used by steelhead and bull trout!
- **Potato-Roaring BDAs:** Partnership project with Trout Unlimited and USFWS. We are planning a multi-year project to address water storage and sediment issues in Potato and Roaring Creeks. This summer will focus on Potato Creek. Public scoping will begin soon. To make sure you receive a scoping notification, email Mariah at [mariah.mayfield@usda.gov](mailto:mariah.mayfield@usda.gov).

**Other upcoming projects:**

- **Post-fire danger tree removal:** We are looking to remove danger trees along roads burned in the Wolverine and Cougar Creek Fires. This project may include opening new areas up to firewood collection and allowing commercial firewood cutting. Stay tuned for more info.
- **Mad-Roaring-Mills Watershed Restoration:** We are in the process of planning for our FY21 scope of work which we are hoping will include this project. We are doing spotted owl surveys this spring and have conducted stream surveys and reach assessments for most of the project area. We have developed a proposed transportation plan and identified vegetation treatment areas.

We are all hoping this prep work will make this project a forest priority so we can continue our watershed restoration projects.

**Acting Entiat District Ranger:** Kari Grover Wier, the Chelan District Ranger, is currently the Acting Ranger for the Entiat District. Kari is managing both Chelan and Entiat Ranger Districts, along with the very capable staff at both Districts. The Forest is currently looking at ways to combine public services of the two Districts due to flat and declining budgets into the future. Please feel free to reach out to Kari with any concerns or information at [kari.grover-wier@usda.gov](mailto:kari.grover-wier@usda.gov) or 509-699-1447.