



File Code: 1010

Date: January 29, 2001

Dear Climbing Community:

It is that time of year when we prepare to welcome back North Carolina's Peregrine Falcons. The Peregrine Falcon is now listed as a regional sensitive species on the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests. Closure of the cliffs where the falcon is known to nest is necessary to limit disturbance in the vicinity so the nesting pairs are successful in producing young.

During the 2000 nesting season, there were 10 nesting pairs in Western North Carolina, five of which were on Forest Service land. An additional pair of Peregrines were observed at Eagle Cliff, however, the birds were immature and did not produce a nest. Of the five nests on Forest Service land, 3 were successful and raised 8 chicks. There were 16 total young raised in Western North Carolina during the calendar year 2000.

Although the number of nesting pairs has increased from 8 pairs in 1999 to 10 pairs in 2000, the number of successfully raised young has not increased. Until North Carolina can maintain a healthy reproductive rate for Peregrine Falcons, the existing closures will be maintained, posted, and enforced. The closure for Whitesides Mountain on the Highlands Ranger District has been modified. The climbing routes closed for the Peregrine Falcon are listed on the Whiteside Mountain closure, a copy of which is attached to this letter.

Closure Areas

Whitesides Mountain, Highlands Ranger District

Big Lost Cove Cliffs and Linville Gorge (Shortoff Mountain and the North Carolina Wall), Grandfather Ranger District

Whiterock Cliff, Madison County, and Eagle Cliff, Mitchell County, Appalachian Ranger District

Looking Glass Rock, Pisgah Ranger District

The closure order prohibits going into or being upon the areas defined above from January 15 to August 15. Areas are defined by orange painted boundary or posted. We have experienced considerable vandalism with our signing of the trail head for Big Lost Cove Cliffs and the Linville Gorge areas. This closure is in effect for the areas listed regardless of whether or not posted signs are present.



If you have any questions regarding these areas or would like to view a copy of the closure notice, please access the National Forests in North Carolina web site (www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc).

Thank you for your continued cooperation in the restoration efforts for this magnificent bird of prey.

Sincerely,

/s/ John F. Ramey
JOHN F. RAMEY
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure



United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
National Forests in North Carolina

Order of the Forest Supervisor; ORDER NO. 01-01-01

Pursuant to 36 CFR 261.53 (a), the following acts are prohibited on the areas listed below and further described on the attached map within the National Forests in North Carolina. This Closure is effective from January 12, 2001 through January 12, of 2006 and is an amendment to a previous order.

Area to Which This Order Applies

Whiteside Mountain, portion used for rock climbing and hang gliding, extends along the uppermost face of the rock below the loop trail to the first continuous tree line below.

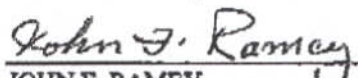
It is prohibited to go into or be upon the areas below the orange painted or posted boundary which consists of the following climbing routes: #4 Southwest Arête, #5 Power Cuts, #6 Ship of Fools, #7 KKK Variation, #8 Room To Breathe, #9 The Promise Land, #10 Blarney Stone, #11 Little Miss Dangerous, #12 Warrior's Way, #13 Volunteer Wall, #14 New Diversions, #15 The Route Doctors, Mainline, Last of the Dixie Trails, Arm & Hammer, Cavers Rappel, Great Abba, and Save the Shrimp. The above-described area is closed from January 15th to August 15th of each year, to provide solitude and protection of the threatened Peregrine Falcon.
36 CFR 261.53 (a)

In the event that falcons are not using the site, or nesting terminates at an earlier date than August 15th, the site may be opened to public use, as determined by the District Ranger. The specified closed (or open) routes could be changed if the falcons nest on a part of the cliff outside the existing closed area, as determined by the District Ranger.

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

- 1) Person with a permit specifically authorizing the prohibited act or omission.
- 2) Any Federal, State, or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.

Done at Asheville, North Carolina this 16 day of January 2001



JOHN F. RAMEY
Forest Supervisor
National Forest in North Carolina

Violation of the prohibition set forth above is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual and 10,000 for an organization or imprisonment of not more than six (6) months, or both. 16 USC 551 and 18 USC 3559 and 3571.