NEWS RELEASE

Eldorado National Forest Dirt Roads and Trails to Remain Closed Until At Least April 15

Placerville, CA….The Forest Service is extending the current closure of Eldorado National Forest dirt roads and trails until April 15 since many of the routes are too muddy for vehicles to drive on. Two weeks prior to that date, the Forest Service says it will reassess the conditions and the weather forecasts to determine if lifting the closure is still reasonable.

This closure does not affect routes located in the Rock Creek area of the Georgetown Ranger District which are managed with different closure criteria. Information about road and trail closures is posted on the Eldorado National Forest website: www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado.

Dirt roads and trails, also known as native surface roads, have been closed since January 1, when the three month minimal seasonal closure was put into effect. Forest Supervisor Ramiro Villalvazo said that he elected to extend the closure period by way of a Forest Order because soil conditions remained too wet to travel on without causing damage.

"I am primarily concerned with the soils in the lower elevations that tend to mud up more easily than those found in the higher elevations, said Villalvazo."The dirt road closure affects the entire Eldorado National Forest and I expect that some routes will be drier than others."

Villalvazo says that when he lifts the closure, some routes will be too wet to drive on and visitors will be responsible not to drive on them. Once the closure is lifted, the Forest Service can still cite people for damaging the routes.

"Every year the dirt roads and trails will be closed between January 1 and March 31," said Villalvazo. "And, each year, depending on the conditions and the weather forecast, I may need to close them sooner or open them later. This year I needed to open them later."

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