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Los Angeles District



NEWS RELEASE



Closure order in effect for Mt. Charleston berm and diversion channel project

By Daniel J. Calderón

MOUNT CHARLESTON, Nev. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and agencies in the State of Nevada, is informing members of the public of a closure order in effect in the work area of the berm and diversion channel structure being built in the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area.

The closure order, signed by the forest supervisor for the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, is in effect until it is rescinded.

“The closure order enables us to enforce the requirement to keep people out of the construction area,” said Mike Balen, the lead engineer for the Forest Service. “It gives us the force of law we need to keep people out of the construction area, keeping them safe and keeping our workers safe.”

Balen said anyone who does trespass into the construction area faces potential danger from the construction equipment Forest Service personnel are using to excavate and build the flood risk management structures. Additionally, Forest Service personnel could be endangered because they would have to make potentially dangerous moves in heavy equipment to avoid any trespassers on the work site.

According to the order, any violation is punishable as a Class B misdemeanor with a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization and/or imprisonment of not more than six months. Individuals, including local residents, who want to enter the area may contact the Forest Service or the Corps of Engineers to request access. However, they must request access a minimum of 24 hours in advance and must be escorted on the work site by appropriate USFS or USACE personnel.

The closure area is bounded by Davos Way on the west and extends through Rainbow Canyon to the hill slope on the east. Individuals who own “summer homes” up the mountain must use Davos Way and a new service road the Forest Service constructed to access their home sites because the former access road is now closed. The closure area is marked by yellow safety tape and flaggers are in place during work hours to detour motorists away from the work area.

The Forest Service, with the Corps of Engineers serving as construction manager, is building the temporary structure, which is approximately 2,350 feet long, on National Forest land. The \$3 million structure is designed to divert flows from rain events into a natural wash and away from the neighborhood. It is designed for a “25-year” rain event, an event which has a 4 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. Members of the construction crew are working 13 out of every 14 days and are putting in up to 12 hours a day to complete the project as soon as possible.

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