



United States Department of Agriculture

USDA Forest Service
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News Release

For Immediate Release
October 1, 2020
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Forest Service issues closure order for Taylor Creek

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, Calif., Oct. 1, 2020 – Due to continued public health safety concerns related to COVID-19, trail improvement work, the risk of bear-human encounters and in order to discourage large groups from gathering, the USDA Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) has issued a Forest Order that temporarily closes Taylor Creek and the surrounding area from Oct. 3 through Nov. 2, 2020.

In recent years, the Taylor Creek area has experienced a large increase in use as visitors flock to the creek to observe the fall spawning of Kokanee salmon, which also provides a natural food source for black bears. Visitor center staff have routinely observed visitors approaching bears at unsafe distances to observe bear behavior and take photographs. The risk of bear-human interaction combined with anticipated crowding and inability to maintain social distance requirements on narrow trails, trail construction and public health concerns associated with large gatherings all contributed to the decision to close the area for public safety.

“During the month of October, Taylor Creek receives thousands of visitors each day and can receive as many as 12,000 visitors over one weekend,” said Acting Forest Supervisor, Danelle D. Harrison. “While we understand the popularity of the area this time of year, the safety of our visitors and employees remains our highest priority.”

The temporary closure order prohibits members of the public, including photographers, from entering the Taylor Creek area from Fallen Leaf Dam to the marsh area where the creek empties into Lake Tahoe. Parking areas at Taylor Creek Visitor Center, Taylor Creek Sno-Park and the nearby pump station will be closed and parking on the shoulders of Highway 89 near the bridge that crosses Taylor Creek will be prohibited. Please obey all closure signs.



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As a reminder, portions of the Rainbow Trail are still under construction for a trail improvement project that began in late July to reroute approximately 600 feet of the existing trail out of sensitive wetland areas and extend a section of the elevated boardwalk. This watershed improvement project is designed to reduce impacts to the heavily visited and beloved Rainbow Trail, while protecting wildlife in the area to ensure the trail remains viable for the enjoyment of visitors in the years to come.

The closure order is available for viewing on the Forest Order webpage at <https://go.usa.gov/xVfjp> under the “Taylor Creek” heading.

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