



News Release

**Sierra National Forest
Supervisors Office
1600 Tollhouse Road
Clovis, CA 93611**

**Media Contact: Alex Olow
(559) 297-0706 ext. 4804**

aolow@fs.fed.us



For Immediate Release:

Madera County Sheriff Issues Flood Evacuations for areas of Sierra National Forest and Community of North Fork, CA.

North Fork, California January 09, 2017 - Over the weekend the Sierra National Forest received a significant amount of rainfall and with the snow levels above 9000', a large amount of snow from recent storms has melted in association with the rain. This has created a significant amount of runoff swelling rivers and creeks, beyond their capacity. Early this morning, the Madera County Sheriff's Office, in order to maintain public safety and security has issued an evacuation notice for several areas in the North Fork community. The Sierra National Forest (NF) Bass Lake Ranger District office, and residential areas have been affected by this issuance. District Ranger Denise Tolmie and Forest Supervisor Dean Gould have closed the offices in North Fork for employee and public safety until the threat and danger of flooding passes. Only emergency essential personnel remain, but are prepared to leave at a moment's notice if necessary.

The National Weather Service continues to issue a Severe Weather Alert "Flood Watch" for the Sierra and surrounding San Joaquin Valley Communities through Wednesday afternoon January 11, 2017 as a line of storms impacting the area continue to move through to the East. A flood watch means that there is potential for flooding based on current forecasts. Heavy rain of 1 to 3 inches is expected to continue over the next several days. Travel could be very difficult with some roads covered by water, blocked by fallen trees, or even washed out. Avoid driving through unknown depths of water. You should monitor later forecasts as conditions can change, be alert for flood warnings and be prepared to take action should flooding develop.

For information regarding the Sierra NF, and recreational activities please contact the High Sierra Ranger District office in Prather, CA. at 559-855-5355 or the Forest Supervisors office in Clovis, CA. at 559-297-0706 until normal business can be resumed in the Bass Lake Ranger District. A follow-on press release will be issued once the Bass Lake Ranger District office has been reopened.

For weather information please contact the National Weather Service Hanford, California at 559-5843752 or <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/hnx/>

###

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).