

Six Rivers temporarily closes Sand Camp area due to bear encounters

August 5, 2020



The Sand Camp in the Smith River National Recreation area will close after multiple encounters with a yearling black bear. The bear has been reported harassing visitors for weeks, approaching them without fear, stealing food and bags and breaking into cars via open windows, according to a Six Rivers National Forest press release.

The closure From Aug. 6 through Aug. 19 will allow California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and US Forest Service officials to attempt to “haze” the bear.

Hazing is a non-lethal approach used to encourage the bear to move on and resume normal foraging behavior — for nuts, berries and grubs — away from humans, forestry officials explained.

The CDFW requested the US Forest Service close the site for two weeks to allow both agencies to continue hazing efforts without the temptation of human food. So far, hazing efforts have proven unsuccessful.

Meanwhile, US Forest Service and CDFW staff have been encouraging the public to not feed bears or any wildlife.

“If, after this two-week period, we’re not successful with changing the bear’s behavior, the bear will have to be relocated or, unfortunately, euthanized,” said Jeff Marszal, district ranger for the Smith River NRA.

While the Sand Camp area is closed, Smith River NRA staff encourages visitors to relocate to other river-access sites along the South Fork of the Smith River and South Fork Road, including Craigs Beach and Stevens Bridges.

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