

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

FOR MARION COUNTY, OREGON

In the matter of adopting temporary use )  
restrictions on North Fork Road SE, Gates Hill )  
Road SE and Pioneer Road SE. )

**ORDER No.** 21-025

This matter came before the Marion County Board of Commissioners at its regularly scheduled public meeting on Wednesday, March 10, 2021.

WHEREAS, the Marion County Board of Commissioners is the road authority for all county roads outside of incorporated cities in Marion County pursuant to ORS 810.010; and

WHEREAS, the Beachie Creek Fire swept through the areas surrounding North Fork, Gates Hill and Pioneer Roads during the month of September 2020, creating road hazards along North Fork, Gates Hill and Pioneer Roads and the destruction of public and private property, which will need to be rebuilt; and

WHEREAS, in order to facilitate the reconstruction of public and private property along North Fork, Gates Hill and Pioneer Roads, and to alleviate road hazards, the board desires to place temporary restrictions on North Fork, Gates Hill and Pioneer Roads; now, therefore,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the following restrictions are imposed upon North Fork, Gates Hill and Pioneer Roads until further order of the board:

- a. Only authorized vehicles and pedestrians may use North Fork Road SE, Gates Hill Road SE and Pioneer Road SE. Authorized pedestrians include individuals who obtain access to their private property from North Fork, Gates Hill and/or Pioneer Roads, individuals representing entities who obtain access to their private property from North Fork, Gates Hill and/or Pioneer Roads, the agents or guests of individuals or individuals representing entities who obtain access to their private property from North Fork, Gates Hill and/or Pioneer Roads,

and individuals representing federal, state, or local government. Authorized vehicles include vehicles owned or operated by individuals who obtain access to their private property from North Fork, Gates Hill and/or Pioneer Roads, individuals representing entities who obtain access to their private property from North Fork, Gates Hill and/or Pioneer Roads, the agents or guests of individuals or individuals representing entities who obtain access to their private property from North Fork, Gates Hill and/or Pioneer Roads, and federal, state, or local government vehicles.

- b. No access to the Little North Fork of the Santiam River is allowed from the right of way of North Fork Road SE, Gates Hill Road SE and Pioneer Road SE.
- c. No parking within the right of way of North Fork Road SE, Gates Hill Road SE and Pioneer Road SE.
- d. No bicyclists are allowed to use the right of way of North Fork Road SE, Gates Hill Road SE or Pioneer Road SE.

DATED at Salem, Oregon, this 10<sup>th</sup> day of March 2021.

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

  
Chair

  
Commissioner

  
Commissioner



MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Board Session Agenda Review Form

Meeting date: March 10, 2021

Department: Public Works Agenda Planning Date: 03/04/2021 Time required: 10 min

Audio/Visual aids

Contact: Brian Nicholas Phone: 503.588.7943

Department Head Signature: Brian Stille

TITLE Consider approval of an order for the temporary closure of North Fork Road SE, Gates Hill Road SE and Pioneer Road SE

Issue, Description & Background The public and private lands in and around the Little North Fork Santiam River basin were heavily damaged during the September 2020 Beachie Creek / Lionshead wildfires resulting in extensive damage to public road infrastructure and near total destruction of rural residential and timber properties in the area. Marion County Public Works is working with FEMA and the State of Oregon to obtain Public Assistance to support the cost of road repairs and to remove wildfire debris from public and private lands. North Fork Road SE, Gates Hill Road SE and Pioneer Road SE currently provide the only local road access into the Little North Fork Santiam River basin. These roads are maintained by Marion County and will play a critical role in the reconstruction of wildfire-damaged properties that gain their access from these and adjoining local roads. Historically, these roads have also provided access to the Little North Fork Santiam River and recreational opportunities associated with the river and public forest lands. Wildfire recovery is in the early stages of development and significant public safety hazards remain. All federal, state and local parks and public forest lands have been closed to public access due to the presence of dead and standing trees. A large number of dead and standing trees also remain in all county road rights of way in the area. Up to 18 months of work will be necessary to restore wildfire-damaged roads to county road standards. Meanwhile, the volume of log truck traffic is currently the highest ever observed as land owners rush to salvage fire damaged timber while it is still marketable. Furthermore, it is not safe for the public to enter the Little North Fork Santiam River due to a large volume of woody debris, both floating and submerged, moving down the watershed on a daily basis. It is clear that these conditions will not be remedied in the near future. Staff recommend the board restrict public access to North Fork, Gates Hill and Pioneer Roads on a temporary basis to allow only property owners that access their properties from North Fork, Gates Hill and/or Pioneer Roads; the guests, contractors and agents of these property owners; and federal, state and local government agencies. Staff further recommend the board temporarily prohibit pedestrians, bicyclists and public parking within the North Fork, Gates Hill and Pioneer Road rights of way and to prohibit public access to the Little North Fork Santiam River from these public rights of way. These temporary restrictions will limit or prevent public exposure to in-water and landside hazards until the aforementioned hazards have been mitigation, while providing the property access necessary for wildfire recovery on public and private lands. If the order is adopted, Marion County Public Works will post road signs on North Fork, Gates Hill and Pioneer Road notifying the public of these restrictions. Additional access control measures may be warranted.

Financial Impacts: The only financial impact associated with this order will be the cost of road signs and associated access control measures necessary to implement the order. These are eligible Road Fund costs in the current FY2020/21 Public Works Department budget.



MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**Board Session Agenda Review Form**

Impacts to Department  
& External Agencies

This order will not impact other departments or external agencies.

Options for  
Consideration:

1. Approve the proposed order;  
2. Deny the proposed order; or  
3. Direct staff to alter the proposed order and return for approval.

Recommendation:

Staff recommend the board approve the order as written.

List of attachments:

Board Order

Presenter:

Brian Nicholas and Lani Radtke

*Copies of completed paperwork sent to the following: (Include names and e-mail addresses.)*

Copies to: