

BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS  
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

In the matter of the adoption of an emergency rule closing the Smith River from Camp Baker to Eden Bridge )  
) NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF AN EMERGENCY RULE  
)  
)

TO: All Concerned Persons

1. The Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (department) has determined the following reasons justify the adoption of an emergency rule:

- (a) There are intermittent ice jams on the Smith River that have caused the river to be impassable by recreationists. The steep canyon walls provide a perfect place for ice to collect and remain due to lack of sun exposure.
- (b) Persons recreating on the river in these conditions would be subjected to:
  - (i) collisions with ice;
  - (ii) becoming stranded and having to hike out of steep canyon areas; or
  - (iii) drowning.

(c) Therefore, as this situation constitutes an imminent peril to public health, safety, and welfare, due to the combination of unsafe conditions and this threat cannot be averted or remedied by any other administrative act, the department adopts the following emergency rule. The emergency rule will be sent as a press release to newspapers throughout the state. Also, signs informing the public of the closure will be posted at access points. The rule will be sent to interested parties and published as an emergency rule in Issue No. 7 of the 2020 Montana Administrative Register.

2. The department will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in the rulemaking process and need an alternative accessible format of the notice. If you require an accommodation, contact the department no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 1, 2020, to advise us of the nature of the accommodation that you need. Please contact Kaedy Gangstad, Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 1420 East Sixth Avenue, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701; telephone (406) 444-4594; or e-mail kgangstad@mt.gov.

3. The emergency rule is effective March 25, 2020, when this rule notice is filed with the Secretary of State.

4. The text of the emergency rule provides as follows:

RULE I SMITH RIVER EMERGENCY CLOSURE (1) The closed portion of the Smith River is located in Meagher and Cascade Counties.

(2) The Smith River is closed to all floating on the river between Camp Baker and Eden Bridge.

(3) This rule will remain in effect until the department determines the river is again safe for boating.

AUTH: 2-4-303, 23-1-106, MCA  
IMP: 2-4-303, 23-1-106, MCA

5. The rationale for the emergency rule is set forth in paragraph 1.

6. Concerned persons are encouraged to submit their comments to the department. They should submit their comments along with their names and addresses to Colin Maas, Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 4600 Giant Springs Road, Great Falls, MT 59405; or e-mail [cmaas@mt.gov](mailto:cmaas@mt.gov). Any comments must be received no later than May 15, 2020.

7. The department maintains a list of interested persons who wish to receive notice of rulemaking actions proposed by the department. Persons who wish to have their name added to the list shall make written request that includes the name and mailing address of the person to receive the notice and specifies the subject or subjects about which the person wishes to receive notice. Such written request may be mailed or delivered to Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Legal Unit, P.O. Box 200701, 1420 East Sixth Avenue, Helena, MT 59620-0701, or may be made by completing the request form at any rules hearing held by the department.

8. The bill sponsor contact requirements of 2-4-302, MCA, do not apply.

/s/ Mike Volesky

Mike Volesky

Chief of Operations

Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

/s/ Zach Zipfel

Zach Zipfel

Rule Reviewer

Certified to the Secretary of State March 25, 2020.