



File Code: 2300
Route To:

Date: July 6, 2020

Subject: Expanding the Online Solution for Forest Service Christmas Tree Permits
Through Recreation.gov

To: Regional Foresters

REPLY DUE: AUGUST 6, 2020

In 2019, 13 National Forests participated in a pilot Christmas Tree App program with the Open Forest platform to offer Christmas Tree permits online. The Open Forest platform has proven the viability of an online Christmas Tree permit service for customers and staff alike. We recognize this service needs to be rapidly scaled up to deliver an online solution nationwide for the 2020 season. For this reason, we are transitioning the Christmas Tree permit app to Recreation.gov.

Those Forests already in the Open Forest platform will be migrated to the Recreation.gov Christmas Tree permit app. **Forests not currently a part of the pilot Open Forest platform interested in adding online sales for their Christmas Tree Permits for this year's Christmas Tree cutting season will need to contact Recreation One Stop Agency Program Manager, Sue Valente (susan_valente@usda.gov) no later than August 6, 2020, to initiate the process.**

Units will be required to collect Christmas Tree permit fees using the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act authority. This decision unites public facing recreation services under a one-stop shop platform and focuses Open Forest's efforts on more non-recreation business-related functions.

The Recreation.gov Online Christmas Tree Permit Service will:

- offer visitors and field staff peace of mind by reducing in-person financial transactions;
- offer convenience from a familiar platform to visitors and field staff, many of whom already have accounts;
- provide additional customer service support through Contact Center and Help Center resources; and
- continue to provide secure transactions and personally identifiable information protection to meet strict government requirements when handling financial and personal information.

I want to thank the Open Forest team and Forests that participated in the pilot for delivering a superior product and for pioneering how to implement a successful online Christmas Tree permit app. I also want to thank them for working with Recreation.gov to share lessons learned during this transition. Their hard work is being leveraged to deliver a nation-wide product to enhance how we serve our customers and colleagues.



Questions regarding the Christmas Tree Online Permit program can be directed to the Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources staff, acting director, Jeff Vail at Jeffrey.vail@usda.gov in the Washington Office.

X



for

Signed by: TINA TERRELL

CHRISTOPHER B. FRENCH

Deputy Chief, National Forest System