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Joint News Release

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South Lake Road Reconstruction Planned for 2020 ***Significant Impacts to Access, Parking***

The South Lake Road Reconstruction is planned for the 2020 season under a funding request from Inyo County. The road will be re-paved and needs significant repairs for safety and includes a new bicycle staging area. The Inyo National Forest is also completing trailhead parking and campground improvements in conjunction with this project.

Many destinations along the South Lake Road are popular for boating, fishing, hiking and backpacking, and camping. The Bishop Pass Trailhead is a highly sought out trailhead that accesses the John Muir Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, and the North Lake/ South Lake Loop through the Evolution Basin of Kings Canyon National Park.

During construction, roadside parking, day use parking, and the parking areas for South Lake will be significantly reduced, and at times, closed. Bishop Pass Trailhead Parking and Tye Lakes Trailhead Parking will be closed at times this summer, although access to the trailheads will be maintained. Visitors should anticipate that there may not be parking available. The Forks, Four Jeffrey and Willow Campgrounds may also be closed at points this summer.

“There is no way to complete this project without having a significant impact on visitors to the South Lake area,” said Philip DeSenze, White Mountain District Ranger. “The road has only one ingress/egress and the already limited parking will be much reduced. Accessing the area may be, at times, difficult and frustrating. Your planning and patience will help complete this much-needed project.”

Construction delays will typically be 30 minutes during the day. However, at points, closures will be up to three hours, twice a day. There will be no night work, weekend work, or work during holiday weekends, although traffic controls will still be in place. Visitors to South Lake Road destinations should consider carpooling, being dropped off by friends, or using shuttle services available from the Bishop area.

Once construction starts, visitors should check the construction schedule before heading to South Lake. This schedule will be posted on Inyo County and Inyo National Forest webpages and social media sites. Careful planning will help alleviate, but not eliminate, construction delays.

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