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**File Code:** 2720  
**Date:** October 7, 2022

Allen Clark, Director  
Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs  
5636 E. McDowell Road, Building M5101  
Phoenix, Arizona 85008-3495

Dear Mr. Clark:

As you know, on September 16, 2022, representatives from your office, the Arizona Department of Emergency Management (AZDEMA), emailed Coronado National Forest personnel seeking authorization "to place barriers on National Forest land in all areas that currently have gaps in the federal wall." While they did not identify the specific gaps that AZDEMA seeks to address, media reports indicate that the project may entail the placement of approximately 300 containers between 20 and 40 feet in length along an undisclosed extent of National Forest System (NFS) lands. Members of my staff and I communicated verbally over the last two weeks with you and other personnel from your office, advising of the federal regulatory approval process that governs NFS land use and occupancy and that prior approval would need to be obtained before the State could proceed. Your office was also encouraged to communicate its plans to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

On the afternoon of October 5, 2022, Forest Service personnel observed approximately 15 shipping containers and associated construction equipment at a staging area just north of the international border on NFS lands in Cochise County. As of October 6, 2022, at least 22 shipping containers, associated construction equipment, and private security personnel were located on the area. The Forest Service did not authorize this occupancy and use. It is my understanding that AZDEMA also intends to transport additional containers to the border and that it proposes to utilize existing roads to transport shipping containers to their intended destinations. Not only has the Forest Service not authorized the placement of any shipping containers on NFS lands, AZDEMA has not identified which roads will be used, how the proposed road use will impact NFS lands, or the extent to which excavation will be required to facilitate the placement of the containers.

As we discussed previously, the process for obtaining a permit is outlined in 36 C.F.R. 251.54. Please provide the requisite information required by this process at your earliest convenience to Adam Milnor, Recreation and Lands Staff Officer, Coronado National Forest, at [adam.milnor@usda.gov](mailto:adam.milnor@usda.gov). Upon receipt of the required information, the Forest Service will assess the information provided against initial screening criteria outlined in the regulations. If the proposal passes the applicable screening criteria, it will also have to be analyzed for effects on the environment in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other federal law.

Meanwhile, please refrain from any further activity associated with the containers on NFS lands, including the use of any equipment, until such time as a proper authorization is secured. If you have any questions about how to comply with the special use authorization process, please reach out to me by email at [kerwin.dewberry@usda.gov](mailto:kerwin.dewberry@usda.gov), or by phone at 520-262-1652.

Sincerely,

**KERWIN  
DEWBERRY**

Digitally signed by  
KERWIN DEWBERRY  
Date: 2022.10.07  
19:44:35 -0700

KERWIN S. DEWBERRY  
Forest Supervisor

cc: Adam Milnor

