

File Code: 1920
Date:

Dear Objectors and Interested Persons:

As the objection reviewing officer for the Regional Forester's list of species of conservation concern for the Ashley National Forest, I am providing my final written response to the objections (36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 219.50, Subpart B). Deb Oakeson, the reviewing officer for objections filed on the Ashley National Forest Land Management Plan revision will provide a separate written response to those objections.

The legal notice of the objection period for the Ashley National Forest Land Management Plan revision and/or the Regional Forester's list of species of conservation concern for the Ashley National Forest was published on April 19, 2023, initiating a 60-day objection filing period. The objection period closed on June 20, 2023. This written response is the final determination of the U.S. Department of Agriculture on these objections (36 CFR 219.57(b)(3)).

I conducted my review in accordance with the predecisional administrative review process described at 36 CFR 219 subpart B. A review team, made up of Forest Service subject matter experts from across the Agency, reviewed your objections and proposed remedies. After the review team evaluated the planning record to ensure it complied with current laws, regulations, and policies, they provided their recommendations for addressing any inconsistencies. I appreciate your attendance at the resolution meeting on August 28, 2023, to represent your issues as an objector and/or as an interested person. The feedback I received at the meeting improved my understanding of your concerns and requested remedies and helped inform my decision.

The enclosed response includes a summary of the objections, an analysis of the planning record and conclusion of its adequacy in addressing the issue, and instructions that must be completed prior to the responsible official making a final decision on the Regional Forester's list of species of conservation concern. My response is also available on the Forest Plan Revision website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=49606>.

If you have any questions, please contact Heather McKenny, Objection Coordinator, National Forest Plan Objection Review Team, at heather.c.mckenny@usda.gov.

Sincerely,



JACQUELINE EMANUEL
Reviewing Officer for the Chief

Enclosure

cc: Deb Oakeson, Susan Eickhoff, Heather McKenny Melissa Steward, Anastacia Allen, Linda Walker, Bradley Kinder, Mary Grim