



**File Code:** 1920  
**Route To:**

**Date:** December 6, 2021

**Subject:** Species of Conservation Concern, Nantahala-Pisgah Forest Plan

**To:** Forest Supervisor, National Forests in North Carolina

The 2012 Planning Rule requires Forests undergoing plan revisions to identify Species of Conservation Concern (SCC). SCC are at-risk species known to occur in the planning unit, with substantial concerns regarding their ability to persist over the long-term. As such, SCC represent a critical tool for Forest planners, biologists and managers, for conserving ecosystem diversity in the planning unit.

Under the 2012 Planning Rule, the Regional Forester identifies SCC for the plan unit, in coordination with the responsible official. The staff on the Forest has worked closely with the staff at the Region to develop the list of SCC. The forest and regional staffs have performed exemplary work analyzing a large number of species and identifying only species that meet the criteria for SCC designation. I appreciate the hard work and many hours the Forest and their partners have contributed to this process.

On July 2, 2015, Jerome Thomas, acting for Regional Forester Tony Tooke, signed the list identifying the SCC for the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest (enclosed). Since that time, the Forest planning team, acting on new information, has continued to analyze species of conservation interest regarding their suitability for SCC designation. For 40 species not previously identified as SCC, new information shows they meet the criteria for SCC species, and have support for listing from both our forest biologists and our valued partners. For nine species previously identified as SCC, new information shows they are either more common or less threatened than originally thought, and therefore no longer meet the criteria for SCC designation. Amending the initial SCC list to address this information will, on balance, increase the size of the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest SCC list from 308 to 339 species.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 219.7(c)(3), I amend the existing SCC list for the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest using the enclosed list. Please use this list to complete the current revision of your Forest plan.

If you have any questions regarding the amended list of SCC, the process for identifying SCC, or the requirement for addressing SCC under the 2012 Planning Rule, please contact Duke Rankin, Regional Threatened and Endangered Species Program Manager, at (404) 347-3981 or via email at [duke.rankin@usda.gov](mailto:duke.rankin@usda.gov).

KENDERICK ARNEY  
Regional Forester

Enclosures (2)

