

## Forest Service, USDA

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unique characteristics of scientific interest and importance. Research Natural Areas will be retained in a virgin or unmodified condition except where measures are required to maintain a plant community which the area is intended to represent. Within areas designated by this regulation, occupancy under a special-use permit shall not be allowed, nor the construction of permanent improvements permitted except improvements required in connection with their experimental use, unless authorized by the Chief of the Forest Service.

[31 FR 5072, Mar. 29, 1966]

### PETERSBURG WATERSHED

#### § 251.35 Petersburg watershed.

(a) Except as authorized in paragraphs (b) and (c), access to lands within the Petersburg watershed, Tongass National Forest, as described in the Act of October 17, 1940 (54 Stat. 1197), is prohibited.

(b) Access to lands within the Petersburg watershed is hereby authorized, without further written approval, for the following routine purposes:

(1) The discharge of official duties related to management of the Tongass National Forest by Federal employees, holders of Forest Service contracts, or Forest Service agents;

(2) The operation, maintenance, and improvement of the municipal water system by Federal and State officials and employees of the city of Petersburg; and

(3) Public recreational use of the Raven's Roost Trail for access to and from the Raven's Roost public recreation cabin and the Alpine Recreation Area.

(c) Any person who wishes to enter upon the lands within the watershed for purposes other than those listed in paragraph (b) must obtain a permit that has been signed by the appropriate city official and countersigned by the District Ranger.

(d) Unauthorized entrance upon lands within the watershed is subject to punishment as provided in 36 CFR 261.1b.

(e) The Forest Supervisor of the Stikine Area of the Tongass National Forest may authorize the removal of timber from the watershed under the

regulations governing disposal of National Forest timber (36 CFR part 223). In any removal of timber from the watershed, the Forest Supervisor shall provide adequate safeguards for the protection of the Petersburg municipal water supply.

[53 FR 26595, July 14, 1988]

### Subpart B—Special Uses

AUTHORITY: 16 U.S.C. 4601-6a, 4601-6d, 472, 497b, 497c, 551, 580d, 1134, 3210; 30 U.S.C. 185; 43 U.S.C. 1740, 1761-1771.

SOURCE: 45 FR 38327, June 6, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

#### § 251.50 Scope.

(a) All uses of National Forest System lands, improvements, and resources, except those authorized by the regulations governing sharing use of roads (§ 212.9); grazing and livestock use (part 222); the sale and disposal of timber and special forest products, such as greens, mushrooms, and medicinal plants (part 223); and minerals (part 228) are designated "special uses." Before conducting a special use, individuals or entities must submit a proposal to the authorized officer and must obtain a special use authorization from the authorized officer, unless that requirement is waived by paragraphs (c) through (e)(3) of this section.

(b) Nothing in this section prohibits the temporary occupancy of National Forest System lands without a special use authorization when necessary for the protection of life and property in emergencies, if a special use authorization is applied for and obtained at the earliest opportunity, unless waived pursuant to paragraphs (c) through (e)(3) of this section. The authorized officer may, pursuant to § 251.56 of this subpart, impose in that authorization such terms and conditions as are deemed necessary or appropriate and may require changes to the temporary occupancy to conform to those terms and conditions. Those temporarily occupying National Forest System lands without a special use authorization assume liability, and must indemnify the United States, for all injury, loss, or damage arising in connection with the temporary occupancy.

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(c) A special use authorization is not required for noncommercial recreational activities, such as camping, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, hunting, and horseback riding, or for noncommercial activities involving the expression of views, such as assemblies, meetings, demonstrations, and parades, unless:

(1) The proposed use is a noncommercial group use as defined in §251.51 of this subpart;

(2) The proposed use is still photography as defined in §251.51 of this subpart; or

(3) Authorization of that use is required by an order issued under §261.50 or by a regulation issued under §261.70 of this chapter.

(d) Travel on any National Forest System road shall comply with all Federal and State laws governing the road to be used and does not require a special use authorization, unless:

(1) The travel is for the purpose of engaging in a noncommercial group use, outfitting or guiding, a recreation event, commercial filming, or still photography, as defined in §251.51 of this subpart, or for a landowner's ingress or egress across National Forest System lands that requires travel on a National Forest System road that is not authorized for general public use under §251.110(d) of this part; or

(2) Authorization of that use is required by an order issued under §261.50 or by a regulation issued under §261.70 of this chapter.

(e) For proposed uses other than a noncommercial group use, a special use authorization is not required if, based upon review of a proposal, the authorized officer determines that the proposed use has one or more of the following characteristics:

(1) The proposed use will have such nominal effects on National Forest System lands, resources, or programs that it is not necessary to establish terms and conditions in a special use authorization to protect National Forest System lands and resources or to avoid conflict with National Forest System programs or operations;

(2) The proposed use is regulated by a State agency or another Federal agency in a manner that is adequate to protect National Forest System lands and

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resources and to avoid conflict with National Forest System programs or operations; or

(3) The proposed use is not situated in a congressionally designated wilderness area, and is a routine operation or maintenance activity within the scope of a statutory right-of-way for a highway pursuant to R.S. 2477 (43 U.S.C. 932, repealed Oct. 21, 1976) or for a ditch or canal pursuant to R.S. 2339 (43 U.S.C. 661, as amended), or the proposed use is a routine operation or maintenance activity within the express scope of a documented linear right-of-way.

[69 FR 41964, July 13, 2004]

### § 251.51 Definitions.

*Applicant*—any individual, partnership, corporation, association, or other business entity, and any Federal, State or governmental entity or agency which applies for a special use authorization.

*Authorized officer*—any employee of the Forest Service to whom has been delegated the authority to perform the duties described in this part.

*Chief*—the Chief of the Forest Service.

*Commercial filming*—use of motion picture, videotaping, sound recording, or any other moving image or audio recording equipment on National Forest System lands that involves the advertisement of a product or service, the creation of a product for sale, or the use of models, actors, sets, or props, but not including activities associated with broadcasting breaking news, as defined in FSH 2709.11, chapter 40.

*Commercial use or activity*—any use or activity on National Forest System lands (a) where an entry or participation fee is charged, or (b) where the primary purpose is the sale of a good or service, and in either case, regardless of whether the use or activity is intended to produce a profit.

*Easement*—a type of special use authorization (usually granted for linear rights-of-way) that is utilized in those situations where a conveyance of a limited and transferable interest in National Forest System land is necessary or desirable to serve or facilitate authorized long-term uses, and that may be compensable according to its terms.

*Forest road or trail.* A road or trail wholly or partly within or adjacent to and serving the National Forest System that the Forest Service determines is necessary for the protection, administration, and utilization of the National Forest System and the use and development of its resources.

*Group use*—an activity conducted on National Forest System lands that involves a group of 75 or more people, either as participants or spectators.

*Guiding*—providing services or assistance (such as supervision, protection, education, training, packing, touring, subsistence, transporting people, or interpretation) for pecuniary remuneration or other gain to individuals or groups on National Forest System lands.

*Holder*—any applicant who has received a special use authorization.

*Lease*—a type of special use authorization (usually granted for uses other than linear rights-of-way) that is used when substantial capital investment is required and when conveyance of a conditional and transferable interest in National Forest System lands is necessary or desirable to serve or facilitate authorized long-term uses, and that may be revocable and compensable according to its terms.

*Linear right-of-way*—a right-of-way for a linear facility, such as a road, trail, pipeline, electronic transmission line, fence, water transmission facility, or fiber optic cable.

*Major category*—A processing or monitoring category requiring more than 50 hours of agency time to process an application for a special use authorization (processing category 6 and, in certain situations, processing category 5) or more than 50 hours of agency time to monitor compliance with the terms and conditions of an authorization (monitoring category 6 and, in certain situations, monitoring category 5). Major categories usually require documentation of environmental and associated impacts in an environmental assessment and may require an environmental impact statement.

*Minor category*—A processing or monitoring category requiring 50 hours or less of agency time to process an application for a special use authorization (processing categories 1 through 4 and,

in certain situations, processing category 5) or 50 hours or less of agency time to monitor compliance with the terms and conditions of an authorization (monitoring categories 1 through 4 and, in certain situations, monitoring category 5). Minor categories may require documentation of environmental and associated impacts in an environmental assessment.

*Monitoring*—Actions needed to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions in a special use authorization.

*National Forest System land*—all lands, waters, or interests therein administered by the Forest Service.

*National Forest System road.* A forest road other than a road which has been authorized by a legally documented right-of-way held by a State, county, or other local public road authority.

*NEPA procedures*—the rules, policies, and procedures governing agency compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act set forth in 50 CFR parts 1500-1508, 7 CFR part 1b, Forest Service Manual Chapter 1950, and Forest Service Handbook 1909.15.

*Noncommercial use or activity*—any use or activity that does not involve a commercial use or activity as defined in this section.

*Outfitting*—renting on or delivering to National Forest System lands for pecuniary remuneration or other gain any saddle or pack animal, vehicle, boat, camping gear, or similar supplies or equipment.

*Permit*—a special use authorization which provides permission, without conveying an interest in land, to occupy and use National Forest System land or facilities for specified purposes, and which is both revocable and terminable.

*Recreation event*—a recreational activity conducted on National Forest System lands for which an entry or participation fee is charged, such as animal, vehicle, or boat races; dog trials; fishing contests; rodeos; adventure games; and fairs.

*Recreation Residence Lot*—a parcel of National Forest System land on which a holder is authorized to build, use, occupy, and maintain a recreation residence and related improvements. A recreation residence lot is considered to be in its natural, native state at the

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time when the Forest Service first permitted its use for a recreation residence. A recreation residence lot is not necessarily confined to the platted boundaries shown on a tract map or permit area map. A recreation residence lot includes the physical area of all National Forest System land being used or occupied by a recreation residence permit holder, including, but not limited to, land being occupied by ancillary facilities and uses owned, operated, or maintained by the holder, such as septic systems, water systems, boat houses and docks, major vegetative modifications, and so forth.

*Revocation*—the cessation of a special use authorization by action of an authorized officer before the end of the specified period of occupancy or use for reasons set forth in §251.60(a)(1)(i), (a)(2)(i), (g), and (h) of this subpart.

*Right-of-way*—land authorized to be used or occupied for the construction, operation, maintenance and termination of a project or facility passing over, upon, under or through such land.

*Secretary*—the Secretary of Agriculture.

*Ski area*—a site and attendant facilities expressly developed to accommodate alpine or nordic skiing and from which the preponderance of revenue is generated by the sale of lift tickets and fees for ski rentals, for skiing instruction and trail passes for the use of permittee-maintained ski trails. A ski area may also include ancillary facilities directly related to the operation and support of skiing activities.

*Sound business management principles*—a phrase that refers to accepted industry practices or methods of establishing fees and charges that are used or applied by the Forest Service to help establish the appropriate charge for a special use. Examples of such practices and methods include, but are not limited to, appraisals, fee schedules, competitive bidding, negotiation of fees, and application of other economic factors, such as cost efficiency, supply and demand, and administrative costs.

*Special use authorization*—a permit, term permit, lease, or easement which allows occupancy, use, rights, or privileges of National Forest System land.

*Still photography*—use of still photographic equipment on National Forest

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System lands that takes place at a location where members of the public generally are not allowed or where additional administrative costs are likely, or uses models, sets, or props that are not a part of the site's natural or cultural resources or administrative facilities.

*Suspension*—a temporary revocation of a special use authorization.

*Termination*—the cessation of a special use authorization by operation of law or by operation of a fixed or agreed-upon condition, event, or time as specified in an authorization without the necessity for any decision or action by the authorized officer; for example, expiration of the authorized term or transfer of the authorized improvement to another party.

*Term permit*—a special use authorization to occupy and use National Forest System land, other than rights-of-way under §251.53(l) of this part, for a specified period which is both revocable and compensable according to its terms.

[45 FR 38327, June 6, 1980, as amended at 49 FR 25449, June 21, 1984; 53 FR 16550, May 10, 1988; 54 FR 22593, May 25, 1989; 60 FR 45293, Aug. 30, 1995; 60 FR 54409, Oct. 23, 1995; 63 FR 65964, Nov. 30, 1998; 69 FR 41965, July 13, 2004; 70 FR 68290, Nov. 9, 2005; 71 FR 8913, Feb. 21, 2006; 71 FR 16621, Apr. 3, 2006]

### § 251.52 Delegation of authority.

Special use authorizations shall be issued, granted, amended, renewed, suspended, terminated, or revoked by the Chief, or through delegation, by the Regional Forester, Forest Supervisor, District Ranger or other forest officer, and shall be in such form and contain such terms, stipulations, conditions, and agreements as may be required by the regulations of the Secretary and the instructions of the Chief (7 CFR 2.60; 36 CFR part 200, subpart B).

### § 251.53 Authorities.

Subject to any limitations contained in applicable statutes, the Chief of the Forest Service, or other Agency official to whom such authority is delegated, may issue special use authorizations for National Forest System land under the authorities cited and for the types of use specified in this section as follows:

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(a) Permits governing occupancy and use, including group events and distribution of noncommercial printed materials, under the act of June 4, 1897, 30 Stat. 35 (16 U.S.C. 551);

(b) Leases under the Act of February 28, 1899, 30 Stat. 908 (16 U.S.C. 495) for public sanitariums or hotels near or adjacent to mineral springs;

(c) Permits under the Act of June 8, 1906, 34 Stat. 225 (16 U.S.C. 431, *et seq.*), for the examination of ruins, the excavation of archaeological sites, and the gathering of objects of antiquity in conformity with the rules and regulations prescribed by the Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture, and War, December 28, 1906 (43 CFR part 3);

(d) Term permits under the Act of March 4, 1915, 38 Stat. 1101, as amended, 70 Stat. 708 (16 U.S.C. 497) for periods not over 30 years and (1) for not over 80 acres for (i) hotels, resorts, and other structures and facilities for recreation, public convenience, or safety; (ii) industrial or commercial purposes, and (iii) education or public activities; and (2) for not over 5 acres for summer homes and stores;

(e) Easements for rights-of-way for pipeline purposes for the transportation of oil and gas and products thereof where no Federal land other than National Forest System land is required, and permits for the temporary use of additional National Forest System land necessary for construction, operation, maintenance or termination of a pipeline or to protect the natural environment or the public safety under section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, 41 Stat. 449, as amended, (30 U.S.C. 185);

(f) Permits, term permits, and easements in the National Grasslands and other lands acquired or administered under title III, Act of July 22, 1937, 50 Stat. 525, as amended, (7 U.S.C. 1011(d));

(g) Permits under section 7 of the Act of April 24, 1950, 64 Stat. 84 (16 U.S.C. 580d) for periods not over 30 years for the use of structures or improvements under the administrative control of the Forest Service and land used in connection therewith;

(h) Permits, term permits, leases, or easements as authorized by the Act of September 3, 1954, 68 Stat. 1146 (43 U.S.C. 931c, 931d), to States, counties,

cities, towns, townships, municipal corporations, or other public agencies for periods not over 30 years, at prices representing the fair market value, fixed by the Chief, through appraisal for the purpose of constructing and maintaining on such lands public buildings or other public works;

(i) Permits under the Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964, 78 Stat. 890 (16 U.S.C. 1131-1136) for temporary structures and commercial services and for access to valid mining claims or other valid occupancies and to surrounded State or private land within designated wilderness (see part 293 of this chapter);

(j) Temporary or permanent easements under the Act of October 13, 1964, 78 Stat. 1089 (16 U.S.C. 532-538) for road rights-of-way over lands and interests in land administered by the Forest Service (see §212.10 of this chapter);

(k) Special recreation permits issued under section 803(h) of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6802(h)), for specialized recreation uses of National Forest System lands, such as group activities, recreation events, and motorized recreational vehicle use.

(l) Permits, leases and easements under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 90 Stat. 2776 (43 U.S.C. 1761-1771) for rights-of-way for:

(1) Reservoirs, canals, ditches, flumes, laterals, pipes, pipelines, tunnels, and other facilities and systems for the impoundment, storage, transportation, or distribution of water;

(2) Pipelines and other systems for the transportation or distribution of liquids and gases, other than water and other than oil, natural gas, synthetic liquid or gaseous fuels, or any refined product produced therefrom, and for storage and terminal facilities in connection therewith;

(3) Pipelines, slurry and emulsion systems, and conveyor belts for transportation and distribution of solid materials, and facilities for the storage of such materials in connection therewith;

(4) Systems and related facilities for generation, transmission, and distribution of electric energy, except that the applicant, in addition to obtaining a

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Forest Service special use authorization, shall also comply with all applicable requirements of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission under the Federal Power Act of 1935, as amended, 49 Stat. 838 (16 U.S.C. 791a, et seq.);

(5) Systems for transmission or reception of radio, television, telephone, telegraph, and other electronic signals and other means of communication;

(6) Roads, trails, highways, railroads, canals, tunnels, tramways, airways, livestock driveways, or other means of transportation except where such facilities are constructed and maintained in connection with commercial recreation facilities;

(7) Such other necessary transportation or other systems or facilities which are in the public interest and which require rights-of-way over, upon, under, or through National Forest System lands; and

(8) Any Federal department or agency for pipeline purposes for the transportation of oil, natural gas, synthetic liquid or gaseous fuels, or any product produced therefrom;

(m) Permits under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, 93 Stat. 721 (16 U.S.C. 470aa).

(n) Operation of nordic and alpine ski areas and facilities for up to 40 years and encompassing such acreage as the Forest Officer determines sufficient and appropriate as authorized by the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986 (16 U.S.C. 497b).

[45 FR 38327, June 6, 1980; 45 FR 43167, June 26, 1980, as amended at 49 FR 25449, June 21, 1984; 53 FR 16550, May 10, 1988; 54 FR 22594, May 25, 1989; 70 FR 70498, Nov. 22, 2005]

### § 251.54 Proposal and application requirements and procedures.

(a) *Early notice.* When an individual or entity proposes to occupy and use National Forest System lands, the proponent is required to contact the Forest Service office(s) responsible for the management of the affected land as early as possible in advance of the proposed use.

(b) *Filing proposals.* Proposals for special uses must be filed in writing with or presented orally to the District Ranger or Forest Supervisor having jurisdiction over the affected land (§200.2 of this chapter), except as follows:

(1) Proposals for projects on lands under the jurisdiction of two or more administrative units of the Forest Service may be filed at the most convenient Forest Service office having jurisdiction over part of the project, and the proponent will be notified where to direct subsequent communications;

(2) Proposals for cost-share and other road easements to be issued under §251.53(j) must be filed in accordance with regulations in §212.10(c) and (d) of this chapter; and

(3) Proposals for oil and gas pipeline rights-of-way crossing Federal lands under the jurisdiction of two or more Federal agencies must be filed with the State Office, Bureau of Land Management, pursuant to regulations at 43 CFR part 2882.

(c) *Rights of proponents.* A proposal to obtain a special use authorization does not grant any right or privilege to use National Forest System lands. Rights or privileges to occupy and use National Forest System lands under this subpart are conveyed only through issuance of a special use authorization.

(d) *Proposal content—(1) Proponent identification.* Any proponent for a special use authorization must provide the proponent's name and mailing address, and, if the proponent is not an individual, the name and address of the proponent's agent who is authorized to receive notice of actions pertaining to the proposal.

(2) *Required information—(i) Non-commercial group uses.* Paragraphs (d)(3) through (d)(5) of this section do not apply to proposals for noncommercial group uses. A proponent for non-commercial group uses shall provide the following:

(A) A description of the proposed activity;

(B) The location and a description of the National Forest System lands and facilities the proponent would like to use;

(C) The estimated number of participants and spectators;

(D) The starting and ending time and date of the proposed activity; and

(E) The name of the person or persons 21 years of age or older who will sign a special use authorization on behalf of the proponent.

(ii) *All other special uses.* At a minimum, proposals for special uses other than noncommercial group uses must include the information contained in paragraphs (d)(3) through (d)(5) of this section. In addition, if requested by an authorized officer, a proponent in one of the following categories must furnish the information specified for that category:

(A) If the proponent is a State or local government agency: a copy of the authorization under which the proposal is made;

(B) If the proponent is a public corporation: the statute or other authority under which it was organized;

(C) If the proponent is a Federal Government agency: the title of the agency official delegated the authority to file the proposal;

(D) If the proponent is a private corporation:

(1) Evidence of incorporation and its current good standing;

(2) If reasonably obtainable by the proponent, the name and address of each shareholder owning three percent or more of the shares, together with the number and percentage of any class of voting shares of the entity which such shareholder is authorized to vote;

(3) The name and address of each affiliate of the entity;

(4) In the case of an affiliate which is controlled by the entity, the number of shares and the percentage of any class of voting stock of the affiliate that the entity owns either directly or indirectly; or

(5) In the case of an affiliate which controls that entity, the number of shares and the percentage of any class of voting stock of that entity owned, either directly or indirectly by the affiliate; or

(E) If the proponent is a partnership, association, or other unincorporated entity: a certified copy of the partnership agreement or other similar document, if any, creating the entity, or a certificate of good standing under the laws of the State.

(3) *Technical and financial capability.* The proponent is required to provide sufficient evidence to satisfy the authorized officer that the proponent has, or prior to commencement of construction will have, the technical and finan-

cial capability to construct, operate, maintain, and terminate the project for which an authorization is requested, and the proponent is otherwise acceptable.

(4) *Project description.* Except for requests for planning permits for a major development, a proponent must provide a project description, including maps and appropriate resource information, in sufficient detail to enable the authorized officer to determine the feasibility of a proposed project or activity, any benefits to be provided to the public, the safety of the proposal, the lands to be occupied or used, the terms and conditions to be included, and the proposal's compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and orders.

(5) *Additional information.* The authorized officer may require any other information and data necessary to determine feasibility of a project or activity proposed; compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and orders; compliance with requirements for associated clearances, certificates, permits, or licenses; and suitable terms and conditions to be included in the authorization. The authorized officer shall make requests for any additional information in writing.

(e) *Pre-application actions—(1) Initial screening.* Upon receipt of a request for any proposed use other than for non-commercial group use, the authorized officer shall screen the proposal to ensure that the use meets the following minimum requirements applicable to all special uses:

(i) The proposed use is consistent with the laws, regulations, orders, and policies establishing or governing National Forest System lands, with other applicable Federal law, and with applicable State and local health and sanitation laws.

(ii) The proposed use is consistent or can be made consistent with standards and guidelines in the applicable forest land and resource management plan prepared under the National Forest Management Act and 36 CFR part 219.

(iii) The proposed use will not pose a serious or substantial risk to public health or safety.

(iv) The proposed use will not create an exclusive or perpetual right of use or occupancy.

(v) The proposed use will not unreasonably conflict or interfere with administrative use by the Forest Service, other scheduled or authorized existing uses of the National Forest System, or use of adjacent non-National Forest System lands.

(vi) The proponent does not have any delinquent debt owed to the Forest Service under terms and conditions of a prior or existing authorization, unless such debt results from a decision on an administrative appeal or from a fee review and the proponent is current with the payment schedule.

(vii) The proposed use does not involve gambling or providing of sexually oriented commercial services, even if permitted under State law.

(viii) The proposed use does not involve military or paramilitary training or exercises by private organizations or individuals, unless such training or exercises are federally funded.

(ix) The proposed use does not involve disposal of solid waste or disposal of radioactive or other hazardous substances.

(2) *Results of initial screening.* Any proposed use other than a noncommercial group use that does not meet all of the minimum requirements of paragraphs (e)(1)(i)-(ix) of this section shall not receive further evaluation and processing. In such event, the authorized officer shall advise the proponent that the use does not meet the minimum requirements. If the proposal was submitted orally, the authorized officer may respond orally. If the proposal was made in writing, the authorized officer shall notify the proponent in writing that the proposed use does not meet the minimum requirements and shall simultaneously return the request.

(3) *Guidance and information to proponents.* For proposals for noncommercial group use as well as for those proposals that meet the minimum requirements of paragraphs (e)(1)(i)-(ix), the authorized officer, to the extent practicable, shall provide the proponent guidance and information on the following:

(i) Possible land use conflicts as identified by review of forest land and resource management plans, landowner-

ship records, and other readily available sources;

(ii) Proposal and application procedures and probable time requirements;

(iii) Proponent qualifications;

(iv) Applicable fees, charges, bonding, and/or security requirements;

(v) Necessary associated clearances, permits, and licenses;

(vi) Environmental and management considerations;

(vii) Special conditions; and

(viii) identification of on-the-ground investigations which will require temporary use permits.

(4) *Confidentiality.* If requested by the proponent, the authorized officer, or other Forest Service official, to the extent reasonable and authorized by law, shall hold confidential any project and program information revealed during pre-application contacts.

(5) *Second-level screening of proposed uses.* A proposal which passes the initial screening set forth in paragraph (e)(1) and for which the proponent has submitted information as required in paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this section, proceeds to second-level screening and consideration. In order to complete this screening and consideration, the authorized officer may request such additional information as necessary to obtain a full description of the proposed use and its effects. An authorized officer shall reject any proposal, including a proposal for commercial group uses, if, upon further consideration, the officer determines that:

(i) The proposed use would be inconsistent or incompatible with the purposes for which the lands are managed, or with other uses; or

(ii) The proposed use would not be in the public interest; or

(iii) The proponent is not qualified; or

(iv) The proponent does not or cannot demonstrate technical or economic feasibility of the proposed use or the financial or technical capability to undertake the use and to fully comply with the terms and conditions of the authorization; or

(v) There is no person or entity authorized to sign a special use authorization and/or there is no person or entity willing to accept responsibility for



adherence to the terms and conditions of the authorization.

(6) *NEPA compliance for second-level screening process.* A request for a special use authorization that does not meet the criteria established in paragraphs (e)(5)(i) through (e)(5)(v) of this section does not constitute an agency proposal as defined in 40 CFR 1508.23 and, therefore, does not require environmental analysis and documentation.

(f) *Special requirements for certain proposals—(1) Oil and gas pipeline rights-of-way.* These proposals must include the citizenship of the proponent(s) and disclose the identity of its participants as follows:

(i) Citizens of another country, the laws, customs, or regulations of which deny similar or like privileges to citizens or corporations of the United States, shall not own an appreciable interest in any oil and gas pipeline right-of-way or associated permit; and

(ii) The authorized officer shall notify the House Committee on Resources and the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources promptly upon receipt of a proposal for a right-of-way for a pipeline twenty-four (24) inches or more in diameter, and no right-of-way for such a pipeline shall be granted until sixty (60) days (not counting days on which the House of Representatives or the Senate has adjourned for more than three (3) days) after a notice of intention to grant the right-of-way, together with the authorized officer's detailed findings as to terms and conditions the officer proposes to impose, has been submitted to such committees, unless each committee by resolution waives the waiting period.

(2) *Electric power transmission lines 66 KV or over.* Any proposal for authority to construct and maintain a facility for the generation of electric power and energy or for the transmission or distribution of electric power and energy of 66 kilovolts or higher under this section must be referred to the Secretary of Energy for consultation.

(3) *Major development.* Proponents of a major development may submit a request for a planning permit of up to 10 years in duration. Requests for a planning permit must include the information contained in paragraphs (d)(1) through (d)(3) of this section. Upon

completion of a master development plan developed under a planning permit, proponents may then submit a request for a long-term authorization to construct and operate the development. At a minimum, a request for a long-term permit for a major development must include the information contained in paragraphs (d)(1) and (d)(2)(ii) through (d)(5) of this section. Issuance of a planning permit does not prejudice approval or denial of a subsequent request for a special use permit for the development.

(g) *Application processing and response—(1) Acceptance of applications.* Except for proposals for noncommercial group uses, if a request does not meet the criteria of both screening processes or is subsequently denied, the proponent must be notified with a written explanation of the rejection or denial and any written proposal returned to the proponent. If a request for a proposed use meets the criteria of both the initial and second-level screening processes as described in paragraph (e) of this section, the authorized officer shall notify the proponent that the agency is prepared to accept a written formal application for a special use authorization and shall, as appropriate or necessary, provide the proponent guidance and information of the type described in paragraphs (e)(3)(i) through (e)(3)(viii) of this section.

(2) *Processing applications.* (i) Upon acceptance of an application for a special use authorization other than a planning permit, the authorized officer shall evaluate the proposed use for the requested site, including effects on the environment. The authorized officer may request such additional information as necessary to obtain a full description of the proposed use and its effects.

(ii) Federal, State, and local government agencies and the public shall receive adequate notice and an opportunity to comment upon a special use proposal accepted as a formal application in accordance with Forest Service NEPA procedures.

(iii) The authorized officer shall give due deference to the findings of another agency such as a Public Utility Commission, the Federal Regulatory Energy Commission, or the Interstate

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Commerce Commission in lieu of another detailed finding. If this information is already on file with the Forest Service, it need not be refiled, if reference is made to the previous filing date, place, and case number.

(iv) Applications for noncommercial group uses must be received at least 72 hours in advance of the proposed activity. Applications for noncommercial group uses shall be processed in order of receipt, and the use of a particular area shall be allocated in order of receipt of fully executed applications, subject to any relevant limitations set forth in this section.

(v) For applications for planning permits, including those issued for a major development as described in paragraph (f)(3) of this section, the authorized officer shall assess only the applicant's financial and technical qualifications and determine compliance with other applicable laws, regulations, and orders. Planning permits may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement pursuant to Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 (36 CFR 200.4).

(3) *Response to applications for noncommercial group uses.* (i) All applications for noncommercial group uses shall be deemed granted and an authorization shall be issued for those uses pursuant to the determination as set forth below, unless applications are denied within 48 hours of receipt. Where an application for a noncommercial group use has been granted or is deemed to have been granted and an authorization has been issued under this paragraph, an authorized officer may revoke that authorization only as provided under § 251.60(a)(1)(i).

(ii) An authorized officer shall grant an application for a special use authorization for a noncommercial group use upon a determination that:

(A) Authorization of the proposed activity is not prohibited by the rules at 36 CFR part 261, subpart B, or by Federal, State, or local law unrelated to the content of expressive activity;

(B) Authorization of the proposed activity is consistent or can be made consistent with the standards and guidelines in the applicable forest land and resource management plan required

under the National Forest Management Act and 36 CFR part 219;

(C) The proposed activity does not materially impact the characteristics or functions of the environmentally sensitive resources or lands identified in Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, chapter 30;

(D) The proposed activity will not delay, halt, or prevent administrative use of an area by the Forest Service or other scheduled or existing uses or activities on National Forest System lands, including but not limited to uses and activities authorized under parts 222, 223, 228, and 251 of this chapter;

(E) The proposed activity does not violate State and local public health laws and regulations as applied to the proposed site. Issues addressed by State and local public health laws and regulations as applied to the proposed site include but are not limited to:

(1) The sufficiency of sanitation facilities;

(2) The sufficiency of waste-disposal facilities;

(3) The availability of sufficient potable drinking water;

(4) The risk of disease from the physical characteristics of the proposed site or natural conditions associated with the proposed site; and

(5) The risk of contamination of the water supply;

(F) The proposed activity will not pose a substantial danger to public safety. Considerations of public safety must not include concerns about possible reaction to the users' identity or beliefs from non-members of the group that is seeking an authorization and shall be limited to the following:

(1) The potential for physical injury to other forest users from the proposed activity;

(2) The potential for physical injury to users from the physical characteristics of the proposed site or natural conditions associated with the proposed site;

(3) The potential for physical injury to users from scheduled or existing uses or activities on National Forest System lands; and

(4) The adequacy of ingress and egress in case of an emergency;

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(G) The proposed activity does not involve military or paramilitary training or exercises by private organizations or individuals, unless such training or exercises are federally funded; and

(H) A person or persons 21 years of age or older have been designated to sign and do sign a special use authorization on behalf of the applicant.

(iii) If an authorized officer denies an application because it does not meet the criteria in paragraphs (g)(3)(ii)(A) through (g)(3)(ii)(H) of this section, the authorized officer shall notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for the denial. If an alternative time, place, or manner will allow the applicant to meet the eight evaluation criteria, an authorized officer shall offer that alternative. If an application is denied solely under paragraph (g)(3)(ii)(C) of this section and all alternatives suggested are unacceptable to the applicant, the authorized officer shall offer to have completed the requisite environmental and other analyses for the requested site. A decision to grant or deny the application for which an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement is prepared is subject to the notice and appeal procedures at 36 CFR part 215 and shall be made within 48 hours after the decision becomes final under that appeal process. A denial of an application under paragraphs (g)(3)(ii)(A) through (g)(3)(ii)(H) of this section constitutes final agency action and is immediately subject to judicial review.

(4) *Response to all other applications.* Based on evaluation of the information provided by the applicant and other relevant information such as environmental findings, the authorized officer shall decide whether to approve the proposed use, approve the proposed use with modifications, or deny the proposed use. A group of applications for similar uses having minor environmental impacts may be evaluated with one analysis and approved in one decision.

(5) *Authorization of a special use.* Upon a decision to approve a special use or a group of similar special uses, the authorized officer may issue one or more

special use authorizations as defined in §251.51 of this subpart.

[63 FR 65964, Nov. 30, 1998]

### § 251.55 Nature of interest.

(a) A holder is authorized only to occupy such land and structures and conduct such activities as is specified in the special use authorization. The holder may sublet the use and occupancy of the premises and improvements authorized only with the prior written approval of the authorized officer, but the holder shall continue to be responsible for compliance with all conditions of the special use authorization.

(b) All rights not expressly granted are retained by the United States, including but not limited to (1) continuing rights of access to all National Forest System land (including the subsurface and air space); (2) a continuing right of physical entry to any part of the authorized facilities for inspection, monitoring, or for any other purposes or reason consistent with any right or obligation of the United States under any law or regulation; and (3) the right to require common use of the land or to authorize the use by others in any way not inconsistent with a holder's existing rights and privileges after consultation with all parties and agencies involved. When costs can be feasibly allocated and have not been amortized, a new holder may be required to compensate existing holders for an equitable proportion of the original costs or other expense associated with the common use.

(c) Special use authorizations are subject to all outstanding valid rights.

(d) Each special use authorization will specify the lands to be used or occupied which shall be limited to that which the authorized officer determines: (1) Will be occupied by the facilities authorized; (2) to be necessary for the construction, operation, maintenance, and full utilization of the authorized facilities or the conduct of authorized activities; and, (3) to be necessary to protect the public health and safety and the environment.

(e) The holder will secure permission under applicable law, and pay in advance, the value as determined by the authorized officer for any mineral and

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vegetative materials (including timber) to be cut, removed, used, or destroyed by the holder from the authorized use area or other National Forest System land. The authorized officer may, in lieu of requiring an advance payment, require the holder to stockpile or stack the material at designated locations for later disposal by the United States.

### § 251.56 Terms and conditions.

(a) *General.* (1) Each special use authorization must contain:

(i) Terms and conditions which will:

(A) Carry out the purposes of applicable statutes and rules and regulations issued thereunder;

(B) Minimize damage to scenic and esthetic values and fish and wildlife habitat and otherwise protect the environment;

(C) Require compliance with applicable air and water quality standards established by or pursuant to applicable Federal or State law; and

(D) Require compliance with State standards for public health and safety, environmental protection, and siting, construction, operation, and maintenance if those standards are more stringent than applicable Federal standards.

(ii) Such terms and conditions as the authorized officer deems necessary to:

(A) Protect Federal property and economic interests;

(B) Manage efficiently the lands subject to the use and adjacent thereto;

(C) Protect other lawful users of the lands adjacent to or occupied by such use;

(D) Protect lives and property;

(E) Protect the interests of individuals living in the general area of the use who rely on the fish, wildlife, and other biotic resources of the area for subsistence purposes;

(F) Require siting to cause the least damage to the environment, taking into consideration feasibility and other relevant factors; and

(G) Otherwise protect the public interest.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (a)(1)(ii)(G): The Department is making explicit its preexisting understanding of § 251.56(a)(1)(ii)(G) of this subpart in the context of authorizing non-commercial group uses of National Forest System lands. Section 251.56(a)(1)(ii)(G) pro-

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vides that each special use authorization shall contain such terms and conditions as the authorized officer deems necessary to otherwise protect the public interest. In the context of noncommercial group uses, the Forest Service interprets the term “public interest” found in § 251.56(a)(1)(ii)(G) to refer to the three public interests identified by the Forest Service on August 30, 1995. These public interests include the protection of resources and improvements on National Forest System lands, the allocation of space among potential or existing uses and activities, and public health and safety concerns. Under this construction, § 251.56(a)(1)(ii)(G) allows the Forest Service to impose terms and conditions that are not specifically addressed in § 251.56(a)(1)(ii)(A)–(F) but only those that further these public interests. The Forest Service shall implement and enforce § 251.56(a)(1)(ii)(G) in accordance with this interpretation.

(2) Authorizations for use of National Forest System lands may be conditioned to require State, county, or other Federal agency licenses, permits, certificates, or other approval documents, such as a Federal Communication Commission license, a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license, a State water right, or a county building permit.

(b) *Duration and renewability*—(1) *Requirements.* If appropriate, each special use authorization will specify its duration and renewability. The duration shall be no longer than the authorized officer determines to be necessary to accomplish the purpose of the authorization and to be reasonable in light of all circumstances concerning the use, including

(i) Resource management direction contained in land management and other plans;

(ii) Public benefits provided;

(iii) Cost and life expectancy of the authorized facilities;

(iv) Financial arrangements for the project; and

(v) The life expectancy of associated facilities, licenses, etc. Except for special use authorizations issued under the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986, authorizations exceeding 30 years shall provide for revision of terms and conditions at specified intervals to reflect changing times and conditions.

(2) *Ski area permits.* (i) For authorizations issued under the National Forest

Ski Area Permit Act of 1986, the authorized officer normally shall issue a ski area authorization for 40 years, if, upon consideration of information submitted by the applicant, the authorized officer finds that the ski area development meets the following standards:

(A) In the case of an existing permit holder, existing on-site investment is of sufficient magnitude to justify authorization for 40 years;

(B) In the case of an existing permit holder, existing investment of capital is in ski-related facilities;

(C) Planned investment capital is directly related to development of ski area facilities and is not for financing regular, ongoing operation and maintenance costs;

(D) Ski facilities requiring long-term investment are, or will be, located predominantly on land authorized under a permit;

(E) The number and magnitude of planned facilities, as detailed in a Master Development Plan, clearly require long-term financing and/or operation;

(F) The United States is not the owner of the principal facilities within the authorized ski area.

(ii) A term of less than 40 years shall be authorized for a ski area when the applicant requests a shorter term or when, in the authorized officer's discretion:

(A) Analysis of the information submitted by the applicant indicates that a shorter term is sufficient for financing of the ski area;

(B) The ski area development, whether existing or proposed, does not meet the standards of paragraph (2)(i)(A) through (F) of this section; or

(C) A 40-year authorization would be inconsistent with the approved forest land and resource management plan governing the area (36 CFR part 219).

(c) *Preconstruction approvals.* Forest Service approval of location, design and plans (or standards, if appropriate) of all developments within the authorized area will be required prior to construction.

(d) *Liability.* Holders shall pay the United States for all injury, loss, or damage, including fire suppression costs, in accordance with existing Federal and State laws.

(1) Holders shall also indemnify the United States for any and all injury, loss, or damage, including fire suppression costs, the United States may suffer as a result of claims, demands, losses, or judgments caused by the holder's use or occupancy.

(2) Holders of special use authorizations for high risk use and occupancy, such as, but not limited to, powerlines and oil and gas pipelines, shall be held liable for all injury, loss, or damage, including fire suppression costs, caused by the holder's use or occupancy, without regard to the holder's negligence, provided that maximum liability shall be specified in the special use authorization as determined by a risk assessment, prepared in accordance with established agency procedures, but shall not exceed \$1,000,000 for any one occurrence. Liability for injury, loss, or damage, including fire suppression costs, in excess of the specified maximum shall be determined by the laws governing ordinary negligence of the jurisdiction in which the damage or injury occurred.

(e) *Bonding.* An authorized officer may require the holder of a special use authorization for other than a non-commercial group use to furnish a bond or other security to secure all or any of the obligations imposed by the terms of the authorization or by any applicable law, regulation or order.

(f) *Special terms and conditions—(1) Public service enterprises.* Special use permits authorizing the operation of public service enterprises shall require that the permittee charge reasonable rates and furnish such services as may be necessary in the public interest, except where such rates and services are regulated by Federal, State or municipal agencies having jurisdiction.

(2) *Common carriers.* Oil and gas pipelines and related facilities authorized under section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, 41 Stat. 449, as amended (30 U.S.C. 185), shall be constructed, operated and maintained as common carriers. The owners or operators of pipelines shall accept, convey, transport, or purchase without discrimination all oil or gas delivered to the pipeline without regard to whether such oil or gas was produced on Federal or nonfederal lands. In the case of oil or gas produced

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from Federal lands or from the resources on the Federal lands in the vicinity of the pipeline, the Secretary may, after a full hearing with due notice thereof to interested parties and a proper finding of facts, determine the proportionate amounts to be accepted, conveyed, transported, or purchased. The common carrier provisions of this section shall not apply to any natural gas pipeline operated (i) by any person subject to regulation under the Natural Gas Act, 52 Stat. 821, as amended, (15 U.S.C. 717) or (ii) by any public utility subject to regulation by a State or municipal regulatory agency having jurisdiction to regulate the rates and charges for the sale of natural gas to consumers within the State or municipality. Where natural gas not subject to State regulatory or conservation laws governing its purchase by pipeline companies is offered for sale, each pipeline company shall purchase, without discrimination, any such natural gas produced in the vicinity of the pipeline.

(g) *Conversion of Ski Area Authorizations.* (1) The Forest Service shall request that all existing permit holders convert existing authorizations for ski areas to a new authorization issued pursuant to the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act.

(2) Any current holder of a ski area permit who wishes to convert an existing permit to one issued pursuant to the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act must submit a written request for the new authorization to the authorized officer.

(3) With the consent of the holder, the authorized officer shall convert the authorization if:

(i) The holder is in compliance with the existing authorization;

(ii) All fees currently due under the existing authorization are paid in full; and

(iii) Any proposed modifications of terms and conditions of the existing authorization included in a request for conversion meet the standards of paragraphs (2)(i) (A) through (F) of this section and the relevant requirements of this subpart.

(4) A holder retains the right to decline a new authorization offered pursuant to this paragraph and to con-

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tinue to operate under the terms of the existing permit. However, pursuant to the rules at § 251.61 of this subpart, major modifications of existing permits shall require conversion to a permit issued under the authority of the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act, unless the holder provides compelling justification for retaining the existing permit.

[45 FR 38327, June 6, 1980, as amended at 49 FR 46895, Nov. 29, 1984; 54 FR 22594, May 25, 1989; 60 FR 45294, Aug. 30, 1995; 63 FR 65967, Nov. 30, 1998; 64 FR 48960, Sept. 9, 1999]

### § 251.57 Rental fees.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this part or when specifically authorized by the Secretary of Agriculture, special use authorizations shall require the payment in advance of an annual rental fee as determined by the authorized officer.

(1) The fee shall be based on the fair market value of the rights and privileges authorized, as determined by appraisal or other sound business management principles.

(2) Where annual fees of one hundred dollars (\$100) or less are assessed, the authorized officer may require either annual payment or a payment covering more than one year at a time. If the annual fee is greater than one hundred dollars (\$100), holders who are private individuals (that is, acting in an individual capacity), as opposed to those who are commercial, other corporate, or business or government entities, may, at their option, elect to make either annual payments or payments covering more than one year.

(3) A base cabin user fee for a recreation residence use shall be 5 percent of the market value of the recreation residence lot, established by an appraisal conducted in accordance with the Act of October 11, 2000 (16 U.S.C. 6201-13).

(b) All or part of the fee may be waived by the authorized officer, when equitable and in the public interest, for the use and occupancy of National Forest System land in the following circumstances:

(1) The holder is a State or local government or any agency or instrumentality thereof, excluding municipal

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utilities and cooperatives whose principal source of revenue from the authorized use is customer charges; or

(2) The holder is a nonprofit association or nonprofit corporation, which is not controlled or owned by profit-making corporations or business enterprises, and which is engaged in public or semi-public activity to further public health, safety, or welfare, except that free use will not be authorized when funds derived by the holder through the authorization are used to increase the value of the authorized improvements owned by the holder, or are used to support other activities of the holder; or

(3) The holder provides without charge, or at reduced charge, a valuable benefit to the public or to the programs of the Secretary; or

(4) When the rental fee is included in the fees for an authorized use or occupancy for which the United States is already receiving compensation; or

(5) When a right-of-way is authorized in reciprocation for a right-of-way conveyed to the United States; or

(6) For rights-of-way involving cost-share roads or reciprocal right-of-way agreements.

(c) No rental fee will be charged when the holder is the Federal government.

(d) No fee shall be charged when the authorization is for a noncommercial group use as defined in §251.51 of this subpart.

(e) Special use authorizations issued under §251.53(g) of this part may require as all or a part of the consideration the reconditioning and maintenance of the government-owned or controlled structures, improvements, and land to a satisfactory standard. The total consideration will be based upon the fair market value of the rights and privileges authorized.

(f) Special use authorizations involving government-owned or controlled buildings, structures, or other improvements which require caretakers' services, or the furnishing of special services such as water, electric lights, and clean-up, may require the payment of an additional fee or charge to cover the cost of such services.

(g) Except where specified otherwise by terms of a special use authorization, rental fees may be initiated or adjusted

whenever necessary: (1) As a result of fee review, reappraisal; or (2) upon a change in the holder's qualifications under paragraph (b) of this section; and (3) notice is given prior to initiating or adjusting rental fees.

(h) Each ski area authorization issued under the authority of the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act shall include a clause that provides that the Forest Service may adjust and calculate future rental fees to reflect Agency revisions to the existing system for determining fees based on fair market value or to comply with any new fee system for determining fees based on fair market value that may be adopted after issuance of the authorization.

(i) Each permit or term permit for a recreation residence use shall include a clause stating that the Forest Service shall recalculate the base cabin user fee at least every 10 years and shall use an appraisal to recalculate that fee as provided in paragraph (a)(3) of this section.

[45 FR 38327, June 6, 1980, as amended at 51 FR 16683, May 6, 1986; 54 FR 22594, May 25, 1989; 60 FR 45294, Aug. 30, 1995; 63 FR 65967, Nov. 30, 1998; 71 FR 16621, Apr. 3, 2006]

### § 251.58 Cost recovery.

(a) *Assessment of fees to recover agency processing and monitoring costs.* The Forest Service shall assess fees to recover the agency's processing costs for special use applications and monitoring costs for special use authorizations. Applicants and holders shall submit sufficient information for the authorized officer to estimate the number of hours required to process their applications or monitor their authorizations. Cost recovery fees are separate from any fees charged for the use and occupancy of National Forest System lands.

(b) *Special use applications and authorizations subject to cost recovery requirements.* Except as exempted in paragraphs (g)(1) through (g)(4) of this section, the cost recovery requirements of this section apply in the following situations to the processing of special use applications and monitoring of special use authorizations issued pursuant to this subpart:

(1) *Applications for use and occupancy that require a new special use authorization.* Fees for processing an application for a new special use authorization shall apply to any application formally accepted by the agency on or after March 23, 2006 and to any application formally accepted by the agency before March 23, 2006, which the agency has not commenced processing. Proposals accepted as applications which the agency has commenced processing prior to March 23, 2006 shall not be subject to processing fees. The cost recovery provisions of this section shall not apply to or supersede written agreements providing for recovery of processing costs executed by the agency and applicants prior to March 23, 2006.

(2) *Changes to existing authorizations.* Processing fees apply to proposals that require an application to amend or formally approve specific activities or facilities as identified in an existing authorization, operating plan, or master development plan. Processing fees also apply to agency actions to amend a special use authorization.

(3) *Agency actions to issue a special use authorization and applications for issuance of a new special use authorization due to termination of an existing authorization, including termination caused by expiration, a change in ownership or control of the authorized facilities, or a change in ownership or control of the holder of the authorization.* Upon termination of an existing authorization, a holder shall be subject to a processing fee for issuance of a new authorization, even if the holder's existing authorization does not require submission of an application for a new authorization.

(4) *Monitoring of authorizations issued or amended on or after March 23, 2006.*

(c) *Processing fee requirements.* A processing fee is required for each application for or agency action to issue a special use authorization as identified in paragraphs (b)(1) through (b)(3) of this section. Processing fees do not include costs incurred by the applicant in providing information, data, and documentation necessary for the authorized officer to make a decision on the proposed use or occupancy pursuant to the provisions at §251.54.

(1) *Basis for processing fees.* The processing fee categories 1 through 6 set out in paragraphs (c)(2)(i) through (c)(2)(vi) of this section are based upon the costs that the Forest Service incurs in reviewing the application, conducting environmental analyses of the effects of the proposed use, reviewing any applicant-generated environmental documents and studies, conducting site visits, evaluating an applicant's technical and financial qualifications, making a decision on whether to issue the authorization, and preparing documentation of analyses, decisions, and authorizations for each application. The processing fee for an application shall be based only on costs necessary for processing that application. "Necessary for" means that but for the application, the costs would not have been incurred and that the costs cover only those activities without which the application cannot be processed. The processing fee shall not include costs for studies for programmatic planning or analysis or other agency management objectives, unless they are necessary for the application being processed. For example, the processing fee shall not include costs for capacity studies, use allocation decisions, corridor or communications site planning, and biological studies that address species diversity, unless they are necessary for the application. Proportional costs for analyses, such as capacity studies, that are necessary for an application may be included in the processing fee for that application. The costs incurred for processing an application, and thus the processing fee, depend on the complexity of the project; the amount of information that is necessary for the authorized officer's decision in response to the proposed use and occupancy; and the degree to which the applicant can provide this information to the agency. Processing work conducted by the applicant or a third party contracted by the applicant minimizes the costs the Forest Service will incur to process the application, and thus reduces the processing fee. The total processing time is the total time estimated for all Forest Service personnel involved in processing an application and is estimated case by case to determine the fee category.



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(i) *Processing fee determinations.* The applicable fee rate for processing applications in minor categories 1 through 4 (paragraphs (c)(2)(i) through (c)(2)(iv) of this section) shall be assessed from a schedule. The processing fee for applications in category 5, which may be either minor or major, shall be established in the master agreement (paragraph (c)(2)(v) of this section). For major category 5 (paragraph (c)(2)(v) of this section) and category 6 (paragraph (c)(2)(vi) of this section) cases, the authorized officer shall estimate the agency's full actual processing costs. The estimated processing costs for category 5 and category 6 cases shall be reconciled as provided in paragraphs (c)(5)(ii) and (iii) and (c)(6)(ii) and (iii) of this section.

(ii) *Reduction in processing fees for certain category 6 applications.* For category 6 applications submitted under authorities other than the Mineral Leasing Act, the applicant:

(A) May request a reduction of the processing fee based upon the applicant's written analysis of actual costs, the monetary value of the rights and privileges sought, that portion of the costs incurred for the benefit of the general public interest, the public service provided, the efficiency of the agency processing involved, and other factors relevant to determining the reasonableness of the costs. The agency will determine whether the estimate of full actual costs should be reduced based upon this analysis and will notify the applicant in writing of this determination; or

(B) May agree in writing to waive payment of reasonable costs and pay the actual costs incurred in processing the application.

(2) *Processing fee categories.* No fee is charged for applications taking 1 hour or less for the Forest Service to process. Applications requiring more than 1 hour for the agency to process are covered by the fee categories 1 through 6 set out in the following paragraphs i through vi.

(i) *Category 1: Minimal Impact: More than 1 hour and up to and including 8 hours.* The total estimated time in this minor category is more than 1 hour and up to and including 8 hours for

Forest Service personnel to process an application.

(ii) *Category 2: More than 8 and up to and including 24 hours.* The total estimated time in this minor category is more than 8 and up to and including 24 hours for Forest Service personnel to process an application.

(iii) *Category 3: More than 24 and up to and including 36 hours.* The total estimated time in this minor category is more than 24 and up to and including 36 hours for Forest Service personnel to process an application.

(iv) *Category 4: More than 36 and up to and including 50 hours.* The total estimated time in this minor category is more than 36 and up to and including 50 hours for Forest Service personnel to process an application.

(v) *Category 5: Master agreements.* The Forest Service and the applicant may enter into master agreements for the agency to recover processing costs associated with a particular application, a group of applications, or similar applications for a specified geographic area. This category is minor if 50 hours or less are needed for Forest Service personnel to process an application and major if more than 50 hours are needed. In signing a master agreement for a major category application submitted under authorities other than the Mineral Leasing Act, an applicant waives the right to request a reduction of the processing fee based upon the reasonableness factors enumerated in paragraph (c)(1)(ii)(A) of this section. A master agreement shall at a minimum include:

(A) The fee category or estimated processing costs;

(B) A description of the method for periodic billing, payment, and auditing;

(C) A description of the geographic area covered by the agreement;

(D) A work plan and provisions for updating the work plan;

(E) Provisions for reconciling differences between estimated and final processing costs; and

(F) Provisions for terminating the agreement.

(vi) *Category 6: More than 50 hours.* In this major category more than 50 hours are needed for Forest Service personnel

to process an application. The authorized officer shall determine the issues to be addressed and shall develop preliminary work and financial plans for estimating recoverable costs.

(3) *Multiple applications other than those covered by master agreements (category 5).* (i) *Unsolicited applications where there is no competitive interest.* Processing costs that are incurred in processing more than one of these applications (such as the cost of environmental analysis or printing an environmental impact statement that relates to all of the applications) must be paid in equal shares or on a prorated basis, as deemed appropriate by the authorized officer, by each applicant, including applicants for recreation special uses that are otherwise exempt under paragraph (g)(3) of this section when the Forest Service requires more than 50 hours in the aggregate to process the applications submitted in response to the prospectus.

(ii) *Unsolicited proposals where competitive interest exists.* When there is one or more unsolicited proposals and the authorized officer determines that competitive interest exists, the agency shall issue a prospectus. All proposals accepted pursuant to that solicitation shall be processed as applications. The applicants are responsible for the costs of environmental analyses that are necessary for their applications and that are conducted prior to issuance of the prospectus. Processing fees for these cases shall be determined pursuant to the procedures for establishing a category 6 processing fee and shall include costs such as those incurred in printing and mailing the prospectus; having parties other than the Forest Service review and evaluate applications; establishing a case file; recording data; conducting financial reviews; and, for selected applicants, any additional environmental analysis required in connection with their applications. Processing fees shall be paid in equal shares or on a prorated basis, as deemed appropriate by the authorized officer, by all parties who submitted proposals that were processed as applications pursuant to the solicitation, including applicants for recreation special uses that are otherwise exempt under paragraph (g)(3) of this section

when the Forest Service requires more than 50 hours in the aggregate to process the applications submitted in response to the prospectus.

(iii) *Solicited applications.* When the Forest Service solicits applications through the issuance of a prospectus on its own initiative, rather than in response to an unsolicited proposal or proposals, the agency is responsible for the cost of environmental analyses conducted prior to issuance of the prospectus. All proposals accepted pursuant to that solicitation shall be processed as applications. Processing fees for these cases shall be determined pursuant to the procedures for establishing a category 6 processing fee and shall include costs such as those incurred in printing and mailing the prospectus; having parties other than the Forest Service review and evaluate applications; establishing a case file; recording data; conducting financial reviews; and, for selected applicants, any additional environmental analysis required in connection with their applications. Processing fees shall be paid in equal shares or on a prorated basis, as deemed appropriate by the authorized officer, by all parties who submitted proposals that were processed as applications pursuant to the solicitation, including applicants for recreation special uses that are otherwise exempt under paragraph (g)(3) of this section when the Forest Service requires more than 50 hours in the aggregate to process the applications submitted in response to the prospectus.

(4) *Billing and revision of processing fees.* (i) *Billing.* When the Forest Service accepts a special use application, the authorized officer shall provide written notice to the applicant that the application has been formally accepted. The authorized officer shall not bill the applicant a processing fee until the agency is prepared to process the application.

(ii) *Revision of processing fees.* Minor category processing fees shall not be reclassified into a higher minor category once the processing fee category has been determined. However, if the authorized officer discovers previously undisclosed information that necessitates changing a minor category processing fee to a major category

processing fee, the authorized officer shall notify the applicant or holder of the conditions prompting a change in the processing fee category in writing before continuing with processing the application. The applicant or holder may accept the revised processing fee category and pay the difference between the previous and revised processing categories; withdraw the application; revise the project to lower the processing costs; or request review of the disputed fee as provided in paragraphs (e)(1) through (e)(4) of this section.

(5) *Payment of processing fees.* (i) Payment of a processing fee shall be due within 30 days of issuance of a bill for the fee, pursuant to paragraph (c)(4) of this section. The processing fee must be paid before the Forest Service can initiate or, in the case of a revised fee, continue with processing an application. Payment of the processing fee by the applicant does not obligate the Forest Service to authorize the applicant's proposed use and occupancy.

(ii) For category 5 cases, when the estimated processing costs are lower than the final processing costs for applications covered by a master agreement, the applicant shall pay the difference between the estimated and final processing costs.

(iii) For category 6 cases, when the estimated processing fee is lower than the full actual costs of processing an application submitted under the Mineral Leasing Act, or lower than the full reasonable costs (when the applicant has not waived payment of reasonable costs) of processing an application submitted under other authorities, the applicant shall pay the difference between the estimated and full actual or reasonable processing costs.

(6) *Refunds of processing fees.* (i) Processing fees in minor categories 1 through 4 are nonrefundable and shall not be reconciled.

(ii) For category 5 cases, if payment of the processing fee exceeds the agency's final processing costs for the applications covered by a master agreement, the authorized officer either shall refund the excess payment to the applicant or, at the applicant's request, shall credit it towards monitoring fees due.

(iii) For category 6 cases, if payment of the processing fee exceeds the full actual costs of processing an application submitted under the Mineral Leasing Act, or the full reasonable costs (when the applicant has not waived payment of reasonable costs) of processing an application submitted under other authorities, the authorized officer either shall refund the excess payment to the applicant or, at the applicant's request, shall credit it towards monitoring fees due.

(iv) For major category 5 and category 6 applications, an applicant whose application is denied or withdrawn in writing is responsible for costs incurred by the Forest Service in processing the application up to and including the date the agency denies the application or receives written notice of the applicant's withdrawal. When an applicant withdraws a major category 5 or category 6 application, the applicant also is responsible for any costs subsequently incurred by the Forest Service in terminating consideration of the application.

(7) *Customer service standards.* The Forest Service shall endeavor to make a decision on an application that falls into minor processing category 1, 2, 3, or 4, and that is subject to a categorical exclusion pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, within 60 calendar days from the date of receipt of the processing fee. If the application cannot be processed within the 60-day period, then prior to the 30th calendar day of the 60-day period, the authorized officer shall notify the applicant in writing of the reason why the application cannot be processed within the 60-day period and shall provide the applicant with a projected date when the agency plans to complete processing the application. For all other applications, including all applications that require an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement, the authorized officer shall, within 60 calendar days of acceptance of the application, notify the applicant in writing of the anticipated steps that will be needed to process the application. These customer service standards do not apply to applications that are subject to a waiver of or exempt from cost recovery fees under §§ 251.58(f) or (g).

(d) *Monitoring fee requirements.* The monitoring fee for an authorization shall be assessed independently of any fee charged for processing the application for that authorization pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section. Payment of the monitoring fee is due upon issuance of the authorization.

(1) *Basis for monitoring fees.* Monitoring is defined at § 251.51. For monitoring fees in minor categories 1 through 4, authorization holders are assessed fees based upon the estimated time needed for Forest Service monitoring to ensure compliance with the authorization during the construction or reconstruction of temporary or permanent facilities and rehabilitation of the construction or reconstruction site. Major category 5 and category 6 monitoring fees shall be based upon the agency's estimated costs to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the authorization during all phases of its term, including but not limited to monitoring to ensure compliance with the authorization during the construction or reconstruction of temporary or permanent facilities and rehabilitation of the construction or reconstruction site. Monitoring for all categories does not include billings, maintenance of case files, annual performance evaluations, or scheduled inspections to determine compliance generally with the terms and conditions of an authorization.

(i) *Monitoring fee determinations.* The applicable fee rate for monitoring compliance with authorizations in minor categories 1 through 4 (paragraphs (d)(2)(i) through (d)(2)(iv) of this section) shall be assessed from a schedule. The monitoring fee for authorizations in category 5, which may be minor or major, shall be established in the master agreement (paragraph (d)(2)(v) of this section). For major category 5 (paragraph (d)(2)(v) of this section) and category 6 (paragraph (d)(2)(vi) of this section) cases, the authorized officer shall estimate the agency's full actual monitoring costs. The estimated monitoring costs for category 5 and category 6 cases shall be reconciled as provided in paragraphs (d)(3)(ii) and (iii) and (d)(4)(ii) and (iii) of this section.

(ii) *Reductions in monitoring fees for certain category 6 authorizations.* For

category 6 authorizations issued under authorities other than the Mineral Leasing Act, the holder:

(A) May request a reduction of the monitoring fee based upon the holder's written analysis of actual costs, the monetary value of the rights or privileges granted, that portion of the costs incurred for the benefit of the general public interest, the public service provided, the efficiency of the agency monitoring involved, and other factors relevant to determining the reasonableness of the costs. The agency will determine whether the estimate of full actual costs should be reduced based upon this analysis and will notify the holder in writing of this determination; or

(B) May agree in writing to waive payment of reasonable costs and pay the actual costs incurred in monitoring the authorization.

(2) *Monitoring fee categories.* No monitoring fee is charged for authorizations requiring 1 hour or less for the Forest Service to monitor. Authorizations requiring more than 1 hour for the agency to monitor are covered by fee categories 1 through 6 set out in the following paragraphs (d)(2)(i) through (vi) of this section.

(i) *Category 1: Minimal Impact: More than 1 hour and up to and including 8 hours.* This minor category requires more than 1 hour and up to and including 8 hours for Forest Service personnel to monitor compliance with a special use authorization during construction or reconstruction of temporary or permanent facilities and rehabilitation of the construction or reconstruction site.

(ii) *Category 2: More than 8 and up to and including 24 hours.* This minor category requires more than 8 and up to and including 24 hours for Forest Service personnel to monitor compliance with a special use authorization during construction or reconstruction of temporary or permanent facilities and rehabilitation of the construction or reconstruction site.

(iii) *Category 3: More than 24 and up to and including 36 hours.* This minor category requires more than 24 and up to and including 36 hours for Forest Service personnel to monitor compliance with a special use authorization during

construction or reconstruction of temporary or permanent facilities and rehabilitation of the construction or reconstruction site.

(iv) *Category 4: More than 36 and up to and including 50 hours.* This minor category requires more than 36 and up to and including 50 hours for Forest Service personnel to monitor compliance with a special use authorization during construction or reconstruction of temporary or permanent facilities and rehabilitation of the construction or reconstruction site.

(v) *Category 5: Master agreements.* The Forest Service and the holder of an authorization may enter into a master agreement for the agency to recover monitoring costs associated with a particular authorization or by a group of authorizations for a specified geographic area. This category is minor if 50 hours or less are needed for Forest Service personnel to monitor compliance with an authorization and major if more than 50 hours are needed. In signing a master agreement for a major category authorization issued under authorities other than the Mineral Leasing Act, a holder waives the right to request a reduction of the monitoring fee based upon the reasonableness factors enumerated in paragraph (d)(1)(ii)(A) of this section. A master agreement shall at a minimum include:

(A) The fee category or estimated monitoring costs;

(B) A description of the method for periodic billing, payment, and auditing of monitoring fees;

(C) A description of the geographic area covered by the agreement;

(D) A monitoring work plan and provisions for updating the work plan;

(E) Provisions for reconciling differences between estimated and final monitoring costs; and

(F) Provisions for terminating the agreement.

(vi) *Category 6: More than 50 hours.* This major category requires more than 50 hours for Forest Service personnel to monitor compliance with the terms and conditions of the authorization during all phases of its term, including, but not limited to, monitoring compliance with the authorization during the construction or reconstruction of temporary or permanent facilities

and rehabilitation of the construction or reconstruction site.

(3) *Billing and payment of monitoring fees.* (i) The authorized officer shall estimate the monitoring costs and shall notify the holder of the required fee. Monitoring fees in minor categories 1 through 4 must be paid in full before or at the same time the authorization is issued. For authorizations in major category 5 and category 6, the estimated monitoring fees must be paid in full before or at the same time the authorization is issued, unless the authorized officer and the applicant or holder agree in writing to periodic payments.

(ii) For category 5 cases, when the estimated monitoring costs are lower than the final monitoring costs for authorizations covered by a master agreement, the holder shall pay the difference between the estimated and final monitoring costs.

(iii) For category 6 cases, when the estimated monitoring fee is lower than the full actual costs of monitoring an authorization issued under the Mineral Leasing Act, or lower than the full reasonable costs (when the holder has not waived payment of reasonable costs) of monitoring an authorization issued under other authorities, the holder shall pay the difference in the next periodic payment or the authorized officer shall bill the holder for the difference between the estimated and full actual or reasonable monitoring costs. Payment shall be due within 30 days of receipt of the bill.

(4) *Refunds of monitoring fees.* (i) Monitoring fees in minor categories 1 through 4 are nonrefundable and shall not be reconciled.

(ii) For category 5 cases, if payment of the monitoring fee exceeds the agency's final monitoring costs for the authorizations covered by a master agreement, the authorized officer shall either adjust the next periodic payment to reflect the overpayment or refund the excess payment to the holder.

(iii) For category 6 cases, if payment of the monitoring fee exceeds the full actual costs of monitoring an authorization issued under the Mineral Leasing Act, or the full reasonable costs

(when the holder has not waived payment of reasonable costs) of monitoring an authorization issued under other authorities, the authorized officer shall either adjust the next periodic payment to reflect the overpayment or refund the excess payment to the holder.

(e) *Applicant and holder disputes concerning processing or monitoring fee assessments; requests for changes in fee categories or estimated costs.* (1) If an applicant or holder disagrees with the processing or monitoring fee category assigned by the authorized officer for a minor category or, in the case of a major processing or monitoring category, with the estimated dollar amount of the processing or monitoring costs, the applicant or holder may submit a written request before the disputed fee is due for substitution of an alternative fee category or alternative estimated costs to the immediate supervisor of the authorized officer who determined the fee category or estimated costs. The applicant or holder must provide documentation that supports the alternative fee category or estimated costs.

(2) In the case of a disputed processing fee:

(i) If the applicant pays the full disputed processing fee, the authorized officer shall continue to process the application during the supervisory officer's review of the disputed fee, unless the applicant requests that the processing cease.

(ii) If the applicant fails to pay the full disputed processing fee, the authorized officer shall suspend further processing of the application pending the supervisory officer's determination of an appropriate processing fee and the applicant's payment of that fee.

(3) In the case of a disputed monitoring fee:

(i) If the applicant or holder pays the full disputed monitoring fee, the authorized officer shall issue the authorization or allow the use and occupancy to continue during the supervisory officer's review of the disputed fee, unless the applicant or holder elects not to exercise the authorized use and occupancy of National Forest System lands during the review period.

(ii) If the applicant or holder fails to pay the full disputed monitoring fee, the authorized officer shall not issue the applicant a new authorization or shall suspend the holder's existing authorization in whole or in part pending the supervisory officer's determination of an appropriate monitoring fee and the applicant's or holder's payment of that fee.

(4) The authorized officer's immediate supervisor shall render a decision on a disputed processing or monitoring fee within 30 calendar days of receipt of the written request from the applicant or holder. The supervisory officer's decision is the final level of administrative review. The dispute shall be decided in favor of the applicant or holder if the supervisory officer does not respond to the written request within 30 days of receipt.

(f) *Waivers of processing and monitoring fees.* (1) All or part of a processing or monitoring fee may be waived, at the sole discretion of the authorized officer, when one or more of the following criteria are met:

(i) The applicant or holder is a local, State, or Federal governmental entity that does not or would not charge processing or monitoring fees for comparable services the applicant or holder provides or would provide to the Forest Service;

(ii) A major portion of the processing costs results from issues not related to the project being proposed;

(iii) The application is for a project intended to prevent or mitigate damage to real property, or to mitigate hazards or dangers to public health and safety resulting from an act of God, an act of war, or negligence of the United States;

(iv) The application is for a new authorization to relocate facilities or activities to comply with public health and safety or environmental laws and regulations that were not in effect at the time the authorization was issued;

(v) The application is for a new authorization to relocate facilities or activities because the land is needed by a Federal agency or for a Federally funded project for an alternative public purpose; or

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(vi) The proposed facility, project, or use will provide, without user or customer charges, a valuable benefit to the general public or to the programs of the Secretary of Agriculture.

(2) An applicant's or holder's request for a full or partial waiver of a processing or monitoring fee must be in writing and must include an analysis that demonstrates how one or more of the criteria in paragraphs (f)(1)(i) through (f)(1)(vi) of this section apply.

(g) *Exemptions from processing or monitoring fees.* No processing or monitoring fees shall be charged when the application or authorization is for a:

(1) Noncommercial group use as defined in §251.51, or when the application or authorization is to exempt a noncommercial activity from a closure order, except for an application or authorization for access to non-Federal lands within the boundaries of the National Forest System granted pursuant to section 1323(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3210(a)).

(2) Water systems authorized by section 501(c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761(c)).

(3) A use or activity conducted by a Federal agency that is not authorized under Title V of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761-1771); the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (30 U.S.C. 185); the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470h-2); or the Act of May 26, 2000 (16 U.S.C. 4601-6d).

(4) Recreation special use as defined in the Forest Service's directive system and requires 50 hours or less for Forest Service personnel to process, except for situations involving multiple recreation special use applications provided for in paragraph (c)(3) of this section. No monitoring fees shall be charged for a recreation special use authorization that requires 50 hours or less for Forest Service personnel to monitor.

(h) *Appeal of decisions.* (1) A decision by the authorized officer to assess a processing or monitoring fee or to determine the fee category or estimated costs is not subject to administrative appeal.

(2) A decision by an authorized officer's immediate supervisor in response to a request for substitution of an alternative fee category or alternative estimated costs likewise is not subject to administrative appeal.

(i) *Processing and monitoring fee schedules.* (1) The Forest Service shall maintain schedules for processing and monitoring fees in its directive system (36 CFR 200.4). The rates in the schedules shall be updated annually by using the annual rate of change, second quarter to second quarter, in the Implicit Price Deflator-Gross Domestic Product (IPD-GDP) index. The Forest Service shall round the changes in the rates either up or down to the nearest dollar.

(2) Within 5 years of the effective date of this rule, March 23, 2006, the Forest Service shall review these rates:

(i) To determine whether they are commensurate with the actual costs incurred by the agency in conducting the processing and monitoring activities covered by this rule and

(ii) To assess consistency with processing and monitoring fee schedules established by the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management.

[71 FR 8913, Feb. 21, 2006]

### **§251.59 Transfer of authorized improvements.**

If the holder, through death, voluntary sale, transfer, or through enforcement of a valid legal proceeding or operation of law, ceases to be the owner of the authorized improvements, the authorization terminates upon change of ownership. Except for easements issued under authorities other than §251.53(e) and leases and easements under §251.53(l) of this subpart, the new owner of the authorized improvements must apply for and receive a new special use authorization. The new owner must meet requirements under applicable regulations of this subpart and agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the authorization and any new terms and conditions warranted by existing or prospective circumstances.

[63 FR 65967, Nov. 30, 1998]

**§ 251.60 Termination, revocation, and suspension.**

(a) *Grounds for termination, revocation, and suspension*—(1) *Noncommercial group uses.* (i) *Revocation or suspension.* An authorized officer may revoke or suspend a special use authorization for a noncommercial group use only under one of the following circumstances:

(A) Under the criteria for which an application for a special use authorization may be denied under §251.54(h)(1);

(B) For noncompliance with applicable statutes or regulations or the terms and conditions of the authorization;

(C) For failure of the holder to exercise the rights or privileges granted; or

(D) With the consent of the holder.

(ii) *Administrative or judicial review.* Revocation or suspension of a special use authorization under this paragraph constitutes final agency action and is immediately subject to judicial review.

(iii) *Termination.* A special use authorization for a noncommercial group use terminates when it expires by its own terms. Termination of a special use authorization under this paragraph does not involve agency action and is not subject to administrative or judicial review.

(2) *All other special uses.* (i) *Revocation or suspension.* An authorized officer may revoke or suspend a special use authorization for all other special uses, except an easement issued pursuant to §251.53 (e) and (l):

(A) For noncompliance with applicable statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of the authorization;

(B) For failure of the holder to exercise the rights or privileges granted;

(C) With the consent of the holder; or

(D) At the discretion of the authorized officer for specific and compelling reasons in the public interest.

(ii) *Administrative review.* Except for revocation or suspension of an easement issued pursuant to §251.53 (e) and (l) of this subpart, a suspension or revocation of a special use authorization under this paragraph is subject to administrative appeal and review in accordance with 36 CFR part 251, subpart C, of this chapter.

(iii) *Termination.* For all special uses except noncommercial group uses, a special use authorization terminates when, by its terms, a fixed or agreed-

upon condition, event, or time occurs. Termination of a special use authorization under this paragraph does not involve agency action and is not subject to administrative or judicial review.

(b) For purposes of this section, the authorized officer is that person who issues the authorization or that officer's successor.

(c) A right-of-way authorization granted to another Federal agency will be limited, suspended, revoked, or terminated only with that agency's concurrence.

(d) A right-of-way authorization serving another Federal agency will be limited, suspended, revoked, or terminated only after advance notice to, and consultation with, that agency.

(e) Except when immediate suspension pursuant to paragraph (f) of this section is indicated, the authorized officer shall give the holder written notice of the grounds for suspension or revocation under paragraph (a) of this section and reasonable time to cure any noncompliance, prior to suspension or revocation pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section.

(f) Immediate suspension of a special use authorization, in whole or in part, may be required when the authorized officer deems it necessary to protect the public health or safety or the environment. In any such case, within 48 hours of a request of the holder, the superior of the authorized officer shall arrange for an on-site review of the adverse conditions with the holder. Following this review, the superior officer shall take prompt action to affirm, modify, or cancel the suspension.

(g) The authorized officer may suspend or revoke easements issued pursuant to §251.53 (e) and (l) of this subpart under the Rules of Practice Governing Formal Adjudicatory Administrative Proceedings instituted by the Secretary under 7 CFR 1.130 through 1.151. No administrative proceeding shall be required if the easement, by its terms, provides that it terminates on the occurrence of a fixed or agreed-upon condition, event, or time.

(h)(1) The Chief may revoke any easement granted under the provisions of the Act of October 13, 1964, 78 Stat. 1089, 16 U.S.C. 534:



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(i) By consent of the owner of the easement;

(ii) By condemnation; or

(iii) Upon abandonment after a 5-year period of nonuse by the owner of the easement.

(2) Before any such easement is revoked for nonuse or abandonment, the owner of the easement shall be given notice and, upon the owner's request made within 60 days after receipt of the notice, an opportunity to present relevant information in accordance with the provisions of 36 CFR part 251, subpart C, of this chapter.

(i) Upon revocation or termination of a special use authorization, the holder must remove within a reasonable time the structures and improvements and shall restore the site to a condition satisfactory to the authorized officer, unless the requirement to remove structures or improvements is otherwise waived in writing or in the authorization. If the holder fails to remove the structures or improvements within a reasonable period, as determined by the authorized officer, they shall become the property of the United States, but holder shall remain liable for the costs of removal and site restoration.

[45 FR 38327, June 6, 1980; 45 FR 43167, June 26, 1980, as amended at 48 FR 28639, June 23, 1983; 60 FR 45295, Aug. 30, 1995; 63 FR 65968, Nov. 30, 1998]

### § 251.61 Modifications.

(a) A holder shall file a new or amended application for a special use authorization to cover new, changed, or additional use(s) or area.

(1) In approving or denying changes or modifications, the authorized officer shall consider among other things, the findings or recommendations of other involved agencies and whether the terms and conditions of the existing authorization may be continued or revised, or a new authorization issued.

(2) Changes during construction, or at any other time, from the approved plans or the location shown in the application or authorization shall be allowed only with the prior approval of the authorized officer.

(b) A holder may be required to furnish as-built plans, map(s), or survey(s) upon completion of construction.

(c) A holder shall obtain prior approval from the authorized officer for modifications to approved uses that involve any activity impacting the environment, other users, or the public.

[45 FR 38327, June 6, 1980, as amended at 63 FR 65968, Nov. 30, 1998]

### § 251.62 Acceptance.

Except for an easement, a special use authorization shall become effective when signed by both the applicant and the authorized officer. The authorization must be signed by the applicant and returned to the authorized officer within 60 days of its receipt by the applicant, unless extended by the authorized officer. Refusal of an applicant to sign and accept a special use authorization within the time allowed, and before its final approval and signature by an authorized officer, shall terminate an application and constitute denial of the requested use and occupancy.

[53 FR 16550, May 10, 1988]

### § 251.63 Reciprocity.

If it is determined that a right-of-way shall be needed by the United States across nonfederal lands directly or indirectly owned or controlled by an applicant for a right-of-way across Federal lands, the authorized officer may condition a special use authorization to require the holder to grant the United States the needed right-of-way.

### § 251.64 Renewals.

(a) When a special use authorization provides for renewal, the authorized officer shall renew it where such renewal is authorized by law, if the project or facility is still being used for the purpose(s) previously authorized and is being operated and maintained in accordance with all the provisions of the authorization. In making such renewal, the authorized officer may modify the terms, conditions, and special stipulations to reflect any new requirements imposed by current Federal and State land use plans, laws, regulations or other management decisions. Special uses may be reauthorized upon expiration so long as such use remains consistent with the decision that approved the expiring special use or group of uses. If significant new information or

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circumstances have developed, appropriate environmental analysis must accompany the decision to reauthorize the special use.

(b) When a special use authorization does not provide for renewal, it is discretionary with the authorized officer, upon request from the holder and prior to its expiration, whether or not the authorization shall be renewed. A renewal pursuant to this section shall comply with the same provisions contained in paragraph (a) of this section.

[45 FR 38327, June 6, 1980, as amended at 63 FR 65968, Nov. 30, 1998]

### § 251.65 Information collection requirements.

The rules of this subpart governing special use applications (§ 251.54 and § 251.59), terms and conditions (§ 251.54), rental fees (§ 251.57), and modifications (§ 251.61) specify the information that proponents or applicants for special use authorizations or holders of existing authorizations must provide in order for an authorized officer to act on a request or administer the authorization. As such, these rules contain information requirements as defined in 5 CFR part 1320. These information requirements are assigned OMB Control Number 0596-0082.

[63 FR 65968, Nov. 30, 1998]

## Subpart C—Appeal of Decisions Relating to Occupancy and Use of National Forest System Lands

AUTHORITY: 7 U.S.C. 5101-5106; 16 U.S.C. 472, 551.

SOURCE: 54 FR 3362, Jan. 23, 1989, unless otherwise noted.

### § 251.80 Purpose and scope.

(a) This subpart provides a process by which those who hold or, in certain instances, those who apply for written authorizations to occupy and use National Forest System lands, may appeal a written decision by an authorized Forest Service line officer with regard to issuance, approval, or administration of the written instrument. The rules in the subpart establish who may appeal under these rules, the kinds of

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decisions that can and cannot be appealed, the responsibilities of parties to the appeal, and the various procedures and timeframes that will govern the conduct of appeals under this subpart.

(b) The rules in this subpart seek to offer appellants a fair and deliberate process for appealing and obtaining administrative review of decisions regarding written instruments that authorize the occupancy and use of National Forest System lands.

### § 251.81 Definitions and terminology.

For the purposes of this subpart, the following terms are defined:

*Appeal.* A request to a higher ranking officer for relief from a written decision filed under this subpart by an applicant for or a holder of a written instrument issued or approved by a Forest Service line officer.

*Appeal decision.* The written decision rendered by the Reviewing Officer on an appeal for relief under this subpart. The use of this term is limited to the final decision of a Reviewing Officer and does not refer to a stay decision or to any other determinations or procedural orders made on the conduct of an appeal (§ 251.99).

*Appeal record.* The documents submitted to the Reviewing Officer by an appellant, intervenor, or Deciding Officer (§ 251.98).

*Appellant.* An eligible applicant for or holder of a written instrument issued for the occupancy and use of National Forest System land (or their authorized agent or representative) who files an appeal pursuant to the provisions of this subpart (§ 251.86).

*Deciding officer.* The Forest Service line officer who makes a decision related to issuance, approval, or administration of an authorization to occupancy and use National Forest System lands that is appealed under this subpart.

*Decisions regarding a written instrument or authorization to occupy and use National Forest System lands.* A broad, all inclusive phrase used throughout this subpart to connote the full range of actions and decisions a forest officer takes to issue written instruments, or to manage authorized uses of National Forest System lands, including, but