

**STATEMENT OF
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**BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC
LANDS
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**CONCERNING FOREST SERVICE REGULATORY ROADBLOCKS TO
PRODUCTIVE LAND USE AND RECREATION: PROPOSED PLANNING
RULE, SPECIAL USE PERMITS, AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT
PART 2**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Agency's views regarding the administration of special uses on National Forest System (NFS) lands.

The Forest Service manages approximately 74,000 special use authorizations. Special use authorizations allow for the use of NFS lands for numerous purposes to benefit the public. Types of special uses range from communications sites, transmission lines, and other energy-related uses to public service facilities such as ski areas, resorts, and marinas to services such as outfitting and guiding. There are 180 types of special uses.

Consistent with the Forest Service's statutory authorities to manage NFS lands, special uses are authorized utilizing standard forms that contain provisions to protect the environment, including fish and wildlife habitat, air and water quality, and esthetic values; lives and property; and other preexisting lawful users of NFS lands. In addition, provisions in special use authorizations protect Federal property and economic interests, provide for effective management of NFS lands, and otherwise protect the public interest.

The special uses program provides significant public benefits. Numerous energy-related pipeline and transmission line rights-of-way cross NFS lands, and numerous relay towers for communications uses are located on NFS lands. Private businesses and non-profit entities provide approximately half of the recreation opportunities on NFS lands, including 122 ski areas, 260 resorts, 76 marinas, 297 organizational camps, 294 concession campground operations, 5,000 outfitting and guiding operations, and nearly 1,000 recreation events each year.

Some of these uses, such as pipeline and transmission line rights-of-way, outfitting and guiding, and communications sites, are also conducted on lands managed by the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), under the same statutory authority. The Forest Service coordinates extensively with BLM to realize efficiencies and consistency in regulations, land use instruments, and other aspects of management of these programs. Holders of Forest Service and BLM land use authorizations benefit from this interagency coordination.

Forest Service special uses generate approximately \$76 million in land use fees annually. The Forest Service is authorized to retain land use fees charged for organizational camps, commercial filming, outfitting and guiding, and recreation events to cover some of the costs to administer those uses.

Special uses provide many benefits to the American public and are one of the many ways that NFS lands provide resources and services. Special uses provide business opportunities for large and small companies, thereby serving the national and local economies. The public benefits greatly from this program by receiving services which could not be provided by the Forest Service.

This concludes my prepared statement and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.