

(e) *Designation and documentation.* If the authorized officer determines that a cave nominated and evaluated under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section meets one or more of the criteria in paragraph (c) of this section, the authorized officer shall designate the cave as significant. The authorized officer will notify the nominating party of the results of the evaluation and designation. Each forest will retain appropriate documentation for all significant caves located within its administrative boundaries. At a minimum, this documentation shall include a statement of finding signed and dated by the authorized officer and the information used to make the determination. This documentation will be retained as a permanent record in accordance with the confidentiality provision in § 290.4.

(f) *Undiscovered passages.* If a cave is determined to be significant, its entire extent on federal land, including passages not mapped or discovered at the time of the determination, is deemed significant. This includes caves that extend from lands managed by any other Federal agency into National Forest System lands, as well as caves initially believed to be separate for which interconnecting passages are discovered after significance is determined.

(g) *Decision final.* The decision to designate or not designate a cave as significant is made at the sole discretion of the authorized officer based upon the criteria in paragraphs (c) and (d) of this section and is not subject to further administrative review of appeal under Parts 217 or 251.82 of this chapter.

§ 290.4 Confidentiality of cave location information.

(a) *Information disclosure.* No Forest Service employee shall disclose any information that could be used to determine the location of a significant cave or a cave nominated for designation, unless the authorized officer determines that disclosure will further the purposes of the Act and will not create a substantial risk of harm, theft, or destruction to cave resources.

(b) *Requesting confidential information.* Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this section, the authorized officer may make confidential cave information

available to Federal or State governmental agencies, bona fide educational or research institutes, or individuals or organizations assisting the land management agencies with cave management activities. To request confidential cave information, such entities shall make a written request to the authorized officer which includes the following:

(1) Name, address, and telephone number of the individual responsible for the security of the information received;

(2) A legal description of the area for which the information is sought;

(3) A statement of the purpose for which the information is sought; and,

(4) Written assurances that the requesting party will maintain the confidentiality of the information and protect the cave and its resources.

(c) *Decision final.* The decision to permit or deny access to confidential cave information is made at the sole discretion of the authorized officer and is not subject to further administrative review or appeal under 5 U.S.C. 552 or parts 217 or 251.82 of this chapter.

§ 290.5 Collection of information.

The collection of information contained in this rule represents new information requirements as defined in 5 CFR part 1320, Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public. In accordance with those rules and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 as amended (44 U.S.C. 3507), the Forest Service has received approval by the Office of Management and Budget to collect cave nomination information under clearance number 0596-0123 and confidential information under 0596-0122. The information provided for the cave nominations will be used to determine which caves will be listed as "significant" and the information in the requests to obtain confidential cave information will be used to decide whether to grant access to this information. Response to the call for cave nominations is voluntary. No action may be taken against a person for refusing to supply the information requested. Response to the information requirements for obtaining confidential cave information is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with section 5 of the Federal