

Agriculture (Forest Service or Agency), is proposing to revise its directives to provide guidance on climbing opportunities on National Forest System (NFS) lands, including climbing opportunities in Congressionally designated wilderness (wilderness).

**DATES:** Comments must be received in writing by January 16, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be submitted electronically to <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?project=ORMS-3524>. Written comments may be mailed to Peter Mali, National Wilderness Program Manager, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-1124. All timely comments, including names and addresses, will be placed in the record and will be available for public inspection and copying. The public may inspect comments received at <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/ReadingRoom?project=ORMS-3524>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Peter Mali, National Wilderness Program Manager, [SM.FS.ClimbDir@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.ClimbDir@usda.gov), (202) 823-0773. Individuals who use telecommunications devices for the hearing impaired may call the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339, 24 hours a day, every day of the year, including holidays.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Climbing is a growing sport in the United States. According to the Outdoor Industry Association's 2022 Report on Outdoor Participation Trends, there were nearly 10.3 million climbers in the United States in 2021. Approximately 30 percent of outdoor climbing in the United States occurs on NFS lands. In recent years, line officers have expressed concerns about climbing-related impacts on resources and conflicts among uses.

Current Forest Service directives do not provide guidance for climbing opportunities on NFS lands. The Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act directs the Forest Service to issue general guidance on climbing opportunities on NFS lands, including the application of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131-1136) to climbing opportunities and appropriate use of fixed anchors and fixed equipment in wilderness. To address impacts associated with increased climbing on NFS lands and consistent with the Joint Explanatory Statement, the Forest Service is proposing revisions to its directives to provide guidance on climbing opportunities on NFS lands.

The proposed directive would provide guidance on climbing opportunities inside and outside

wilderness on NFS lands and would provide for climbing opportunities that serve visitor needs; meet land management and recreation policy objectives; emphasize the natural setting of NFS lands; align with natural and cultural resource protection and the Agency's responsibility to Indian Tribes; and are consistent with applicable law, directives, and the applicable land management plan.

The proposed directive would add a new section, 2355, to Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2300—Recreation, Wilderness, and Related Resource Management, chapter 2350—Trail, River, and Similar Recreation Opportunities, which would provide that climbing is an appropriate use of NFS lands (proposed FSM 2355.03, para. 1)—including in wilderness—when conducted in accordance with applicable law and Forest Service directives and consistent with the applicable land management plan (proposed FSM 2355.03, para. 4); that a climbing management plan be developed, as funding and resources allow, for climbing opportunities in wilderness, and for climbing opportunities outside wilderness where the District Ranger determines that climbing is causing adverse resource impacts or use conflicts (proposed FSM 2355.21); that fixed anchors and fixed equipment are installations for purposes of section 4(c) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(c)) (proposed FSM 2355.32, para. 1); that a Forest Supervisor may authorize the placement or replacement of fixed anchors and fixed equipment in wilderness based on a case-specific determination that they are the minimum necessary for administration of the area for Wilderness Act purposes, including primitive or unconfined recreation and preservation of wilderness character (proposed FSM 2355.32, para. 1); that existing fixed anchors and fixed equipment in wilderness may be retained pending completion of a Minimum Requirements Analysis, as funding and resources allow, that determines they are the minimum necessary to facilitate primitive or unconfined recreation or otherwise preserve wilderness character (FSM 2355.32, para. 5); and that the issuance and administration of special use permits are encouraged to enhance visitor access to climbing opportunities and visitor education concerning low impact climbing practices (proposed FSM 2355.03, para. 9).

To allow for enforcement of restrictions and prohibitions in climbing management plans as needed, the Forest Service will be proposing revisions via a separate **Federal Register** notice to its

regulations at 36 CFR part 261, subpart A, General Prohibitions.

The minimum 120-day Tribal consultation for the proposed directive was initiated November 8, 2021, and will conclude at the end of the 60-day comment period for the proposed directive.

After the comment period closes, the Forest Service will consider timely comments that are within the scope of the proposed directive in the development of the final directive. A notice of the final directive, including a response to comments, will be posted on the Forest Service's web page at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/regulations-policies>.

Dated: November 6, 2023.

**Gregory Smith,**

*Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System.*

[FR Doc. 2023-25426 Filed 11-16-23; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3411-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### **Stanislaus National Forest; California; Social and Ecological Resilience Across the Landscape 2.0 EIS**

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, Agriculture (USDA).

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service ("Forest Service"), United States Department of Agriculture, is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Social and Ecological Resilience Across the Landscape 2.0 (SERAL 2.0) project. The project area is approximately 160,000 acres in size, including approximately 119,000 acres of Forest Service lands. The project area includes the remainder of the Stanislaus Landscape—a Wildfire Crisis Strategy Priority Landscape identified in 2022. The project area also spans multiple High Risk Western Firesheds identified by the Secretary of Agriculture in January 2023.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by December 18, 2023. The draft environmental impact statement is expected in early February 2024, and the final environmental impact statement is expected in April 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Scoping comments may be submitted electronically through <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/commentInput?Project=63557>. Written

comments may be submitted via mail or by hand delivery to Stanislaus National Forest, Attn: SERAL 2.0, 19777 Greenley Road, Sonora, CA 95370.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Benjamin Cossel (Stanislaus National Forest Public Affairs Officer) by email at [benjamin.cossel@usda.gov](mailto:benjamin.cossel@usda.gov). Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf and hard of hearing (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339, 24 hours a day, every day of the year, including holidays.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Purpose and Need for Action**

The purpose of SERAL 2.0 is to prepare the landscape for the safe reintroduction of fire as a key ecological process; increase the landscape's resilience and adaptive capacity to natural disturbances such as fire, drought, insects and disease; reduce the risk of fire spreading into communities or damaging critical infrastructure; and to manage the forest in a cost-effective manner, including making wood products available to local industries and businesses. The actions proposed in the SERAL 2.0 project are needed to minimize the potential for large-, high-severity fire and habitat loss; shift the landscape vegetation structure and composition towards conditions that are more in alignment with future desired conditions, control occurrences of invasive, non-native plants; and support prescribed fire and wildfire management operations.

**Proposed Action**

The Stanislaus National Forest is proposing multiple actions to meet the purpose and need of the project. A combination of mechanical thinning and prescribed fire is proposed. Treatment objectives to create both late-open and mid-open forest structure will be achieved through mechanical thinning with strategically placed openings (gaps) and retained groups of trees (clumps) scattered throughout the treated landscape. Gaps and clumps will generally range in size between 0.1 and 0.5 acres, each averaging approximately 0.25 acres in size and a gap frequency of approximately one every two acres. Thinning would primarily consist of timber harvesting but also includes non-commercial methods such as mastication and biomass removal. Multiple logging systems, road maintenance, temporary road construction, and landing development would be required for commercial timber harvest. A proportion of the proposed restoration treatments will occur within California spotted owl

protected activity centers and territories designed to incorporate the management approaches and conservation measures specifications presented in the Conservation Strategy for the California Spotted Owl in the Sierra Nevada (USDA Forest Service 2019).

The construction and maintenance of a shaded fuelbreak network is also proposed. The purpose of this proposed network is to break up large expanses of continuous fuels, support firefighter access and safety, increase suppression opportunities, and provide control points for the implementation of prescribed fire. To construct these fuelbreaks, trees may be thinned to shaded fuelbreak standards and continuous vegetation under 8" DBH (the diameter of each tree is measured at "breast height") or 12 feet tall will be broken up into naturally appearing clumps or islands of varied size and shape. Salvage of insect-, disease-, drought-, and fire-killed trees is included as part of the proposed action. The area of potential salvage varies: for insect-, disease-, and drought-killed trees, the area of potential salvage is limited to within 0.25 miles of maintenance level 2, 3, 4, and 5 National Forest System (NFS) roads; not requiring a new temporary road greater than 500 feet within forested areas; outside of protected activity centers (PACs), and outside of wild and scenic river corridors. For fire-killed trees, the area of potential salvage is further limited to only 500 acres per Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 6 watershed.

Non-native invasive weed control and eradication treatments are proposed for mapped known invasive weed locations, additional acres to account for a 20 percent rate of spread from those known locations, and a limited number of acres where future infestations are discovered after analysis.

**Forest Plan Amendments**

The proposed project-specific forest plan amendments are designed to implement the management approaches and conservation measures presented in the Conservation Strategy for the California Spotted Owl in the Sierra Nevada ("The CSO Strategy"; USDA Forest Service 2019). The amendments are specific to the approximate 160,000-acre project area and proposed actions. The proposed amendments incorporate CSO Strategy conservation measures that provide some immediate stability for individual owls while implementing actions to better increase landscape resilience. The CSO Strategy concludes that short term impacts are a trade-off that is warranted to best develop resilient habitat conditions that will

provide long term stability and future CSO habitat.

**Expected Impacts**

This project is expected to significantly increase landscape resilience to natural disturbances which is the primary objective of SERAL 2.0. The treatments proposed to meet the desired landscape conditions may cause short term impacts to sensitive resources, including California spotted owl PACs. SERAL 2.0 is the second project on the Stanislaus National Forest to fully adopt and implement the CSO Strategy's management approaches and conservation measures (SERAL 1.0 in 2022 was the first). Although the long-term benefits are expected to far outweigh the risks to resources from applying these new approaches, a measure of uncertainty is also present. The proposed actions have been designed based on best available science and are well supported. However, at present, there are not any documented post-treatment case-studies of the outcomes of the treatments to directly inform the analysis, and thus the uncertainty.

**Responsible Official**

The Responsible Official will be Jason Kuiken, Forest Supervisor, Stanislaus National Forest.

**Scoping Comments**

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the EIS. In this process, the Forest Service is requesting comments on potential impacts, and identification of any relevant information, studies, or analyses of any kind concerning impacts affecting the quality of the human environment. Public comments regarding this proposal will assist the Forest Service in identifying issues and opportunities associated with the proposal, how to best manage resources, and to focus the analysis. The SERAL 2.0 project was authorized to use the Western Firesheds Emergency Action Declaration (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Section 40807) on April 14, 2023. Under this emergency authority, the SERAL 2.0 EIS will be developed to consider only a proposed action and no action alternative in detail, and the EIS and draft decision will not be subject to pre-decisional administrative review (Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 (Pub. L. 112-74) as implemented by Subparts A and B of 36 CFR part 218 or part 219).

It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such manner that they are useful to the

agency's preparation of the environmental impact statement. Therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewers' concerns and contentions. The Forest Service will use the scoping comments to help identify potential significant issues related to the proposed action while preparing the draft EIS (DEIS). The DEIS is expected to be available for a 45-day opportunity to comment in early February 2024.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered.

#### Nature of Decision To Be Made

Given the purpose and need, the Responsible Official will determine whether the proposed actions comply with all applicable laws governing Forest Service actions and with the applicable standards and guidelines found in the Forest Plan of the Stanislaus National Forest; whether the EIS has sufficient environmental analysis to make an informed decision; and whether the proposed action meets the purpose and need for action. With this information, the Responsible Official must decide whether to select the proposed action and what, if any, additional actions should be required.

#### Substantive Provisions

The substantive provisions of 36 CFR 219.8 through 219.11 that directly apply to the proposed amendments are 36 CFR 219.9 Diversity of Plant and Animal Communities, (a) Ecosystem plan components, (1) Ecosystem integrity (36 CFR 219(a)(1)); 36 CFR 219.9 Diversity of Plant and Animal Communities, (a) Ecosystem plan components, (2) Ecosystem diversity, (i) key characteristics associated with the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem types (36 CFR 219(a)(2)(i)); 36 CFR 219.9 Diversity of Plant and Animal Communities, (a) Ecosystem plan components, (2) Ecosystem diversity, (ii) rare aquatic and terrestrial plant and animal communities (36 CFR 219(a)(2)(ii)); and 36 CFR 219.8 Sustainability, (b) Social and Economic Sustainability, (1) Social, cultural, and economic conditions relevant to the area influenced by the plan (36 CFR 219.8(b)(1)).

Dated: November 1, 2023.

**Troy Heithecker,**

*Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System.*

[FR Doc. 2023-25427 Filed 11-16-23; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3411-15-P**

#### COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

##### Notice of Public Meeting of the Tennessee Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** Commission on Civil Rights.

**ACTION:** Announcement of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission), and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) that a meeting of the Tennessee Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene by Zoom on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. (CST). The purpose of the meeting is to discuss their draft report on voting rights in the state.

**DATES:** The meeting will take place on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. (CST).

Registration Link (Audio/Visual):  
<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1609335325?pwd=dGlwOU9STmhTV28vWmIycW5WcIR3QT09>.

Telephone (Audio Only): Dial (833) 568-8864 USA Toll Free; Access Code: 160 933 5325.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Victoria Moreno at [vmoreno@usccr.gov](mailto:vmoreno@usccr.gov) or by phone at 434-515-0204.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This meeting is available to the public through the Zoom link above. If joining only via phone, callers can expect to incur charges for calls they initiate over wireless lines, and the Commission will not refund any incurred charges. Individuals who are deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing may also follow the proceedings by first calling the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 and providing the Service with the call-in number found through registering at the web link provided above for the meeting.

Members of the public are entitled to make comments during the open period at the end of the meeting. Members of the public may also submit written comments; the comments must be received in the Regional Programs Unit within 30 days following the respective meeting. Written comments may be emailed to Victoria Moreno at [vmoreno@usccr.gov](mailto:vmoreno@usccr.gov). All written comments received will be available to the public.

Persons who desire additional information may contact the Regional Programs Unit at (202) 809-9618. Records and documents discussed during the meeting will be available for public viewing as they become available at the [www.facadatabase.gov](http://www.facadatabase.gov). Persons interested in the work of this advisory committee are advised to go to the Commission's website, [www.usccr.gov](http://www.usccr.gov), or to contact the Regional Programs Unit at the above phone number or email address.

#### Agenda

Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. (CST)

1. Welcome & Roll Call
2. Chair's Comments
3. Discussion on Report
4. Next Steps
5. Public Comment
6. Adjourn

Dated: November 14, 2023.

**David Mussatt,**

*Supervisory Chief, Regional Programs Unit.*

[FR Doc. 2023-25448 Filed 11-16-23; 8:45 am]

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#### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

##### Foreign-Trade Zones Board

[S-214-2023]

##### Foreign-Trade Zone 26; Application for Subzone; Helena Industries, LLC; Cordele, Georgia; Correction

The **Federal Register** notice published on November 14, 2023 (88 FR 77952) regarding the subzone application for Helena Industries, LLC, located in Cordele, Georgia, is corrected as follows:

In the first paragraph, first sentence, the grantee organization should read "Georgia Foreign-Trade Zone, Inc., grantee of FTZ 26".

For further information contact Christopher Kemp at [Christopher.Kemp@trade.gov](mailto:Christopher.Kemp@trade.gov).

Dated: November 14, 2023.

**Elizabeth Whiteman,**

*Executive Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 2023-25467 Filed 11-16-23; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

##### International Trade Administration

##### Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.