

## **BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT / EVALUATION**

### **Office Expansion**

**U.S. Forest Service  
Enoree Ranger District  
Sumter National Forest  
Newberry County  
South Carolina**

**August 2012**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Biological Assessment/Evaluation (BA/BE) is to determine whether the proposed action is likely to affect any proposed, endangered, threatened, or sensitive (PETS) species or their habitats.

Proposed, endangered, and threatened species are designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and are managed under the authority of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (Public Law [P.L.] 93-205, as amended) and the National Forest Management Act (PL. 94-588). The ESA requires Federal agencies to ensure that no actions that they "authorize, fund, or carry out" are likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any proposed, endangered, or threatened species or their habitat.

Sensitive species are managed under the authority of the National Forest Management Act requiring that National Forests manage for "viable populations of all native and desirable non-native species" both across the range of the species and within the planning area. Sensitive species designation occurs on a periodic basis through the recommendation of Forest Biologists who consult with local State Heritage Programs, the Nature Conservancy, and local species experts. The Regional Forester administratively designates sensitive species.

The objectives of this BA/BE are:

- To ensure that Forest Service actions do not contribute to the loss of viability of any PETS species;
- To comply with the requirements of the ESA; and
- To provide a process and standard to ensure PETS species receive full consideration in the decision-making process.

### **II. PROPOSED ACTION**

The Francis Marion and Sumter National Forest is proposing to improve the existing Enoree Ranger District office. The site is approximately 20 acres and is located on national forest system lands. The existing office site would be renovated and expanded to provide a 8000 square foot office building to accommodate full district staff; visitor area; 45-space employee parking; 6-space visitor parking; entrance road; water service; septic tank and drain field;

electric service; additional pole sheds; outdoor covered pavilion; and antenna tower. The work center would be reconstructed at a future time when funding becomes available. This project would expand the current administrative Forest Service office, combining the Tyger and Indian Creek Offices, associated parking and storage structures at primarily one location.

### III. CONSULTATION HISTORY

This BA/BE tiers to the Biological Assessment for the Sumter National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan, 2004). The USFWS was consulted informally on the Forest Plan BA and concurred with a determination of "not likely to adversely affect."

### IV. SPECIES CONSIDERED AND EVALUATED

The complete list of PETS species for the Sumter National Forest is attached in Appendix A. All species on this list were considered for this BA/BE. Using a step-down process and best available science, species and potential habitat in the project area were identified by:

- 1) Evaluating the location and nature of the proposed project,
- 2) Considering the species' range, life history, and available habitat information,
- 3) Reviewing District records of known PETS species occurrences,
- 4) Reviewing the USFWS Distribution Records of Endangered, Threatened, Candidate and Species of Concern (2012), and
- 5) Reviewing the South Carolina Heritage Trust Geographic Database of Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species (2011).

The procedure used to decide when to inventory for PETS species is consistent with Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2672.43. A review of the available records indicates that there are no occurrences of any PETS species in the project area. The project area would be an established building, parking lot, and work center. There are no PETS species or associated habitats which are known to occur or have the potential to occur in the proposed project area.

### V. DETERMINATION OF EFFECT AND RATIONALE

Since all threatened and endangered species were eliminated from consideration due to lack of habitat in the project area, ESA Section 7 consultation with the USFWS is not necessary.

#### Threatened and Endangered Species

All Threatened and Endangered Species - NO EFFECT

#### Sensitive Species

All Sensitive Species - NO IMPACTS

## VI. SIGNATURES

This Biological Assessment/Evaluation was prepared by:

*/s/ Carrie M. Miller*

7/31/2012

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Carrie M. Miller  
Biological Science Technician  
Sumter National Forest

Date

This Biological Assessment/Evaluation was reviewed and accepted by:

*Jeffrey M. Magniez*

8/1/2012

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Jeffrey M. Magniez  
Zone Wildlife Biologist  
Sumter National Forest

Date

## VII. REFERENCES AND DATA SOURCES

South Carolina Heritage Trust Geographic Database of Rare and Endangered Species. 2011. Online reference <https://www.dnr.sc.gov/pls/heritage/species.login>.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2012. South Carolina Distribution Records of Endangered, Threatened, Candidate and Species of Concern.

**APPENDIX A**

<b>Proposed, Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive (PETS) Species of the Sumter National Forest (2012).</b> Obs = PETS species observed during project field surveys or known to occur based on existing records, Hab = Suitable habitat exists within the project area, "+" = meets criterion, "--" = does not meet criterion. P = piedmont (Enoree and Long Cane Ranger Districts), M = mountains (Andrew Pickens Ranger District).					
<b>SPECIES</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>HABITAT</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>Hab</b>	<b>Range</b>
<b>CAROLINA HEELSPLITTER</b> <i>Lasmigona decorata</i>	Federally Endangered	Known historically from Catawba, Pee Dee, and Saluda drainages in South Carolina; occurs in Mountain, Beaverdam, Cuffytown, Sleepy, and Turkey Creeks <b>No potential habitat within project area; aquatic areas not affected</b>	--	--	P
<b>PERSISTENT TRILLIUM</b> <i>Trillium persistens</i>	Federally Endangered	Known from one site in South Carolina; occurs in mixed mesic forest in the Tugaloo River Composite watershed <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>RELICT TRILLIUM</b> <i>Trillium reliquum</i>	Federally Endangered	Basic mesic forests in Savannah and Chattahoochee drainages; known from the lower piedmont/fall line sandhills region <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	P
<b>SMOOTH CONEFLOWER</b> <i>Echinacea laevigata</i>	Federally Endangered	Occurs along the Brevard Geologic Belt in association with grassy understories and open canopies <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>WOOD STORK</b> <i>Mycteria americana</i>	Federally Endangered	Known to forage in freshwater wetlands on both Enoree and Long Cane Ranger Districts <b>No potential habitat within project area; wetlands not present</b>	--	--	P
<b>FLORIDA GOOSEBERRY</b> <i>Ribes echinellum</i>	Federally Threatened	Known from the Stevens Creek drainage, on north facing hardwood slopes in association with basic soils <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	P
<b>SMALL WHORLED POGONIA</b> <i>Isotria medeoloides</i>	Federally Threatened	Occurs in mixed mesic forests at moderate elevations (> 1,000 feet) <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>ASHLEAF GOLDENBANNER</b> <i>Thermopsis mollis</i> var. <i>fraxinifolia</i>	Sensitive	Pine-oak heaths and roadsides <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>BACHMAN'S SPARROW</b> <i>Aimophila aestivalis</i>	Sensitive	Occurs in forest stands with open canopies and grassy understories <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P
<b>BALD EAGLE</b> <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Sensitive	Perennial rivers and lakes, nesting in dominant or co-dominant pines 3 km or less from open water <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P, M
<b>BILTMORE SEDGE</b> <i>(Carex biltmoreana)</i>	Sensitive	Thin soils on rock outcrops and adjacent woodlands; known from the Chattooga River corridor <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M

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<b>SPECIES</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>HABITAT</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>Hab</b>	<b>Range</b>
<b>BROOK FLOATER</b> <i>Alasmidonta varicosa</i>	Sensitive	Small streams with gravel bottoms; known from Chattooga, Turkey and Upper Stevens Creek watersheds on the Long Cane Ranger District <b>No potential habitat within project area; aquatic areas not affected</b>	--	--	P, M
<b>BUTTERNUT</b> <i>Juglans cinerea</i>	Sensitive	Basic mesic forests along the Brevard Geologic Belt; usually at old homesites <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>CAROLINA DARTER</b> <i>Etheostoma collis</i>	Sensitive	Localized populations occur in lower and middle piedmont streams with slow to moderate current. Known from Saluda and Broad River watersheds <b>No potential habitat within project area; aquatic areas not affected</b>	--	--	P
<b>CAROLINA PLAGIOMNIUM</b> <i>Plagiomnium carolinianum</i>	Sensitive	Damp, shaded, vertical rock faces along streams in mountain gorges; known from Long Creek and Opossum Creek <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>CHAUGA CRAYFISH</b> <i>Cambarus chaugaensis</i>	Sensitive	Fast-moving, rocky 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> order streams in tributaries of the upper Savannah River; known most recently from the Chauga River; noted historically in Ramsey Creek, West Village Creek, Crane Creek, Cedar Creek, and a stream between Long Creek and the Chattooga River (1972 data) <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>DIANA FRITILLARY</b> <i>Speyeria diana</i>	Sensitive	Violets are larval host plant; open areas for nectar sources in summer <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>EASTERN SMALL-FOOTED MYOTIS</b> <i>Myotis leibii</i>	Sensitive	At southern terminus of range on Andrew Pickens Ranger District; known from Moody Creek near Lake Cherokee; may commonly roost in hemlock trees near streams in summer <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>EDMUND'S SNAKETAILED</b> <i>(Ophiogomphus edmundo)</i>	Sensitive	Clear moderately flowing mountain streams and rivers with sand or gravel riffles. Known to occur in the Chattooga River <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>FORT MOUNTAIN SEDGE</b> <i>Carex communis</i> var. <i>amplisquama</i>	Sensitive	Found in rich coves, at Tamassee Knob, East Fork of the Chattooga, and White Rock Cove on the Andrew Pickens Ranger District <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M

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SPECIES	STATUS	HABITAT	Obs	Hab	Range
<b>FRASER'S LOOSESTRIFE</b> <i>Lysimachia fraseri</i>	Sensitive	Open stands or rights-of-way with grassy understories <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>GEORGIA ASTER</b> <i>Symphytotrichum georgianus</i>	Sensitive; Federal Candidate	Open stands or rights-of-way with grassy understories; piedmont and lower elevations in mountains <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P, M
<b>HARTWIG'S LOCUST</b> <i>Robinia viscosa</i> var. <i>hartwegii</i>	Sensitive	Pine-oak heaths and roadsides in the mountains; one location known near Village Creek on the Andrew Pickens Ranger District <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>INDIGO BUSH</b> <i>Amorpha schwerini</i>	Sensitive	Pine-oak heaths and oak-hickory communities <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P
<b>JEWELED TRILLIUM</b> <i>Trillium simile</i>	Sensitive	Basic mesic forests of the mountains <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>LANCELEAF TRILLIUM</b> <i>Trillium lancifolium</i>	Sensitive	Basic mesic forests of the piedmont <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P
<b>LIVERWORT SP.</b> <i>Cheilolejeunea evansii</i>	Sensitive	Bark of trees in moist escarpment gorges or gorge-like habitats <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>LIVERWORT SP.</b> <i>Plagiochila caduciloba</i>	Sensitive	Found on damp, shaded, vertical rock faces along streams in mountain gorges; southern appalachian endemic <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>LIVERWORT SP.</b> <i>Plagiochila sharpii</i>	Sensitive	Found on damp, shaded, vertical rock faces along streams in mountain gorges <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>LIVERWORT SP.</b> <i>Radula sullivantii</i>	Sensitive	Wet shaded rocks and crevices <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>MIGRANT LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE</b> <i>Lanius ludovicianus migrans</i>	Sensitive	Breeds in open areas dominated by grasses interspersed with shrubs, trees, or bare ground; uses agricultural landscapes (pastures) <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P
<b>MOUNTAIN WITCH ALDER</b> <i>Fothergilla major</i>	Sensitive	Occurs in oak-hickory forests; may occur on monadnocks or north-facing slopes in piedmont <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>NODDING TRILLIUM</b> <i>Trillium rugelii</i>	Sensitive	Rich wooded slopes over mafic or calcareous rocks <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P, M
<b>OGLETHORPE OAK</b> <i>Quercus oglethorpensis</i>	Sensitive	Upland wetland depressions and streamside forests in the Carolina Slate belt <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P

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SPECIES	STATUS	HABITAT	Obs	Hab	Range
<b>PIEDMONT ASTER</b> <i>Eurybia mirabilis</i>	Sensitive	Nutrient-rich bottomlands and moist slopes, endemic to the NC and SC piedmont <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P
<b>PIEDMONT STRAWBERRY</b> <i>Waldsteinia lobata</i>	Sensitive	Occurs in mixed mesic hardwood forests in the lower elevations of the mountains <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>RADFORD'S SEDGE</b> <i>Carex radfordii</i>	Sensitive	Occurs in basic mesic and mixed mesic hardwood forests <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>RAFINESQUE'S BIG-EARED BAT</b> <i>Corynorhinus rafinesquii</i>	Sensitive	Restricted to the mountains, sandhills, and coastal plain Physiographic regions; may be found in hollow trees or behind loose bark near streams, caves, mines, or human-made structures <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>RAYED PINK FATMUCKET</b> <i>Lampsilis splendida</i>	Sensitive	Primarily a costal plain species; one occurrence in Middle Saluda River Composite watershed <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P
<b>ROBUST REDHORSE</b> <i>Moxostoma robustum</i>	Sensitive	Occurs in the Lower Savannah River composite watershed and introduced to the Broad River <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P
<b>SHOAL'S SPIDER LILY</b> <i>Hymenocallis coronaria</i>	Sensitive	Rocky river shoals; sandhills and piedmont <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P
<b>SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN SALAMANDER</b> <i>Plethodon teyahalee</i>	Sensitive	Mature mesic hardwood forests <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>SOUTHERN OCONEE BELLS</b> <i>Shortia galacifolia</i> var. <i>galacifolia</i>	Sensitive	Large colonies in mixed mesic forests near Lake Jocassee <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>SPREADING POGONIA</b> <i>Cleistes bifaria</i>	Sensitive	Dry ridgetops under pines <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>SUN-FACING CONEFLOWER</b> <i>Rudbeckia heliopsidis</i>	Sensitive	Open forests with herbaceous understories; known from roadsides in the vicinity of Lake Cherokee <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M
<b>SWEET PINESAP</b> <i>Monotropsis odorata</i>	Sensitive	Shortleaf pine-oak heaths in the southern Appalachians and piedmont <b>No potential habitat within project area</b>	--	--	P, M

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SPECIES	STATUS	HABITAT	Obs	Hab	Range
<b>WEBSTER'S SALAMANDER</b> <i>Plethodon websteri</i>	Sensitive	Mesic hardwood slopes with rocky outcrops; Greenwood, Edgefield, and McCormick Counties <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	P
<b>WHORLED HORSEBALM</b> <i>Collinsonia verticillata</i>	Sensitive	Found in basic mesic forests along the Brevard Geologic Belt in South Carolina <b>Outside of known range</b>	--	--	M