

United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

Lands and Realty Management

Landownership Adjustment

Special Use Authorizations and Administration

Boundary and Title Management

Valuation

Our Mission

The Lands and Realty Management program secures and protects the American public's rights, title, value, and interests in its national forests and grasslands and authorizes a variety of uses on those lands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Our Goal

Nearly 193 million acres of public land are managed as national forests and grasslands. The protection of these lands and resources is a fundamental Forest Service responsibility. Through direct land management practices, the Lands and Realty Management program enables the agency to better manage Federal lands within or adjacent to National Forest System (NFS) boundaries and deliver the necessary products and services that are essential for enhancing natural resource stewardship and providing for the public's enjoyment, future use, and access to NFS lands.

Our Activities

Lands and Realty Management is carried out through four major activities:

- Landownership Adjustment
- Special Use Authorizations and Administration
- Boundary and Title Management
- Valuation

Protection of the public's interests in NFS lands is essential to the land stewardship and public trust responsibilities of the Forest Service. To obtain these goals, we as managers of the program will:

- **Capture** opportunities to consolidate landownership patterns through exchange, acquisition, and conveyance of lands to meet the objectives of forest land and resource management plans and to improve land management efficiencies.
- **Meet** the needs of adjacent landowners and the public for energy, utility services, access, communications, transportation, and national security.
- **Secure** and protect the rights, title, land, and resources of public land from unauthorized use and occupancy by providing legally defensible boundaries and accurate, complete landownership records of NFS lands.
- **Assure** the public receives a fair return for use or conveyance of public assets and for acquisition of private property.

Landownership Adjustment

- Exchange lands to achieve a desired national forest landownership pattern that supports forest land and resource goals and objectives, addresses fragmentation, reduces future management costs, and responds to local community needs.
- Purchase land through the Land and Water Conservation Fund to protect critical resource areas and provide increased public recreation opportunities.
- Accept donations of land to consolidate NFS lands and protect critical resource areas.
- Improve legal public use of NFS lands by acquiring rights-of-way for roads and trails.
- Assure that market value is obtained for lands or interests in lands to protect the public and private property owner's interest.

Special Uses and Administration

Authorize use of public lands by individuals, companies, organized groups, other Federal agencies, and State or local levels of government in a manner that protects natural resource values and public health and safety.

For example:

- Authorize uses that contribute to the Nation's infrastructure for generating and transmitting energy resources, such as electric transmission facilities, oil and gas pipelines, and hydropower facilities.
- Authorize uses for communications, commerce, public health and safety, and homeland security, such as fiber-optic and wireless telecommunications; water development systems; and Federal, State, and local highways.
- Issue authorizations needed by landowners to exercise statutory rights and outstanding and reserved interests in NFS lands.

Boundary and Title Management

Survey national forest boundaries to identify and protect public lands.

- Maintain records of national forest land areas, land transactions, land status, permitted uses, and easements.
- Resolve landownership cases related to title claims, trespass, and unauthorized uses to protect public access and achieve effective management of NFS lands.

Valuation

Provide independent, objective, and impartial appraisal and consulting services to support landownership management and other Forest Service activities, such as the Forest Legacy Program, litigation, leasing, and fire management.

For More Information

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