

Management Standards
for
Recreation Residences

Pike and San Isabel National Forests
Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands

Management Standards for Recreation Residences
Pike and San Isabel National Forests
Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands

Table of Contents

Introduction..... 5

Definition of Recreation Residence..... 5

Guidelines for Recreation Residences 6

Permits..... 6

General Permit Requirements 6

Transfer of Improvements and Issuance of New Special Use Permits..... 7

Destruction, Abandonment, Termination, and Future Use 9

Use of the Permitted Area 10

Public Use..... 10

Subleasing / Rental 11

Permitted Structures – Improvements..... 11

 General 11

 Authorized structures..... 11

 Plans 12

 Size 12

 Decks, Appurtenances, and Minor Improvements 13

 Utilities 14

Improvement Standards..... 14

 General 14

 Operation and Maintenance Plan..... 14

 Signing..... 15

 General Standards for Construction 15

 Colors 16

 Hazardous Trees 17

 Landscaping..... 17

 Lot Line and Setback..... 17

 Roads and Bridges..... 18

 Gates..... 18

 Off-lot Improvements..... 18

 Fences..... 19

 Water Systems 19

 Public Access Delineation..... 19

Inspections..... 19

Trash..... 19

GLOSSARY..... 20

Appendix..... 24

Excerpts from Forest Service Manual..... 24

 2721.21 – Isolated Cabins:..... 24

 2721.23 – Recreation Residence:..... 24

 2721.23a – Administration:..... 24

 2721.23b – *Applications* 26

2721.23c – Permit Preparation.....	27
2721.23d - <i>Fee Determination</i> : (FSH 2709.11, chapter 30)	27
2721.23h – Cooperation and Issue Resolution.....	28
2721.23i – Noncompliance	28
2721.23j – Lot Restoration.....	28
2721.24 – Caretaker Residence.....	28

Standards for Recreation Residence Special Use Permits

Pike and San Isabel National Forests
Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands

Introduction

These guidelines have been prepared for the Pike and San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands (PSICC) to explain the rules under which recreation residence special use permits are administered on this unit. Most of the policies and guidelines listed below are excerpts from the recreation and special uses sections of the *Forest Service Manuals* (FSM) and *Forest Service Handbooks* (FSH). Relevant sections from the manual are included in the appendix.

Since the exclusive occupancy of National Forest System lands by recreation residences (structures) must contain safeguards to protect the public land, permits issued for this use contain stipulations that assist in reaching that goal. The following section is intended to help promote an awareness and understanding of the special use administration standards by which this unit operates.

The contact person for special use administration is normally the District Recreation / Lands Staff Officer or their assistant. Feel free to call them any time you have questions about your cabin or your permit. The District addresses and phone numbers are listed below.

Headquarters	2840 Kachina Drive, Pueblo, CO 81008	719-553-1400
Leadville RD	810 Front St., Leadville, CO 80461	719-486-0749
Salida RD	325 W. Rainbow Blvd., Salida, CO 81201	719-539-3591
San Carlos RD	3028 E. Main, Canon City, CO 81212	719-269-8500
Pikes Peak RD	601 S. Weber St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903	719-636-1602
South Park RD	320 Hwy. 285, Box 219, Fairplay, CO 80440	719- 836-2031
South Platte RD	19316 Goddard Ranch Ct., Morrison, CO 80465	303-275-5610

Definition of Recreation Residence

Recreation residences in the National Forest were established to provide a non-commercial forest recreation experience. In order to ensure that the recreation intent is maintained, it is required that the recreation residence must not be used to the exclusion of a home elsewhere. A home elsewhere can be a house, apartment, mobile home, or other reasonable domicile either owned or rented and must be open and available to the permittee at all times. It cannot be simply an address used in the pretense of a home elsewhere. It must be a place where the permittee routinely receives mail, is registered to vote, where children attend school, and from where the permittee normally commutes to work. There is no limit on the length of stay in a recreation residence. However, the above criteria make it clear that a permittee shall not utilize the residence continually for 12 months a year. The recreation residence should be utilized at least a minimum of 15 days per calendar year by the permittee to ensure that the privilege granted by the permit is exercised and the continued exclusive private use of public land is justified.

Guidelines for Recreation Residences

The recreation residence is used for personal recreation only. It shall not be used commercially in any way. Permittees may not use the recreation residence as a place from which they routinely commute to work on a full time basis, nor may their relatives, or guests. No business of any form may be conducted from a recreation residence. Some typical examples that would be prohibited are real estate sales, firewood sales, carpentry, repair services, and snowmobile rental.

Permits

The subject of permits has been an area of some confusion for cabin owners and others over the years. Following is a listing and description of the primary permits which are currently in use as related to recreation residences. The correct definition of a Term Permit is “A special use authorization to occupy and use National Forest System land, for a specified period that is both revocable and compensable under its terms.”

Term Special Use Permit for Recreation Residences (Form FS-2700-5a, 02/07). This permit is the most recent revision of the recreation residence permit. This permit was created as a result of the passage of the Cabin Users Fee Fairness Act.

99 Year Lease

The so-called “99 year lease” is mentioned here only because the term has been much discussed and misunderstood over the years. Many permittees have had (and some still have) the mistaken impression that their permit is a 99-year lease. Actually, there is not now, and never has been, an instrument in the Forest Service known as a “99 year lease” – and it is uncertain exactly where this idea originated.

Apparently, the “99 year lease” was not an uncommon practice on private land in the early part of the century, and some such leases for summer homes and subdivisions do exist on private land in the foothills and mountain areas. It is possible that these areas, because of their location adjacent to or near National Forest land, became associated, in the view of some permittees, with National Forest recreation residence tracts.

General Permit Requirements

Permittees may on occasion ask, “Why have inspections?” or “Why so many rules and policies?” The requirements are to administer the recreation residence permit in a manner that will maintain a forest-related recreation experience for the permittee and the public and to prevent that experience from being significantly lessened by the presence of human improvements.

The regulations and conditions governing the use, maintenance and reconstruction of recreation residences are those necessary to comply with state, county and local ordinances, building and sanitation codes, and to safeguard the interest of the general public in the National Forests. Restrictions and special rules are designed to fit local conditions, and their objectives are to:

- a) Prevent urbanization of recreation residence tracts by limiting the addition of improvements. To achieve this objective, we have limited the size of structures and number of buildings allowed per lot.

Help assure the safety of the permittees and the general public.

Protect the forest environment from degradation as a result of encroachment of urban development, such as bright colored buildings, T.V. antennas, elaborate ultra modern structures, urban landscaping, or cabins that turn into shacks due to poor maintenance and an accumulation of junk around them.

Protect the forest environment including soil, vegetation, water, wildlife, and air quality.

Comply with the meaning and intent of the special use permit.

Comply with the Act of March 4, 1915, the legislation which authorized use and occupancy of National Forest land for recreation purposes such as summer homes, stores, and resorts.

Comply with the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, by recording and protecting historic values associated with eligible summer homes, some of which may be prime examples of a style of vernacular architecture or of a traditional recreation lifestyle.

Transfer of Improvements and Issuance of New Special Use Permits

- 1) General conditions requiring the issuance of new permits are:
 - a) Transfer or sale of improvements.
 - b) Adding or removing a name from the permit as the result of death or divorce or for personal reasons.
- 2) Sale of a recreation residence on National Forest land involves a sale of only the structures thereon. The sale value of your improvements will depend upon how you maintain them.
- 3) Authority to use the land occupied by the improvements is granted by a special use permit signed by a District Ranger. This permit itself is not transferable. Upon change of ownership it must be terminated and a new permit issued. A recreation residence special use permit grants the use of a specific lot for residential purposes for a definite period of time. Additionally a part of the permit is for specific structures, etc., which occupy National Forest System land. Only those items listed on the permit are authorized.

- 4) Issuance of a new special use permit may be requested by a permittee(s) desiring to buy/sell their cabin (see 5. below). However, issuance of the new permit is not automatic. Limitations and different requirements brought about by 50 years of changes in public needs and demands may be incorporated in permits to new owners. Issuance of the new permit will then be subject to acceptance of these terms by the new owner.

Since Real Estate agents often do not understand the special use permit or the permitting process, prospective buyers and sellers of improvements should personally contact the District Recreation Staff to find out under what conditions a new permit will be approved. A conditional sales agreement or escrow instructions could provide that the permit be available for the buyer's inspection prior to closing the purchase. Prior to issuing a permit to a new owner all unauthorized items will be removed from the permitted area.

- 5) The District Recreation Staff should be informed of contemplated sales involving the recreation residence. The seller and buyer must execute page 1 of the combined relinquishment / application form FS-2700-3a. This is a formal notice to the District Ranger of intention to sell and request that the permit be terminated and a new one issued to the buyer. In addition, a Bill of Sale, deed or other proof of ownership must be submitted.
- 6) Upon receipt of the completed relinquishment and application form, the District Recreation Staff will arrange for an inspection of the recreation residence. Recommendations for a new permit may be made subject to the correction or improvement of any substandard condition(s) noted. The new permit may be withheld pending the satisfactory correction of major noncompliance issues. A time schedule may be developed and agreed upon for completion of these corrective actions. Acceptance by the new owner will be necessary to validate the permits.
- 7) Sales of improvements that are part of an estate require submission of evidence that the person signing the relinquishment is the legal heir, administrator or executor of the estate.
- 8) Permits are issued in the name of one individual or to a husband and wife. Existing permits that were not issued to an individual or husband and wife will be revised at the first opportunity so that the responsible individual is identified.
- 9) No more than one recreation residence special use permit shall be issued to any single family (husband, wife, dependent children).
- 10) The new permittee must meet with the District Recreation Staff and go over the terms and conditions of the permit prior to signing it.
- 11) A conditional sales contract protects the seller and is recognized by the Forest Service to the extent that in the event of default of contract, the permit to the buyer who defaults will be terminated and a new permit issued to the person showing legal right of possession. The permit is a privilege granted to an individual. The seller cannot assure the buyer that the privilege of occupying National Forest land will be continued.
- 12) Use of National Forest System land for facilities such as roads and pipelines requires additional permits. In addition, any maintenance of roads on National Forest System land requires a permit.

- 13) A recreation residence permit holder must be an individual, a married couple, or a designated representative of a formally established family trust.
- 14) The holder of the permit must be able to demonstrate ownership of the authorized improvements. When the holder is a designated representative of a family trust, the holder must be able to demonstrate ownership of the authorized improvements in the name of the trust that they are representing.

Destruction, Abandonment, Termination, and Future Use

The PSICC will manage recreation residences in accordance with *Forest Service Manual* and *Forest Service Handbook* direction. These policies recognize the need to provide for public safety, to protect forest resources, and to balance the growing needs for all National Forest users.

- 1) **Destruction** – Upon substantial destruction of a residence by fire or natural causes (falling trees, limbs, avalanches, landslides, floods etc.), the permittee will be given the following options:
 - a) The permittee may rebuild a residence on the lot if the authorized officer determines that the site can be safely occupied and that re-building will be allowed. Building plans must be approved by the Forest Service, State or county and others (where appropriate). The building must be completed within two (2) years.
 - b) Or, the permittee may elect to abandon the residence, in which case the permit will terminate after the Forest Service has received written notification of abandonment and given written agreement to the request. The permittee will be responsible for removal of all improvements and restoration of the site.
 - c) Or, the permittee may elect to sell the partial residence remaining on the lot. In this case, the Forest Service will review the site and write an inspection outlining work to be completed and a corresponding time schedule.

Under no circumstances will separate structures (guest houses, storage sheds, garages, etc.) be authorized.

- 2) **Abandonment** – Upon abandonment (i.e. non-use, non-payment of fees, etc.) of improvements, the permittee will be notified of the termination of the permit. The permittee will be informed of their obligation under the permit to restore the permitted site to its natural condition. A maximum 6-month time limit will normally be given, subject to weather conditions, to complete restoration.

If the permittee fails to remove their improvements (or remains, should they be destroyed/damaged), the Forest Service will remove them and restore the site at permittee expense; a Bill for Collection for all costs associated with site clean up and restoration, including employee salary, will be sent to the permittee.

3) **Termination / Future Uses**

- a) All residences on the PSICC will have a common termination date. Permits being transferred will have the same expiration date as the original permit.
- b) Term recreation residence permits are issued for a specific period of time and provide for reimbursement as outlined in the permit, should public interest require termination of the permit during the term period.
- c) There is no guarantee, implied or intended, that a new permit will be issued at the end of any currently existing term permit. Prospective permittees should realize the necessity of amortizing any personal investment during the period of the permit.
- d) Permits will be issued for existing residences at the end of their current terms when it is in the public interest to do so and no management use conflicts exist.

Permittees are encouraged to check with their District Ranger or district staff for information on anticipated future management changes concerning their continued exclusive use of National Forest lands. In addition, the District Ranger will make every effort to keep the permittees informed of changes that might affect them.

- e) It is Forest Service policy to provide permittees 10 years advanced written notice if the use is to be terminated for some other use. Exception;
 - i) when it is in the public interest, particularly when the final decision authority does not rest with the Forest Service (e.g., state highway relocation);
 - ii) when there is an uncorrected breach of the permit; or
 - iii) the site has been rendered unsafe by a catastrophic event such as flood, avalanche, or landslide.

Use of the Permitted Area

The use of recreation vehicles for guest rooms is not authorized. Pickup campers, vacation trailers, tent trailers, and motor homes may not be stored on a recreation lot. It is realized that visits by friends driving such vehicles are common and that some permittees may drive such vehicles while using the recreation residence. Occasional temporary use is permissible. The intent is to prevent recreation vehicles from being used as regular sleeping quarters and from being stored on a recreation residence lot.

Public Use

The special use permit does not provide exclusive use of National Forest System lands to recreation residence homeowners. The public has the right to cross land under special use authorization, if necessary, for lawful access to National Forest System lands. At the earliest opportunity, borderline or off-lot improvements blocking necessary public access to lakeshores, streambanks, and other areas will be removed. The public does not have the right to use land within the permitted lot boundary for activities such as picnicking, camping, or vehicle travel and

parking. However, the permittee shall not place private property or no trespassing signs on National Forest System land. Signs approved by the Forest Service, which delineate the site as being authorized under special use permit, may be placed on lot boundaries.

Subleasing / Rental

Sublease and rental are considered synonymous. Any subleasing of the site and improvements shall only be authorized by a written document issued in advance by the authorized Forest

Service line officer (District Ranger) and will be for recreation use only. It constitutes use by another party or parties in addition to the minimum 15 days of recreation use each year by the permittee. Subleasing will be incidental to the permittee's personal use and will normally be of a short duration. As a guide, "short duration" is 2 weeks (14 calendar days), although periods of up to 30 days may be authorized.

The intent is to allow better utilization of National Forest System lands. Subleasing decisions will be documented in the permit folder, citing reasons for the decision. Keep in mind however, that the Forest Service is not obligated to allow permittees full recovery for costs of owning a recreation residence by subleasing. An application for subleasing is available from the district permit administrator.

Permitted Structures – Improvements

General

An objective for a recreation tract is to give the impression of a forest having a few cabins – rather than a subdivision with a few trees. Therefore the dominant character of a recreation residence tract must be the forest environment, not the improvements. The residences and lots should be cared for to retain the tract's visual, natural historic character.

NOTE: If the historic standards of a particular lot group are more stringent than these standards, then the lot group's standards will prevail. Lot group standards may include

but not be limited to architectural style, colors, exterior materials, lack of electrical or telephone service, lack of wells or indoor plumbing, smaller square footage limits, no porches or decks, or any other standards that have been in practice for a particular lot group.

Authorized structures

Only those structures named on the face of the permit are authorized. The objective is to have only one dwelling per lot (recreation residence). Unauthorized structures (i.e. guest houses and sleeping quarters) will be phased out as opportunity allows, or attached through alterations of design, such as with a breezeway (if the resulting total size of the residence does not exceed 1240 square feet). Opportunities that may allow removal of excess structures include:

1. A change in ownership,
2. expiration of the permit,

3. a request for new construction
4. and destruction of the structure.

Separate structures such as pump houses, storage sheds, generators, and outhouses (subject to county approval) may be authorized if they cannot be logically incorporated into the main residence. Separate structures will be included in the 1,240 square feet total living space allowed and shall not exceed an aggregate of 100 square feet.

New construction or reconstruction of guesthouses and garages with/without sleeping facilities shall not be authorized under any circumstances.

Plans

The special use permit requires a permittee to submit conceptual design and layout plans for proposed development or changes to the District Ranger. The conceptual plans should be detailed enough to allow preparation of an analysis, and details shown should include roads, trees, rock outcrops, planned and existing improvement locations, and lot boundary as accurately as possible. The size of structures, materials and schedule should also be indicated.

After review by the District Ranger and receipt of the Ranger's approval-in-concept of the proposed development, addition, or alteration, the permittee's construction plans shall be approved by the county in which the structure will be constructed. The plans will also be reviewed and approved by the appropriate Forest Service personnel. The architect's or engineer's signature and seal will appear on the plans submitted to the Forest Supervisor's office. The permittee must also obtain required permits from the state or county and submit these to the Forest Service before the project can commence.

New construction, alteration, addition, or substantial repairing of existing improvements will be authorized only when the maximum size standard of 1240 square feet is not exceeded and is compatible with the forest environment. Comments from affected neighbors will be requested along with project proposal plans for additions to cabins.

Approval for new construction and alterations is given for the upcoming year only. If work has not commenced within the one year period, new approval must be sought (to accommodate possible changes in circumstances related to the proposed construction). Once work has commenced, the permittee has 18 months to complete all exterior work, so the residence looks finished from the outside. It is permissible for interior work to continue beyond 18 months, but no lumber, building debris, or other materials may be stored on the lot outside the authorized improvements.

Size

A recreation residence building may not be constructed higher than one story and a loft if on level ground. Total height will conform to county ordinance. For the purposes of these standards, a loft is defined as interior space meeting the following description: The square footage is two-thirds or less of the ground floor area. Total square footage of the structure will not exceed 1240 square feet including main floor, loft, etc.

- The loft is open with no intervening partitions.
- No bathrooms are included in the loft.
- The loft is not partitioned off from the vaulted ceiling of the main floor (where applicable).

The interior living space is limited to a maximum of 1240 square feet and may be much less in some summer home groups depending on the group character. This includes any loft, but not an exterior deck or screened-in porch.

Decks, Appurtenances, and Minor Improvements

Decks and patios must be attached to the residence. Combined deck and/or patio size will not exceed 600 square feet. Decks on only one side of the residence are preferred. Deck and patio location must be approved by the Forest Service and must be within the setback line (see Improvements Standards, Item 8). If area under a deck is used for storage it must be fully enclosed. Lattice is prohibited due to the fire hazard.

Appurtenances may be approved on a case-by-case basis if they do not detract from the forest setting. Examples:

- Satellite dishes/antennas - normally will not exceed 18" in diameter and may be approved on a tract or association basis only. They may be installed only on a post/pole with a height not to exceed 10 feet above ground line. They must be removed when recreation residence is vacant. No roof mountings will be allowed.
- Solar panels – may be approved if constructed of a non-reflective color harmonious with the forest setting.
- Hot tubs – may be approved subject to the surrounding group's approval regarding Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. If approved, it will be constructed directly adjacent to the main structure or on the attached deck and will be screened so that it is not visible by neighbors or from public vantage points.
- Swing set – may be approved if made of natural material that blends well with the setting and does not damage trees.
- Bar-B-Qs – may be approved if incorporated into the deck or patio area, with Forest Service approval. Bar-B-Q's and fire pits may not be built into natural features (i.e., mortared against rocks). Existing outside fireplaces may remain if maintained and compatible with forest setting. No new permanent fireplaces will be authorized. With the availability and safety of small, portable grills and propane units, it is not necessary to construct permanent fireplaces of rock or brick.

Outhouses must be constructed of materials and colors to blend with the cabin and other outbuildings. They are included as a portion of the maximum 1,240 square foot allowed, and the 100 square foot maximum for separate structures. The replacement or relocation of an outhouse must be authorized by the Forest Service before work commences. Replacement outhouses

should be a sealed vault, self-contained composting, chemical, or propane-fired which meet local and county regulations.

Utilities

Electric and telephone service must first be authorized by the Forest Service and must meet standards for safety and proper installation. All new utility lines shall be buried underground: phones lines a minimum of 24", power lines a minimum of 36" in depth or to Federal and State code.

Improvement Standards

General

1. Mobile homes or trailers are not permitted.
2. Only one single-family residence shall be constructed on each lot. Separate structures may be permitted for uses not logically attached to the main structure, (i.e., outhouse, pump house, generator). Where septic systems are not authorized, sealed vaults, composting, propane fired or chemical toilets are required.
3. To the extent feasible, the overall appearance of improvements will be inconspicuous. They will not contrast unnecessarily with natural landforms on the site. Design will emphasize low, predominately horizontal lines or will duplicate dominant landform line of the building site or background. Where possible, structures will be placed with their long side parallel to natural slopes. Unusual forms may be appropriate if handled tastefully. This ordinarily will require the services of a highly skilled designer.
4. A chimney, flue, and spark arrester must be installed in accordance with federal, state, and county ordinances and regulations. Wood stoves must be installed in accordance with manufactures installation instructions. Electrical wiring installation must conform to the code adopted by the local county.
5. Yard lighting is normally discouraged. However where needed for safety, lights should be mounted on buildings or on freestanding posts. Power lines to lights, between buildings, or to low intensity walkway lights shall be buried. Lighting should be installed to minimize disruption to surrounding areas.
6. Handrails, fences, and gates will be constructed of wood and must be approved prior to installation. Fences and rails may not be attached to trees.
7. Propane tanks are allowed: they should be screened or painted (if allowable by local code) in a subdued, non-reflective color.

Operation and Maintenance Plan

A requirement of the special use permit is that the permittee and the Forest Service jointly prepare an operation and maintenance (O&M) plan, which will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary. This O&M plan will cover requirements such as maintenance of facilities,

removal of vegetation, signing, fire protection, removal of garbage and trash, and identifies the person responsible for implementing the plan.

Signing

Signing will not be permitted except as shown below. All signs must be of a rustic nature and must be approved in advance by the authorized officer.

All cabins must display the lot number so that it is easily visible from the driveway. The owner's name and cabin number may be shown on a rustic, routed wooden sign. Maximum size of the sign is 18"x 8"x 2".

Accepted lettering and sign colors will conform to Forest Service Sign Manual (EM 7100-15) paint standards for wood routed signs. Signs may not be nailed to trees. Painting lot numbers on natural features will not be permitted. "Private Property" or "No Trespassing" signs will not be permitted. The yellow and black National Forest Service sign "Notice- This Use of National Forest Land is authorized by the Forest Service- U.S. Department Of Agriculture" small metal sign number 27-5, (or its earlier version) will be attached in a prominent position on the main structure (to be supplied by the Forest Service).

General Standards for Construction

The forest/mountain environment including its inherent activities and lifestyle is very different from the urban environment, and the Forest Service is striving for a standard that will be compatible with the natural environment.

The following are some guidelines relating to this standard:

- 1) Modern materials such as structural steel, concrete, and glass in well-designed combination with wood or stone are acceptable.
- 2) Buildings constructed entirely of metal are usually not acceptable.
- 3) Wood and stone used in essentially rough form harmonizes very well with natural surroundings. The exterior of other materials used should appear similarly rough textured. Large even surfaces should be broken. Uniform lineal patterns are not desirable.
- 4) Roofs must be designed and built to withstand the maximum snow loads of the area as specified in applicable county building codes. Pitched roofs of at least 5" rise to 12" run are recommended.

- 5) The following roof coverings are acceptable:
 - a) Color-impregnated metal roofing may be used. Dark colors with a non-reflective finish will be approved where compatible with the forest setting.
 - b) Composition shingles (mineral surface and asbestos), tile, and other flexible materials.
 - c) Although shake and wood shingle roofing is desirable visually, summer homes located in dense forest should be roofed with non-flammable materials such as composition shingles or metal.
- 6) Acceptable materials for exterior walls and porches may be as follows:
 - a) Textured exterior plywood, wooden vertical or horizontal siding, peeled logs, native stone, or manufactured “logs.” Combinations of these materials are often more acceptable than a single material.
 - b) Small concrete blocks, lightweight aggregate blocks, split face block, and similar materials in mute tan, gray, green, and charcoal are acceptable in appropriate combination with wood. The use of white or bright colored mortar or stucco, corrugated iron or tarpaper will not be approved.
- 7) Foundations:
 - a) Continuous foundations of approved materials are required. Exposed foundations shall extend above the ground only as far as necessary to conform to good construction practices.
 - b) Solid masonry chimneys must extend to a solid ground foundation with adequate footing. Freestanding fireplaces of an approved design may be authorized.

Colors

The exterior of improvements must be harmonious with the forest setting. Semi-transparent stains, which allow natural wood of a structure to be seen, are preferred over paints. Where paints are used, use of colors found in native soil, bark, rock, and vegetation during most of the year will achieve the desired harmony. Examples of such colors include brown, charcoal gray, dark green, and tan. Non-reflective matte finishes are more harmonious with the natural texture of the surrounding forest than are bright, shiny surfaces.

Window trim, door casings, shutters, and other outside trim should harmonize with the main structure and the environment and generally should not present strong contrast. Colors such as white, bright green, orange, blue, or yellow are not acceptable. Aluminum window and door sashes must be in dark color, such as bronze anodized finish. Bare aluminum will not be permitted (existing ones will be allowed until replaced).

Hazardous Trees

A “hazard” tree is defined as one which poses a significant threat to the residence, associated structures, the parking area, or outdoor areas of frequent use. Hazard trees include dead, dying, or strongly leaning trees within striking distance of improvements or use areas. Trees causing structural damage to an improvement (such as root growth causing a foundation to crack) can be considered hazard trees as well. The permittee will work with the Forest Service to ensure that sufficient vegetation (trees, limbs, brush and grass) is removed to allow for an adequate “defensible space” (as defined by Forest Service fire standards) around the structure in the event of wildfire.

Administration of hazard trees and other vegetation on recreation residence tracts will be managed to meet fire and other safety needs while preserving the forest environment in as natural a state as possible. Permittees are responsible for the identification and removal of trees that are hazardous to their improvements (whether they are located on or adjacent to permitted lots), but must obtain Forest Service approval prior to removal of any tree. Under no circumstances will the Forest Service contract for any tree removal that is the responsibility of the permittee unless it is done through a cooperative agreement under which the permittee is responsible for all costs associated with this work. Permittees should contact the Forest Service if they are concerned about a particular tree. In addition the Forest Service may identify hazard trees during inspections and require permittees to remove them.

In any calendar year, hazard trees within the boundaries of the recreation residence lot will be authorized for use on or off site if a firewood permit is purchased (by the holder) from the Forest Service district office. If a firewood permit is not purchased, the material generated from the removal of the hazard trees will be placed off lot such that it may be collected by the public with proper permits in place.

Landscaping

Landscaping is authorized only to restore natural conditions. Urban-like flower beds, lawns, and large, permanent decorations are not acceptable. Walks should be gravel or native materials. Exceptions must be approved by the District Ranger in consultation with the Forest Landscape Architect. Removal of vegetation solely to improve views and visibility will not be approved.

Attachments or nails are not allowed on or in trees. Such attachments include, but are not limited to: gates, yard lights, power lines, fences, benches, signs, clotheslines, and wires. Livestock, including recreational saddle stock, shall not be kept on summer home lots.

Lot Line and Setback

When improvements are proposed it will be the responsibility of the permittee to locate their lot corners in order to comply with setback requirements. Corners will be marked with metal pipe to approved Forest Service standards. All structures shall be setback a minimum of 10 feet from the marked lot line. Existing main residences encroaching on the lot line and/or setback line may remain until it is reasonable to move them, (i.e., rebuilding due to fire, flood, etc.). All other improvements will be removed and /or relocated, if authorized, at time of permit transfer. Variances may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Roads and Bridges

Those roads/bridges that are not maintained by county, state, or other agency, or do not serve a public or other resource need, will be placed under permittee association for the tract. The roads/bridges will be maintained to Forest Service standards, which shall be defined in the operating plan that is attached to the permit as an exhibit. Those roads serving both public and recreation residence needs, will be on a cost share basis – details will be worked out on a case-by-case basis.

The following criteria will be used to determine maintenance responsibility:

- Does the road/bridge serve resources or activities other than the cabins?
- Does Forest Service manage this resource/activity?
- Would the road/bridge exist if not for the cabins?
- Is there a potential Forest Service need for the road/bridge?

If the answer to all questions is yes, then the Forest Service should maintain the road/bridge.

If the answer is no, then the cabin owner or association will be responsible for maintenance. Answers of yes and no mean there is a shared responsibility, and an agreement will have to be reached on the proportionate shares.

Gates

On Forest Service or county maintained roads, gates will be installed only to prevent or reduce resource damage and will be closed only during the normal seasonal closures to all vehicles. On permittee or association maintained roads, gates may be approved that will restrict public vehicular traffic. These gates will be approved Forest Service design with appropriate safety signs attached. In addition, an approved sign (as approved by the Forest Service) with wording to allow foot traffic access to National Forest lands behind the gate and beyond the summer home group will be installed adjacent to the gate. All gates will be required to have a Forest Service lock in addition to the locks of any other users of the gate. If the road has shared maintenance, then the road/gate will be treated as though it were a Forest Service maintained facility. In addition, a sign shall be installed by the association which informs the public that the gate/road is under special use permit.

Off-lot Improvements

All improvements off the lot must be authorized on the face of the permit, using the appropriate authority (Act), or by separate permit. This would include improvements such as water systems (pipes, tanks, pump houses, power lines etc.), sanitation systems, and outhouses.

Fences

Fences will not normally be approved. Exceptions may be made when a fence is appropriate to define general public use areas from cabin use areas, or to meet other resource needs such as excluding livestock authorized under a grazing permit and when it can be done within acceptable visual management constraints.

Water Systems

The owner of the recreation residence, or an association of owners if applicable, is responsible for testing drinking water and assuring its purity in compliance with state regulations.

If a well is authorized, the owner(s) of the recreation residence must obtain necessary well permits from the state. Water rights will be obtained in the name of the United States, not the permittee. New requests for wells in drainages where state water rights are already over allocated will normally be denied. In cases where existing well permits or water rights are in place the permittee shall be responsible for any augmentation, which may be required by the state. In addition, adequate septic systems (including gray-water) will be required in compliance with local state or county regulations.

Public Access Delineation

The Forest Service in partnership with the cabins/tracts will work to define and separate public and tract space by delineating public access routes to National Forest areas located beyond the tracts. This may be done, for example, by developing public parking, open type (split rail) fences, and trails signed for public use. Consideration will be given to protection of sensitive plants, animals, and archaeological areas.

Inspections

The premises and improvements are subject to Forest Service inspection to assure permittee compliance with terms of the special use permit, which requires that an acceptable standard of repair, cleanliness, and fire safety is maintained. Unauthorized structures/items, which are found on the permitted site, will result in a notice of non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the permit. Continued failure to correct non-compliance issues will result in adverse action being taken against the permit.

Trash

Trash shall not be allowed to accumulate or present a wildlife habitation problem. Trash shall be removed when the property is vacated.

NOTE: THESE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES WILL BE USED FROM THIS DATE FORWARD. EXISTING CONDITIONS, WHICH ARE IN CONFLICT WITH THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE ADDRESSED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, WITH CORRECTIONS BEING MADE WHERE POSSIBLE AND WHEN PRACTICAL.

GLOSSARY

authorized officer

Any Forest Service employee with delegated authority to evaluate and administer special-use authorizations.

day users

Those recreationists who travel Forest roads or highways and stop at developed sites or dispersed areas for swimming, picnicking, fishing, taking pictures, or other activities. Generally their length of stay is short.

design capacity

The maximum theoretical amount of use a developed recreation site was built to accommodate.

developed recreation site

Distinctly defined area where facilities are provided for concentrated public use (e.g., campgrounds, picnic areas, boating sites, ski areas).

dispersed recreation

Outdoor recreation that occurs outside of developed recreation sites (e.g., scenic driving, hunting, backpacking, fishing).

expiration

The cessation or termination of a special use authorization upon reaching the end of the specified period of occupancy or use.

FSH

Forest Service Handbook.

FSM

Forest Service Manual.

holder or permittee

The person or entity to whom a special-use authorization is issued.

in-lieu lots

Lots located on the National Forest, where displaced residents may establish new recreation residences.

land/water interface

The strip of land bordering on and directly influenced by a stream, river, or lake. The interface has high recreational value because it offers views of the water, water in motion may be heard, and access to the water is relatively unrestricted.

mitigation

Actions taken to avoid, minimize, reduce, eliminate, or rectify the adverse impacts of a practice.

open space

Land adjacent to recreation facilities that is kept free of any major development.

permit holder

Any applicant who has received a special use authorization (see FSM 2705). A recreation residence permit holder must be an individual, a married couple, or a designated representative of a formally established living or family trust. The holder of the permit must be able to demonstrate ownership of the authorized improvements. When the holder is a designated representative of a family trust or living trust, the holder must be able to demonstrate ownership of the authorized improvements in the name of the trust which they are representing.

persons-at-one-time (PAOT)

A term used to measure recreation capacity, which means the number of people that can use a facility or area at one time. PAOT capacity represents the design capacity for a facility or the theoretical maximum capacity over a period of time.

private use sites

Recreation sites developed and operated for use exclusively by private groups, organizations, or individuals. These include clubs, private camps, and recreation residences.

privately provided recreation sites (private sector)

Recreation sites developed and operated under permit by private parties or groups. These sites may be developed for private, public, or semi-public uses. (See definitions for private, public, and semi-public use sites.)

public space

Space in recreation areas dedicated to public day use, such as picnicking, sun bathing, beaching of boats, access to fishing, strolling, bird watching, photography, etc. Development consists of minimal facilities such as parking lots, trails, and signing.

public use sites

In general, those recreation sites developed for use by the general public, such as campgrounds, picnic sites, and boating sites. Ski areas, resorts, and other privately provided sites open to the public also fit into this category.

publicly provided recreation sites (public sector)

Recreation sites and facilities developed and managed by the Forest Service. Examples are campgrounds, picnic areas, and boat launch ramps.

recovery

Cancellation or non-renewal, for other purposes, of special use permits such as resorts, recreation residences, and organization camps. The improvements would be removed and the land used for other activities (e.g., campgrounds, picnic areas, waterfront access).

recreation residence

A privately owned dwelling within an established recreation residence tract on National Forest System land, authorized for maintenance and use under a special use permit. A recreation residence is to be used by permittees, their families, and guests for enjoyment of related National Forest System lands and recreation resources. It is not intended for use as a primary or permanent residence.

recreation visitor day (RVD)

Twelve hours of recreation use in any combination of persons and hours, i.e., one person for 12 hours, three persons for 4 hours, etc.

renewal

The issuance of a new special use authorization usually upon the expiration of a previous authorization.

scoping process

Process used to identify issues and concerns that are within Forest Service authority to resolve - may be in-house, public, or both.

semi-public sites

Those recreation sites providing facilities and services to a segment of the public, generally through development of camps by non-profit organizations, institutions, sites, or other agencies (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, city recreation departments).

special-use authorization

A permit, temporary permit, lease, or easement that allows occupancy, use, rights, or privileges of National Forest Service land.

suspension

The temporary withholding, either entirely or partially, of occupancy or use privileges granted under a special use authorization.

termination

Termination is the situation where the permit is no longer in existence and the permitted activity is no longer authorized. A permit terminates or is terminated as the result of a specific event, condition, or action, or by mutual agreement.

water influence zone

Area oriented to outdoor water recreation.

Appendix

Excerpts from Forest Service Manual

2721.21 – Isolated Cabins:

This designation includes isolated recreation cabins located on sites not planned or designated for recreational cabin purposes. Use of these cabins originated from situations other than occupancy trespasses or invalid mining claims. In most circumstances, these uses should be phased out. The period of continued occupancy may be flexible, but normally should not exceed 15 years. See FSM 2721.23 for direction on recreation residences and FSM 2723.71 for direction on resolving trespass and invalid mining claims problems.

The minimum permit fee is \$150 per year.

2721.23 – Recreation Residence:

The term "recreation residence" includes only those residences that occupy planned, approved tracts or those groups of tracts established for recreation residence use. See FSM 2347 for basic policy on recreation residence use.

2721.23a – Administration:

The following direction relates specifically to issuance and administration of special use permits for recreation residence. For recreation residence permits in Alaska, follow the additional requirements in section 1303(d) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Administer recreation residence permits in accordance with the direction in FSM 2721.23a through 2721.23i and within the broad governing recreation residences and permitted uses set forth in FSM 2347.1 and Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, section 251.50 (36 CFR 251.50).

- 1) Issue special use permits for recreation residence in the name of one individual or to a husband and wife. Upon issuance of a new permit that continues the use or amendment, revise authorizations that are not issued to an individual or to a husband and wife, so that the responsible person is identified.
- 2) Issue no more than one recreation residence special use permit to a single family (husband, wife, and dependent children).
- 3) Do not issue special use permits for recreation residence use to entities such as commercial enterprises, nonprofit organizations, business associations, corporations, partnerships, or other similar enterprises, except that a tract association may own a caretaker residence.
- 4) To the extent possible, issue all recreation residence permits in a tract, or in logical groups of tracts, with the same expiration date.
- 5) To help defray costs and provide additional recreation opportunities, a holder may obtain permission for incidental rental for specific periods; ensure that rental use is solely for recreation purposes and does not change the character of the area or use to a commercial

nature. Rental arrangements must be in writing and approved in advance by the authorized officer. The holder must remain responsible for compliance with the special use authorization.

- 6) Allow no more than one dwelling per lot to be built. In those cases where more than one dwelling (residence/sleeping cabin) currently occupies a single lot; allow the use to continue in accordance with the authorization. However, correct such deficiencies, if built without prior approval, upon transfer of ownership outside of the family (husband, wife, and dependent children).
- 7) When a recreation residence is included in the settlement of an estate, issue a new special use permit to the properly determined heir, if eligible, for the remainder of the original permit term, updated to reflect policy and procedural changes. Prior to estate settlement, issue an annual renewable permit to the executor or administrator to identify responsibility for the use pending final settlement of the estate. When a recreation residence is sold, issue a new term permit to the buyer, if eligible, for the remainder of the original permit term, updated to reflect policy and procedural changes.
- 8) Specify in the permit that the recreation residence must be occupied at least 15 days annually, the minimum acceptable period of occupancy.
- 9) Issue recreation residence term permits for a maximum of 20 years, except when the need for a shorter term has been determined by a project analysis in accordance with FSM 2721.23e and FSH 2709.11, chapter 40.
- 10) When a decision is made to convert the lot to an alternative use (FSM 2721.23e), take the following actions:
 - a) Notify the holder of the reasons and provide a copy of the decision documentation.
 - b) Allow at least 10 years of continued occupancy after notification.
 - c) Allow the current term permit to expire under its own terms and, if the holder is entitled to additional time to satisfy the 10-year notification period, issue a new term permit for the remaining period. Clearly specify any limited tenure by including the following statement in the permit:

"This permit will expire on (insert date) and a new permit will not be issued."
 - d) Issue term or annual permits for additional periods as needed to allow continuation of occupancy until conversion to the alternate public use is ready to begin.
- 11) Before the forest supervisor issues a decision to convert a lot to an alternative public use, submit the proposed decision, supporting documentation and summary of public comments, to the regional forester for review for adequacy of the documentation and analysis. If analysis and documentation are inadequate to support the proposed decision or there is some other deficiency in the proposed decision, the regional forester shall instruct the forest

supervisor to remedy the deficiencies and reconsider the proposed decision prior to making the final decision.

12) As with any resource allocation made in a forest land and resource management plan, the forest supervisor may reconsider a decision to continue or convert recreation residence lots to an alternative public use at any time new or changed conditions merit such reconsideration.

13) In the event a recreation residence is destroyed or substantially damaged by a catastrophic event such as a flood, avalanche, or massive earth movement, conduct and document an environmental analysis to determine whether improvements on the lot can be safely occupied in the future under Federal and State laws before issuing a permit to rebuild or terminating the permit. Normally, an analysis should be completed within 6 months of such an event.

Allow rebuilding if the lot can be occupied safely and the use remains consistent with the forest plan. If the need for an alternative public use at the same location has been established prior to the catastrophic event, do not allow rebuilding if the improvements are more than 50 percent destroyed. If rebuilding is not authorized, in-lieu lots may be offered as provided by FSM 2347.1, paragraph 6, and FSH 2709.11, section 41.23c.

14) At the time permits are issued, advise holders that the terms of the permit require that they notify the Forest Service if they intend to sell their improvements and that they must provide a copy of the permit to a prospective purchaser before finalizing a sale. Whenever possible, the authorized officer should advise a prospective purchaser of the terms and conditions of the permit before a sale is final.

15) Do not stay a fee increase pending completion of an appeal of the fee under the administrative appeal regulations. Make any adjustments resulting from the administrative review through credit, refund, or supplemental billing.

16) During the term of a permit, terminate or revoke the use only in accordance with regulations at 36 CFR 251.60 and the terms and conditions of the permit (FSM 2347.1, para. 5). Except for revocation for noncompliance of terms of the permit, the forest supervisor shall submit proposed revocations, with supporting documentation and a summary of the public comments, to the regional forester for review prior to the forest supervisor's issuance of a decision. If analysis and documentation are inadequate to support the proposed decision or there is some other deficiency in the proposed decision, the regional forester shall instruct the forest supervisor to remedy the deficiencies and reconsider the proposed revocation prior to making the final decision.

2721.23b – Applications

Insofar as practicable, notify a new or prospective owner that he or she must make application for the authorization to use existing improvements in accordance with 36 CFR 251.54

2721.23c – Permit Preparation

- 1) Use the Term Special Use Permit for Recreation Residence, Form FS-2700-5a, to authorize recreation residences, except as specified in paragraph 2 of this section.
- 2) Use the Special Use Permit, Form FS-2700-4, when:
 - a) Conversion of the lot to an alternative public use is authorized, the conversion will be delayed, and a minimum term of continued use cannot be predicted.
 - b) Continuance of the recreation residence use is conditioned on the owner's complying with specific Forest Service requirements before a term permit is issued.
 - c) The improvements are managed by a third party pending settlement of an estate, bankruptcy proceedings, or other legal action.
 - d) Year-long occupancy is authorized by the forest supervisor, at which time the improvement ceases to be a recreation residence.
- 3) In either permit, identify all authorized improvements associated with recreation residence use. Do not authorize use of more than the statutory maximum of 5 acres under a term permit. Authorize community or association-owned improvements, such as water systems, by a separate permit (Form FS-2700-4).

2721.23d - Fee Determination: (FSH 2709.11, chapter 30)

For further direction, see FSH 2709.11, chapter 30.

1. Use market value as determined by appraisal in determining the base annual fees for recreation residence lots. Determine a new base fee at 10-year intervals.
2. Adjust the fee annually by the annual (second quarter to second quarter) change in the Implicit Price Deflator-Gross Domestic Product (IPD-GDP).
3. Use professional appraisal standards in appraising recreation residence lots for fee determination purposes (FSH 2709.11 and 5409.12).
4. Where practicable, contract with private fee appraisers to perform the appraisal.
5. Require appraisers to coordinate the assignment closely with affected holders by seeking advice, cooperation, and information from the holders and local holder associations.
6. Retain only qualified appraisers. To the extent feasible, use those appraisers most knowledgeable of market conditions within the local area.
7. Before accepting any appraisal, conduct a full review of the appraisal to ensure the instructions have been followed and the assigned values are supported properly.

2721.23h – Cooperation and Issue Resolution

Authorized officers shall strive to reduce conflict between holders and the Forest Service arising from permit administration. As necessary, specify a Forest Officer to work with the holders, their representatives, and other interested parties on specific issues.

1. Provide opportunity for holders and their representatives to participate in issue resolution. Where practicable, except where an imminent hazard or risk to health and safety or resources requires immediate action prior to issuing written decisions related to permit administration, consult and meet in person, or by telephone, with holders and their representatives to discuss any issues or concerns related to the permit and to reach a common understanding and agreement.
2. During forest plan amendment or revision and project analysis, seek full involvement of holders and their representatives in public involvement opportunities and activities. Encourage and solicit their input and comments.
3. Meet with holders and their representatives to discuss any issues or concerns arising in the planning and analysis processes and explores opportunities to resolve those issues prior to issuing a decision.
4. If a decision is appealed, utilize the opportunities provided in the appeal rules (36 CFR part 215, part 217, and part 251, subpart C) to discuss the appeal with the appellant(s), interveners(s) and/or their representatives, together or separately, to explore opportunities to resolve the issues by means other than review and decision on the appeal

2721.23i – Noncompliance

Give written notice and provide a reasonable opportunity for a holder to correct special use permit violations before terminating the use for noncompliance with the permit conditions (36 CFR 251.60(e)). Revocation for noncompliance shall be only for a breach of a permit provision(s) that continues after notice and a reasonable opportunity for correction has been given (FSM 2347.1, para. 5).

2721.23j – Lot Restoration

On expiration of a permit, which will not be reissued, or for revocation or termination prior to expiration (FSM 2721.23a, para. 10 and 16), except for revocation in the public interest, require the holder to restore the property to a condition acceptable to the forest supervisor (36 CFR 251.60(j)). The holder may relinquish the improvements to the Forest Service upon approval of the forest supervisor. Terms and conditions for lot restoration are given in the term permit issued for recreation residences.

2721.24 – Caretaker Residence

Refer to FSM 2347.12 for the policy on caretaker residence permits.