

Legal

NOTICE OF OBJECTIONS FILED AND REQUEST FOR INTERESTED PERSON STATUS FOR THE FOLLOWING:

**The U. S. Department of
Agriculture, Forest Service,
Revised Land Management
Plan for the Gila National
Forest: Deputy Regional
Forester Kristin Bail,
Reviewing Officer.**

**Southwestern Regional
Forester's list of species of
conservation concern for the
Gila National Forest:
Associate Deputy Chief
Jacqueline Emanuel,
Reviewing Officer.**

On July 30, 2024, the US Forest Service published a legal notice in the *Silver City Daily Press* (newspaper of record) initiating a 60-day period to file objections to the revised Land Management Plan and the Regional Forester's list of species of conservation concern for the Gila National Forest. The revised Land Management Plan, final Environmental Impact Statement, and draft Record of Decision were simultaneously released for public review. The objection filing period closed on September 30, 2024. The Forest Service received approximately 15 eligible objection letters from individuals and organizations. These objections and a list of topics are available for review at: <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=51887>. Publication of this notice in the *Silver City Daily Press* initiates a 10-day period during which individuals or organizations with a particular interest in the resolution of an objection may request to participate in meetings between the objector(s) and the Forest Service, as an interested person (36 CFR 219.57). This opportunity ensures that efforts to resolve objections are conducted in an open and collaborative forum. Meetings are open to observation by the public, but only objectors and interested persons can actively participate. Interested persons must have provided substantive formal comments during an opportunity for public participation provided during the planning process as provided in 36 CFR 219 Subpart A. Substantive comments are within the scope of the proposal, are specific to the proposal, have a direct relationship to the proposal, and include supporting reasons for the responsible official to consider (36 CFR 219.62). **How to become an interested person:** The request must be submitted within 10 days follow-

ing publication of this legal notice, unless the filing period ends on a weekend or holiday in which case it will be extended to the end of the next Federal workday (11:59 p.m. Mountain Standard Time for electronic filings). Requests must include: 1) name and affiliation (if any); 2) mailing address, phone number, and email address (if available); 3) the name(s) of the objector(s) whose objection(s) the requester has an interest in, a brief explanation of the requester's interest in the objection(s), and any specific concern(s), including a description of support or opposition to the objection(s); and 4) identification of substantive formal comments on the plan provided by the requester during a formal public comment period demonstrating the requester's past participation in the planning process.

Formally identified cooperating agencies with a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for participation in plan revision and federally recognized Tribal governments are automatically granted interested person status. However, they must notify the reviewing officer of their interest in specific objections and intent to participate, so that the reviewing officer is able to provide them with notification of relevant meetings (Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, chapter 50, section 51.65). Agencies without a MOU and other stakeholders must submit a request for interested persons status as described above.

Electronic requests submitted via the plan website are preferred: <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=51887>. Written requests may be submitted via USPS, carrier, or hand delivery to: USDA-Forest Service Southwestern Region, ATTN: Objection Reviewing Officer, Gila National Forest Plan Revision, 333 Broadway Blvd SE, Albuquerque, NM 87102. The office hours for submitting a hand-delivered requests are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Mountain Standard Time, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays.

Resolution meeting: Interested persons requests will be considered by the reviewing officer and eligible interested persons will be notified in advance of the objection resolution meetings. We

anticipate holding a resolution meeting in January 2025. Members of the public who are not objectors or interested persons and would like to attend may observe the resolution meeting but cannot participate. People interested in attending as observers, with questions related to interested person requests, or seeking additional information about the resolution meeting or objection review process please contact Heather McKenny, Objection Coordinator, 603-393-0455, heather.c.mckenny@usda.gov. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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