



## United States Department of the Interior

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200  
Charleston, South Carolina 29407



December 2, 2016

Mr. Rick Lint  
Forest Supervisor  
Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests  
4931 Broad River Road  
Columbia, SC 29212

Re: Biological Opinion for the  
Francis Marion National Forest Revised Land Management Plan  
Location: Berkeley and Charleston Counties, South Carolina  
FWS Log No. 04ES1000-2016-F-0628

Dear Mr. Lint:

This document is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Biological Opinion (BO) based on our review of the revised Land Management Plan for the Francis Marion National Forest (Forest Plan) which describes proposed management activities within the Francis Marion National Forest, Berkeley and Charleston Counties, South Carolina. This BO is provided in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) (ESA). Your original request for formal consultation was received on August 15, 2016. The Service's BO is based on our review of the implementation of the Forest Plan and its effects on the following tabulated species and/or designated critical habitat:

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status	Conclusion	Associated Ecosystem on the Forest
American chaffseed	<i>Schwalbea americana</i>	Endangered	MALAA	Fire-maintained upland longleaf and loblolly pine-dominated woodlands
Canby's dropwort	<i>Oxypolis canbyi</i>	Endangered	MALAA	Fire-maintained Carolina bays and depressional wetlands
Frosted flatwoods salamander	<i>Ambystoma cingulatum</i>	Threatened	MALAA	Fire-maintained upland longleaf woodlands; wet pine savannas and flatwoods, Carolina bays and depressional wetlands
Pondberry	<i>Lindera melissifolia</i>	Endangered	MALAA	Fire-maintained Carolina bays and depressional wetlands
Red-cockaded woodpecker	<i>Picoides borealis</i>	Endangered	MALAA	Fire-maintained upland longleaf and loblolly pine woodlands and wet pine savannas and flatwoods

MALAA-May affect, likely to adversely affect

### Concurrences


Additionally, the Service concurs with your determination that this action is not likely to adversely affect the federally listed American wood stork (*Mycteria Americana*) or adversely modify designated critical habitat for the Frosted Flatwoods Salamander (*Ambystoma cingulatum*). We agree the project will have no effect on Bachman's warbler (*Vermivora bachmanii*) or the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*). In view of this, we believe that the requirements of section 7 of the ESA have been satisfied. However, obligations under section 7 of the ESA must be reconsidered if: (1) new information reveals impacts of this identified action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner not previously considered; (2) this action is subsequently modified in a manner, which was not considered in this assessment; or (3) a new species is listed or critical habitat is determined that may be affected by the identified action.

This BO is based on information provided in the Biological Assessment received on July 25, 2016, and additional communication with the U.S. Forest Service. A complete administrative

record of this consultation is on file at the South Carolina Ecological Services Field Office, 176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200, Charleston, South Carolina 29407.

The Service greatly appreciates the cooperation of U.S. Forest Service personnel during this consultation. We have assigned our Service Log Number 04ES1000-2016-F-0628 to this consultation; please refer to it in any future correspondence concerning this project. If you or your staff has any questions regarding the BO, please contact Ms. Paula Sisson at (843) 727-4707 ext. 226, or Ms. April Punsalan at (843) 727-4707 ext. 218.

Sincerely,

  
for Thomas D. McCoy  
Field Supervisor

TDM

Electronic Copies to:

Will McDearman, RCW Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Jackson, MS  
Harold Mitchell, Frosted Flatwoods Salamander Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
Panama City, FL  
Jerry Ziewitz, Section 7 Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Atlanta, GA  
Scott Wiggers, Pondberry Recovery Lead, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Moss Point, MS