

SPECIAL USE PERMITS

For Snow Survey Sites on National Forest Lands



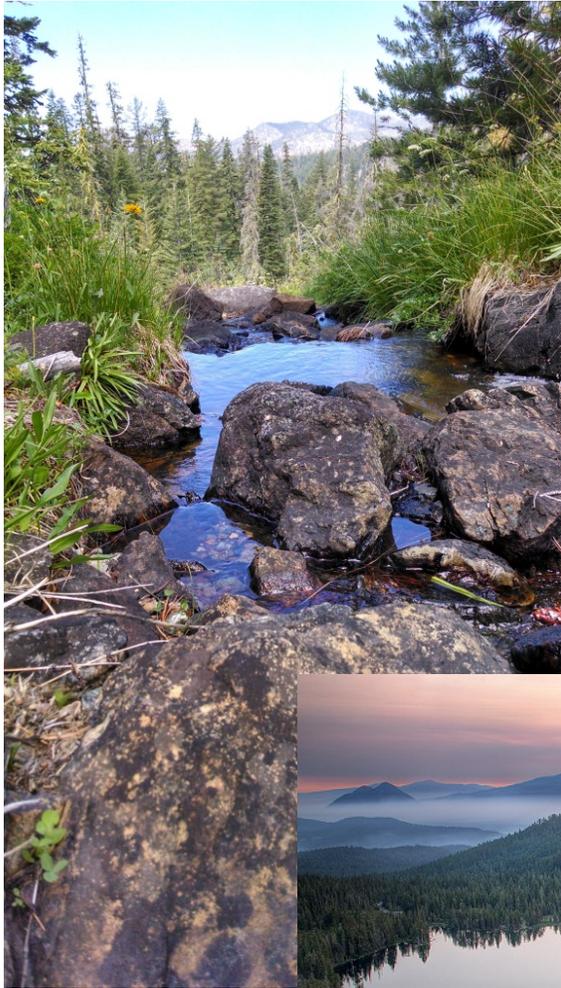
Special Use Permits authorize uses on NFS land that provide a benefit to the general public and protect public and natural resources values. They do not permit the permanent occupancy of public lands and generally have an expiration date related to the legislative authority that allows for the type of use.



Region 5 has approximately 14,000 special use permits in both *lands* and *recreation*. About 24% of those are expired, including a number of Snow survey related facilities. Staffing and resource shortages across the region contribute to this backlog.



A large percentage of our expired permit workload is in the lands category. We have been making some improvements, but there is still much work to be done.



Snow survey sites, SNOTELs, and associated cabins are *lands* permits – lands permits provide a service to the American public associated with water, power, communication, transportation, and other “non-recreation” activities.



Current focus at the Regional Office in the Lands Special Uses program is power transmission and distribution line permits. These lines provide critical services to Californians, minimizing the risk to national forests and communities they serve is a high priority for the region this fiscal year.



The Forest Service is a partner with the state on this Snow survey program because our respective missions overlap with regards to water quality and availability.



We continue to permit Snow survey facilities and activities on NFS lands for those permits that are expired.

Special Use permit administration occurs at the Forest level, so it's important to work with the local FS office when a permitting issue arises

