# USFS Vision statement

We are developing a user-friendly digital tool to guide proponents through the special uses application process. Our work will help reduce back-and-forth and build trust between proponents and permit administrators.

**USFS Problem statement**

Applying for a special use authorization can be complicated, and authorization proponents often need guidance from administrators. Administrators are often resource-constrained and unable to provide the level of guidance needed in the time required, which in turn leads to growing backlogs of unprocessed applications. These conditions risk unauthorized use (and subsequent resource damage), burnout and employee attrition, and corrosion of public trust in the Forest Service.

A successful solution would result in more efficient, accurate, and transparent processing of special use authorizations thus reducing errors and appeals, improving compliance with regulatory requirements and business standards, easing the burden on administrators, and enabling responsible access to National Forest Service lands.

# USFS Draft Vision Statements

## Option 1a

We are guiding the special uses application process for proponents and applicants. It will be an intuitive, user-friendly, digital-first process that reduces back-and-forth with permit administrators and builds trust between applicants and the agency.

## Option 1b

We are developing a more user-friendly special uses application process for proponents and applicants. It will be an intuitive, digital-first tool that supports the relationship between administrator and proponent, reducing back and forth and building trust between applicants and the agency.

## Option 2

We are developing a user-friendly digital tool to guide proponents through the special uses application process. Our work will help reduce back-and-forth and build trust between proponents and permit administrators.

# USFS Draft Problem Statements

## July 24 Draft #6 (current final)

Applying for a special use authorization can be complicated, and authorization proponents often need guidance from administrators. Administrators are often resource-constrained and unable to provide the level of guidance needed in the time required, which in turn leads to growing backlogs of unprocessed applications. These conditions risk unauthorized use (and subsequent resource damage), burnout and employee attrition, and corrosion of public trust in the Forest Service.

## A successful solution would result in more efficient, accurate, and transparent processing of special use authorizations thus reducing errors and appeals, improving compliance with regulatory requirements and business standards, easing the burden on administrators, and enabling responsible access to National Forest Service lands.

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## July 9 Draft #5

Applying for a special uses permit can be complicated, and authorization proponents often need guidance from permit administrators. Permit administrators are often resource-constrained and unable to provide the level of guidance needed in the time required, which in turn leads to growing backlogs of unprocessed permits. These conditions risk unauthorized use (and subsequent resource damage), burnout and employee attrition, and corrosion of public trust in the Forest Service.

A successful solution would result in more efficient, accurate, and transparent permit processing thus reducing errors and appeals, improving compliance with regulatory requirements and business standards, easing the burden on permit administrators, and enabling responsible access to Forest Service lands.

## July 9 Draft #4

Resource-constrained permit administrators struggle to keep up with the volume of proposals, which leads to backlogs of unprocessed permits. These conditions risk unauthorized use and resource damage, burnout and employee attrition, and corrosion of public trust in the Forest Service.

## July 9 Draft #3

Submitting a proposal often requires guidance but permit administrators have limited time to provide it. This leads to slow processing times, growing backlogs, and unprocessed permits. These conditions risk unauthorized use and resource damage, burnout and employee attrition, and corrosion of public trust in the Forest Service.

## ~~June 28 Draft #2~~

~~Authorization proponents have difficulty finding accurate information to submit a proposal and seek guidance from permit administrators. Permit administrators are often under-resourced and therefore unable to provide the level of support that proponents need at the time they need it.~~

## June 28 Draft #1

Authorization proponents have difficulty finding accurate information to submit a proposal and need guidance from permit administrators, who are often under-resourced and therefore unable to maintain clear lines of communication. This can result in slow permit processing times, which in turn yields unwieldy backlogs and unprocessed permits. These conditions can lead to proponents who are unable to gain authorization for permits they are qualified for and missed regulatory requirements. These conditions risk unauthorized use and resource damage, burnout and employee attrition, and corrosion of public trust in the Forest Service.

A successful solution would result in more efficient, accurate, and transparent permit processing thus reducing errors and appeals, improving compliance with regulatory requirements and business standards, easing the burden on permit administrators, and enabling responsible access to Forest Service lands.

Known constraints include the NEPA process (which currently appears outside our domain of influence).

## June 27 Draft

Authorization proponents have difficulty finding accurate information to submit a proposal and need guidance from permit administrators, who are often under-resourced and therefore unable to maintain clear lines of communication. This can result in slow permit processing times, which in turn yields unwieldy backlogs and unprocessed permits and missed regulatory requirements. These conditions risk unauthorized use and resource damage, burnout and employee attrition, and corrosion of public trust in the Forest Service.

A successful solution would result in more efficient, accurate, and transparent permit processing thus reducing errors and appeals, improving the ability to meet deadlines, easing the burden on permit administrators, and enabling responsible access to Forest Service lands.

Known constraints include the NEPA process (which currently appears outside our domain of influence).

Constraints:

* Not going to solve our staffing problems, either
* NEPA
  + Section 7 of Endangered Species Act, Section 106 of Historical Preservation Act – biggest time sucks for the specialists in the NEPA process
* capacity analysis, prospectuses
* Agency priorities (wildfire reduction, competing projects)
* Staffing and funding
* SUDS/SUDS next gen
  + Don’t build redundant functionality?
  + Can’t wait for SUDS next gen?
* This is intake, not apply-and-print

## Early version 1

Limited permit administration staff and limited tools combined with incomplete permit seeker input results in slow permit processing times. This in turn yields unwieldy backlogs and unprocessed permits, which can lead to permit administrator burnout and unauthorized use. Ultimate consequences can include employee attrition, corroded public trust, and resource damage.

## Early version 2

Permit administrators have large workloads and limited tools. Permit seekers often start the application process without knowing what they need to complete it. This results in slow permit processing times, which can in turn yield unwieldy backlogs and unprocessed permits. This risks unauthorized use and possible resource damage, burnout and employee attrition, and ultimately corrosion of public trust in the Forest Service.