



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[Docket No. FWS-HQ-NWRS-2026-2575; FXRS1261090000-267-FF09R20000]

Wilderness Administration and Resource Stewardship; Request for Information

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice; request for public comment.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) seeks public comment on potential improvements to Part 610 of the Service Manual (Wilderness Stewardship), which provides policy direction for the review, planning, stewardship, and administration of wilderness areas managed by the Service. The Service is interested in receiving information and recommendations regarding whether updates, clarifications, or other revisions to existing wilderness stewardship policy may be appropriate. We invite comments from the public, and local, State, Tribal, U.S. Territories, and Federal agencies.

DATES: We must receive your written comments on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

ADDRESSES: *Comment submission:* All submissions must include the docket number FWS-HQ-NWRS-2026-2575 for this document. You must submit comments using one of the following methods:

- *Electronic submission:* Federal eRulemaking Portal at:

<https://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter FWS-HQ-NWRS-2026-2575, which is the docket number for this action. Then click the Search button. On the resulting page, you may submit a comment by clicking on “Comment.” Please ensure that you have found the correct document before submitting your comments.

- *U.S. mail:* Public Comments Processing, Attn: Docket No. FWS–HQ–NWRS–2026–2575, Policy and Regulations Branch, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: PRB (JAO/3W), 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041–3803.

Comments submitted through any method not authorized in this document, or sent to an address not listed here, will not be considered. We will not accept comments via email, fax, or hand delivery. We are not required to consider comments that are submitted after the comment period ends or that are submitted via a method outside of these instructions. Comments containing profanity, vulgarity, threats, or other inappropriate content will not be considered.

We will post all comments at <https://www.regulations.gov>. You may request that we withhold personal identifying information from public review; however, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. See **Public Comments** for more information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nick Kaczor, National Wilderness Coordinator, Branch of Wildlife Resources, nick_kaczor@fws.gov. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services.

Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Background

The Service seeks public comment on potential improvements to Part 610 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (Wilderness Stewardship), which provides policy direction for the review, planning, stewardship, and administration of wilderness areas managed by the Service. The Service is interested in receiving information and recommendations regarding whether updates, clarifications, or other revisions to existing wilderness stewardship policy may be appropriate. The Part 610 Wilderness Stewardship

Service Manual is non-binding, does not establish legally binding rules, and is internal Service policy intended only to improve the internal management of the Service.

Part 610 consists of the following five chapters:

- 610 FW 1: General Overview of Wilderness Stewardship Policy, provides an overview and foundation for implementing the Wilderness Act and the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended;

- 610 FW 2: Wilderness Administration and Resource Stewardship, provides specific direction and guidance on administration of refuge wilderness, including stewardship of natural and cultural resources, public uses, and fire;

- 610 FW 3: Wilderness Stewardship Planning, describes how to develop wilderness stewardship plans;

- 610 FW 4: Wilderness Review and Evaluation, establishes policy for conducting wilderness reviews and managing wilderness study areas, recommended wilderness, and proposed wilderness; and

- 610 FW 5: Special Provisions for Alaska Wilderness, describes the special provisions of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 96-487) that we must consider together with the policy in 610 FW 1–4 in administering National Wildlife Refuge System wilderness areas in Alaska.

To view the current Manual chapters, visit <https://www.fws.gov/policy-library/manuals/land-use-and-management-series/natural-and-cultural-resources-management-0>.

Public Comments

We invite comments from the public, and local, State, Tribal, U.S. Territories, and Federal agencies on the Service Manual chapters. All comments must be received by the date specified above. If you submit a comment at <https://www.regulations.gov>, your entire comment, including any personal identifying information, will be posted on the

website. If you submit a hardcopy comment that includes personal identifying information, such as your address, phone number, or email address, you may request at the top of your document that we withhold this information from public review. However, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Moreover, all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public disclosure in their entirety.

This request for public comment is entirely separate from the opportunity to provide comments on Wilderness Administration and Resource Stewardship; Managing Climbing Activities in Wilderness that also published in this issue of the *Federal Register*. If you wish to submit comments on the draft rock-climbing guidance, please comment on Docket No. FWS–HQ–NWRS–2026–1618 at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

Cynthia Martinez,
Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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