



File Code: 1950

Date: September 3, 2026

Dear Interested Public,

The Andrew Pickens Ranger District of the Sumter National Forest in Oconee County, SC, is proposing forest restoration activities on twelve sites totaling approximately 518 acres in the AP White Pine Plantation Project. Specifically, silviculture treatments including timber harvest and reforestation activities are proposed to regenerate mature Eastern white pine plantations to more diverse mixed species forest communities.

There is a need to change forest conditions from predominantly a monoculture of white pine plantations to mixed shortleaf pine / hardwood forest communities that are better adapted and more resilient to environmental conditions typical of these upland sites. Such communities support viable populations of native plants and wildlife species consistent with management goals in the Sumter Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).

Treatments would include regeneration timber harvest along with reforestation treatments that may include the following: herbicide and/or mechanical site preparation, mastication, and tree planting to establish new mixed species forest communities. Less than 2.5 miles of temporary roads would be used for access. Most temporary roads would utilize existing undesignated "woods" roads. These roads would be obliterated once project treatments are completed.

Portions of some sites have already become mixed with other tree species over time due to white pine mortality caused by overcrowding or past disturbances such as wind, insects, or fire. These patches would either be excluded from harvest or thinned to improve forest health by reducing tree competition. No treatment is proposed in the following areas: Ellicott Rock Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, Roadless Areas, Floodplains or Wetlands, Research Natural Areas, Chattooga Wild and Scenic River Corridor, Botanical/Zoological Areas.

The project may utilize categorical exclusion USDA-47d-USFS, (7 CFR 1b.4(d)(47)), which states the following: "Forest and grassland management activities with a primary purpose of meeting restoration objectives or increasing resilience. Activities to improve ecosystem health, resilience, and other watershed and habitat conditions may not exceed 2800 acres."

HOW TO COMMENT

The Responsible Official for this project is Robert Sitzlar, District Ranger, Andrew Pickens Ranger District. Comments regarding this proposed action may be submitted electronically to SM.FS.r8fmsapcom@usda.gov or by regular mail to: Andrew Pickens Ranger District, Sumter National Forest, 112 Andrew Pickens Circle, Mt. Rest, SC 29664, Attn: White Pine Plantation Restoration Project. Please submit your comments by September 25, 2026. Comments should be specific, within the scope of the proposed action, and include supporting reasons. Please identify the project as "AP White Pine Plantation Restoration Project". Thank you for your interest in the management of your National Forests.

Sincerely,

ROBERT SITZLAR
District Ranger

Andrew Pickens White Pine Plantation Map

