



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Southern Research Station | Policy review form: required with submission of all Station Forest Service series manuscripts (optional resource for manuscripts submitted to external publishers)

Title of manuscript: _____

Author names and affiliations: _____

Reviewer name and affiliation: _____

Versions reviewed: _____

Date(s) reviewed: _____

Review questionnaire

- Peer reviews confirm that data and citations support the manuscript's conclusions ☐ yes ☐ no
- Writing is objective (e.g., presents options or considerations rather than recommendations or opinions on laws or policy) ☐ yes ☐ no
- Writing style is appropriate for the intended audience (i.e., not pedantic, judgmental, biased) ☐ yes ☐ no
- Manuscript topic and objectives are consistent with the Forest Service mission ☐ yes ☐ no
- Offers information needed by stakeholders or the general public ☐ yes ☐ no
- Needs higher level review (sensitive topic, [influential scientific information \(ISI\)](#), [highly influential scientific assessment \(HISA\)](#)) ☐ yes ☐ no

General comments:

Specific comments:

Justification for higher level review (if yes box is checked):

Author response:

Assessment of author response to review (complete once the author has made revisions)

- Author responses to suggested improvements are sufficient ☐ yes ☐ no
 - Obscure, confusing, and unclear statements or sections are noted and adequately resolved ☐ yes ☐ no
-

Specific comments (optional):

Policy Review Instructions

The **senior Forest Service author** requests a policy review from their respective **Designated Responsible Official (DRO)**. The **DRO** completes this form (page 1 upon initial review; page 2 upon reviewing the revised manuscript and author's response, included at the top of page 2) and returns it to the author. If the **DRO** notes that a higher level review is needed, then the **DRO** forwards the manuscript to their respective **Center Director** for additional policy review or coordinates directly with the **Station Publications Control Officer** for a Washington Office level review.

The **senior Forest Service author**, typically the primary investigator, is the Forest Service-affiliated author who contributed most to the work in terms of time, expertise, and resources. If the actual senior author of the manuscript is affiliated with a partner institution, then the Forest Service-affiliated author who contributed most to the work serves as the senior author for the purposes of coordinating peer review and completing and signing the 1600-1 form.

The **DRO** is designated by the station director to evaluate the rigor and policy implications of the manuscript and can be an assistant director, center director, project leader, or program manager. The DRO is usually a project leader at the Southern Research Station. When a project leader or nonprogram station employee (such as someone in the director's office) is an author, a member of the executive team will provide the policy review and approval to submit for publishing.

Policy review is required and looks for manuscript content that compromises scientific integrity, credibility, and objectivity. This includes opinions on laws or policy, speculation without peer-reviewed experimental data and citations, and provocative statements inappropriate for scientific publication. The policy review will ensure that discussion of management implications, considerations, and potential outcomes are objective. Reviews are generally conducted by the senior Forest Service author's DRO, but may be delegated to a similarly qualified senior manager.

In addition to completing this form, the **senior Forest Service author** completes and signs (along with the **DRO**) the Station's **manuscript approval form** ([FS-1600-1 for publications external to the Forest Service](#) or [FS-1600-1 for Southern Research Station publications](#)) when the senior Forest Service author is a Southern Research Station employee. If the senior Forest Service author is from a different station, then that station's 1600-1 form needs to be completed and signed instead.

See the [Southern Research Station authors guide](#) for a description of station series publication categories. For Forest Service series publications, copies of the technical, statistical, and policy review forms remain on file permanently with the Station Publications Control Officer.