USDA Forest Service
Natural Resource Manager

Topic: Natural Resource Manager (NRM) Special Uses Data System (SUDS)

Summary: The NRM SUDS is a web-based application used by the Special Uses administrators to authorize permit leases and easements, amend these authorizations, and track billing information in the Recreation and Lands Programs. Program managers use the system to collect, analyze, maintain and track data about special use permits and revenue, including data about land use and cost recovery.

The system communicates with the USDA Financial Management Modernization Initiative (FMMI). Special use permit bills are sent electronically to FMMI. In turn, FMMI transfers receipt information, administrative and interest charges, and bounced check data back to SUDS.

The Forest Service is authorized by Congress to issue and administer special use permits for a wide variety of purposes that serve the public, promote public health and safety, provide recreational opportunities and protect the environment. The agency is legislatively authorized to enter into a variety of special use authorizations that are considered licenses which pertain to a certain use, place, and time. There are nine major types of special use permits on National Forest System lands, including numerous subcategories. The major categories are:

- o   Recreation
- o   Agriculture
- o   Research
- o   Industry
- o   Transportation
- o   Communication
- o   Water
- o   Community & Public Information
- o   Energy Generation & Transmission

Key Points: SUDS was developed to improve efficiency and ease of preparing permits, bills, amendments and reports. The application is used at the national, regional, and forest level in the agency.
Annually, there are approximately:

- 1,100 users accessing the system
- 75,000 active special use permits
- $110 million collected in revenue

Key Features: This application provides the following capabilities:

- A single point of entry for all special use permits
- A full life-cycle management for permits and billing
- An audit trail, ad hoc reports and archives data

National- and regional-level reports produced with SUDS are used to respond to Congressional inquiries and data requests by other departments and agencies. Reports produced by SUDS are also used to respond to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.