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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code:
Route To:

Date: February 2, 1998

Subject: Reply to Concerns about SES Appointments

To: Angelina Baca, National Chair, Forest Service Hispanic Employees Association (FSHEA)

I have given very serious consideration to the concerns you expressed in your January 21 and 28, 1998 letters to me and in our phone conversations. One of your specific requests was the appointment of a Hispanic employee to the Region 3 Regional Forester position. I assure you that my staff and I considered all SES certified employees, individuals currently in SES positions within the Forest Service, as well as individuals outside the Forest Service. Even though a Hispanic employee was not selected for this particular position, there will be other opportunities we will be carefully evaluating in 1998. Our policy is to give every qualified employee careful consideration for both SES and non-SES positions.

The diversity reflected in Forest Service SES positions continues to improve, however, much more remains to be done. Since I became Chief, we have filled sixteen SES positions. Of this sixteen, seven leadership positions were filled by minorities and women new to the SES ranks. We are making excellent progress in placing highly skilled individuals in key leadership positions. We will continue to put emphasis on this key multi-cultural organization goal.

In a broader context, we need to look at how we are accomplishing our mission and how we are taking advantage of the diverse views offered by the many cultures represented in our workforce. I am especially proud of the ideas and initiative you brought forward for involving Hispanic and other employee groups in implementing the Government Performance and Results Act. Your leadership and the commitment of FSHEA are to be commended.

I do appreciate the advice you have provided as leader of FSHEA and I look forward to future dialog and support. We must become an integrated team of professionals from across racial, cultural, gender, religious, and professional experiences. My goal is a strong, integrated team of professionals doing the business of the Forest Service together.

I hope I can continue counting on you and FSHEA to be part of this integrated team as we move forward in "caring for the land and serving people."

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
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Washington
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14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Stephen Horn
United States House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0538

Dear Congressman Horn:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

We currently manage a road system that was designed primarily for one purpose-timber production--that now serves many other purposes, such as meeting the access needs of many western communities and rapidly growing recreation use. Our objective is to fully engage Congress and the American people in developing a science-based transportation strategy for forest roads that meets multiple objectives and minimizes environmental damage.

I am committed to using the best available science and working in a collaborative manner to develop a long-term forest road management policy that accomplishes at least four objectives:

- *The Forest Service will develop and provide managers with the tools to make better, more informed decisions about if, where, and when new roads should be constructed.* This applies to roadless areas as well as already roaded areas.
- *The Forest Service will aggressively decommission old, unneeded, and unused roads, as well as unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads."* In addition to the 373,000 miles of authorized forest roads, we estimate that there are at least 60,000 miles of unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads" on National Forests. These uninventoried roads, and many of the old and unused roads, are primary sources of environmental damage from erosion, landslides, and degradation of western drinking water supplies.



- *The Forest Service will upgrade forest roads as appropriate to meet changing uses, local communities' access needs, and growing recreation demand on the National Forest System.* Most forest roads were constructed by timber support dollars and designed to accomplish timber-related objectives. Today, these same roads are used regularly by local communities and hundreds of thousands of recreation users. These roads must be upgraded to ensure safe public passage with a minimal amount of environmental degradation.
- *The Forest Service and Congress should find sustainable funding sources for maintaining the forest road system in an environmentally sensitive manner that best meets the needs of local communities and other users and visitors of the National Forest System.* We presently estimate a \$10 billion backlog in road maintenance and reconstruction on National Forest roads. Additionally, only 40 percent of the existing forest roads are maintained to the safety and environmental standards to which they were designed.

These are some of the issues we intend to address through our long-term transportation strategy, as the enclosed Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking states. We fully intend to comply with all existing environmental laws, to employ the best science, and to work with Congress and the American people as we develop the new forest road policy.

Our draft interim policy proposes to temporarily suspend road construction in certain roadless areas. We are proposing this action for several reasons. First, common sense tells us that we should proceed cautiously with any new road construction--particularly in roadless areas--when we cannot afford to maintain the existing road system.

Second, new scientific information points to the ecological and social importance of roadless areas on National Forests. For example, the Interior Columbia River Basin Ecosystem Management Plan found that:

- "The existence of unroaded areas is by far the most valuable output from Forest Service and BLM administered lands in the Basin" (47 percent of value outputs today; 41 percent in the year 2045).
- Over 70 percent of the 94 key species ("species of focus") studied within the basin are negatively affected by one or more factors associated with road construction.
- Over 60 percent of the best remaining aquatic habitats ("aquatic strongholds") within the basin are found within roadless areas.

We are simply proposing a "time out" on new entries into roadless areas until we can provide our field managers with the tools they need to make more informed decisions about when, or whether, to construct roads within roadless areas. However, we are proposing to exempt national forests under the Pacific Northwest Plan and three other forests whose plans have recently been revised. Also, forests whose plans are under appeal, such as the Tongass, are exempt because of the need to allow the administrative appeal process to address and resolve issues, including roads.

Third, let me assure you that all of our actions will fully comply with all existing environmental laws including the public involvement and environmental analysis procedures required under the National

Environmental Policy Act and the National Forest Management Act. We have issued the proposed interim strategy in draft form with a 30-day public comment period. Public comment will be analyzed and taken into account in any final interim rule. We will also be preparing an appropriate environmental analysis for the final interim rule.

Fourth, our final interim policy will not violate the "release" language agreements that were forged in a bipartisan fashion for the western states that have passed wilderness bills. Nor do we intend to adjust land-use categories as they are defined within forest plans. We only propose to temporarily suspend road construction within roadless areas. All other management activities such as thinning, helicopter logging, and prescribed fire can continue.

Fifth, the proposed interim policy will allow for the continuation of timber sales, and associated road construction, that are already under contract.

Finally, we have proposed that the interim policy only remain in effect for 18 months, or until we develop improved tools for making informed decisions about building future roads in roadless areas, whichever is sooner. To ensure that people's views are heard, the Forest Service will facilitate several public meetings across the country to discuss how long-term road management policies are resolved.

I appreciate your support as we develop a scientifically based, environmentally balanced, and popularly supported approach to managing forest roads. I welcome your comments to our proposal and look forward to working with you. We cannot allow this issue to continue to distract from the need to manage this Nation's great forest legacy.

Sincerely,



MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

Enclosure



United States
Department of
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Forest
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Washington
Office

[FEB 9 1998]
14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date:

FFR 9 1002

Honorable Rick Boucher
U.S. House of Representatives
2329 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4609

Dear Congressman Boucher:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

We currently manage a road system that was designed primarily for one purpose--timber production--that now serves many other purposes, such as meeting the access needs of many western communities and rapidly growing recreation use. Our objective is to fully engage Congress and the American people in developing a science-based transportation strategy for forest roads that meets multiple objectives and minimizes environmental damage.

I am committed to using the best available science and working in a collaborative manner to develop a long-term forest road management policy that accomplishes at least four objectives:

- *The Forest Service will develop and provide managers with the tools to make better, more informed decisions about if, where, and when new roads should be constructed.* This applies to roadless areas as well as already roaded areas.
- *The Forest Service will aggressively decommission old, unneeded, and unused roads, as well as unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads."* In addition to the 373,000 miles of authorized forest roads, we estimate that there are at least 60,000 miles of unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads" on National Forests. These uninventoried roads, and many of the old and unused roads, are primary sources of environmental damage from erosion, landslides, and degradation of western drinking water supplies.





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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Eva M. Clayton
U.S. House of Representatives
2440 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3301

Dear Congresswoman Clayton:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Max Cleland
United States Senate
463 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cleland:

Thank you for your letters regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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P. O. Box 96090
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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Bob Clement
U.S. House of Representatives
2229 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4205

Dear Congressman Clement:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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[Feb. 9, 1998]
14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date:

Feb. 9

Honorable Ernest F. Hollings
United States Senate
125 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hollings:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable John Lewis
U.S. House of Representatives
229 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-1005

Dear Congressman Lewis:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Cynthia A. McKinney
U.S. House of Representatives
124 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-1004

Dear Congresswoman McKinney:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable James P. Moran
U.S. House of Representatives
1214 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4608

Dear Congressman Moran:

Thank you for your recent letters regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Washington, DC 20090-6090

1 FEB 9 1997

File Code: 1010-2

Date:

FFR 9 1996

Honorable David E. Price
U.S. House of Representatives
2162 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3304

Dear Congressman Price:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Charles S. Robb
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-4603

Dear Senator Robb:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Strom Thurmond
United States Senate
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Thurmond:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

We currently manage a road system that was designed primarily for one purpose--timber production--that now serves many other purposes, such as meeting the access needs of many western communities and rapidly growing recreation use. Our objective is to fully engage Congress and the American people in developing a science-based transportation strategy for forest roads that meets multiple objectives and minimizes environmental damage.

I am committed to using the best available science and working in a collaborative manner to develop a long-term forest road management policy that accomplishes at least four objectives:

- *The Forest Service will develop and provide managers with the tools to make better, more informed decisions about if, where, and when new roads should be constructed.* This applies to roadless areas as well as already roaded areas.
- *The Forest Service will aggressively decommission old, unneeded, and unused roads, as well as unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads."* In addition to the 373,000 miles of authorized forest roads, we estimate that there are at least 60,000 miles of unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads" on National Forests. These uninventoried roads, and many of the old and unused roads, are primary sources of environmental damage from erosion, landslides, and degradation of western drinking water supplies.





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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable John Warner
United States Senate
225 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Warner:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of forest roads and roadless areas in the Southern Appalachians. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond on his behalf. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of Congress who wrote to express their views on this important matter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Date:

FEB 9 1998 [1998]

Honorable George E. Brown, Jr.
United States House of Representatives
2300 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0542

Dear Congressman Brown:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Date:

FEB 9 1998

[1998]

Honorable Howard L. Berman
United States House of Representatives
2330 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0526

Dear Congressman Berman:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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FEB 9 1998

[1998]

Honorable Julian C. Dixon
United States House of Representatives
2252 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0532

Dear Congressman Dixon:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Anna G. Eshoo
United States House of Representatives
308 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0514

Dear Congresswoman Eshoo:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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FEB 9

[Feb 9, 1998]

Honorable Sam Farr
United States House of Representatives
1117 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0517

Dear Congressman Farr:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Bob Filner
United States House of Representatives
330 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0550

Dear Congressman Filner:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Date:

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Honorable Jane Harman
United States House of Representatives
325 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0536

Dear Congresswoman Harman:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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FEB 9 1998

Honorable Tom Lantos
United States House of Representatives
2217 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0512

Dear Congressman Lantos:

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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Zoe Lofgren
United States House of Representatives
318 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0516

Dear Congresswoman Lofgren:

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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Matthew G. Martinez
United States House of Representatives
2234 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-05310

Dear Congressman Martinez:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Nancy Pelosi
United States House of Representatives
2457 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0508

Dear Congresswoman Pelosi:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Loretta Sanchez
United States House of Representatives
1529 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0546

Dear Congresswoman Sanchez:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Honorable Brad Sherman
United States House of Representatives
1524 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0524

Dear Congressman Sherman:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

We currently manage a road system that was designed primarily for one purpose--timber production--that now serves many other purposes, such as meeting the access needs of many western communities and rapidly growing recreation use. Our objective is to fully engage Congress and the American people in developing a science-based transportation strategy for forest roads that meets multiple objectives and minimizes environmental damage.

I am committed to using the best available science and working in a collaborative manner to develop a long-term forest road management policy that accomplishes at least four objectives:

- *The Forest Service will develop and provide managers with the tools to make better, more informed decisions about if, where, and when new roads should be constructed.* This applies to roadless areas as well as already roaded areas.
- *The Forest Service will aggressively decommission old, unneeded, and unused roads, as well as unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads."* In addition to the 373,000 miles of authorized forest roads, we estimate that there are at least 60,000 miles of unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads" on National Forests. These uninventoried roads, and many of the old and unused roads, are primary sources of environmental damage from erosion, landslides, and degradation of western drinking water supplies.





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14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Fortney H. Stark
U.S. House of Representatives
239 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0513

Dear Congressman Stark:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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File Code: 1010-2

Date:

FEB 9 1998

[1998]

Honorable Ellen O. Tauscher
United States House of Representatives
1440 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0510

Dear Congresswoman Tauscher:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Henry A. Waxman
United States House of Representatives
2204 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0529

Dear Congressman Waxman:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Lynn C. Woolsey
United States House of Representatives
439 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0506

Dear Congresswoman Woolsey:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

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I am committed to using the best available science and working in a collaborative manner to develop a long-term forest road management policy that accomplishes at least four objectives:

- *The Forest Service will develop and provide managers with the tools to make better, more informed decisions about if, where, and when new roads should be constructed.* This applies to roadless areas as well as already roaded areas.
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File Code: 1010-2

Date:

FEB 9 1998

Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510-0505

Dear Senator Boxer:

Thank you for your letter of support for my review of Forest Service road policies. Like you, I am extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share your hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

I would like to share with you an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

We currently manage a road system that was designed primarily for one purpose--timber production--that now serves many other purposes, such as meeting the access needs of many western communities and rapidly growing recreation use. Our objective is to fully engage Congress and the American people in developing a science-based transportation strategy for forest roads that meets multiple objectives and minimizes, and reverses, environmental damage.

I am committed to using the best available science and working in a collaborative manner to develop a long-term forest road management policy that accomplishes at least four objectives:

- *The Forest Service will develop and provide managers with the tools to make better, more informed decisions about if, where, and when new roads should be constructed.* This applies to roadless areas as well as already roaded areas.
- *The Forest Service will aggressively decommission old, unneeded, and unused roads, as well as unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads."* In addition to the 373,000 miles of authorized forest roads, we estimate that there are at least 60,000 miles of unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads" on National Forests. These uninventoried roads, and many of the old and unused roads, are primary sources of environmental damage from erosion, landslides, and degradation of western drinking water supplies.
- *The Forest Service will upgrade forest roads as appropriate to meet changing uses, local communities' access needs, and growing recreation demand on the National Forest System.* Most forest roads were constructed by timber support dollars and designed to accomplish timber-





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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Richard H. Bryan
United States Senate
364 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510-280

Dear Senator Bryan:

Thank you for your letter of support for my review of Forest Service road policies. Like you, I am extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share your hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

I would like to share with you an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

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File Code: 1010-2

Date:

FEB 9 1998

Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510-2803

Dear Senator Reid:

Thank you for your letter of support for my review of Forest Service road policies. Like you, I am extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share your hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

I would like to share with you an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

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- *The Forest Service will upgrade forest roads as appropriate to meet changing uses, local communities' access needs, and growing recreation demand on the National Forest System.*





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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Robert G. Torricelli
United States Senate
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510-3003

Dear Senator Torricelli:

Thank you for your letter of support for my review of Forest Service road policies. Like you, I am extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share your hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

[1998]

Honorable Ronald V. Dellums
United States House of Representatives
2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0509

Dear Congressman Dellums:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Diana DeGette
United States House of Representative
1404 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0601

Dear Congresswoman DeGette:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

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File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable John Edward Porter
United States House of Representatives
2373 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-1310

Dear Congressman Porter:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

Your letter addressed the management of roads on the national forests, and I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

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Date:

FEB 9 1998

[FEB 9 1998]

Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
United States House of Representatives
2435 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0533

Dear Congresswoman Roybal-Allard:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. We appreciate your support and that of the other Members of the California Delegation who signed the letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Barbara Cubin
U.S. House of Representatives
1114 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-5001

Dear Congresswoman Cubin:

Thank you for your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

Your letter addressed the management of roads on the national forests, and I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

We currently manage a road system that was designed primarily for one purpose--timber production--that now serves many other purposes, such as meeting the access needs of many western communities and rapidly growing recreation use. Our objective is to fully engage Congress and the American people in developing a science-based transportation strategy for forest roads that meets multiple objectives and minimizes environmental damage.

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Date: FEB 9 1998

Honorable Tony Knowles
Governor
State of Alaska
Post Office Box A
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0101

Dear Governor Knowles:

Thank you for your letter of support for my proposal regarding roads and roadless areas in Alaska. Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

We currently manage a road system that was designed primarily for one purpose--timber production--that now serves many other purposes, such as meeting the access needs of many western communities and rapidly growing recreation use. Our objective is to fully engage Congress and the American people in developing a science-based transportation strategy for forest roads that meets multiple objectives and minimizes environmental damage.

I am committed to using the best available science and working in a collaborative manner to develop a long-term forest road management policy that accomplishes at least four objectives:

- *The Forest Service will develop and provide managers with the tools to make better, more informed decisions about if, where, and when new roads should be constructed.* This applies to roadless areas as well as already roaded areas.
- *The Forest Service will aggressively decommission old, unneeded, and unused roads, as well as unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads."* In addition to the 373,000 miles of authorized forest roads, we estimate that there are at least 60,000 miles of unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads" on National Forests. These uninventoried roads, and many of the old and unused roads, are primary sources of environmental damage from erosion, landslides, and degradation of western drinking water supplies.





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 9 1998

Mr. Edward Zukoski
Staff Attorney, Land and Water Fund
2260 Baseline Road, Suite 200
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Dear Mr. Zukoski:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter regarding forest roads and roadless areas. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

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Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 10 1998

Honorable Jim Duncan
Alaska Senate
State Capitol, Room 119
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Mr. Duncan:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter of January 20, 1998, regarding forest roads and roadless areas. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

We are proposing a "time out" on new entries into roadless areas until we can provide our field managers with the tools they need to make more informed decisions about when, or whether, to construct roads within roadless areas. However, we are proposing to exempt national forests under the Pacific Northwest Plan and three other national forests whose plans have recently been revised. Also, forests whose plans are under appeal, such as the Tongass, are exempt because of the need to allow the administrative appeal process to address and resolve issues, including roads. Like you, we know that the Tongass plan is of great concern to Alaskans and share your belief that public involvement is a critical aspect of forest planning

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas in Alaska, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

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I am committed to using the best available science and working in a collaborative manner to develop a long-term forest road management policy that accomplishes at least four objectives:

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- *The Forest Service will aggressively decommission old, unneeded, and unused roads, as well as unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads."* In addition to the 373,000 miles of authorized forest roads, we estimate that there are at least 60,000 miles of unplanned and unauthorized "ghost roads" on National Forests. These uninventoried roads, and many of the old and unused roads, are primary sources of environmental damage from erosion, landslides, and degradation of western drinking water supplies.
- *The Forest Service will upgrade forest roads as appropriate to meet changing uses, local communities' access needs, and growing recreation demand on the National Forest System.* Most forest roads were constructed by timber support dollars and designed to accomplish timber-related objective. Today, these same roads are used regularly by local communities and hundreds of thousands of recreation users. These roads must be upgraded to ensure safe public passage with a minimal amount of environmental degradation.
- *The Forest Service and Congress should find sustainable funding sources for maintaining the forest road system in an environmentally sensitive manner that best meets the needs of local communities and other users and visitors of the National Forest System.* We presently estimate a \$10 billion backlog in road maintenance and reconstruction on National Forest roads. Additionally, only 40 percent of the existing forest roads are maintained to the safety and environmental standards to which they were designed.

These are some of the issues we intend to address through our long-term transportation strategy, as the enclosed Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking states. We fully intend to comply with all existing environmental laws, to employ the best science, and to work with Congress and the American people as we develop the new forest road policy.

Our draft interim policy proposes to temporarily suspend road construction in certain roadless areas. We are proposing this action for several reasons. First, common sense tells us that we should proceed cautiously with any new road construction--particularly in roadless areas--when we cannot afford to maintain the existing road system.

Second, new scientific information points to the ecological and social importance of roadless areas on National Forests. For example, the Interior Columbia River Basin Ecosystem Management Plan found that:

- "The existence of unroaded areas is by far the most valuable output from Forest Service and BLM administered lands in the Basin" (47 percent of value outputs today; 41 percent in the year 2045).
- Over 70 percent of the 94 key species ("species of focus") studied within the basin are negatively affected by one or more factors associated with road construction.
- Over 60 percent of the best remaining aquatic habitats ("aquatic strongholds") within the basin are found within roadless areas.

Third, let me assure you that all of our actions will fully comply with all existing environmental laws including the public involvement and environmental analysis procedures required under the National

Environmental Policy Act and the National Forest Management Act. We have issued the proposed interim strategy in draft form with a 30-day public comment period. Public comment will be analyzed and taken into account in any final interim rule. We will also be preparing an appropriate environmental analysis for the final interim rule.

Fourth, our final interim policy will not violate the "release" language agreements that were forged in a bipartisan fashion for the western states that have passed wilderness bills. Nor do we intend to adjust land-use categories as they are defined within forest plans. We only propose to temporarily suspend road construction within roadless areas. All other management activities such as thinning, helicopter logging, and prescribed fire can continue.

Fifth, the proposed interim policy will allow for the continuation of timber sales, and associated road construction, that are already under contract.

Finally, we have proposed that the interim policy only remain in effect for 18 months, or until we develop improved tools for making informed decisions about building future roads in roadless areas, whichever is sooner. To ensure that people's views are heard, the Forest Service will facilitate several public meetings across the country to discuss how long-term road management policies are resolved.

I hope I can count on your support to help us develop a scientifically based, environmentally balanced, and popularly supported approach to managing forest roads. I welcome your comments to our proposal and look forward to working with you. We cannot allow this issue to continue to distract from the need to manage this nation's great forest legacy.

Sincerely,



MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

Enclosure



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010-2

Date: FEB 18 1998

Honorable Mike Miller
President of the Senate of the
State of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Mr. Miller:

Secretary Glickman asked that I respond to your letter of January 15, 1998, regarding forest roads and roadless areas. Like you, we are extremely concerned about management of the Forest Service's extensive road network. I also share the hope that by exerting decisive leadership on an issue that has long bedeviled us, and by working in a collaborative manner with Congress and the public, we can obviate the need for future divisive forest road debates.

We are proposing a "time out" on new entries into roadless areas until we can provide our field managers with the tools they need to make more informed decisions about when, or whether, to construct roads within roadless areas. However, we are proposing to exempt national forests under the Pacific Northwest Plan and three other national forests whose plans have recently been revised. Also, forests whose plans are under appeal, such as the Tongass, are exempt because of the need to allow the administrative appeal process to address and resolve issues, including roads. Like you, we know that the Tongass plan is of great concern to Alaskans and share your belief that public involvement is a critical aspect of forest planning.

While much of the content of your letter addressed the treatment of roadless areas in Alaska, I want to provide you with an outline of our proposed long-term approach to forest road management. Although the proposed interim roadless policy has generated most of the media coverage and congressional interest, I believe that the issue of how we manage the existing forest road network is of far more social, ecological, and economic importance.

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I am committed to using the best available science and working in a collaborative manner to develop a long-term forest road management policy that accomplishes at least four objectives:

- *The Forest Service will develop and provide managers with the tools to make better, more informed decisions about if, where, and when new roads should be constructed.* This applies to roadless areas as well as already roaded areas.



FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, Alaska, Chairman

DETROIT, Michigan
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TIM JOHNSON, South Dakota
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THOMAS B. WILLIAMS, STAFF DIRECTOR FOR THE MINORITY
SAM E. POWELL, CHIEF COUNSEL FOR THE MINORITY

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-8160

February 20, 1998

Mr. Mike Dombeck
Chief
U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th and Independence Ave., NW
Washington DC 20250

Received in FS/CCU
Initial: C.E.N.
Control No: 4008084

Dear Mr. Dombeck:

As you know, there is presently very little agreement on a discrete mission for the National Forest System. Consequently, there is no consensus on appropriate governing statutes, nor any real collaboration within government or among competing interests in setting management goals. Neither Congress, the Administration, nor the Forest Service have been able to consider together, let alone find, cost efficient and effective ways to streamline the legislative, regulatory, and legal morass in which the Agency currently finds itself. In the face of continuing controversy over Forest Service management, it is increasingly clear that the costs of managing the National Forest System are increasing (in some cases dramatically) and may, in the view of some, outweigh the benefits being received by interest groups, communities, and the public. While it is painful for us to contemplate, the time may have come to instead consider ways to reduce the investment of billions of dollars each year in light of the increasingly diminished returns on that investment.

This is not our preferred course. But the trend of present events — accelerated by some of the Administration's own initiatives — suggests we may be moving in this direction irrespective of our preferences. Consequently, we would like your assessment of the costs and savings from converting to custodial management of the National Forest System. We also would like your assessment of the savings that might be available — through down-sizing the agency, out-sourcing some management functions, or other alternatives — to match such a management approach. In order to accurately and thoroughly assess what a conversion to custodial management might mean — particularly if events are already moving in this direction — we need to more fully understand both the biological and financial implications of this management strategy.

Most Americans believe that each generation should leave the public resources in a better condition than they received them from their parents. Thus, we first want you to generally assess: (1) how past management has changed the condition of the federal lands in the last 100 years; (2) the condition they are in today, compared to what the current forest plans call for; and (3) the ecological condition of those lands if no vegetative management or man-induced, prescribed fire are practiced on the National Forests System for the next 100 years.

As you are aware, many forest ecosystems in the West are currently severely overstocked, and

becoming progressively more so. The age-class distribution of their forests suggests they are increasingly susceptible to natural pathogens and catastrophic fires. If Congress were to direct the Forest Service to manage National Forest System stands under only custodial management — with only the most limited active management intervention and fire suppression limited to avoiding spread to other ownerships — what will be the biological conditions of these forests in one hundred years? Specifically, how much less productive would soils be due to severe erosion after fire? How will wildlife and fisheries resources be affected by radical changes to habitat conditions?

Turning to the financial part of the question, we recognize there are a limited number of activities which must continue under even a custodial management regime. For example, some fire suppression must be continued (to avoid spread to other ownerships). We also understand that a limited amount of land line location and survey work must be carried out to ensure the integrity of National Forest boundaries. Additionally, the Forest Service will incur costs to maintain right-of-way access to private lands within the National Forests. There will also be some costs associated with wildlife and fisheries restoration and enhancement work which must be carried out in the National Forest System under any fully approved Endangered Species Act (ESA) Recovery Plan (this is distinguishable from the costs of any restoration and enhancement work which is discretionary, whether or not that management is prescribed in existing forest plans, which would not be part of a custodial management regime and would occur naturally more slowly). Additionally, funds will be needed to administer existing contracts, permits, leases, or other instruments — through the termination date of these instruments. Finally, funds will be needed to cover the cost of maintaining only those roads in the National Forest System which are currently designated as a Federal, State, or County highway, road, or right-of-way, and any recreation facility that is accessible from such a road. We assume continued management of any recreation facility that is still accessible and would want to evaluate the costs and how they should be borne, including management by other entities.

Please provide an estimate of what the above efforts would likely cost on an annual basis. Additionally, if you feel any other work will be required to properly discharge custodial responsibilities, please provide us with the legal citations which list the work you believe will be needed, along with the specific legislative language which directs the additional management.

In addition to the above information, please provide specific answers to the following questions and transmit your response no later than March 20, 1998. We intend to discuss these issues with you in a preliminary way at our budget oversight hearings in late February and early March. Your prompt and more detailed response will help us develop our final Committee recommendations for the Forest Service FY 1999 Budget.

1. Please provide the total amount of acres in the National Forest System as of October 1, 1997.
2. Please provide the total number of acres, under the existing National Forest Management Act (NFMA) forest plans, available for active management for the production of commodity and non-commodity goods and services in the National Forest System as of October 1, 1997.
3. Please list all management activities which will have to be carried out under a custodial management regime. Please also provide the statutory citation which requires this work to be carried out in a specific area or areas (please be specific and quote the actual language which requires this work to be carried out).

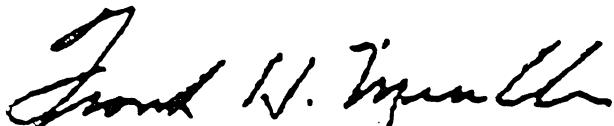
4. Please provide the current number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE's) positions employed by the U.S. Forest Service in all three arms of the Agency.
5. Please provide the number of the employees, the salaries, and other compensation which could be saved by shifting to custodial management, as described above, with any additions you believe necessary. Include savings in support functions which would no longer be necessary. Exclude from these savings the estimated cost of providing the following management activities: (1) the decadal per acre average cost of providing fire protection (pre-suppression and suppression) times the number of acres so treated per decade to prevent the spread of fires to adjacent ownerships; (2) the cost of any land line surveys planned over the next decade; (3) the expected annual cost of administering existing grazing, mining permits, and mining claims and special use permits; (4) any costs for maintaining roads needed to maintain access to private in-holdings; and (5) the minimum cost of stream or habitat rehabilitation work required under existing, approved ESA Recovery Plans.
6. Please provide the FY 1998 per-acre cost of management of the lands entrusted to the Forest Service. This cost should be computed based on the funds appropriated for the National Forest System and the authorized expenditures of trust funds in FY 1998 divided by the number of acres entrusted to the U.S. Forest Service.
7. Please estimate any additional or reduced costs of fighting wildfire in the National Forest System given the more limited road access mentioned, and a de-emphasis on suppression that does not threaten other ownerships.
8. Please describe the number of person days and the associated cost in the Forest Service, the Department of Agriculture, Department of Justice, and the Council on Environmental Quality that have been expended each of the last five years related to conflicts over current management. Please also estimate how much money was spent, in each of the last five years, to deal with appeals and lawsuits over National Forest System management. Include costs associated with support functions and a description of how these costs were calculated.
9. Please estimate the cost of reducing the number of FTE's to a level needed to carry-out custodial management on all National Forest System acres (comparable to 1950's management). Assume that the Agency will only be able to use existing early-out authority or Reduction in Force (RIF) authority. Also, assume that the Agency will have to absorb the cost of these reductions. In calculating these cost estimates, assume necessary reductions would occur early in FY 1999 or early in FY 2000 using orderly RIF or other appropriate procedures.
10. According to the FY 1998 Presidential Budget Request, driving for pleasure is the most popular recreational use of the National Forest. In a recent Journal of Forestry article, the President of the Society of American Foresters is quoted as saying less than 4.5% of the recreation use on the National Forests occurs in the congressionally-designated wilderness areas. Please describe the reductions in on-road and off-road visitor use which are likely to occur as a result of a custodial management regime which allows only those roads currently

listed as part of the Federal, State, or County road systems to remain open. Assume other agencies will shoulder the administrative responsibility and cost of road maintenance. Additionally, estimate the loss in recreation user fees which will be experienced as a result of such a policy.

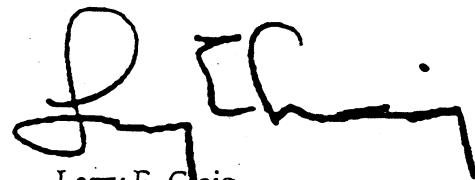
11. Please provide an analysis of the portion of the FY 1998 Forest and Environment Research budget that is spent in direct or indirect support of National Forest System management programs. Please specify what percentage of this would be necessary to support a custodial management regime. — *Ask Rick Goldin & Dick Smith to answer*
12. Similarly, please provide an analysis of the portion of the FY 1998 State and Private Forestry budget that is spent in direct or indirect support of National Forest System programs. Please specify what percentage of this would be necessary to support custodial management.

As you might guess by these questions, we are trying to respond to questions about whether it is financially or environmentally prudent to continue to shift to management regimes that are more costly and produce less benefits. Since you seem bent on producing fewer and fewer results from the National Forests at rapidly increasing costs, many will press Congress to seriously consider the option to simply move to custodial management of our National Forests in order to stem the flow of unjustifiable investments. That will mean the Agency will have to operate with significantly reduced budgets and with far fewer employees. Before taking this step though, it is only fair to let the Forest Service articulate how our National Forests and the various constituencies might fare under a carefully considered custodial management regime.

Sincerely,



Frank H. Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources



Larry E. Craig
Chairman
Subcommittee on Forests and
Public Land Management



Don Young
Chairman
House Committee on Resources



Helen Chenoweth
Chairman
Subcommittee on Forests
and Forest Health

CC: Secretary Dan Glickman

Enclosure

I. In response to the questions in the third paragraph on the first page of your letter, we have briefly summarized some of the history and ecological changes on National Forest System (NFS) lands:

Evolution of Federal land management: During most of the 19th Century, it was national policy to transfer substantial portions of Federal (Public Domain) lands to private use and ownership. During this period, more than 1 billion acres, or over half the land area of the United States was transferred from Federal to non-Federal ownership. The period from 1900 to World War II was one of consolidation and limited management for most Federal land management agencies. From 1896 to 1910 the area of forest reserves (national forests) rose from 18 to 168 million acres.

By the late 1800s, tens of millions of sheep and cattle were being grazed on these Federal lands. Efforts to bring livestock numbers down to the carrying capacity of the land were a primary focus of Forest Service managers during the pre-World War II period. Nationally, another main focus of Forest Service efforts was the control of wildfire. Prior to the 1930s, uncontrolled wildfire annually devastated large areas of public and private wildlands. Wildfire prevention and suppression became the focus of highly successful cooperative efforts among Federal agencies and State and private landowners. By 1960, the average annual area consumed by wildfire was reduced by more than 90 percent.

The expanding economy following World War II created a substantial increase in the demand for timber. National forest and Bureau of Land Management timber sale levels increased from 2-4 billion board feet per year in the late 1940s to 11-14 billion board feet in the 1960s and beyond. By the 1960s, Federal forests were meeting almost 20 percent of the Nation's total consumption of wood volume. National forest recreation visitation also increased dramatically; annual visits increased from about 5 million in the early 1920s to 18 million in 1946, 93 million in 1960, and 233 million in 1975.

The use of clearcutting as a forest management tool increased dramatically on the national forests after World War II. Much of the public concern over national forest land management practices was focused on the visual and ecological effects of clearcutting. These conflicts led eventually to the passage of the National Forest Management Act of 1976. The level of national forest timber sales has declined from an annual average of 10-12 billion board feet during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, to 3-4 billion board feet today.

Current Condition of NFS lands: Given the varied history of NFS lands, it is difficult to summarize their current condition. There are substantial differences between NFS lands in the East and South, those in the interior West, and those on the Pacific Coast and Alaska. The condition of NFS lands in the East and South has improved dramatically over the last century. After millions of acres of abandoned and depleted farm and forest lands became NFS lands, feral cattle, dogs, and goats were eliminated and the land rehabilitated. Today, these areas provide superb habitat supporting rich populations of many wildlife species.

Many ecosystems within the national forests were originally subject to relatively frequent low-intensity wildfires as well as occasional stand-replacing conflagrations. The forest ecosystems most in trouble tend to be those formerly subject to a frequent, low-intensity fire

Enclosure

regime, particularly forest ecosystems of western national forests where fire frequency has been substantially reduced. When fires do occur in these areas today, they are often destructive, soil and watershed damaging, stand-replacing fires. Strategies for the restoration of ecosystem health in such areas often involve the use of prescribed fire, frequently in conjunction with mechanical treatment.

In higher elevation forests, which tend to be cooler and moister, the ecological effects of fire exclusion are typically less profound than in the lower elevation forests, at least over the short term. But even in these forests, reduction in fire frequency has had substantial ecological effects. Aspen communities have been reduced substantially, and many meadows and openings have diminished in size or have disappeared altogether. The ecological diversity and "patchy-ness" of the forest landscape has been reduced. Such forests are subject to increased insect epidemics and to larger and more intense stand-replacing conflagrations than typically would have occurred in the past.

Introduced exotics also present major biodiversity and ecosystem health problems in some areas, especially on rangelands in the West and forestlands in the East and South.

II. The following information is provided in response to the numbered questions commencing near the bottom of the second page of your letter:

1. Please provide the total amount of acres in the National Forest System.

The National Forests and Grasslands encompass 191,644,936 acres.

2. Please provide the total number of acres, under the existing National Forest Management Act (NFMA) forest plans, available for active management for the production of commodity and non-commodity goods and services in the National Forest System.

Commodity and non-commodity goods and services encompass a myriad of activities including, but not limited to recreation, wilderness, grazing, timber and mineral production, fishing, water supplies, heritage, and other aesthetic values. All 191.6 million acres of Forest Service lands produce commodity and non-commodity goods and services related to these benefits.

3. Please list all management activities which will have to be carried out under a custodial management regime. Please also provide the statutory citation which requires this work to be carried out in a specific area or areas.

We are not certain what "custodial management" means. In your letter you outlined some of the components that you would include under a custodial regime. Your partial list includes a limited number of activities to be implemented under your custodial regime. We would not be able to limit our management to such a narrow list given the vast body of laws and statutes that guide our work. We would need specific direction on which of the laws would not require enforcement under your interpretation of custodial management.

Enclosure

4. Please provide the current number of FTE positions employed by the Forest Service in all three arms of the agency:

Based on information provided in the fiscal year (FY) 1999 President's Budget for the Forest Service, the total number of FTE positions for FY 1998 is 36,311 in the three arms of the Agency.

5. Please provide the number of employees, the salaries, and other compensation which could be saved by shifting to custodial management as described above, with any additions you believe necessary. Include savings in support functions that would no longer be necessary.

As in the response to question 3, we have only a limited understanding of what you mean by "custodial management." Forest Service actions are guided by many laws, and we are mandated to carry out a range of activities under those laws. It is impossible for us to identify which activities we would not undertake.

6. Please provide the FY 1998 per-acre cost of management of the lands entrusted to the Forest Service. This cost should be computed based on the funds appropriated for the National Forest System and the authorized expenditures of trust funds in FY 1998 divided by the number of acres entrusted to the U.S. Forest Service.

Based on information provided in the FY 1999 Explanatory Notes to Congress, the FY 1998 budget directly impacting Forest Service lands is approximated below:

NFS	\$1,348,377,000
Wildland Fires	584,707,000
Reconstruction/Construction (1)	162,308,000
State and Private Forestry (2)	16,500,000
L&WCF (3)	52,976,000
Other (4)	5,090,000
Subtotal Appropriated	\$2,169,958,000
Permanent Appropriations (5)	260,098,000
Trust Funds	261,885,000
Grand Total	\$2,691,941,000

The cost per acre of management would be calculated as \$2,691,941,000 divided by 191,644,936 acres, or about \$14 dollars per acre.

- (1) Excludes \$2,737,000 for Research Construction.
- (2) Only includes the insect and disease prevention and suppression portion of the Forest Health Management budget line item.
- (3) Excludes special one-time Title V Land Acquisition amount of \$167 million.
- (4) Excludes \$92,000 for Gifts, Donations and Bequests.
- (5) Excludes Payments to Counties and States.

Enclosure

7. Please estimate any additional or reduced of fighting wildfire in the National Forest System given the more limited road access mentioned, and a de-emphasis on suppression that does not threaten other ownerships.

As stated in our response to questions 3 and 5, we do not have enough information to develop or evaluate a "custodial management" scenario. We do note that our current preparedness organization is designed around protecting high value resources, including lives and private property. Shifting to a less active management regime might increase, rather than decrease, fire suppression costs if access was more limited and vegetation was not managed to reduce fire spread and intensity.

8. Please describe the number of person days and the associated cost in the Forest Service, the Department of Agriculture, Department of Justice, and the Council on Environmental Quality that have been expended each of the last 5 years related to conflicts over current management. Please also estimate how much money was spent, in each of the last 5 years, to deal with appeals and lawsuits over National Forest System management. Include costs associated with support functions and a description of how these costs were calculated.

Based on estimates from the Forest Service regions and Washington Office, the Forest Service spent an average of \$5.1 million annually on processing appeals in the last 5 years, and \$4.9 million annually on litigation. The Office of the General Counsel estimates it spent an average of \$0.3 million annually on appeals and \$2.2 million on litigation in the same period. We have no information on expenditures of the Department of Justice or the Council on Environmental Quality.

9. Please estimate the cost of reducing the number of FTE's to a level needed to carry-out custodial management on all National Forest System acres (comparable to 1950's management). Assume that the Agency will only be able to use existing early-out authority or Reduction in Force (RIF) authority. Also, assume that the Agency will have to absorb the cost of these reductions. In calculating these cost estimates, assume necessary reductions would occur early in FY 1999 or early in FY 2000 using orderly RIF or other appropriate procedures.

As in the response to question 3, we are unclear as to the definition of custodial management. Forest Service actions are guided by just under 200 laws, and we are mandated to carry out a range of activities under those laws. It is not possible for us to identify which activities we would not undertake.

As for the changes in FTE totals, the FY 1999 President's Budget reflects a total of 35,526 FTEs. Barring other changes, such as an authorized buyout, we would estimate that FY 2000 would reflect a similar total.

Enclosure

10. According the FY 1998 Presidential Budget Request, driving for pleasure is the most population recreational use of the national forests. In a recent Journal of Forestry article, the President of the Society of American Foresters is quoted as saying that less [than] 4.5 percent of the recreation use on the national forests occurs in the Congressionally-designated wilderness areas. Please describe the reductions in on-road and off-road visitor use which are likely to occur as a result of a custodial management regime which allows only those roads currently listed as part of the Federal, State or county road systems to remain open. Assume other agencies will shoulder the administrative responsibility and cost of road maintenance. Additionally, estimate the loss in recreation user fees which will be experience as a result of such a policy.

Again, answering this question with precision is difficult because we do not understand what is meant by "custodial management." Would all 373,000 miles of forest roads be closed, or would the 20 percent of the roads that handle and estimated 80 percent of the recreation use remain open?

11. Please provide an analysis of the portion of the FY 1998 Forest and Environment Research budget that is spent in direct or indirect support of National Forest System management programs. Please specify what percentage of this would be necessary to support a custodial management regime.

The Forest Service conducts research in accordance with the authorities described in the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (92 Stat.353, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1600 (note), 1641 (note), and 1641-1648. There is no reference in the 1978 Act to 16 U.S.C. 1609, which defines the National Forest System, nor does the 1978 act contain any direction or limitation, expressed or implied, that research shall only pertain to national forests. Rather, the 1978 act explicitly states purposes and authorizations that apply to all the Nation's forests:

- Section 2 (a)(1) states, "Congress finds that scientific discoveries and technological advances must be made and applied to support the protection, management, and utilization of the Nation's renewable resources ..."
- Section 3(a) states, "The Secretary is authorized to conduct, support, and cooperate in investigations, experiments, tests, and other activities the Secretary deems necessary to obtain, analyze, develop, demonstrate, and disseminate scientific information about protecting, managing, and utilizing forest and rangeland resources in rural, suburban, and urban areas."
- Section 3(a)(5) provides for the Forest Inventory and Analysis and Forest Health Management programs as does Section 3 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974.
- Section 4(c) states, "In implementing this Act, the Secretary may cooperate with international, Federal, State, and other governmental agencies, with public or private agencies, institutions, universities, and organizations, and with businesses and individuals in the United States and in other countries."

Enclosure

Each of the four program areas in Forest Service Research & Development simultaneously support management activities on private lands, State and other Federal lands, as well as the national forests. For example, research addressing wildland-urban interface management issues is useful to the residents and local governments at the interface, without respect to whether the wildlands are national forests, State forests, or privately owned forests.

Providing research results to private landowners and State and local governments is how forest research began in the Department of Agriculture. In fact, forest research within the Department of Agriculture began in the mid-1870s--30 years before the forest reserves were transferred to USDA in 1905. Since then, research results have often benefitted private, State, and Federal resource management simultaneously. Attempting to distinguish research specific to the national forests from research applicable to the Nation's forests creates false distinctions because the same cover types and ecological conditions exist on a variety of land ownerships.

There is an increasing demand for intensive forest management research that benefits the national forests and grasslands, along with other Federal, State and private lands. These landowners have traditionally obtained this information from Forest Service Research & Development. As ecological conditions change, new knowledge and technology will be needed to track and predict forest conditions and effects at the stand, watershed, and landscape levels. These will be truly unique research and development needs the Forest Service is best suited to provide.

12. Please provide an analysis of the FY 1998 State and Private Forestry budget that is spent in direct or indirect support of the National Forest System programs. Please specify what percentage of this would be necessary to support custodial management.

About \$16.5 million (45 percent) of the Federal lands expanded budget line item of the Forest Health Management budget line item directly or indirectly supports NFS programs through insect and disease prevention and suppression. (The remainder supports activities on other Federal and State and private lands.) This support includes:

- forest insect and disease survey and monitoring to detect and evaluate pest outbreaks,
- financial and technical assistance for prevention and suppression treatments for native and exotic pests,
- technical assistance to land managers in insect and disease prevention, pesticide use, hazard tree recognition, and biological control of noxious weeds,
- participation of insect and disease specialists in forest plan development and implementation,
- development of pest-resistant trees to restore species that have been seriously impacted by exotic diseases (for example western and eastern white pines and Port-Orford cedar).

Again, without a clear definition, we are unwilling to engage in a speculative exercise to define or evaluate a hypothetical custodial management scenario.



United States
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Washington
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14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 2600

Date: February 20, 1998

Jessie excellent job M.

Mr. Robert W. Munson
President
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
2291 W. Broadway
Missoula, MT 59802

Dear Bob:

I am sorry that I am unable to be with you tonight on an occasion recognizing 14 years of outstanding service to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF). It's hard to believe that 14 years have passed since the Forest Service joined with the RMEF through a Master Memorandum of Understanding to "provide a framework for cooperative research and management activities necessary to maintain and enhance the productivity of elk habitats on National Forest System lands in order to improve elk management for the best interests of the people of the United States." We look forward to continuing to build on the strong partnership foundation that you have established between the RMEF and the Forest Service.

Your signature is on that memorandum, Bob, and indeed, you've left your mark on more than just a piece of paper. Through your untiring efforts and leadership on behalf of elk conservation, both nationally and at the grassroots level, you've successfully positioned the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation as a major force in the American conservation community. Your influence is far reaching and your reputation well respected.

You are the personification of a consummate professional, conservationist, sportsman, and gentlemen. It's been a privilege to count the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation among our conservation partners and to count you among our valued friends. Best wishes for continued success in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Mike Dombeck

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief



Caring for the Land at

1 Recycled Paper

Mike-
2/23/98
Here's what I sent
on your behalf
to RMEF -
Can send this orig. to
Munson - want to
add a personal note?
J





ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION

2291 W. Broadway
Missoula, MT 59802
P.O. Box 8249
Missoula, MT 59807-8249
(406) 523-4500
Field Office Fax (406) 523-4550
General Office Fax (406) 523-4581
E-mail - rmeff@rmeff.org

February 12, 1998

Via Telefax 202-205-1765

Dear Chief Dombek,

After founding and leading the Elk Foundation for 14 years, Bob Munson is moving on to become President Emeritus of RMEF.

At our annual convention in Portland we will be honoring Bob, and I thought you might like a chance to say "goodbye."

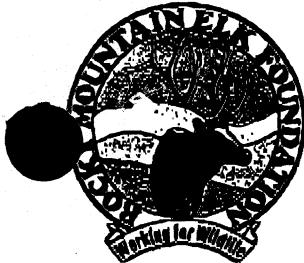
We would like to read a thought or two from a few of Bob's friends and RMEF partners at our Grand Banquet on Saturday night, February 21. I'm sorry it's such short notice, but I'd appreciate any words you might fax my way before then.

Before Monday, February 16 I can be reached at: phone 1-800 CALL ELK, ext.543; Fax (406) 523-0209. After Monday, February 16 I can be reached at: phone 503-281-6111 (Double Tree Hotel, Lloyd Center), Fax (503) 249-3137 ATTN: Gary Wolfe (Guest).

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Gary J. Wolfe
Executive Vice President



ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION

2291 W. Broadway
Missoula, MT 59802
P.O. Box 8249
Missoula, MT 59807-8249
(406) 523-4500
Field Office Fax (406) 523-4550

E-mail - rmeff@rmeff.org

FAX TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET

Date: 2-12-98

To: CHIEF, MIKE DOMBECK

Fax Number: (202)205-1765

Re:

From: GARY WOLFE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Pages including cover: 2

Message:

TIME-SENSITIVE INFORMATION FOLLOWING. PLEASE RESPOND AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

PRIVACY NOTICE

This message is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged, confidential or exempt from disclosure under applicable Federal or State law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited.

If you received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by telephone and return the original message to us at the above address via regular U.S. mail.



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Washington
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14th & Independence SW
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, D.C. 20090-6090

Date: MAR 2 1998

Chris Nota
Minerets Ranger District
Sierra National Forest

Dear Chris:

Just before Christmas I received a wonderful letter from Derrick Crandall, President of the American Recreation Coalition. Derrick described your significant accomplishments over the past several years on the Minerets Ranger District and in the community of North Fork.

I would like to commend you and your team for your initiative, enthusiasm, and commitment to engaging local citizens in developing new opportunities! Your efforts have helped communities affected by changing timber programs to realize new natural resource - based ventures and to chart their own course for a vibrant, productive future. The leadership you have provided in designating the Sierra Vista National Scenic Byway, facilitating community revitalization, and stimulating recreational tourism through the Grizzly Century Bicycle Rally, have made a positive impact. I am proud of the leadership you have shown. Your efforts are a shining example of what we can accomplish when we reach out to work collaboratively with our neighbors.

Congratulations to you and the Minerets Ranger District and thank you for your dedication to quality service.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

Caring for the Land and Serving People



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P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1900

Date: March 2, 1998

Subject: Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director,
Deputy Chiefs, and WO Staff

REPLY DUE: MARCH 13, 1998

This morning I presented the details of the Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda in a speech before Forest Service employees and retirees here in Washington. This agenda is the result of many hours spent with you, our employees and our constituents, listening, reading, discussing, and debating. Now, I am putting these ideas into action to focus and improve our ability to deliver on our mission of "Caring for the Land and Serving People." Please take time now to read the speech attached to this letter. I believe it accurately reflects our shared ideas and vision.

The agenda provides a vision for the long-term future of the Forest Service, and clearly identifies specific areas where we will give added emphasis now. These emphasis areas are watershed health and restoration, forest road policy reform, sustainable forest management, and recreation. Focusing our efforts and showing achievement in these areas is essential in gaining and maintaining public support for all of our programs. Building understanding and commitment to our future within our own work force is critical to our success in implementing this agenda.

Because I believe the agenda is an important contribution to public understanding and support for sound resource management, I ask that you communicate this speech and the ideas presented by the agenda to as wide an audience as possible both inside and outside the agency. I further ask that as you share the agenda, you carefully observe how people react. Are they supportive of the emphasis areas and the actions we propose? How do people want to participate with us in fulfilling the action items? Do our partners embrace the ideas? Do they have concerns, and what are they? As I visit Forest Service units this spring and summer, I look forward to hearing what you have learned and what your ideas are for ways to work together with our employees and our many partners in implementing the agenda.

I also ask that Regional Foresters, Station Directors, the Area Director, and the IITF Director collaboratively identify several on-the-ground projects in each Region where we are successfully implementing the ideas in the agenda. I ask that you make plans to visit these projects, and recognize Forest Service employees and their partners for the work they are doing. Please provide my office, attention Leslie Weldon, your schedule of visits, along with a short description of the project and your assessment of the value of my participation, or the participation of other senior Forest Service leadership in the visit by March 13. I and other members of Executive Team here in Washington intend to participate with you in a number of these visits.

By separate letter, I am forwarding the National Communication Plan for the Natural Resource Agenda. Please review this plan with your communication staffs and your leadership teams. Look for opportunities to implement actions called for in the plan. Do not wait for specific requests from Washington before taking action. Use the national plan as a guide for developing your own Regional, or Station communication effort around the agenda.



A lot of outstanding people assisted with the development of the Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda. I know it was difficult for these people, and their units to take on additional assignments or details on short notice. But I assure you the effort was worthwhile. I appreciate their hard work and your support of their efforts. Their hard work and diligence will pay handsome dividends for the agency.

Thank you for your continued support.

/s/ Mike Dombeck
Michael P. Dombeck
Chief

Attachment



Date: MAR 6 1998

Mr. Michael Ferrucci
INTERFOREST, LLC
1353 Boston Post Road, Suite 7
Madison, CT 06443

Dear Michael:

Thank you for your November letter. I am pleased that my remarks to the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies were well received and I appreciated the opportunity to share them.

You raised several interesting points in your letter. I agree that collaboration and an inclusive approach to gaining public input is a challenging thing. Seeking solutions where not all participants share this goal is indeed a real situation faced by Forest Service and other natural resource managers.

However, it is equally important to ensure that land managers make use of the best scientific information available to continue strengthening the foundation for land management decisions. Our first work is to understand the land and to convey this understanding to those with whom we collaborate.

Science, then social values must guide our choices for sustainable management. Working collaboratively with these tools expands options for sustainable management. Programs, such as Yale's, are educating resource managers who can contribute to these efforts. I encourage you and your students to investigate training and employment opportunities with the USDA Forest Service.

As you have expressed, people value this nation's natural resources - if this were not the case, decisions for land use and stewardship would surely come much easier. I believe controversy is essential to the vibrancy of our democracy.

Your goal to adapt public involvement methods for use in private forestry is laudable. I wish you good luck and thank you for your interesting letter and for your support.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief



Caring for the Land and Serving People

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Washington, D.C. 20090-6090

Date: MAR 6 1998

Janet Zeller
310 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Room 500
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Dear Janet:

I write to thank you for the major contributions you have made with the Civil Rights Implementation Team and the USDA Office of Civil Rights. Lloyd Wright, Director of the Office of Civil Rights, has told me that your leadership in developing and implementing training, and upgrading the processing program for discrimination complaints was essential to the success of this important effort.

I know this work required you to be away from home and your normal duties. I wish to acknowledge your commitment to applying your expertise in civil rights issues in a way that is improving the overall management and success of this program. Thanks, Janet, for a job well done.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

cc: Regional Forester, R-9

Caring for the Land and Serving People



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Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 2400

Date: March 6, 1998

Honorable Tim Hutchinson
United States Senate
233 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hutchinson:

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the management of the Ouachita National Forest. Enclosed is the information you requested. Should you have any questions, please direct them to Robert Lynn, Acting Director, Forest Management Staff, telephone: 202 205-1787.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

Enclosure





BRIEFING MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES R. LYONS, UNDER SECRETARY, NRE

THROUGH: Ronald E. Stewart
Acting Associate Chief

Ronald E. Stewart MAR 6 1998

FROM: Robert C. Joslin
Deputy Chief, National Forest System

SUBJECT: Status of the Southwest Strategy

PURPOSE OF MEETING:

A meeting to discuss the status of the Southwest Strategy has been requested by Katie McGinty on Monday, March 9 at 4 P.M. Invited participants from USDA, in addition to yourself, are Anne Kennedy and Mike Dombeck. Other invited participants are: Don Barry, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks of the Department of the Interior; Jamie Clark, Fish and Wildlife Service Director; and Sherri Goodman, Under Secretary for the Environment, Department of Defense.

BACKGROUND:

The Southwest Strategy is intended to result in a community development and a natural resource conservation and management strategy for matters under the jurisdictions of the involved federal agencies. The strategy should maintain and restore the region's cultural, economic, and environmental quality of life. This will involve significantly enhanced collaboration among agencies and with the public to address Southwest issues and opportunities. Following is a description of key results since the Secretaries met with National and Regional Executives on October 28, 1997, in Phoenix, plus a list of factors which still need attention.

Highlights of Progress to Date

- A foundation for more efficient and effective management through collaboration has been established through formation of a Regional Executive Committee (REC), which is meeting monthly. Members are the leaders of Regional/State agencies as follows:

Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Nat. Res. Cons. Service

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management
Bureau of Reclamation
Fish and Wildlife Service
Geological Survey
National Park Service

Department of Defense
Navy
Air Force
Army



- The REC recently decided to invite the participation of regional/state leaders from the following agencies: Environmental Protection Agency; USDA Rural Development, Farm and Foreign Agricultural Service, and Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; and the Department of Energy.
- Pursuant to the October 28, 1997, meeting in Phoenix and the subsequent letter of November 12, 1998, from USDA Secretary Glickman, USDI Secretary Babbitt, and DOD Under Secretary Goodman (Enclosure A), the REC has completed the four products requested by the Secretaries (Enclosures B-E).
- Outreach to the public regarding the Southwest Strategy effort occurred in mid-December through a coordinated, interagency effort at the Regional/State level. (Enclosure F)
- The Southwest Strategy is already producing substantial improvements in collaboration among the involved federal agencies. Most notably, the Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service have begun a collaborative approach to grazing consultation. This will be the first application of the streamlined consultation process by any of the federal agencies in the southwest.
- Current activities focus on developing the collaborative public participation process, expanding interagency collaboration, and addressing immediate issues. The groundwork for an expansive list of collaborative efforts is being laid through the on-going work of the staff level Regional Implementation Team (RIT) that meets every 2 weeks, and also meets with the Regional Executive Committee each month. Also, several interagency Issue Work Groups have been formed or are proposed to deal with specific topic areas. (Enclosure G). Key products of the RIT and the workgroups currently in draft form include: Criteria for addressing the Endangered Species Act consultation workload; a slide program for use with field personnel and the public to explain the Southwest Strategy effort; a "newsletter" to update agency personnel and the public regarding the status of the effort; and charters for issue work groups.
- The Legal Issues Workgroup is the only unit based in Washington D.C. It meets bi-weekly and has regional participation via telephone. This group gets a weekly update from Department of Justice representative regarding pending litigation in the Southwest, and provides an opportunity to share information and identify action items regarding litigation strategies and coordination.
- To ensure close coordination with the Washington Office, a Southwest Strategy National Staff Group also has been formed. Members of that group from the Forest Service (Nancy Green), Fish and Wildlife Service (Susan Pultz), and Bureau of Land Management (Ken Berg) also are participating in all of the Regional meetings and are considered to be members of the Regional Implementation Team and the Legal Issues Work Group. The National Staff Group, with input from the Regional staff group, has developed a coordinated approach to responding to potential questions about the Southwest Strategy that might come up during the FY 1999 budget hearings. (Enclosure H)

Key Factors Needing Attention

1. The complexity and magnitude of issues that need to be addressed has been underestimated and the agencies lack the staff to make timely progress on desired products. For example, although progress is being made, the Fish and Wildlife Service is facing a huge workload and highly

significant and potentially controversial backlog in consultations. The Forest Service faces a very complex and controversial workload associated with grazing management, including consultations, NEPA analyses, and litigation. An immediate litigation concern is a potential injunction on grazing for more than 100 allotments. Other agencies are also face huge workloads with very limited staff. All of the agencies are finding it difficult to provide consistent staffing at the level needed for the Southwest Strategy effort. Even with the best possible collaboration among the agencies, the workload will still be enormous for the current staff levels and budgets.

2. The timeline originally proposed for development of the Southwest Strategy (Enclosure I) is overly optimistic and needs to be adjusted. The interagency Regional Implementation Team is working with the Communications Work Group to develop a "newsletter" that will update Federal employees and the public regarding the current status of the effort, including information on the need to defer the federal-public participation phases.
 - The outline for working with the public to design a federal-public collaboration process, as well as the public roll-out materials used last December, indicated that that phase would begin in mid-January and conclude by March 31, 1998. However, initiation of this phase has been deferred. This delay is the result of the participating agencies not having the staff to devote to developing materials and an approach for ensuring "internal buy-in." Having that internal understanding and buy-in by agency personnel at the local level is crucial to the ultimate success of the Southwest Strategy.
 - Also, the timeline for the third phase of the effort -- collaborative preparation of a comprehensive strategy for addressing Southwest issues and opportunities -- called for an initial draft by June 15 and a final draft by August 15, 1998. However, the interagency collaboration design team has recently estimated it will take a minimum of 1 1/2 years, and could take as long as 3 years to complete a final draft strategy with meaningful collaboration involving State governments, numerous tribes, local governments, industry and environmental groups, and interest individuals.
3. There is confusion about requested increases in the FY 1999 budget for several agencies in light of the November 12, 1997, letter from the Secretaries, stating their expectation that the strategy would be "implementable given our agencies' current budget and staff climates." Questions about this might come up during budget hearings. (See Enclosure H; participating agencies from USDA did not request specific increases for the Southwest Strategy).
4. The Regional Executives are considering five options for development of a shared office and staff for the Southwest Strategy in Albuquerque. Under all options, space would be provided by one of the participating agencies and an effort would be made to avoid the use of Forest Service or Fish and Wildlife Service offices, to reduce the perception that the Southwest Strategy is being driven by those two agencies. The options involve different levels of staffing and range in cost range from \$0 to \$465,000. There is sensitivity to giving the impression of creating a bureaucracy, especially prior to generating public involvement and support for the effort.
5. The community development aspect of the effort is just beginning to be developed, with the Forest Service taking the lead in cooperation with NRCS and other USDA agencies. The key initial focus will be to identify opportunities for community development, and to identify other incentives and alternatives for complying with anticipated mitigation or other requirements, to

help address concerns about economic impacts of reductions in livestock grazing on national forests.

TALKING POINTS

- The Southwest Strategy is evolving at a steady pace in the relatively short time since the Secretaries' trip to Phoenix. This effort is well on its way to becoming the national model for interagency collaboration at the Regional level, and between Regional and Washington Offices.
- Highlights include the formation of a Regional Executive Committee, an interagency Regional Implementation Team, several issue work groups, and a National Staff Group. These groups are meeting regularly and making progress on interagency collaboration. The four tasks identified by the Secretaries to launch this effort have been completed:
 1. A list of immediate issues and actions needed to address them;
 2. An organization framework for interagency collaboration in the Southwest;
 3. An outline for developing a collaborative process with the public; and
 4. An outline of steps for preparing, in collaboration with the public, a comprehensive strategy for addressing Southwest issues and opportunities.
- Outreach to the public regarding the Southwest Strategy effort occurred in mid-December.
- The National Staff Group has prepared a coordinated strategy for approach for dealing with questions about the Southwest Strategy that might arise during budget hearings.
- The initial timelines for the Southwest Strategy are too ambitious and need to be adjusted.
- The first phase of the effort, which involves significantly improving interagency collaboration, is crucial to the long-term success of the overall effort. Almost all of the activity to date has involved this first phase and has been occurring primarily at the Regional/State office level. Field level involvement and understanding has occurred in only a limited number of places.
- Initiation of the second phase, involving working with the public to design a process for federal-public collaboration, has been deferred due to the need to develop internal understanding of roles and responsibilities and "buy-in" by agency personnel in local offices. This phase was scheduled to be completed by the end of March. A new schedule is being developed.
- To address concerns that the public expected the second phase to begin in mid-January, a document describing the current status of the Southwest Strategy and the deferral of this second phase is being developed for distribution to the public. Also, several meetings are being scheduled with various groups to begin building public awareness of the Southwest Strategy effort.
- The timeline for the third phase of the effort, developing a final draft strategy with the public by August 15, 1998, is not feasible in light of available staffing and the complexity of the effort. The interagency work group estimates a minimum timeline of 1 1/2 years is more realistic.

- Overall, the complexity and magnitude of the tasks involved in this effort have been underestimated and the agencies lack the staff to make timely progress on desired products. Regional Executives, while highly committed to the Southwest Strategy, are struggling with its scope, workload priorities, and the ability to make staff available for various aspects of this effort.

Enclosures



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14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code:
Route To:

Date: MAR 12 1998

Subject: National Leadership Conference

To: Executive Committee and National Leadership Team

We are in the initial stages of planning the 1998 National Leadership Conferences to be held June 30 - July 1 in Washington, DC and October 28-29 at a field location to be determined. Please mark your calendars. The first conference will include the Chief's Awards Ceremony.

A copy of a draft agenda with the specific meeting location and a list of participants will be sent to you at a later date.

Please note that all participants except awardees will be responsible for their own lodging arrangements. A list of suggested lodging sites will also be provided at a later date.

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





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14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date:

MAR 12 1998

Honorable James L. Oberstar
U.S. House of Representatives
2366 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2308

MAR 12 1998

Dear Congressman Oberstar:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

As a result of early public and Congressional comment, we extended the comment period on the interim rule for another 30 days. The new deadline for comments is March 30, 1998. We will also hold a series of public forums across the Nation to assure full public participation in the final development of the roads policy. The dates and locations of the public meetings and the instructions for submission of written or e-mail comments can be found in the *Federal Register* notice published February 27, 1998, or on the Forest Service internet site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/roads/>.

I agree that open and honest communication is essential to the success of public processes and will be pleased to meet with you. I will have my staff contact Jill Beatty to arrange a meeting. I appreciate your comments and suggestions, especially during the recent Resources Committee hearing. We will carefully consider them as we work with Congress and the American public to improve management of roads on National Forest System lands.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





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Washington
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14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date:

MAR 12 1998

Honorable Helen Chenoweth
Chairman, Subcommittee on Forests and
Forest Health
Committee on Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Chenoweth:

Thank you for your letters regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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We agree that open and honest communication is essential to the success of public processes. We appreciate your comments and suggestions, especially during the recent Resources Committee hearing. We will carefully consider them as we work with Congress and the American public to improve management of roads on National Forest System lands.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date: MAR 12 1998

Honorable Virgil H. Goode
U.S. House of Representatives
1520 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4605

Dear Congressman Goode:

Thank you for your February 16, 1998, letter on behalf of your constituents, Mr. Bridger R. Newman and Mr. Ken Morgan, regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date: MAR 12 1998

Honorable James V. Hansen
U.S. House of Representatives
2466 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4401

MAR 12 1998

Dear Congressman Hansen:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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We agree that open and honest communication is essential to the success of public processes. We appreciate your comments and suggestions, especially during the recent Resources Committee hearing. We will carefully consider them as we work with Congress and the American public to improve management of roads on National Forest System lands.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

[DA, MARCH 1998]

Date:

Honorable Rick Hill
U.S. House of Representatives
1037 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2601

Dear Congressman Hill:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date:

MAR 12 1998

Honorable John E. Peterson
U.S. House of Representatives
1020 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3805

Dear Congressman Peterson:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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We agree that open and honest communication is essential to the success of public processes. We appreciate your comments and suggestions, especially during the recent Resources Committee hearing. We will carefully consider them as we work with Congress and the American public to improve management of roads on National Forest System lands.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
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Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date:

MAR 12 1998

Honorable Bob Schaffer
U.S. House of Representatives
212 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0604

Dear Congressman Schaffer:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date: MAR 12 1998

Honorable Larry E. Craig
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-1201

Dear Senator Craig:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
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14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date:

Mar 12 1998

Honorable Rod Grams
United States Senate
261 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2301

Dear Senator Grams:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
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14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date:

12 300
MAR 12 1998

Honorable George P. Radanovich
U.S. House of Representatives
213 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0519

Dear Congressman Radanovich:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1310

Date:: MAR 12 1998

Route To:

Subject: Chief's Overviews - Regions 1 and 2

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director,
IITF Director, and WO Staff

Enclosed are notes from the Chief's Overviews recently conducted in Regions 1 and 2.

I was pleased with both sessions and appreciate the preparation efforts made by each Region. The Regional Foresters and Staff did a very good job of presenting the significant challenges they face in a candid way. I look forward to a continuation of these Overviews at other units in the near future. On March 11 and 12, the Executive Team and I will hold Overviews in Region 4 and the Rocky Mountain Research Station.

While at the Overview sessions, I had the opportunity to meet with most Regional Office employees. I want to thank the employees who participated for their questions and views. As future Overviews are planned, I will look forward to having time with other Region and Station employees.

If you have any questions about the enclosed Overview notes, please call me or Francis Pandolfi.

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

Enclosure



*Francis
See comments
M*

**Chief's Overview
REGION ONE
February 19, 1998
Meeting Notes**

A Chief's Overview of Region 1 was held on February 19, 1998. These notes summarize the important issues discussed at that meeting.

1. Landscapes - Management Opportunities: The Region gave a well organized and thought provoking presentation on landscape management opportunities and innovative approaches to restoring forest and rangeland health.

The Region emphasized its readiness to take future actions based on a new premise: how the land is left, as opposed to what is taken from the land. The challenges of reduced and/or improperly aligned workforce skills, excessive processes, litigation impacts, and a budget and accounting structure geared to resource extraction rather than restoration, is affecting the Region's ability to operate. Despite this, the Region provided proposals to manage based on a large scale restoration of land health. Accomplishing this effort will require the following national level assistance:

- Improvement of interagency relations;
- Better coordination between Deputy Areas for Inventory and Monitoring;
- Development of budgets based on restoration;
- Increased allocations for threatened, endangered and sensitive species;
- New land stewardship contracting procedures; and
- New access management methods.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Francis Pandolfi asked the Regional Forester to develop a business plan based on landscape management opportunities. The intent of the plan is to capitalize on Congressional attention and a supportive environment for innovative landscape management techniques. Potentially the plan could serve as a model for national use. Components will include:

- How landscape management goals can be accomplished within budget;
- how the Region is staffed or prepared to contract to accomplish the work that must be done; and
- how revenue will be enhanced with successful implementation and operation.

2. Common Themes: As in previous reviews, several significant issues were discussed that require national focus.

Similar to discussions in Region 2 and Washington Office Deputy Areas, it is clear there is a need to simplify the budget structure and more closely align that structure with land restoration accomplishment and the GPRA strategic plan. It was noted that Research operates with a very flexible single budget line item due largely to program narratives which do a good job of explaining the services and value provided.

It is clear that roles and expectations at the Washington and Regional levels need to be better defined. Presently the organization, especially the Washington Office, is focusing an ever-increasing amount of resources on "upward" organizations which include the Executive Branch and Congress. At the headquarters level, it was emphasized that Forest Service involvement in

could or been

developing national policy has not been what it should have. Increasing this involvement has resulted in less attention to field issues. Improving this role definition and identification of expectations will improve accountability.

Communication throughout the organization needs to improve. As the organization changes, the new emerging roles must be marketed effectively. There is also a need to concentrate on communication within communities. Region 1 reported a strong willingness in some communities for industry and interest groups to work together to agree on watershed management actions. With the Forest Service as a facilitator, community support can be substantially improved. Some discussion occurred relative to major initiatives, including the recently announced roads policy. Region 1 line officers requested some work on "disciplined communication" with the field when major new initiatives are planned. Such communication could provide appropriate advance notice without compromising national level coordination needs.

3. Other Regional Issues: Several important issues were discussed that were of a national interest.

Washington Office/Regional Office Relationships: During the past seven years, the Region has had four Regional Foresters. In addition, field level interaction has been reduced as the Washington Office focuses more on Congressional and Administration issues. Trust and confidence issues were discussed in some detail. Efforts to improve communication of expectations must be made to improve relationships.

Management of the National Grasslands in North Dakota: Development of a comprehensive strategy addressing conflicts between livestock grazing and other uses was discussed. These issues will be further amplified by the ongoing process of revising management plans for 400 allotments. It is clear that National Grassland management is a significant emerging issue. The organization must focus on resolving grassland conflicts before debates become polarized. There is an important need to tie watershed restoration projects to grasslands management.

Regional Workforce Adjustments: The Region provided a report on the status of the workforce. With the goal of positioning each forest for a fixed cost/variable cost ratio of 70/30, the region estimated that approximate 272 permanent positions and 83 temporary FTE's would need to be reduced by FY 99 from the FY 97 level. Substantive progress has occurred in meeting this goal.

Civil Rights Action Team: The Region has made significant progress in resolving the majority of its backlog of complaints. Line Officers in the Region have emphasized the Continuous Improvement Process to improve relationships and received the highest level of employee response (62%) in FY 97.

Financial Health Improvement: The Region has established a Regional Office Coordinating Team and six financial working teams to provide leadership and training for implementation of FFIS. Three employees have provided assistance to Region 6 in implementing FFIS during FY 97. Based on this involvement and emphasis, the Region is confident in its ability to implement FFIS.

Enclosures are being
retyped.

Chief's Overview
REGION TWO
February 18, 1998
Meeting Notes

A Chief's Overview of Region 2 was held on February 18, 1998. These notes summarize the important issues discussed at that meeting.

1. Resource Allocation and Ecosystem Stewardship: The Region provided extensive information regarding the national process for allocation of funds and its challenging ecosystem stewardship situation. The Region contends that the allocation of budget and personnel resources are out of balance, have been so for several years, and should be significantly adjusted. In light of the changing environment the agency is facing (reduced national timber program) the Region further contends that allocation inequities must be changed if the significant ecosystem stewardship demands are to be addressed.

Discussion focused the agency's perceived reluctance to fully implement criteria for allocation of funds that was developed in response to several studies. This criteria, although available for use beginning in FY 97, has not been fully implemented due to the use of "bridges" to transition funding change impacts, and the continued discretion afforded Washington Office Staffs to make adjustments prior to final allocation.

The Region presented a picture of the significant challenges it faces in managing its diverse ecosystems through a review of the Region's forest health, aquatic and riparian systems, range management issues, noxious weed infestations, an increasing urban wildland interface, and abandoned mines. Major national issues and controversies are associated with these stewardship challenges. In addition to the need to change the budget allocation process as noted above, the Region made several other recommendations including:

- Fully utilizing the National Grasslands Councils for leadership;
- give clear national direction on integrating TES recovery into ecosystem management;
- recognize the serious threat from noxious weeds and assist in mitigation strategies; and
- establish a priority for abandoned mine clean-up.

At the close of this discussion, Francis Pandolfi summarized the key issues necessary to address this issue:

1. It is important to realize that each Region will have a different impression of funding equity. In making a final decision on this issue, it will be necessary for the Region to present a clear picture of the value and services to be gained through funding increases for the Region, and the value and services to be forgone from the Regions where funds are reduced.
2. Organizational culture is a barrier to making changes as proposed by the Region. The Forest Service culture seems to demand that all potentially affected parties, and then some, have to be involved prior to making a decision. It is imperative for the Forest Service to have flexibility and be able to act quickly on major issues. Accordingly, more management level decisions may be made ~~in the absence of~~ internal multi-level involvement.

where time for

is limited.

3. To adequately address this issue, it is necessary for management to analyze the national perspective, decide how business will be conducted differently, compress the time frame for making a decision, and then accept responsibility and accountability for making it happen.

2. Common Themes: Several areas of presentation by Region 2, were similar to those of other units.

There was extensive discussion on the Washington Office/Field level communication problems. The Region perceives that the relationship between Washington and the field has been adversely affected. The perception is that the Washington Office has been focused differently by the current management climate. The Region requested that the Washington Office communicate any role and expectation changes to the field, so a support base can be developed. Participants agreed at present, the Washington Office may not be serving its field customer very well. It will be necessary to clearly market its roles and performance expectations in order to make improvements.

Similar to Region 1, there was discussion on the need to improve communication with local communities. It is only through improved communication that Forest Service planning and resource initiative efforts can be integrated with external priorities from Congress and local governments. The ability for local line managers to make resource decisions with a high degree of decentralized authority was felt to be important for community credibility. However, it may also be necessary to significantly standardize/centralize administrative and information processes to assure a fully responsive agency at the headquarters level.

As in other reviews, the importance of having Washington Office experience prior to serving in line officer positions and key leadership positions was discussed. Region 2 management felt strongly that the most effective leaders have an understanding of the need to integrate national issues with local community needs. It was felt this understanding was best gained from serving at the headquarters level. This issue will be explored further in future reviews.

3. Other Regional Issues: The Region made several other presentation on important issues.

Routt Divide Blowdown: The Region provided information this blowdown covering approximately 20,000 acres, principally on the Medicine Bow National Forest. The Region is preparing a supplemental funding request for consideration by OMB in FY 98. It is important to note that specific additional funding demands will affect the FY 99 and FY 00 budget proposal, if full salvage and other recovering efforts are to be successful.

EEO Settlement Agreements and Compliance Issues: The Region reported on its significant progress in resolving the backlog of EEO complaints. Some concern was expressed that coordination between the Washington Office and the Region is lacking and ~~could affect~~ agency compliance with agreements. Specific concerns were provided ~~to~~ for followup. *is currently*

Reinvention and Process Reengineering: Discussion occurred regarding the Region's involvement in multiple reinvention/reengineering efforts. The Region was involved in and expressed concern about the need to issue new or new interim regulations relative to forest planning, so plan revisions can proceed.



United States
Department of
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Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1230
Route To : 2160

Date:

MAR 17 1998

Subject: Delegation of Authority - Resource Conservation
and Recovery Act (RCRA)

To: Regional Foresters and Station Directors

Pursuant to Executive Order 12088, the Secretary of Agriculture must assure compliance with applicable pollution control standards with respect to facilities, lands, and activities under the jurisdiction, custody, and control of the Department of Agriculture (USDA), including those standards established pursuant to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), 42 U.S.C. 6901, et seq. Pursuant to Section 1-601 to Executive Order 12088, whenever the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or an appropriate State, interstate, or local agency notifies USDA that it is in violation of an applicable pollution control standard, the Secretary must consult promptly with the notifying agency and provide, for the approval of the notifying agency, a plan and schedule to achieve and maintain compliance with the applicable pollution control standard. When the notifying agency is the EPA, the Secretary may enter into an interagency agreement or an administrative order on consent. When the notifying agency is a State, interstate, or local agency, the Secretary may enter into an administrative consent order or a consent judgment in an appropriate United States District Court. With respect to Forest Service facilities and National Forest System lands, the Secretary has delegated his authority under Executive Order 12088 to the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment (7 CFR 2.20(a)(8)). The Under Secretary has re-delegated this authority to the Chief of the Forest Service (7 CFR 2.60(a)(41)).

With respect to facilities, lands, and activities within your respective authority, I hereby re-delegate to you my authority under Executive Order 12088 to enter into inter-agency agreements, administrative orders on consent, and consent judgments with EPA and appropriate State, interstate, and local environmental enforcement agencies concerning compliance with applicable RCRA pollution control standards, including payment of civil or administrative fines and penalties under section 6001 of RCRA, 42 U.S.C. 6961. This delegation may be exercised in the absence of the Regional Forester/Station Director by the Deputy Regional Forester/Deputy Station Director.

Note the following:

It is USDA policy that USDA Central Hazardous Waste Management Account (HWHW) funds cannot be used to pay fines and penalties.

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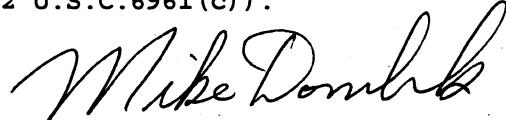


Forest Service benefiting funds distributed from the Washington Office for the HAZMAT program cannot be used to pay fines or penalties. This does not preclude the use of these funds for projects, known as "supplemental environmental projects," which would offset the penalty or fine assessed by the EPA or appropriate agency.

No administrative order can be issued to the Forest Service under RCRA until the Forest Service has an opportunity to confer with the issuing agency (42 U.S.C. 6961(b)(2)).

Lack of appropriations does not exempt Forest Service facilities and activities from compliance with RCRA requirements. The President may exempt a facility or activity from RCRA requirements if he determines that it is in the paramount interest of the United States. No such exemption may be granted due to a lack of appropriation unless the President specifically requested and the Congress denied the appropriation.

Under RCRA, State use of funds collected from the Federal government is limited to projects designed to improve or protect the environment or to defray costs of the environmental protection or enforcement (42 U.S.C. 6961(c)).



MIKE DOMBECK
Chief



United States
Department of
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Forest
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Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1300

Date: March 17, 1998

Route To:

Subject: Framework for a Customer-Driven Forest Service

To: All Employees

In our proposed "Natural Resources Agenda for the 21st Century", we recognize that one of the challenges of the next decade and beyond will be to successfully meet the growing demands of an increasingly urban society. More and more people will be arriving on national forests as customers, demanding a whole range of recreational and informational products and expecting quality service. One of the key measures of our performance is how effectively we deliver on these expectations.

Vice President Gore has designated the Forest Service as a high impact agency because we are an organization that directly serves millions of Americans as customers. You are engaged with these customers on a daily basis and do a commendable job of responding to their needs. With adoption of our service standards in our customer service pledge, widespread use of the comment cards, and completion of our first round of national customer surveys, we have begun a conversation with America and laid the groundwork for becoming a truly customer-driven agency.

To provide you a clearer understanding of what I mean by customer driven, and to ensure that we are providing consistent customer service throughout the agency, I am enclosing what I call a "Framework for a Customer-Driven Forest Service". Please take special note of the service image I would like us to convey to the American people: Every customer, be they visitor, recreationist, partner, contractor, or permittee, should come to expect the same high quality service and responsiveness. Your day-to-day commitment to these objectives will make the difference between saying we are customer driven, and doing it.

I am asking the National Customer Service Team to provide support to the Regions, Stations, Area and WO Staff for accomplishing these objectives and to monitor progress service-wide. I look forward to visiting with you about our progress in the months to come, and I'm counting on each of you to make "Service" in our agency name synonymous with "Customer Service, Second to None".

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

Enclosure



Chief's Framework for a Customer-Driven Forest Service

the Context of "Caring for the Land"

The delivery of products, services, and valued experiences to our citizen-customers (the American people), local communities, and partners is an integral part of our goal to sustain the health of the land. Customer satisfaction about how we "EXECUTE" our programs and provide multiple benefits is one of the truest measures of our performance as land stewards.

Creating a "Service Image"

ALL OF US MUST HELP CREATE AND SUSTAIN A COMMON "SERVICE IMAGE" OF THE AGENCY FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

- **Every Forest Service office/site/facility is a Customer Service Center:**

*The Pledge and comment cards are universally displayed
Convenient hours and access
One-stop shopping
Simple business processes
Quick access to people, assistance and information
A welcoming environment*

- **Every Forest Service employee is a Customer Service Representative:**

*Understands how his/her job connects to our mission, The Natural Resource Agenda, and customer satisfaction
Trained and knowledgeable
Service-oriented...Values his/her customers*

Continuing our "Conversation with America"

As a course of business, we will continuously keep abreast of the changing needs of our customers, be responsive with new technologies and more customer-friendly processes, and continuously seek ways to improve our quality and service.

Being Accountable to Our Customers

We will measure our performance by asking customers how well we are meeting their expectations.

Customer Satisfaction will be a primary performance measure for Government Performance & Results Plan.

Customer Satisfaction will be included in the performance standards of every employee, at every level of the organization.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1300
Route To:

Date: March 17, 1998

Subject: "Conversation with America" Report
Customer Comment Card Program

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director, and WO Staff

Enclosed is the Report "Conversation with America" that describes the results of our frontline customer comment card program for 1997. This report provides a summary of key messages we are receiving from customers across the country and tracks card responses by Region, Station, Area and WO.

The comment card program was established to provide our customers an opportunity to give us feedback on our products, business practices and service, and is an integral part of our corporate effort to create a "customer-driven" agency.

Our experience with these cards over the past two years makes it clear that customers value this opportunity to make suggestions or express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with our services. Responses indicate that where the cards are prominently displayed and easily accessible, our customers do take the time to comment and return them.

I am asking each of you to provide the emphasis necessary to ensure that our comment cards are prominently displayed and readily available to all our customers at every office, recreation site, and visitor center in your region, station or area.

The comment card program is oriented to our frontline customers and employees, so I ask that you make this report available to all your people. Please advise your employees that this report is available on the Forest Service web page (<http://fsweb-www.fed.fs.us>).

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

Enclosure





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date: MAR 17 1998

Honorable Max Baucus
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2602

Dear Senator Baucus:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate your support and the opportunity to respond to your suggestions.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

As a result of early public and Congressional comment, we have extended the comment period on the interim rule for another 30 days. The new deadline for comments is March 30, 1998. We will also hold a series of public forums across the Nation to assure full public participation in the final development of the roads policy. The dates and locations of the public meetings and the instructions for submission of written or e-mail comments can be found in the *Federal Register* notice published February 27, 1998, or on the Forest Service internet site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/roads/>.

We agree that open and honest communication is essential to the success of public processes. We appreciate hearing your comments and suggestions, and we will carefully consider them as we work with Congress and the American public to improve management of roads on National Forest System lands.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date: MAR 17 1998

Honorable Thomas A. Daschle
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-4103

Dear Senator Daschle:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. I appreciate your support and the opportunity to respond to your suggestions.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th & Independence SW
P. O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 1010

Date: MAR 17 1998

Honorable Diane Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510-0504

Dear Senator Feinstein:

Thank you for your letter regarding management of National Forest System roads and our proposed interim regulation to temporarily suspend road construction in National Forest roadless areas. Secretary Glickman asked me to respond to your letter. I apologize for the delay in my response.

The intent of our proposed interim rule is to provide a suspension on road construction in some roadless areas on National Forest System lands during which Congress, the Administration, and the American people can engage in a dialogue about road construction and reconstruction in our National Forests. After we published the proposed interim rule in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 1998, we heard from many citizens and elected officials that the 30-day comment period was too short to permit full participation of those interested in the proposed rule. In addition, many who wrote and called asked that we host public meetings around the Nation to further facilitate public input and discussion.

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We agree that open and honest communication is essential to the success of public processes. We appreciate your comments and suggestions. We will carefully consider them as we work with Congress and the American public to improve management of roads on National Forest System lands.

Sincerely,

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief





May 14, 1998
D 14/9

Mr. Mike Dombeck
Chief, U.S. Forest Service
USDAFS
POB 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090
USA

Dear Mr. Dombeck,

As you may remember, about a month ago during your visit to Israel, you planted two trees in Segev Forest in the western Galilee. Later that day you dropped in on our GIS unit and during the explanation of our mapping project, I tried to print out a GIS map which shows the area where you planted the trees. Well I finally did make contact with the printer, and the map which I wanted to give you then is enclosed here.

Please accept it with the best regards and compliments of everyone here at Israel's Forest Dept.

Sincerely,

John B. Woodcock
Forest Database Administration

cc.

Dr. Menachem Sachs - Eshtaol



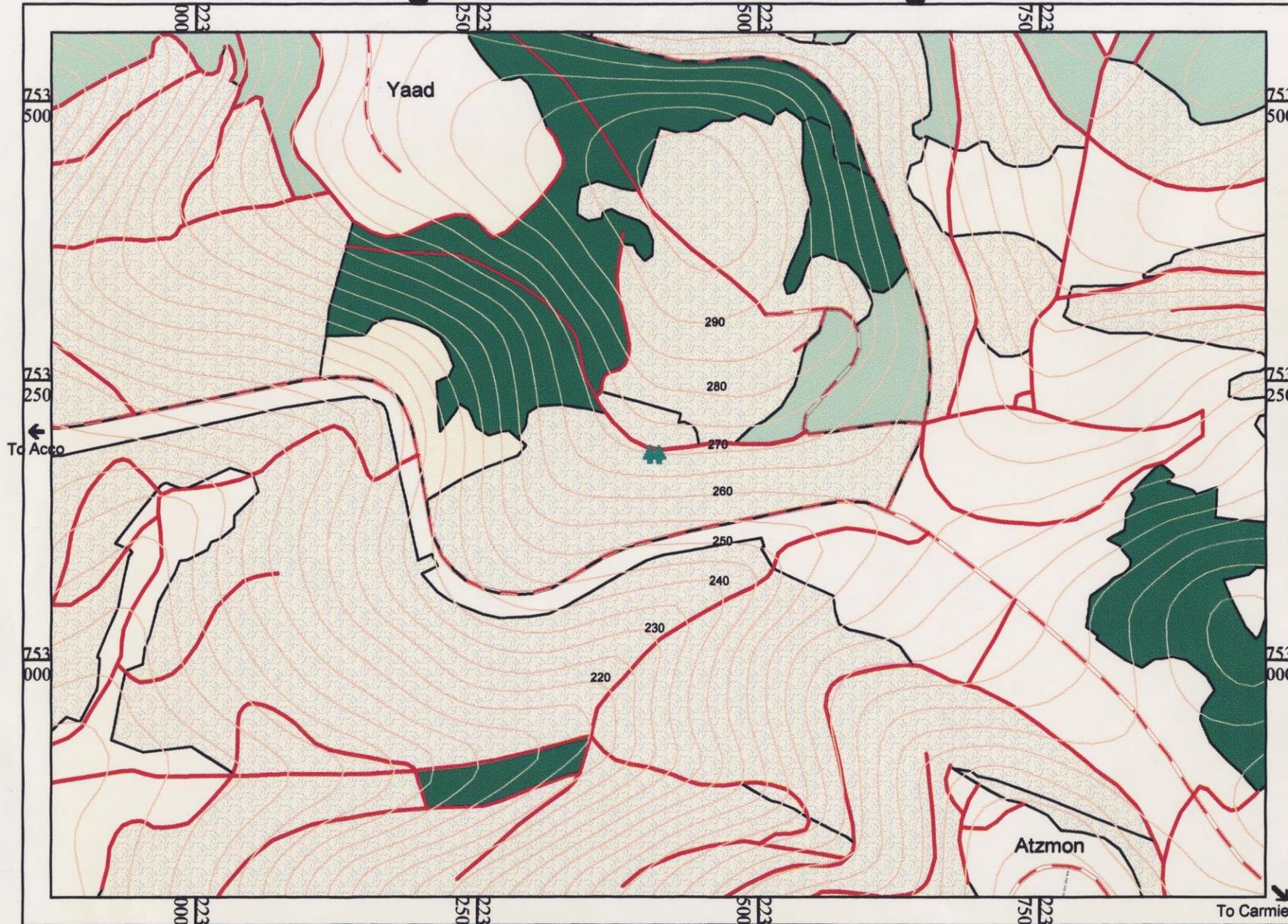
**KEREN KAYEMETH LEISRAEL
LAND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**



JOHN WOODCOCK, M.Sc.
FOREST DATA-BASE ADMINISTRATION

FOREST DEPARTMENT
P.O.BOX 45 KIRYAT HAIM 26103, ISRAEL
TEL. 972-4-8470268
FAX. 972-4-8470274
E-mail: johnw@kkl.org.il

Segev Forest - USFS Planting



Legend

- USFS Trees  5 m. Contour
- Roads 
- Asphalt 
- Dirt 
- Paths 
- Forest Stands 
- Pines 
- Other Conifer 
- EuclOlive 
- Natural Forest 
- Sparse Forest 
- New Planting 



Data Sources:
 KKL Forest Dept.
 Mapping Project

Scale: 1:5000



Meters

06-04-98

Layout created on ArcView
 by John Woodcock