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Statement of Mike Dombeck
Chief of the Forest Service
May 9, 2000

On October 13, 1999, President Clinton charged the Forest Service to develop options to further protect for future generations "some of the last, best, unprotected wildland anywhere in our nation." In keeping with the President's directive and the long Forest Service legacy of conservation, I am pleased to announce today that the Forest Service is proposing to end road construction in nearly one quarter of the 192 million acre National Forest System.

Over 25 years of local planning, lawsuits, and controversy have failed to resolve the roadless area issue. New leadership and new direction are needed. This proposal would ensure that the greatest threat to the values of roadless lands is removed and that their important characteristics are evaluated and protected as appropriate through forest planning at the local level in the future.

Over the past five years, we have seen dramatic increases in the loss of open space, unfragmented lands, farms, and wetlands. In an increasingly urbanized and developed nation, roadless areas of the National Forest System become more and more valuable. They provide:

- Refuges for rare plant, wildlife and fish species.
- Clean, pure drinking water for thousands of communities.
- Opportunities for dispersed recreation.
- Reference areas for research and study.
- Places of solitude and spiritual renewal where families may reconnect with the lands and waters that sustain them.

Another President, Theodore Roosevelt once described conservation as "applying common sense to common problems for the common good." I can think of few issues more relevant to Roosevelt's definition than road construction into pristine roadless areas.

The Forest Service backlog on maintenance and reconstruction of our existing road system is well over $8 billion dollars per year. We presently receive about 20% of the funding that we need to take care of our existing road system. It makes little sense to build new roads into valuable roadless areas when we cannot afford to maintain so much of our existing road system.

Many have charged that protecting roadless areas will block public access to their public lands. This proposal proves them wrong. Not a single authorized road will be closed as a result of this proposal. All existing and legal access would be preserved.

We are at the starting point of the public process. We will hold over 300 public meetings in communities large and small to explain this proposal and garner public input. Our proposal can, and will, be improved based on public involvement and review.

Many will argue this proposal does not go far enough. Others will say it goes too far. At its root, it is a measured and common sense proposal that ensures that the very values that draw hundreds of millions of Americans to their forests will be protected and preserved for the use and benefit of future generations.

I would be happy to answer any questions.

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Speeches

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- bulwark against invasive species

1. Clinton's Charge
2. Roosevelt
3. 2d Para

(2)

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Reasons roadless areas are roadless.

Rugged terrain, unstable geology.
Cost of road building
Natural Resource Values.
Public controversy
Low timber values.

NF ACREAGE

AZ - 11.2M
NM - 9.3

ROADLESS

AZ - 1.1
NM - 1.5

Why roadless areas are important

Wildlife habitat.
Water - drinking water
Large unfragment and undisturbed landscapes.
Recreation opportunities.
Personal renewal
References for research.

Why roadless protection is needed

Rapid loss of open space
Reduce fragmentation
Need to target limited maintenance
Controversy

Key points re the Tongass.

- Statutory requirements - Tongass Timber Reform Act
- 12 years of plan - highly protective
- Changing economies

Impacts

250 jobs

50 - 70 million bf/yr. 2% of current program.

balanced
measured
deliberate
reasonable
} proposal.

Protecting Our Wilderness Heritage

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
Wilderness Summit, Washington, DC
May 17, 2000

Introduction

Welcome to you all!

Less than a year ago, on the Gila Wilderness, I called for a wilderness summit within 1 year—a gathering of like-minded women and men dedicated to the wilderness idea. And here you are today!

As Aldo Leopold once said, "Wilderness is a resource which can shrink but not grow." Wilderness shrinks when people don't actively protect it. Wilderness shrinks in bits and pieces, whittled away by a road built here, a resource extracted there. As Leopold noted, you can still use the land for recreation, for science, for wildlife—but no longer for wilderness.

So how do you protect wilderness? Leopold offered this insight: "Unless there be wilderness-minded men scattered through all the conservation bureaus, the [Wilderness] Society may never learn of new invasions until the time for action has passed." Today, Leopold would have added "women," and he would have mentioned more nongovernmental groups. But his point would still be the same: Wilderness protection requires collaboration, and that's why we're here today.

We're here today on behalf of the National Wilderness Preservation System. We're here to build trust among all those committed to wilderness. Most importantly, we're here to decide what we can concretely do together to protect America's wilderness areas.

It's my pleasure to acknowledge a true wilderness champion, a leader we can all aspire to emulate. Congressman Bruce Vento spent 24 years in Congress as an ardent protector of America's wildland heritage, with a passion for preserving our national treasures. A great friend of the land, he helped craft and pass scores of bills to protect millions of acres of wilderness and other wildlands, along with thousands of miles of wild and scenic rivers. For a decade as Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Parks, Forests and Public Lands, Congressman Vento led the development of national policies that will help us pass on to our children and grandchildren a stronger natural resource legacy than the one we inherited. Congressman Vento, on behalf of us all, I thank you!

I'd also like to thank Dr. Perry Brown, Dean of the School of Forestry at the University of Montana. Dr. Brown is chairing the panel established by the Pinchot Institute to evaluate the management of the National Wilderness Preservation System. We look forward to the findings of Dr. Brown's distinguished panel, and we can't thank him enough for taking on this task.

Also joining us is the Interagency Wilderness Policy Council. The council includes senior leadership from the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and USGS Biological Resources Division.

I would like to give a special note of thanks to the Pinchot Institute for coordinating this event.

Milestones in the Wilderness Movement

The writer A.Q. Mowbray once said, "The measure of a modern industrialized nation can be taken by observing the quality of its works in the two extremes of its environment—cities and wilderness." We are here to take stock of one of those measures—wilderness. How has our Nation fared?

In four centuries, we have lost most of the original American wilderness. We have actually paved more acreage in this country than we have designated as wilderness!

The love of wilderness and the tragedy of its loss are common threads in early American literature. Both are driving themes in James Fenimore Cooper's famous *Leatherstocking Tales*, for example.

In fact, wilderness values inspired the early American conservation movement. Henry David Thoreau is famous for his wildland walks through the Massachusetts countryside. The solitude he found was balsam for his soul. "In Wildness is the preservation of the World," he proclaimed.

In 1860, the artist Frederick Edwin Church painted the masterpiece "Twilight in the Wilderness." He inspired a generation of artists in the so-called Hudson School to celebrate the sublime beauty of the American landscape in their paintings.

Thoreau's book *The Maine Woods*, published in 1864, called for establishing "national preserves" in virgin forests, "not for idle sport or food, but for inspiration and our own true re-creation." George Perkins Marsh, in his 1874 book *The Earth as Modified by Human Nature*, gave the first systematic analysis of the human impact on the environment. The book laid the foundation for the modern conservation movement.

Despite early calls for wilderness conservation, the rate of wilderness loss accelerated with the expanding frontier. In 1909—less than a century ago—Aldo Leopold could still rejoice in experiencing, as he put it, "wild country to be in" out West, where "there were grizzlies in every major mountain mass." That's no longer true anywhere in the lower 48 States.

Leopold well understood the threat to our remaining wilderness areas—the "blank spots on the map," as he called them. He worked tirelessly to exclude roads and grazing use permits from the Gila River headwaters. His efforts paid off—in 1924, the first wilderness was designated, the Gila Wilderness on the Gila National Forest.

At about the same time, Arthur Carhart—another Forest Service employee—was also working for wilderness protection. In 1926, partly thanks to his efforts, another area was designated for special protection. Today, it's the Boundary Waters Canoe Area on the Superior National Forest.

That same year, in 1926, Forest Service Chief William Greeley initiated the first inventory of roadless areas. The inventory was limited to areas larger than 230,400 acres. The Forest Service identified 74 such tracts, totaling 55 million acres.

By the 1930's, the wilderness movement was off the ground. But Forest Service regulations for designating and managing wilderness areas remained weak until 1939. That's when Bob Marshall—yet another Forest Service employee—drafted much tougher regulations for protecting wilderness areas.

Aldo Leopold and Bob Marshall cofounded the Wilderness Society in 1935. By 1964, with support from the society, the Forest Service had set aside 9 million acres of wilderness. But there was something missing: a common standard of wilderness management. Also, because wilderness designations were by administrative fiat, the next administration could reverse them. Wilderness was far from secure.

By the 1960's, with the postwar timber boom, roads were penetrating America's last remaining wildlands. Millions of acres of wilderness were being lost. But people like Howard Zahniser were leading a movement to finally give wilderness permanent protection through an act of Congress.

The wilderness movement laid the foundations for wilderness as we know it today. In 1964, at the stroke of a pen, the Wilderness Act created the National Wilderness Preservation System. As Congress so poetically proclaimed in the memorable words of Howard Zahniser, principle author of the Wilderness Act, a wilderness is "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Of all of the natural resource management laws, the Wilderness Act remains my personal favorite. It has a soul, an essence of hope, a simplicity and sense of connection. Unlike the jargon-filled tomes of most laws, the Wilderness Act says in a very few words that what we have today is worth preserving for future generations. That in a world of compromises, insincere gestures, and half measures, there are lands and waters where we will not allow expediency to override conviction.

Since 1964, the National Wilderness Preservation System has grown from 9 to 104 million acres. Today, we have more than 650 wilderness areas in 46 States—thanks to the visionaries who still inspire us, thanks to Aldo Leopold, to Arthur Carhart, to Bob Marshall, to Howard Zahniser. And thanks also to your hard work! Without you, their vision would never have become a reality—without the likes of Dick Costley and Bill Worf, who helped develop the original Forest Service policy for implementing the Wilderness Act; of Tom Kovalicky, former supervisor of the Nez Perce National Forest; of Ed Bloedell, former wilderness program leader in the Forest Service's Washington Office; and of so many more from different agencies and organizations whose

contributions to wilderness protection have been so vital over the years. Without them, our last remaining wilderness areas might have been lost forever. And we wouldn't be here today.

Wilderness Values

Today, designated wilderness accounts for about 5 percent of the land area of the United States. That might not sound like much, and in fact it's not nearly enough. But the scarcity of wilderness makes it all the more precious. We need what wilderness can give us.

Wilderness provides us with clean water and air. Wilderness provides habitats for plants and animals, including a refuge for endangered species; all too often, wilderness is their last, best hope for survival. Wilderness provides solitude, a refuge from the noise and cares that plague us in our daily lives. Wilderness provides scenic beauty, a place for quiet reflection on what it means to be alive. And let's not forget—wilderness provides economic benefits to communities through tourism and recreation, and to society at large through clean water and clean air.

But there's something else we need from wilderness, something only it can give, something that makes it unique: Wilderness is key to our cultural heritage. Other, older peoples have their ancient myths and traditions, their glorious architectures, their classical literatures. We have our wilderness. Wilderness is part of the American spirit, the American character, the American legacy. It's part of who we are as a people. The writer Wallace Stegner put it well: "We need wilderness preserved," he said, "...because it was the challenge against which our character as a people was formed. The reminder and the reassurance that it is still there is good for our spiritual health even if we never once in 10 years set foot in it."

Accomplishments

What can we do today to protect the American wilderness, our legacy to our children? We at the Forest Service are committed to making a start. Here's some of what we're doing:

- Wilderness requires collaboration. Working with the Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service, we have asked Dr. Perry Brown to form a panel of distinguished colleagues to assess the National Wilderness Preservation System. We also established the Interagency Wilderness Policy Council, including senior leadership from the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and USGS Biological Resources Division.
- Last year, the Forest Service formed a Wilderness Advisory Group of employees at every level of the organization and from every region of the country. It's a long way from the backcountry to the Beltway, from the woods to Washington. Our Wilderness Advisory Group informs me and advises me on wilderness issues. The group has held several meetings to incorporate field input into our wilderness strategy. Wilderness now enjoys a higher profile in our national office.
- In revising our forest plans, we are now specifically looking for areas suitable for wilderness designation. Twenty percent of the National Forest System is already wilderness; we are considering tens of millions of additional acres. But we can't limit wilderness to rocks and

ice. Our wilderness portfolio must embody a broader array of lands. We need to extend wilderness protection to a range of lower elevation ecosystems—to bottomlands, to prairie, to karst ecosystems, to old growth.

- Wilderness now plays a larger role in our efforts to address forest health and sustainability. One way is by placing more emphasis on monitoring wilderness—on finding ways of using wilderness as a baseline for determining our Nation's environmental health. Specifically, we have established links with the Forest Service Inventory and Monitoring Institute. We are also planning a strategic wilderness monitoring needs assessment and a wilderness monitoring committee to make recommendations on wilderness monitoring.
- At the same time, we are placing more emphasis on the interface between wilderness and recreation. The American people are welcome in their wilderness—but they must use the land consistent with wilderness values. Through the National Recreation Use Monitoring Project, we are collecting data on wilderness use levels and patterns. Through the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, we are learning what Americans understand and value about their wilderness.

Our surveys are showing something interesting. We are finding that most Americans don't value their wilderness primarily for recreation. Instead, they value their wilderness primarily for such values as clean water, solitude, protection of rare species, old-growth forests—the values that Americans associate with untrammeled nature.

We take those values very seriously. Let me give you an example I got from Dale Bosworth, Regional Forester for the Forest Service's Northern Region in Missoula, Montana. Dale told me that another Federal agency wanted us to use helicopters to sample water quality in alpine lakes across wilderness areas on our national forests. My predecessor Max Peterson said absolutely not. Instead, we sent in rangers on horseback. We got the job done while upholding our wilderness ethic. Max, my hat's off to you!

Challenges Ahead

Much remains to be done. Too often, we focus exclusively on how to add more wilderness to the system. We forget the difficulties we face in managing the wilderness we already have. The management challenges are daunting—air quality, water quality, recreation use, invasive species, fire use—the list goes on and on. It's your job to address them.

But we must never become so engrossed in the problems of management that we forget the need to extend wilderness protections to more of America's untrammeled wildlands. We can and must do both!

Our collective actions must lead to milestones in the wilderness movement. For too long, we have failed to add new milestones. Since the 1980's, the wilderness movement has suffered from a malaise. Too many of us have rested on our laurels, however well deserved. We need to reinvigorate the wilderness movement.

Today, more vigilance than ever is needed. We are entering times that will truly test our ability to protect America's wilderness. In the next few decades, America's population will mushroom. Americans will continue to spread into the wildland/urban interface. They will continue to acquire new devices, often motorized, for outdoor recreation.

What will that mean for America's wilderness? Consider: Forest fragmentation has doubled in 16 years, partly because 7,000 acres of open space are lost every day. People are demanding more and more space to live in, to work in, to play in. That will increase the pressure on our remaining wildlands. Unless we begin to do something now, we could see our most vulnerable lands—our wildernesses—gradually eroded away.

To meet the challenge, we will need a new generation of leaders. Our original leaders—the ones who, inspired by visionaries such as Aldo Leopold, established our National Wilderness Preservation System—are retired or soon retiring. We need to develop the next generation of leaders now.

Theodore Roosevelt once stood on the rim of the Grand Canyon and said, "Leave it as it is. The ages have been at work on it and man can only mar it." The same can be said about every remaining acre of American wilderness. You must become the leaders who can inspire in all Americans the same feelings of awe and reverence—feelings that alone can ensure permanent protection for our wilderness heritage.

The Changing Role of Timber Harvest in Our National Forests

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA), Washington, DC
May 22, 2000

I would like to thank John Heissenbuttel for inviting me here to speak to you today. I appreciate this opportunity to appear before such a knowledgeable and influential group of forest and corporate managers. We've sometimes had differences in the past. And you might not agree with everything I say here today, but it's important that we have a dialogue.

Before starting, I'd like to address a concern about a passage in our draft roadless area rulemaking environmental impact statement. The passage describes social effects related to timber harvest. Some have said the passage is patronizing and offensive toward forestry workers and their communities.

I grew up near northern Wisconsin's Chequamegon National Forest. Many of my friends and relatives made a living from logging, guiding, recreation, and tourism. I did, too, in my younger years. I have a great deal of respect for those who make their living from logging and other forest-related industries. Be assured: If there is anything that implies otherwise in our draft environmental impact statement, I apologize—and I will personally make sure it is corrected.

History of Service

The American forest products industry has a long history of serving the American people. For most of America's history, wood was practically our only fuel. Wood warmed our citizens, produced our iron, powered our machines. Wood products were used in our houses, barns, fences, bridges, even our dams and locks. Everything depended on wood from America's forests—rural economies, industry, transportation, the building of our cities. In a very real sense, forests were the economic foundation of our Nation.

Today, however, we face serious long-term social and economic challenges. At the Forest Service, we understand that such challenges can mean fewer mills, fewer jobs. We are deeply committed to working with you to create opportunities for communities that depend on the forest products industry.

Forest Service Mission

The Forest Service's mission demands that we care for the land so we can serve the American people in multiple ways. Only by maintaining the health, diversity, and productivity of our national forests and grasslands can we fulfill our mission. We must strike the right balance between removing forest products and maintaining healthy ecosystems.

In the past, we sometimes neglected to take the long view in managing our forests. In response to what we perceived as society's demands, we built a 380,000-mile road system, cut wide swaths of forest, and didn't listen carefully enough to the growing chorus of public discontent. I do not know anyone who would suggest we return to the era of harvesting 12 billion board feet of

timber per year from our national forests. But the unfortunate reality is that those not-so-long-ago days are still fresh in the minds of many, feeding residual distrust and conflict. But things have changed much, and the only certainty I know is that the rate of change will accelerate.

Our multiple-use mission has greatly evolved in a short period of time. Today, we no longer manage public forests primarily for outputs of wood fiber, minerals, or animal unit-months. In ever greater numbers, the American people are asking—demanding—that we focus less on what we take from the land and more on what we leave behind.

You know better than most that a forest is much more than just trees for harvest. Here are just a few of the many ways we depend on our national forests:

- Clean water. The most and the cleanest water in the country comes from our forests. More than 60 million Americans get their drinking water from watersheds that originate in our national forests and grasslands.
- Recreation. In 1946, our national forests and grasslands hosted just 18 million visitor-days; last year, it was nearly 1 billion—that's 50 times more! People are coming from all over the world. They come to enjoy our 7,700 miles of national scenic byways. They come to fish and canoe our 4,348 miles of national wild and scenic rivers. They come to hike our 133,087 miles of trails, to camp in our 4,300 campsites—the list goes on and on.
- Wildlife and fish habitat. Our national forests provide 80 percent of the habitat in the lower 48 States for elk, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. We maintain 28 million acres of wild turkey habitat and half of the country's blue-ribbon trout streams.

Changing Public Demand

Controversy. From our very beginnings, the Forest Service has been steeped in controversy. At the turn of the 20th century, a debate was raging about how to manage the Nation's forests. Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, and other early Forest Service leaders made decisions that weren't always easy or popular.

We respect them today because their decisions—though often politically unpopular at the time—served the interests of the land and of future generations of Americans. Through a system of public lands, the Forest Service protected watersheds in the West. After the Great Depression, we were again called upon to help restore millions of acres of abandoned farmland in the Midwest and East.

Following World War II, we worked with the timber industry to help fulfill the national dream of providing families with single-family homes. Our timber harvests escalated for nearly a quarter of a century.

Along the way, social values changed. Eventually, the changing times caught up with and overran us in a flood of controversy, lawsuits, and injunctions. We've learned that we must be responsive to new demands—demands for clean water, healthy habitat for fish and wildlife, recreation opportunities, and ecologically sustainable timber harvests.

You here in this room know very well what I'm talking about. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative, pioneered by the AF&PA, addresses some of the very same public concerns. We share those concerns and commend the AF&PA for its Sustainable Forestry Initiative, for its Environmental, Health, and Safety Principles, for its efforts to protect longleaf pine forest, the red-cockaded woodpecker, and other rare and endangered species and ecosystems.

Role of Timber Harvest

Today, we know it is possible to generate forest products while maintaining healthy, sustainable forest ecosystems. Some people propose a zero-cut policy for our national forests and grasslands. I'll say it again: I reject the notion that we should stop all timber harvest in our national forests.

For one thing, cutting off the timber supply from our national forests would do nothing to curtail our Nation's growing appetite for wood products. It would only shift environmental problems to other lands where environmental protections are fewer. In the absence of a national consumption ethic, we must continue to meet at least part of the Nation's demand for timber. Although the mix of uses continues to shift, multiple use remains alive and well. And timber harvest will remain a part of it.

But most harvest in our national forests is no longer an end in itself. More and more, we are using harvest as a means to achieve ecosystem health.

Many of the problems we face in our national forests defy simple administrative solutions. One serious problem is the health of our forest ecosystems. Some 54 million acres of national forestland are exposed to a moderate to severe risk of unnaturally occurring catastrophic fire. And 24 million acres are at risk of excessive mortality over the next 15 years due to insect and disease outbreaks.

Our forest ecosystems most in trouble once had low-intensity fires every few years. Decades of fire suppression allowed dense stands of small-diameter trees to fill the spaces between larger, older trees. When fire now occurs, it often ladders into the canopy, destroying the entire forest for generations to come.

Many of our ailing forests are suffering from exotic pests—a threat to private as well as public forestlands. A good example is the gypsy moth, a problem throughout the Northeast. In the next 30 years, the gypsy moth could spread throughout much of the South and Midwest. Working with partners, we expect to slow the spread by up to 60 percent through survey and management practices.

Partnership or Confrontation?

We know how to begin to solve our forest health problems. Thinning, prescribed fire, and planting all play a role.

- In Oregon's Sumpter Valley, we experimented by thinning a stand of beetle-infected ponderosa pine. Tree mortality declined by more than 90 percent.

- On Lake Pend Oreille in northern Idaho, we removed thickets from open forests of ponderosa pine. Then we burned the underbrush. The forest is now on its way to recovery.

Thinning can help bring our ailing forests back to health. To do it, we need your know-how, your resources. Norm Johnson, who chaired the Forest Service's Committee of Scientists, put it well: "In the past," he said, "the forest industry needed the national forests; now the national forests need the industry to achieve ecological objectives."

Unfortunately, the relationship between the Forest Service and the forest products industry has been rocky at times. Remember the spotted owl old-growth controversy in the Pacific Northwest? At the time, the timber industry likely could have settled for legislation that would have reduced harvest in the Pacific Northwest from 5 billion board feet to 2 or 3. Proposals along these lines were summarily rejected. Today, we struggle to harvest 1 billion board feet in the Pacific Northwest.

Now we are facing another issue—roadless areas. Some are crying foul because our proposal for roadless areas would permit timber harvest and other uses they don't like. Others are crying foul because our proposal would, quote, "put up a wall around our forests."

Allow me to respond to some of the concerns raised by AF&PA and others about the roadless issue.

- No "wall" surrounds our national forests. In fact, you will never see a "No Trespassing" sign on your national forests and grasslands. The reality is that more Americans are using their national forests in more ways than at any other time in history.

- Your Website implies that 65 million acres in our national forests are at risk without roads in roadless areas. The reality is that many of our national forestlands are indeed at risk, and it is sometimes easier to treat them using roads. But the highest priority areas for treatment already have roads, for the most part; and those high-priority areas won't be affected by our roadless proposal. So how much land will be affected? Here's one way to look at it: On all national forestlands, we are planning to treat about 2.5 million acres at risk through timber harvest in the next 5 years. Our roadless proposal would reduce that number by about 54,000 acres—or about 2 percent.

- Many also claim that without roads, we can't fight fires. The reality is that roads do make firefighting easier. But they also contribute to human-caused fires. We've been fighting fires in roadless areas for almost a century. We've been so good at firefighting that we've actually contributed to the fire problem—the fuels problem. Last year, we put out 98 percent of the fires we fought in the first few hours. Think about it: 98 percent! And let's not forget—our roadless proposal contains an exception for firefighting.

Again, on *both* sides of the issue, we're setting ourselves up for a fall. We're setting ourselves up with overblown rhetoric, distortions of the truth, confrontational bluster. Let's learn from the past. Let's avoid repeating the same old dynamic that has failed us all in the past.

Another contentious issue is looming ahead: chip mills. Chip mills use low-quality, small-diameter trees. They could be just what we need to utilize the small-diameter trees thinned for the health of our forests.

But instead, many chip mills are accelerating the harvest of hardwood timber on private forestlands in the Southeast. In some cases, forests that have barely begun to regenerate from selective cutting in the past are today being clearcut to feed the chip mills, using methods that can damage watersheds and destroy fish and wildlife habitat. I understand that more trees are harvested today in the Southeast than are growing. Sooner or later, that is certain to draw public criticism and public demands for a more sustainable forest management.

Already, many residents in the Southeast think that the harvest methods used to feed the chip mills are compromising their hunting, fishing, scenic beauty—their very basis for existence. The State of Missouri has declared a 2-year moratorium on permits for new chip mills. Some of the practices promoted by chip mills might be challenged on the basis of sound environmental principles, such as the AF&PA's own Environmental, Health, and Safety Principles.

Now, I want to make something very clear. These are not public lands I'm talking about, and we will not try to regulate private forestlands. I challenge you, the world's foremost leaders in private forest management, to show leadership on this issue. Don't allow the old model of controversy, litigation, and injunction to decide the future of chip mills in the Southeast. For our part, we will offer research support and technical assistance to private landowners through our State and Private Forestry program. But leadership on this issue must come from you!

We share a mutual love for the land and a mutual desire to ensure that the land remains productive for future generations. Based on our mutual interests, let's work together!

Partnership Opportunities

For too long, we have focused on what divides us. It's time to step aside from past debates, ruinous to all concerned. It's time to refocus our energy on what we have in common.

I think we can agree that Americans need three things from their forests: a sustainable *wood* supply; *jobs* in rural communities; and values associated with *healthy forests and healthy ecosystems*, such as clean water and recreation. We need to deliver all three.

Our past approach, based on timber quotas, no longer does the job. It leads to costly litigation and injunctions without necessarily improving the health of our forests. An alternative approach is to plan based on the desired future condition of our national forests. The desired future condition we all wants translates to productive watersheds and ecosystems. If we stop planning based on quantities of board feet and start planning based on desired future conditions, then I think we can deliver all three things Americans need from their national forests—wood, jobs, and healthy forest ecosystems.

To that end, the Forest Service is seeking imaginative ways of using timber harvest as a tool for achieving healthy watersheds and ecosystems. That creates opportunities for you in the forest products industry and for the communities that depend on you for jobs.

- First, we are developing stewardship contracts that combine components of timber sales and service contracts. They will allow us to treat forest vegetation in a single entry—more efficient and environmentally benign than the multiple entries common in the past.
- Second, we are exploring other alternatives to traditional timber sales. For example, we might contract for logging and then sell the timber at the roadside or in log sort yards. Contract logging might help reduce environmental damage while making forest products available to more customers.
- Third, we are seeking new markets and commercial uses for small-diameter trees that can substitute for traditional lumber and help reduce our reliance on wood imports. Our Forest Products Laboratory has a long record of developing technologies for using our wood more efficiently. Examples include the wood truss frame system, panelized construction, and stress skin panel construction.

None of these efforts can succeed without the comprehensive involvement of the forest products industry.

Looking Ahead

I would like to leave you with a question and a challenge. Here's the question: What is the role of industrial forests in helping the Nation to reach its environmental and material goals?

I ask this question because for too long, we assumed that all we need do is supply the Nation with forest products. Today, people want more. They want their forests to look like forests. They reject large clearcuts and below-cost timber sales. They are turning to forests for things like clean water, abundant fish and wildlife, a place for solitude and personal renewal, and—above all—opportunities for future generations.

My challenge is for you to continue to help us find a way on Federal lands to meet timber supply needs in an ecologically sensitive manner. The important thing for us all is to get beyond past disputes. The important thing is to show respect—respect for the land, respect for each other. The important thing is to build on what we have in common for our mutual benefit.

If we do—if we strive for greater harmony with each other—then maybe, just maybe, we will achieve greater harmony with the land and the waters that sustain us all.

A Proud Record of Accomplishment

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
Chief's Awards Ceremony, Rosslyn, VA
June 5, 2000

Welcome to you all! I can't tell you enough what a pleasure it is for me to be here tonight. It's a real treat to have the opportunity to acknowledge your accomplishments, your dedication, your professionalism in caring for the land and serving the American people. This is the best part of my job.

We are here tonight to celebrate the special achievements of our Forest Service colleagues. Their accomplishments are truly outstanding. But their success would not have been possible without all of you, in one way or another. Teamwork is the key to individual excellence. In honoring the few, we are really honoring the many who made their achievements possible.

Three years ago, there was widespread concern in Congress, in the public, and in the agency itself that the Forest Service had lost sight of its mission. In response, we crafted a natural resource agenda founded on an ecosystem-based approach to our multiple-use mission. Our agenda focuses on:

- watershed health and restoration;
- sustainable forest and grassland ecosystems;
- a sound system of forest roads, plus protection for our remaining roadless areas; and
- recreational opportunities for all Americans.

Our focus on these four areas reaffirms our commitment to our roots, to the vision of Teddy Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, to sustainability, to conservation.

I'm proud to say that we are now firmly on course toward a future of healthy watersheds and sustainable ecosystems—resources that all Americans can use and enjoy in multiple ways. I'm especially proud of the many accomplishments of the men and women of the Forest Service in steering our course to the future.

Here are just a few of your many accomplishments:

- As part of the roadless initiative, you hosted more than 185 public meetings nationwide in just 60 days. You then analyzed public comments from those meetings, plus comments received in writing—some 365,000 comments in all. That's on top of the thousands of cards and letters you handled regarding other Forest Service initiatives.
- Since last October, you have managed agency participation in 34 congressional hearings and developed materials related to 14 legislative proposals in the President's fiscal year 2001 budget. You have also handled up to 200 calls per week from congressional offices and responded to more than 500 letters from members of Congress, plus about 7,000 pieces of controlled correspondence from the White House and the Secretary's office.
- Especially during fire seasons, we tend to focus on acres burned, losing sight of the vastly greater number of acres saved, thanks to you. Last year, you put out more than 98 percent of

wildfires during initial attack. What an achievement: 98 percent! You also helped 2,450 community and volunteer fire departments improve their firefighting capabilities.

- Through your hard work, we are preventing more and more fires. In 1998, for example, a national fire prevention team reduced human-caused fires in the Southwest by 25 percent.
- *Safety is our first priority*, whether on the fireline or elsewhere. Thanks to your efforts, the number of our work-related accidents and injuries is declining. From 1993 to 1999, claims for Workers' Compensation fell by about 12 percent.
- Forest Service law enforcement is an unsung hero in America's war on drugs. Last year, you eradicated or seized more than 490,000 marijuana plants on national forestlands—that's more than a million pounds of marijuana. In previous years, you eliminated more marijuana than the Border Patrol or the Customs Service seized along the entire Southwest border.
- You are meeting the growing need for research on forest resources and uses. Last year, you published more than 2,700 research publications.
- You are also discovering new uses for the low-value trees we need to thin from 54 million acres of national forestlands at risk. For example, the Forest Products Laboratory has found ways to use small-diameter Douglas-fir for flooring and red maple for trusses and I-joists.
- You are also finding new ways to recycle. Remember those stamps you had to lick? The envelopes they were attached to couldn't be recycled. To solve the problem, the Forest Products Laboratory invented self-adhesive stamps, and the Post Office sold 33 billion of them last year. Thanks to your research, we can now recycle those billions of envelopes.
- Insects and diseases are ravaging our Nation's forests, both public and private. To help meet the challenge, you developed maps to identify forests at risk. Your maps show that 58 million acres of forest nationwide are at risk of unnaturally high mortality from pests in the next 15 years. With the help of your risk maps, we can begin to treat our threatened forests.
- Conservation knows no borders. Through International Programs, you took steps to protect threatened ecosystems worldwide, to restore habitat for migratory birds, and to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire in Mexico and Indonesia.
- Last year, you managed senior, youth, and volunteer programs that served more than 125,000 Americans, including 92,840 volunteers in the national forests who accomplished $35.8 million worth of work.
- Key to our future success will be cooperative efforts to improve the health of all of our Nation's ecosystems, both public and private. Last year, you helped place 1.8 million acres of nonindustrial private forestlands under stewardship management plans. You assisted 146,000 private woodland owners, and you also assisted 11,000 communities through urban forestry.
- Customer comments on the services we provide are the ultimate measure of our performance. Each year, you process about 14,000 customer comment cards. Last year, you made it possible for the first time for customers to comment online. Forest Service Websites nationwide got about 2.9 million hits in a single week, providing information and opportunities for customer feedback.
- Americans are demanding more conservation education to help them better appreciate their wildland resources. In response, you formed a new, expanded staff area for conservation education. Under your new director, you initiated the first national conservation education grant program. Thanks to you, we are funding more than 70 projects nationwide focusing on underserved youth, watersheds, invasive plants, and sustainable forestry.

- Three years ago, we had an enormous backlog of unresolved civil rights complaints. Of the 1,194 complaints filed against the Forest Service from 1989 to 1997, 94 percent are now resolved.
- In partnership with other USDA agencies, you are helping America's black farmers and small farmers to survive. For example, you helped more than 130 small farmers attend the second Agricultural Marketing Outreach workshop in Memphis, TN.
- You are investing in America's future leaders by helping schoolchildren learn about the environment in a multicultural setting. For example, you are supporting hands-on learning opportunities at Bailey's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences, at Bailey's Crossroads, VA.
- Training is key to our corporate success. You completed a strategic plan for corporate training, hired staff to design corporate training courses, and developed a new automated training information system. For the first time at the Forest Service, people will be able to register for training online.
- You also developed a new automated program for hiring seasonal employees. In just a few months, through your new program, you have processed 6,200 applications and hired 940 temporary employees.
- Last year, you processed procurements worth about $820 million in goods and services, mostly from small businesses. You also managed about 28 million square feet of office space, about 4,000 units of living quarters, and $29 billion worth of Forest Service personal property, including property on loan to State forestry departments.
- You helped pave the way for the President to designate 328,000 acres of the Sierra Nevada as the Giant Sequoia National Monument. The designation will permanently protect about half the remaining giant sequoia groves in the world, a national treasure.
- After years of hard work, you completed draft management alternatives for the Sierra Nevada national forests. The proposed alternatives would protect water quality and riparian ecosystems while reducing fuels and enhancing wildlife habitat.
- Our central challenge is to keep our forests, grasslands, and river systems healthy, diverse, and productive for future generations.
  - Last year, you reforested 267,000 acres, restored 185,000 acres of wildlife habitat, and improved 82,000 acres of threatened and endangered species habitat.
  - You also enhanced 11,300 acres of inland lakes and treated 87,700 acres of rangelands for noxious weeds.
  - In addition, you decommissioned 2,900 miles of road and cleaned up 29 hazardous substance sites.
- You have continued to provide outstanding services to our recreational visitors, supporting nearly 1 billion recreation visitor days last year. For example, you preserved 4,350 heritage sites, reconstructed 1,750 miles of trail, and issued 23,000 recreation special use permits.
- You also served our commercial customers well. Last year, for example, you had 5.2 billion board feet of timber under contract, you administered 8.2 million animal head months of grazing, and you processed more than 1,300 energy and mineral permits.

I could go on and on. Your accomplishments exemplify the best tradition of American public service—a selfless dedication to advancing the public good.

Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." You, the men and women of the Forest Service, are a relatively small group—some 30,000 people in a Nation of 250 million. But you are making a difference through your commitment. Commitment to thriving, healthy watersheds. Commitment to sustainable wildland ecosystems and prosperous communities. Most of all, commitment to a legacy of hope for our children. I commend you and thank you for your commitment, for your service, for making me proud to be one of you.

A Proud Record of Accomplishment—Outline

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
Chief's Awards Ceremony, Rosslyn, VA
June 5, 2000

1. Welcome
2. Tribute to teamwork—everybody shares in the awards
3. 3 years ago, questions about agency mission
4. Natural resource agenda:
   - watershed health and restoration
   - sustainable forest and grassland ecosystems
   - sound forest roads, plus roadless protection
   - recreational opportunities for all Americans
5. Reaffirms our roots
6. Back on course, thanks to your accomplishments:
   - Roadless: more than 185 public meetings nationwide in just 60 days; some 365,000 comments in all
   - Thousands of additional cards and letters
   - Since last October—
     - 34 congressional hearings
     - 14 legislative proposals
     - 200 calls per week from congressional offices
     - 500 letters from members of Congress
     - 7,000 pieces of controlled correspondence from the White House and the Secretary's office
   - Fire—
     - Last year, 98 percent of wildfires put out during initial attack
     - Last year, 2,450 community and volunteer fire departments assisted
     - In 1998, a national fire prevention team reduced human-caused fires in the Southwest by 25 percent
   - *Safety is our first priority:* From 1993 to 1999, claims for Workers' Compensation fell by about 12 percent
   - Law enforcement—
     - last year, eradicated or seized more than 490,000 marijuana plants (more than 1 million pound)
     - previous years, eliminated more marijuana than the Border Patrol or the Customs Service seized along the entire Southwest border
   - Research/FPL—
     - Last year, more than 2,700 research publications

- Uses for low-value trees: small Douglas-fir for flooring; small red maple for trusses and I-joists
- Recycling: Last year, Post Office sold 33 billion self-adhesive stamps

- Forest Health Protection—risk maps showing 58 million acres of forest (all ownerships) at risk of unnaturally high mortality from pests in the next 15 years

- International Programs—partnerships for protected forest areas worldwide, habitat restoration for migratory birds, and sound fire management in Mexico and Indonesia to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire

- Last year, senior, youth, and volunteer programs served more than 125,000 Americans, including 92,840 volunteers who accomplished $35.8 million worth of work

- Cooperative forestry—
  - Last year, 1.8 million acres of nonindustrial private forestlands under stewardship management plans
  - Assisted 146,000 private woodland owners
  - Assisted 11,000 communities through urban forestry.

- Customer service—
  - Each year, about 14,000 customer comment cards
  - New system for commenting online
  - All Forest Service Websites, 2.9 million hits in 1 week

- Conservation education—
  - New, expanded staff area with its own director
  - First national conservation education grants—70 projects nationwide focusing on underserved youth, watersheds, invasive plants, and sustainable forestry

- Civil rights—
  - 1,194 complaints against Forest Service from 1989 to 1997; 94 percent now resolved
  - 130 small farmers sponsored at second Agricultural Marketing Outreach workshop, Memphis, TN
  - Hands-on learning opportunities at Bailey's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences, Bailey's Crossroads, VA

- Training—
  - Strategic plan for corporate training
  - New staff to design corporate training courses
  - New automated training information system; register for training online

- Personnel—new automated program; last year, processed 6,200 applications and hired 940 temporary employees

- Acquisitions—
  - Last year, procurements worth about $820 million in goods and services
  - Managed about 28 million square feet of office space
  - Managed about 4,000 units of living quarters
  - Managed $29 billion worth of Forest Service personal property

- 328,000 acres designated as Giant Sequoia National Monument; about half of remaining giant sequoia groves
- Draft management alternatives for the Sierra Nevada National Forests
- Healthy ecosystems—
  - Last year, reforested 267,000 acres
  - Restored 185,000 acres of wildlife habitat
  - Improved 82,000 acres of threatened and endangered species habitat
  - Enhanced 11,300 acres of inland lakes
  - Treated 87,700 acres of rangelands for noxious weeds
  - Decommissioned 2,900 miles of road
  - Cleaned up 29 hazardous substance sites
- Recreation—
  - Last year, preserved 4,350 heritage sites
  - Reconstructed 1,750 miles of trail
  - Issued 23,000 recreation special use permits
- Commodity use—
  - Last year, 5.2 billion board feet of timber under contract
  - 8.2 million animal head months of grazing.

7. Forest Service staff make a difference through commitment to healthy watersheds, ecosystems, future generations
   Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." You, the men and women of the

Moving Toward Sustainable Forestry in the United States

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
North American Forestry Commission Meeting
New Brunswick, Canada
13 June 2000

It's a pleasure to be here with you today to discuss the challenges we face in establishing sustainable forestry in North America in the 21st century.

U Thant, former Secretary General of the United Nations, once said, "I would hope that in saving ourselves by preserving our environment we might also find a new solidarity and a new spirit among the governments and peoples of the earth." This meeting is a step toward realizing that vision—toward protecting our environment by working together across our borders to build thriving, healthy, sustainable forest ecosystems.

You have our "State of Forestry in the United States" report, which summarizes the history and condition of our forests and the timber situation in our country, among other things. What I'd like to do today is to focus on three areas in the report:

- the Forest Service's proposal for roadless area conservation;
- the consensus we are reaching on the Montreal criteria and indicators for forest health; and
- other steps we are taking across ownerships for sustainable forest management in the United States.

Roadless Area Conservation

What do we mean by "roadless areas"? In a nutshell, we mean 22 million hectares of our national forests and grasslands—the public lands administered by the Forest Service—that do not have roads and are not currently part of our system of designated wilderness in the United States.

At a time when habitat fragmentation is increasing in the United States, roadless areas are often the last refuge for many of our rare ecosystems and species, some found nowhere else on Earth. Roadless areas also provide:

- our cleanest drinking water;
- reference areas for research;
- scenic beauty in largely undisturbed landscapes; and
- recreational opportunities such as hiking, fishing, hunting, skiing, and biking.

Since 1964, the United States has protected many of our wildlands by designating them as wilderness. Today, we have more than 40 million hectares of designated wilderness on our national forests and other public lands. But many areas of unique value do not meet the rigorous standards for wilderness designation. Left without special protection, roadless areas are steadily losing the qualities that make them a national—indeed, a global—treasure.

For decades, the fate of these unique lands was determined on a case-by-case basis that sometimes failed to consider their national and international importance. Controversies associated with the management of these lands were often bitter, lengthy, and costly. In the resulting litigation, natural resource decisions were often made by Federal judges, not by land management professionals. The Forest Service does not have the means to cope with the lawsuits or even to maintain the forest roads we already have.

In October 1999, President Clinton announced a proposal to protect roadless areas from further road construction. The Forest Service launched a year-long process of soliciting public comments. We got 365,000 comments in the first comment period, a tremendous outpouring of public interest. After analyzing the comments, we selected a preferred alternative with three components:

1. On about 16 million hectares of roadless areas in the lower 48 States, all road construction and reconstruction will be prohibited.
2. All other uses, including roadless timber harvest, will be decided on a forest-by-forest basis during forest planning, with full public participation.
3. A decision on about 6 million hectares of roadless areas in Alaska will be deferred until April 2004.

Another public comment period is now underway. We expect a final rule by November 2000. At the same time, we are revising our planning rule to improve our framework for land and resource planning on our national forests and grasslands. We are also revising our rule for managing our existing roads to identify and rehabilitate needed roads and to decommission unneeded ones. Together, our proposed new rules will help protect healthy, thriving ecosystems.

Criteria and Indicators of Forest Health

Roadless area conservation reflects our deep commitment to sustainable forest ecosystems. In June 1993, at the Second Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, the United States committed to achieving sustainable forest management by the year 2000. Both our public and our private forest managers have made considerable progress toward that goal.

One way is through the criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management initiated in 1993 in Montreal, Canada. Today, we are integrating the criteria and indicators into our forest management planning throughout the United States:

- In June 1998, the Forest Service began preparing a comprehensive national assessment of U.S. forest conditions and forest management based on the Montreal criteria and indicators. The report will be released in 2003. The resulting presidential report to Congress will also be based on the criteria and indicators.
- In July 1998, we initiated a Roundtable on Sustainable Forests, including representatives from the forest products industry; nongovernmental organizations; and Federal, State, and local governments. Participants agreed that the Montreal criteria and indicators provide a sound common basis for evaluating the sustainability of U.S. forests, both private and public. Followup workshops are underway.

- In January 1999, the Forest Service selected six ecologically diverse units nationwide for a pilot project known as LUCID—Local Unit Criteria and Indicators Development. LUCID is designed to apply the Montreal criteria and indicators on the ground, where it really counts.
- In September 1999, the Forest Service proposed a new planning rule for land and resource management on our national forests and grasslands. Our proposed rule encourages the use of the Montreal criteria and indicators, emphasizing monitoring activities designed to develop a desired future condition. We expect a final rule by November 2000.

Broad Consensus for Sustainable Forest Management

In addition to the Montreal criteria and indicators, we are implementing sustainable forest management in other ways all across the United States. Here are just a few examples:

- In October 1994, the members of the American Forest and Paper Association, who own 95 percent of the industrial forestland in the United States, approved a Sustainable Forestry Initiative. The initiative includes performance measures for reforestation and the protection of water quality, wildlife, visual quality, and biodiversity.
- The Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, WI, is working closely with industry to develop ways to recycle materials, reduce waste, and use low-value timber. For example, the lab has discovered ways to make containers and fiberboard out of wholly recycled materials and to use small-diameter trees for flooring, trusses, and I-joists.
- Since 1992, the U.S. Government has issued numerous directives and executive orders to consult and coordinate with American Indian governments to protect Indian sacred sites and to share knowledge and insights on sustainable forest management.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has developed partnerships with nongovernmental organizations and with Federal, State, and local agencies to conserve North America's neotropical birds. The partnerships are restoring habitats for migratory birds on millions of hectares of forestland along key flyways, such as along the Gulf of Mexico.
- The U.S. State Foresters are establishing stewardship committees and resource plans in every State to bring millions of hectares of nonindustrial private forestlands under sustainable forest management.

To summarize: Private industry, small woodland owners, nongovernmental organizations, and tribal, Federal, State, and local governments are all supporting various measures to promote sustainable forestry in the United States. Of course, the basis for sustainable forest management is to reach consensus on what forest health means. That's why the broad consensus we are reaching on the Montreal criteria and indicators, on the need worldwide for sustainable forest management based on a shared understanding of forest health, is so truly remarkable. All of you in this room share well-deserved credit.

We still have a long way to go. Former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker once gave a good definition of sustainability. "Sustainable development, to put it simply," he said, "is a way to fulfill the requirements of the present without compromising the future." Whatever we do, let's make sure we don't compromise the future. Through our roadless initiative in the United States and our international commitment to the Montreal criteria and indicators, we've made a good

start—a start toward a future full of hope for our children—a future of healthy watersheds and sustainable forest ecosystems all across North America.

A Call to Action: The Human Dimension in Delivery of Civil Rights Programs

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
National Civil Rights Directors' Meeting
Atlanta, GA—June 21, 2000

Thank you for inviting me to Atlanta. It's a pleasure to join such a large group of distinguished Forest Service professionals dedicated to ensuring equity and fairness in all of our Forest Service programs and activities.

I have had a chance to speak with many of you individually. But I have never had the chance to see all the Civil Rights Directors and others who work in the area of civil rights at once. This is a great opportunity to see many of you again and to meet some of you for the first time.

Your theme for this meeting is highly appropriate—"Expanding the Civil Rights Perspective: Focus on the Human Dimension." Your theme reflects a Forest Service priority—involving all Americans in using and enjoying their national forests and grasslands. With this in mind, I would like to discuss the human dimension in delivery of civil rights programs.

I'd like to start by raising an issue of paramount importance to the Forest Service—how to research and manage the Nation's wildland resources in collaboration with partners to meet the needs of a changing public. The Forest Service is addressing the issue through our Natural Resource Agenda, with its four overarching priorities:

- Ecologically sustainable forest and grassland management;
- Watershed health and restoration;
- Recreation opportunities for all Americans; and
- Sound forest roads and roadless areas.

Within the framework of the Natural Resource Agenda, we must address three related questions:

- What does a changing public mean for the Forest Service?
- What have we accomplished and what challenges remain?
- What opportunities do we have?

Demographic Change

Change. Nobody really likes change. But if there's one certainty in life, it's the certainty of change. Exactly what is changing?

- Americans are growing more racially and ethnically diverse. By the year 2050, a majority will no longer be of European ancestry. Eighty-six percent of immigration is now non-European. Over the next 50 years, 90% of our population growth will come from racial and ethnic minorities.

- Americans are growing older. In 1900, only 4% of the U.S. population was over 65; in 1984, the proportion was 11%; by 2020, it will be 21%.
- Americans are growing more urban. Make no mistake. Although more people are moving to the country—building homes in the wildland/urban interface—they are taking their urban and suburban attitudes with them. They might be living *in* rural America, but most are not *of* rural America. Culturally, they are urbanizing our rural areas.
- Americans are moving from the North and East to the South and West—to where most of our national forests and grasslands are located. In a sense, the cities are coming to the forest.
- American households are changing. In 1990, only a quarter of the households in America had traditional two-parent families with kids. Half of all American households had no children at all. Single-parent households with children made up the rest.

What does all this change mean for the Forest Service? It means changing cultural expectations about natural resources and public lands. It means changing patterns of recreation and resource use. It means a changing public face that will look very different from the faces you see today on many of our national forests and grasslands, whether among users or among employees. Most of all, it means challenges for us at every level to keep up with the changing face of America.

Civil Rights Accomplishments

What does demographic change have to do with civil rights? People. Civil rights are about people, about the human dimension, about principles such as fairness and inclusion—principles that inspire good government. Good stewardship means treating people with fairness and basic decency. Respect for the land begins with respect for each other.

Three years ago, we said that civil rights delivery was perhaps our most important task. Why? Because the two sides of our mission—caring for the land and serving people—are inseparably linked. Aldo Leopold once said that "the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts." That applies equally to the human community and to the land. Unless we live ethically with our neighbors and colleagues, we have no moral authority to ask our fellow Americans to live ethically with the land.

So the first step in building a land ethic is civil rights delivery. Through your good work, we have come a long way. Here are a few of your accomplishments:

- In fiscal year 2000, the Forest Service is spending $2,330,000 on national partnership and outreach initiatives. Our multicultural workforce initiatives provide internships and other employment opportunities to more than 100 students per year. For example:
  - We are working with Historically Black Colleges and Universities to encourage students to enter fields related to natural resources. At one of the institutions, Tuskegee University in Alabama, more than 400 students have participated in the Forest Resources Program. Many are in the Forest Service today.
  - At the University of California at Davis, we are recruiting Asian-Americans, Pacific Islanders, and other minority students interested in natural resource careers.
  - We are working with colleges and universities that serve Hispanic-Americans to communicate our natural resource agenda and career opportunities in the Forest Service.

  - Our Tribal College Initiative has 10 years of experience with capacity building in natural resources at 15 tribal colleges nationwide.
  - Our Persons With Disabilities Initiative works through 146 colleges and universities to recruit persons with disabilities seeking careers in fields related to natural resources.
- We are training future conservation leaders by helping schoolchildren learn about the environment in a multicultural setting. For example:
  - We are providing hands-on learning opportunities to 800 schoolchildren at Bailey's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences, in Bailey's Crossroads, VA.
  - Through the Central California Consortium, we are working with partners and local communities near Fresno, CA, to encourage schoolchildren—mostly minority—to enter fields related to natural resources.
- In 1999, our senior, youth, and volunteer programs served more than 120,000 Americans, including about 40,000 women and 17,300 people from racial and ethnic minorities.
- We are active in the USDA National Commission on Small Farms. This year, we worked with other USDA agencies to help more than 130 small farmers, many of them African-American, to attend the second Agricultural Marketing Outreach workshop in Memphis, TN.
- We are collaborating with Alaska Native corporations. For example, we helped 11 Alaska Native corporations complete forest stewardship planning.
- Our new conservation education staff area is funding more than 70 projects nationwide, some focusing on underserved youth.
- Three years ago, we had an enormous backlog of unresolved civil rights complaints. Of the 1,194 complaints filed against the Forest Service from 1989 to 1997, 94 percent are now resolved. Initiatives such as our Early Intervention Program will help reduce future complaints.
- Let's be clear: Our policy for discrimination and harassment is zero tolerance. Through the human dimension of our Natural Resource Agenda, through initiatives such as Towards a Multicultural Organization and our Continuous Improvement Process, our managers are accountable for building relationships based on dignity and mutual respect.
- Perhaps most importantly, you have made great strides in natural resource management. Too often, we overlook the importance of sound resource management for the health and well-being of our underserved communities. What could be more important to a child, any child, anywhere in this country, than having fresh, clean water available every day for drinking and washing? Through your implementation of our Natural Resource Agenda, you are helping to protect our natural resources for the use and enjoyment of every American. Just to name a few of your accomplishments, in 1999 you:
  - Reforested 267,000 acres,
  - Enhanced 11,300 acres of inland lakes,
  - Restored 185,000 acres of wildlife habitat,
  - Cleaned up 29 hazardous substance sites,
  - Issued 23,000 recreation special use permits,
  - Assisted 11,000 communities through urban forestry,
  - Assisted 2,450 community and volunteer fire departments,
  - Administered 8.2 million animal head months of grazing, and
  - Treated 87,700 acres of rangelands for noxious weeds.

Challenges and Opportunities in Natural and Human Resource Management

Despite our accomplishments, we still have a long way to go:

- Our workforce still does not fully reflect the American public. For example, the proportion of our workforce that is of European ancestry is 84%—5 to 10% higher than the civilian workforce at large. Perhaps worst of all, underserved groups remain underrepresented in key areas such as management, research, and engineering.
  - *So here's our challenge:* How can we attract employees from underserved groups, especially in areas where they are historically underrepresented and critically needed?
- Our visitors and customers on the national forests and grasslands remain overwhelmingly rural or suburban and disproportionately of European ancestry.
  - *So here's our challenge:* How can we better serve our underserved urban and minority communities?
- Our workforce still gets too many civil rights complaints—even one is too many. For example, farmers have lodged complaints of racial discrimination against USDA; and employees have brought a gender-based class action against the Pacific Southwest Region.
  - *So here's our challenge:* How can we create a work environment that is free from all discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, gender, age, disability, or any other grounds?

We have two choices: We can wring our hands and complain that things aren't getting better fast enough; or we can seize the opportunities we have to make things better as fast as we can. The opportunities are there:

- In the next 15 years, minority students will account for 80 percent of the growth in college enrollment. We must position ourselves now to recruit them!
- Over the next 5 years, the Forest Service will hire more than 4,000 new employees from outside the Forest Service. We have a golden opportunity to achieve full parity with the civilian workforce!

Actions Ahead

You are the civil rights leaders of the Forest Service. It's your job to be assertive, be committed, and act responsibly to build relationships based on dignity and respect. This is your chance. I am depending on you to show leadership in seizing the opportunities we have. I am depending on you to:

- Make the Forest Service the employer of choice for underserved groups on every campus with a natural resources department. Universities and partners are eager to assist—the opportunities are there!
- Actively recruit in fields such as business, technology, and communications. Today more than ever, we need employees from underserved groups in these critical fields.
- Establish an aggressive campus relations campaign. We must target underserved groups through expanded student employment and summer internship programs.

- Create and use state-of-the-art recruitment materials, processes, and methods as part of a national recruitment campaign aimed at underserved groups.
- Expand jobs partnerships for underserved youth with professional and minority organizations.
- Use our volunteer and cooperative programs to improve our image and broaden our presence in underserved communities. We must target underserved populations through our Youth Conservation Corps, our Senior Community Service Employment Program, our Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers, our Volunteers in the National Forests program.
- Be aggressive in finding ways to reduce the number of complaints from our employees and customers.
- Use corporate incentives to recruit and retain minority employees. Highly skilled employees of all backgrounds are in growing demand. We must make them feel valued by giving them opportunities for personal growth and career development. Flexible benefits, opportunities for telecommuting, and special policies for older workers and parents can help make the Forest Service the employer of choice.
- Aggressively use our interim Strategic Public Outreach Plan to engage underserved communities in natural resource conservation.

Let me be very clear. I will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on any basis whatsoever. And I will strongly support your initiatives to improve our civil rights record at the Forest Service. I am depending on you, the civil rights leaders in the Forest Service, to show the way. To seize the opportunity to achieve full racial and ethnic parity with the civilian workforce in the next few years. To involve our underserved communities in collaborative stewardship of our Nation's natural resources. And to permanently institutionalize our treatment of each other with dignity and mutual respect. In short, to make the Forest Service a civil rights model for the Nation.

Thanks Clyde & Thelma

Tom Valerio

A Call to Action: The Human Dimension in Delivery of Civil Rights Programs

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
National Civil Rights Directors' Meeting
Atlanta, GA—June 21, 2000

Thank you for inviting me to Atlanta. It's a pleasure to join such a large group of distinguished Forest Service professionals dedicated to ensuring equity and fairness in all of our Forest Service programs and activities.

I have had a chance to speak with many of you individually. But I have never had the chance to see all the Civil Rights Directors and others who work in the area of civil rights at once. This is a great opportunity to see many of you again and to meet some of you for the first time.

Your theme for this meeting is highly appropriate—"Expanding the Civil Rights Perspective: Focus on the Human Dimension." Your theme reflects a Forest Service priority—involving all Americans in using and enjoying their national forests and grasslands. With this in mind, I would like to discuss the human dimension in delivery of civil rights programs. I'd like to start by raising an issue of paramount importance to the Forest Service—how to manage the Nation's

wildland resources to meet the needs of a changing public. I will address three related questions:

- What does a changing public mean for the Forest Service?
- What have we accomplished and what challenges remain?
- What opportunities do we have?

Demographic Change

Change. It's a commonplace to say that the American public is changing. Exactly how is the public changing?

- Americans are growing more racially and ethnically diverse. By the year 2050, a majority will no longer be of European ancestry. Eighty-six percent of immigration is now non-European. Over the next 50 years, 90% of our population growth will come from racial and ethnic minorities.
- Americans are growing older. In 1900, only 4% of the U.S. population was over 65; in 1984, the proportion was 11%; by 2020, it will be 21%.
- Americans are growing more urban. Make no mistake. Although more people are moving to the country—building homes in the wildland/urban interface—

they are taking their urban and suburban attitudes with them. They might be living *in* rural America, but ~~they~~ Most are not *of* rural America. Culturally, they are urbanizing our rural areas.

- Americans are moving from the North and East to the South and West—to where most of our national forests and grasslands are located. In a sense, the cities are coming to the forest.
- American households are changing. In 1990, only a quarter of the households in America had traditional two-parent families with kids. Half of all American households had no children at all. Single-parent households with children made up the rest.

What does all this change mean for the Forest Service? It means changing cultural expectations about natural resources and public lands. It means changing patterns of recreation and resource use. It means a changing public face that will look very different from the faces you see today on many of our national forests and grasslands, whether among users or among employees. Most of all, it means challenges for us at every level to keep up with the changing face of America.

Civil Rights Accomplishments

What does demographic change have to do with civil rights? People. Civil rights are about people, about the human dimension, about principles such as fairness and inclusion—principles that inspire good government. Good stewardship means treating people with fairness and basic decency. Respect for the land begins with respect for each other.

Three years ago, we said that civil rights delivery was perhaps our most important task. Why? Because the two sides of our mission—caring for the land and serving people—are inseparably linked. Aldo Leopold once said that "the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts." That applies equally to the human community and to the land. Unless we live ethically with our neighbors and colleagues, we have no moral authority to ask our fellow Americans to live ethically with the land.

So the first step in building a land ethic is civil rights delivery. Through your good work, we have come a long way. Here are a few of your accomplishments:

- In fiscal year 2000, the Forest Service is spending $2,330,000 on national partnership and outreach initiatives. Our multicultural workforce initiatives provide internships and other employment opportunities to more than 100 students per year. For example:
  - We are working with Historically Black Colleges and Universities to encourage students to enter fields related to natural resources. At one of the institutions, Tuskegee University in Alabama, more than 400 students have participated in the Forest Resources Program. Many are in the Forest Service today.
  - At the University of California at Davis, we are recruiting Asian-Americans, Pacific Islanders, and other minority students interested in natural resource careers.
  - We are working with colleges and universities that serve Hispanic-Americans to communicate our natural resource agenda and career opportunities in the Forest Service.
  - Our Tribal College Initiative has 10 years of experience with capacity building in natural resources at 15 tribal colleges nationwide.
  - Our Persons With Disabilities Initiative works through 146 colleges and universities to recruit persons with disabilities seeking careers in fields related to natural resources.

- We are training future conservation leaders by helping schoolchildren learn about the environment in a multicultural setting. For example:
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- Actively recruit in fields such as business, technology, and communications. Today more than ever, we need employees from underserved groups in these critical fields.

- Establish an aggressive campus relations campaign. We must target underserved groups through expanded student employment and summer internship programs.
- Create and use state-of-the-art recruitment materials, processes, and methods as part of a national recruitment campaign aimed at underserved groups.
- Expand jobs partnerships for underserved youth with professional and minority organizations.
- Use our volunteer and cooperative programs to improve our image and broaden our presence in underserved communities. We must target underserved populations through our Youth Conservation Corps, our Senior Community Service Employment Program, our Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers, our Volunteers in the National Forests program.
- Be aggressive in finding ways to reduce the number of complaints from our employees and customers.
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- Aggressively use our interim Strategic Public Outreach Plan to engage underserved communities in natural resource conservation.

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The Future of Recreation on Your National Forests and Grasslands

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
73rd Annual Outdoor Writers' Association of America Conference
Greensboro, NC—June 27, 2000

It's a pleasure to be here today to speak to you again this year. In particular, I'd like to thank Bill Monroe for inviting me, and Eileen King for making the arrangements. I commend OWAA for providing this opportunity for a dialogue about the responsible use of our natural resources. For anyone interested, I will be available to meet for questions later on today.

Our topic today is timely—the future of recreation on public lands. It's timely because recreation has been growing by leaps and bounds on our public lands. Consider:

- In 1946, our national forests and grasslands hosted just 18 million visitor-days; last year, we hosted nearly 1 billion—that's 50 times more.

- In 1996, on any given day, we had about 15,000 logging vehicles on our forest roads. 15,000 in a single day is a lot. But on any given day, we also had over 1.7 million recreational vehicles. 1.7 million—that's over 100 times more!

Last year, our national forests and grasslands contributed about $134 billion to our gross national product, mostly from recreation. That's why recreation is a major focal area for the Forest Service.

Our Natural Resource Agenda for the 21st century has four overarching priorities:

- Ecologically sustainable forest and grassland management;

- Watershed health and restoration;

- Recreation; and

- Forest roads and roadless areas.

These four priorities are intrinsic to our core mission of caring for the land and serving people.

Our First Priority: Living Within the Limits of the Land

The Forest Service will not allow the health of your national forests and grasslands to be compromised. If there's one message I want you to leave with today, it's this: Living within the limits of the land must be our first and highest priority. We owe it to the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, the visionaries who made "the greatest good of the greatest number" the guiding principle for the National Forest

System. We can fulfill our mission of serving the American people—of providing the greatest good for the greatest number—only if we first care for the land.

With that, I'd like to talk about two issues:

- First, our roads and roadless policies. A lot has been said about our approach to managing forest roads, especially our roadless conservation efforts. Roadless area conservation will protect the health of the land. And it will improve, not take away from, existing recreation opportunities on public lands.

- Second, our recreation policy. The single objective that unites our approach to roads, roadless areas, and recreation is that we are seeking to assure the American people access to the lands they so love in a manner that conserves the long-term health of the land.

Roads and Recreation

We need our forest roads. People need a sound road system to reach their favorite outdoor spots. Forest roads provide the backbone of many rural transportation systems. Our local communities need recreational use to support local transportation, access for multiple use management, and jobs. Just as importantly, we need our roads so we can treat and restore our watersheds and ecosystems. Make no mistake, we need our forest roads.

Our roads policy is about working together with local communities, communities of interest and communities of place, to focus on the road system of the future—rather than fighting over the crumbling road system of the past.

Today, however, our road system is nearly complete. We have some 380,000 miles of forest roads—enough to circle the Earth about 15 times. Most roads were built for logging; but today, we harvest about a quarter of the timber that we took from our national forests in the 1980s. We are left with a road system that was designed primarily for a use that has diminished by about 75 percent. The result is that we can't afford to maintain all the roads we have. Consider:

- In 1980, our funding for roads was $600 million. Today, it is less than $200 million.

- Today, we receive only about 20 percent of the funding we need for the roads we have.

- Our funding backlog for roads is $8.4 billion. That's more than twice the Forest Service's entire annual budget!

In fact, our inability to stem the deterioration of our road system can cause landslides and soil erosion. It's a major factor in the loss of public access.

To meet the challenge, we have made it our goal to establish a sound system of forest roads that meet safety and environmental standards while serving our multiple use needs. We can do that in two ways. First, we must seek new sources of funding to maintain the roads we need. Second, we need to use the best science to help inform local decisions about which roads should be decommissioned, or converted to other uses. That is the purpose of the roads policy.

And that brings me to roadless area conservation. There's an old saying: "If you're in a hole, stop digging." We're in a hole, so we stopped digging. We stopped building new forest roads we can't afford into areas that don't need them.

For three decades, we tried to resolve the issue of roadless area management through a roadless area review. Then we conducted a second roadless area review. Then we tried to resolve the issue through local forest planning. The fruit of our efforts was a cornucopia of lawsuits, controversy, judicial intervention, and controversial congressional riders. At current rates, we will build about 1,444 miles of new roads into roadless areas in the next 5 years. Without a new direction, many new road-building projects will be mired in costly lawsuits that yield no winners or losers, only division and contention.

So we're taking the bull by the horns and proposing to decide the fate of our roadless areas once and for all. Our roadless area conservation proposal would:

- Prohibit road building on 43 million acres of roadless areas in the lower 48 States. A decision in Alaska will be deferred to April 2004.

- All other uses will be decided during forest planning at the local level, allowing managers and local people the opportunity to evaluate how, and whether, they want to protect the socially and ecologically important values of roadless areas.

What are the practical effects of our roadless proposal?

- Water quality and aquatic habitat in roadless areas will remain some of the best in the Nation. That means clean drinking water for millions of downstream residents and millions saved in potential costly water treatments. It also means excellent fishing and outstanding opportunities for other water-based recreation.

- Wildlife habitat will remain protected from fragmentation and invasive species, providing excellent hunting and opportunities for other wildland recreation. As open space and other lands are developed or closed to hunting and fishing, roadless areas will continue to provide high-quality hunting.

- Public access will be protected. Our proposed roadless rule will not close a single mile of road or block any existing access to public lands. Opportunities for OHV

use and the fate of existing roads will be decided at the local level, just as they are now.

These are among our last wild places. Roadless area conservation will preserve existing public access to public lands while prohibiting new roads that we don't need and can't afford. Our roads policy will ensure that the roads Americans need for their favorite hunting, fishing, hiking, and other outdoor spots are safe and environmentally sound. The roads we don't need will be decommissioned or converted to other uses as fast as funding allows.

Recreation Opportunities

The opportunities we have to serve Americans through recreation are endless. Americans cherish their national forests and grasslands for the values they provide—clean water, clean air, scenic beauty in natural outdoor settings, abundant wildlife, opportunities for personal and spiritual growth, and choices for future generations. Most people experience these values and benefits primarily through recreation. Recreation is the main way that Americans experience not only the land, but also the services that we at the Forest Service provide. Here are just a few of the recreation opportunities that our 192 million acres of national forests and grasslands provide:

- 399 wilderness areas—63% of the wilderness system in the lower 48 States;
- 4,268 miles of the Wild and Scenic River System;
- 60% of downhill skiing in the United States;
- 50% of the blue-ribbon trout streams in the United States;
- 23,000 developed recreation sites;
- 50% of the elk, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat in the lower 48 States;
- 133,087 miles of hiking, horse, and OHV trails;
- 277,000 heritage sites;
- More than 4,300 campgrounds; and
- 31 national recreation areas, national scenic areas, and national monuments.

These Forest Service resources form a unique niche of nature-based, dispersed recreation. We offer undeveloped settings in natural surroundings, together with constructed environments (such as interpretive facilities) that reinforce the natural character of the broader wildland setting. Through our resources, the Forest Service opens a window to the natural world for the enjoyment and appreciation of an increasingly urban society.

How can we enlarge the window to our special places and experiences? How can we open the window even wider to more Americans from diverse backgrounds? These are the challenges we face in the 21st century. To meet them, the Forest Service is developing a recreation agenda for the 21st century. I won't go into details, but I will give you an idea of its general thrust.

- We will maintain high-quality outdoor settings based on healthy, thriving watersheds and ecosystems. That includes protecting and restoring the natural character of the land. Roadless area conservation dovetails with our recreation goals by meeting the public's need for high-quality dispersed recreation, such as excellent fishing and hunting.

- We will provide access to OHVs and all other legitimate uses, based on a shared understanding that multiple use does not mean using every acre in every possible way. We will work with each recreational community to negotiate rules, such as designated trails.

- We will encourage travel and tourism in collaboration with tourism professionals who represent the entire spectrum of current and potential visitors to the national forests and grasslands.

- We will base our recreation policy on sound physical, biological, and social science. That includes developing ways to obtain hard facts and figures on recreational uses and needs.

- We will provide services for all Americans, including racial and ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. That includes active outreach through our volunteer programs.

- We will actively promote conservation education through learning-based recreation, focusing on youth, visitors, and urban communities. Working through our volunteer programs and our 56 visitor centers, we will build partnerships for education with nongovernmental organizations and other interested parties.

- We will build partnerships with local communities to protect local interests, address local needs, and provide universal public access. That includes addressing special issues in our urban and heavily used national forests, such as carrying capacity and competing uses.

- We will build business and intergovernmental partnerships to enhance recreational opportunities on our national forests and grasslands.

The Forest Service will work with partners to provide recreation opportunities for all Americans on our national forests and grasslands, always within the limits of the land.

Recreation: An American Birthright

"If bread is the first necessity of life, recreation is a close second," Edward Bellamy wrote in *Looking Backward*. Recreation is indeed a necessity, and we are fortunate to live in a Nation where recreation on public lands is every citizen's birthright.

I have always believed the outdoor recreation community to be among the most important, and least heard, of all the constituencies that use and care for public lands. We had over 500,000 people participate in the scoping phase of the roadless issue alone. This is democracy in action. It's about presenting choices for the American people to help us decide.

I believe the debate over public lands is as heated as it is today because, too often, we allow the minority of extremist views to take up the majority of the debate. To my way of thinking, the outdoor recreation community is often the silent majority in these debates over roads, roadless areas, and how our forests and grasslands are to be managed for present and future generations.

You are the lynchpin in helping to build the majority coalition that carries us to a sustainable future. Consider the issue of chip mills in the southeast.

Chip mills use low-quality, small-diameter trees. Many chip mills have moved to the Southeast, where they are accelerating the harvest of hardwood timber on private forestlands. In some cases, forests that, in the past, were successfully regrown from selective cutting are today being clearcut to feed the chip mills. Many residents in the Southeast believe that the harvest methods used to feed the chip mills are compromising the hunting, fishing, and scenic beauty of the land they call home.

In 1977, the net growth of softwood forests was 6.3 billion cubic feet in the Southeast. About 4.5 billion cubic feet were harvested. In 1997, the net growth of softwood forests was 5.9 billion cubic feet and about 6.5 billion cubic feet were harvested. Although growth levels of hardwood forests still exceed removals, hardwood harvest levels are beginning to approach hardwood forest growth levels.

This is not some abstract debate involving little-known plants, rare fish, or reclusive owls. The issue is a question of basic sustainability. Harvest levels cannot exceed growth if forests are to continue providing healthy fish and wildlife habitats, clean and pure drinking water, and scenic beauty. In fact, because of water quality concerns, the State of Missouri placed a 2-year moratorium on stormwater permits for chip mills.

Now, this is not an issue that the Forest Service can, or will, try to control or regulate. These are private lands, largely. All we can do, and what we are doing today through our interagency and interstate Southern Resources Assessment, is to provide technical resources, science, and information to help frame the debate for decisionmakers.

You can make a difference. For example, seven of the Nation's top whitewater recreation companies—including Dagger, Perception, Patagonia, Lotus Designs, Harmony, Mountain Surf, and the Nantahala Outdoor Center—proposed a timeout on new chip mills until we can better assess their ecological impacts and ensure that the recreation communities' economic and environmental interests are not compromised.

The issue in this case was chip mills; and I applaud the recreation community for getting involved and taking a stand. Other recreation groups, such as local ORV users, are working with the Forest Service to maintain eroding trails that can damage water quality. But the issue could involve roadless area conservation, road management, habitat improvements, or conservation education. My plea is that you get involved. Make your voice heard. These are your lands. Your birthright. Your legacy to pass on to your children and their children's children.

Bill Monroe practices what he writes about: Cordova - rain 60 mph wind. Willamette R.

Pat is there since 1992.

Introduce Donny Chris Pete

Tom Fry, BLM

The Future of Recreation on Your National Forests and Grasslands

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
73rd Annual Outdoor Writers' Association of America Conference
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- In 1946, our national forests and grasslands hosted just 18 million visitor-days; last year, we hosted nearly 1 billion—that's 50 times more.

- In 1996, on any given day, we had about 15,000 logging vehicles on our forest roads. 15,000 in a single day is a lot. But on any given day, we also had over 1.7 million recreational vehicles. 1.7 million—that's over 100 times more!

associated w/ recreation & tourism

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Our Natural Resource Agenda for the 21st century has four overarching priorities:

- Ecologically sustainable forest and grassland management; Our first priority: living within the limits of the land
- Watershed health and restoration; Protect the best, restore the rest.
- Recreation; and - how an increasingly urban society learns to appreciate the outdoors - about quality of life.
- Forest roads and roadless areas.
  - ↳ how we get there
  - ↳ last remaining wild places.

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270
462

These four priorities are intrinsic to our core mission of caring for the land and serving people. For example, healthy watersheds and sustainable forest ecosystems are the basis for all outdoor recreation, from swimming and boating, to fishing and hunting, to hiking and camping, to snowmobiling, pleasure driving, and wildlife watching. The national forests and grasslands are truly America's wildland playground, but they won't be unless we keep them healthy.

Our First Priority: Living Within the Limits of the Land

The Forest Service will not allow the health of your national forests and grasslands to be compromised. If there's one message I want you to leave with today, it's this: Living within the limits of the land must be our first and highest priority. We owe it to the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, the visionaries who made "the greatest good of the greatest number" the guiding principle for the National Forest System they founded. We can fulfill our mission of serving the American people—of providing the greatest good for the greatest number—only if we first care for the land.

With that, I'd like to talk about two issues:

- First, our roads and roadless policies. A lot has been said about our approach to managing forest roads, especially our roadless conservation efforts. ~~The truth is that~~ roadless area conservation will protect the health of the land. And it will improve, not take away from, existing recreation opportunities on public lands.

- Second, our recreation policy. The single objective that unites our approach to roads, roadless areas, and recreation is that we are seeking to ensure the American people access to the lands they so love in a manner that conserves the long-term health of the land.

Roads and Recreation

We need our forest roads. People need a sound road system to reach their favorite outdoor spots. Forest roads provide the backbone of many rural transportation systems. Our local communities need recreational use to support local transportation, access for multiple use management, and jobs. Just as importantly, we need our roads so we can treat and restore our watersheds and ecosystems. Make no mistake, we need our forest roads.

Our road policy is about ~~assorbing~~ together my ~~local com~~ local communities of interest and communities of place to focus on the road system of the future. Rather than fighting over ~~on~~ the crumbling road system of the past.

Today, however, our road system is nearly complete. We have some 380,000 miles of forest roads—enough to circle the Earth about 15 times. Most roads were built for logging; but today, we harvest about a quarter of the timber that we took from our national forests in the 1980s. We are left with a road system that was designed primarily for a use that has diminished by about 75 percent. The result is that we can't afford to maintain all the roads we have. Consider:

- In 1980, our funding for roads was $600 million. Today, it is less than $200 million.

- Today, we receive only about 20 percent of the funding we need for the roads we have.

- Our funding backlog for roads is $8.4 billion and growing. That's more than twice the Forest Service's entire annual budget!

In fact, our inability to stem the deterioration of our road system is ~~more responsible for the closure of public access than any other issue.~~ loss. landslide stream sediment a major factor in loss of access.

To meet the challenge, we have made it our goal to establish a sound system of forest roads that meet safety and environmental standards while serving our multiple use needs. We can do that in two ways. First, we must seek new sources of funding to maintain the roads we need. Second, we need to use the best science to help inform local decisions about which roads should be decommissioned, or converted to other uses. That is the purpose of the roads policy.

And that brings me to roadless area conservation. There's an old saying: "If you're in a hole, stop digging." We're in a hole, so we stopped digging. We stopped building new forest roads we can't afford into areas that don't need them.

For three decades we tried to resolve the issue of roadless area management through a roadless area review. Then we conducted a second roadless area review. Then we tried to resolve the issue through local forest planning. The fruit of our efforts was borne out in a cornucopia of lawsuits, controversy, judicial intervention, and controversial congressional riders. At current rates, we will build about 1,444 miles of new roads into roadless areas in the next 5 years. Without a new direction, many new road-building projects will be mired in costly lawsuits that yield no winners or losers, only division and contention.

So we're taking the bull by the horns and proposing to decide the fate of our roadless areas once and for all. Our roadless area conservation proposal would:

- Prohibit road building on 43 million acres of roadless areas in the lower 48 States. A decision in Alaska will be deferred to April 2004.

- All other uses will be decided during forest planning at the local level, allowing managers and local people the opportunity to evaluate how, and whether, they want to protect the socially and ecologically important values of roadless areas.

What are the practical effects of our roadless proposal?

- Water quality and aquatic habitat in roadless areas will remain some of the best in the Nation. That means clean drinking water for millions of downstream residents and millions saved in potential costly water treatments. It also means excellent fishing and outstanding opportunities for other water-based recreation.

- Wildlife habitat will remain protected from fragmentation and invasive species providing excellent hunting and opportunities for other wildland recreation. As open space and other lands are developed or closed to hunting and fishing, roadless areas will continue to provide for quality hunting.

- Public access will be protected. Our proposed roadless rule will not close a single mile of road or block any existing access to public lands. Opportunities for off road vehicle use and the fate of existing roads will be decided at the local level, just as they are now.

Roadless area conservation will preserve existing public access to public lands while prohibiting new roads that we don't need and can't afford. Our roads policy will ensure that the roads Americans need for access to their favorite outdoor spots are safe and environmentally sound. The roads we don't need will be decommissioned or converted to other uses as fast as funding allows.

there are our last wild places

loss of open space

hiking, biking, hunter walking trails.

spectrum of recreation opportunity

Roads, roadless & recreation are inextricably intertwined.

Recreation Opportunities

The opportunities we have to serve Americans through recreation are endless. Americans cherish their national forests and grasslands for the values they provide—clean water, clean air, scenic beauty in natural outdoor settings, abundant wildlife, opportunities for personal and spiritual growth, and choices for future generations. Most people experience these values and benefits primarily through recreation. Recreation is the main way that Americans experience not only the land, but also the services that we at the Forest Service provide. Our 192 million acres of national forests and grasslands provide:

- 399 wilderness areas—63% of the wilderness system in the lower 48 States;\
- 4,268 miles of the Wild and Scenic River System;
- 133,087 miles of hiking, horse, and OHV trails;
- 277,000 heritage sites;
- More than 4,300 campgrounds; and
- 31 national recreation areas, national scenic areas, and national monuments.

60% of this nation's skiing
equestrian
7,700 miles of scenic byways.
50% blue ribbon trout streams
23,000 developed recreation sites.
50% elk, bighorn sheep, mt goat
28 million ac. wild turkey habitat

These Forest Service resources form a unique niche of nature-based, dispersed recreation. We offer undeveloped settings in natural surroundings, together with constructed environments (such as interpretive facilities) that reinforce the natural character of the broader wildland setting. Through our resources, the Forest Service opens a window to the natural world for the enjoyment and appreciation of an increasingly urban society.

Our mandate is

Make no mistake. We will always be committed to multiple use management including grazing, mining, and timber harvest. And we will never do anything to compromise the long-term health of the land. But within the framework of multiple-use management, our emphasis has shifted. Today, it is universally recognized that meeting the public need for outdoor recreation is an important part of fulfilling our mission of caring for the land and serving people—of providing the greatest good for the greatest number.

1:30 - 3:00: Biltmore Room

Mike Dombeck & FS staff

Available to talk to ~~guess~~ everyone.

Recreation: An American Birthright

"If bread is the first necessity of life, recreation is a close second," Edward Bellamy wrote in *Looking Backward*. Recreation is indeed a necessity, and we are fortunate to live in a Nation where recreation on public lands is every citizen's birthright. ~~Let's not squander that heritage.~~ Let's work together to protect the American birthright by ensuring that our public lands remain healthy and thriving. Living within the limits of the land must be our first and highest priority.

I have always believed the outdoor recreation community to be among the most important, and least heard, of all the constituencies that use and care for public lands. We had over 360,000 people participate in the scoping phase of the issue alone. ~~Right now our faxes are burning and fiber optic wires buzzing with people who are making their views known by participating in the public process associated with the roadless area rulemaking.~~

I believe the debate over public lands is as heated as it is today because too often we allow the minority of extremist views to take up the majority of the debate. To my way of thinking, the outdoor recreation community is often the silent majority in these debates over roads, roadless areas, and how are forests and grasslands are to be managed for present and future generations.

You ~~could be~~ are the lynchpin to helping to build the majority coalition that carries us to a sustainable future. Consider the issue of chip mills in the southeast. Chip mills use low-quality, small-diameter trees. Many chip mills have moved to the Southeast, where they are accelerating the harvest of hardwood timber on private forestlands. In some cases, forests that successfully regrown from selective cutting in the past are today being clearcut to feed the chip mills. Many residents in the southeast believe that the harvest methods used to feed the chip mills are compromising their hunting, fishing, and scenic beauty.

In 1977, 11.3 billion board feet of forest were grown in the southeast. About 7.9 billion board feet died or were harvested for timber production. In 1997, about 10.7 billion board feet of forests grew and about 12.3 billion board feet died or were harvested. This is not some abstract debate involving little known plants, rare fish, or reclusive owls. The issue is a question of basic sustainability. Mortality and harvest cannot exceed growth if forests are to continue providing healthy fish and wildlife habitats, clean and pure drinking water, and scenic beauty.

Now, this is not an issue that the Forest service can, or will, try to control or regulate. These are private lands, largely. All we can do, are doing today through our interagency and inter-state Southern Resources Assessment, is provide technical resources, science, and information to help decision-makers make more informed decisions.

Stats of Missouri

You can make a difference. For example, seven of the nation's ~~top whitewater~~ recreation companies including Dagger, Perception, Patagonia, Lotus Designs, Harmony, Mountain Surf, and the Nantahala Outdoor Center proposed a timeout on new chip mills until we can better assess their ecological impacts and ensure that the recreation communities' economic and environmental interests are not compromised.

The issue in this case was chip mils and I applaud their getting involved and taking a stand. Other recreation groups such as local ORV users are working with the Forest service to maintain eroding trails that can damage water quality. But the issue could involve roadless area conservation, road management, habitat improvements, or conservation education. My plea is that you get involved. Make your voice heard. These are your lands. Your birthright. Your legacy to pass onto to your children and their children's children.

This is about your land
This is about your birthright
This is about the future
This is about the legacy we pass on to future generations

1910 90 2000 *years of research excellence*
conserving the forest resource

Forest Products Laboratory 90th Birthday Celebration

1910–1932

1932–2000

Sponsored by
Forest Products Laboratory Employee Association (FPLEA)

1910 90 2000 *years of research excellence*
conserving the forest resource

Forest Products Laboratory Courtyard

July 18, 2000
2:00–7:00 p.m.

Program at 2:30, picnic immediately following

Master of Ceremonies

Roger Rowell
Project Leader, Modified Lignocellulosic Materials,
Forest Products Laboratory

Comments by

Thomas Hamilton
Director, Forest Products Laboratory (1994–present)

John Erickson
Director, Forest Products Laboratory (1985–1993)

Robert Youngs
Director, Forest Products Laboratory (1975–1985)

Kevin McSweeney
Director, School of Natural Resources, and
Associate Director, Agricultural Experiment Station,
CALS, University of Wisconsin

George Meyer
Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Anthony Hardie
Field Rep. for U.S. Cong. Representative Baldwin

Katie Crawley
Regional Coordinator for Senator Feingold

Eve Galanter
Office Director (Madison) for Senator Kohl

Hilda Diaz-Soltero
Associate Chief for Natural Resources, USDA Forest Service

Mike Dombeck
Chief, USDA Forest Service

Dedication of Demonstration Structure

Dedication of a structure demonstrating use of round wood timbers with their natural taper

Economic use of this material will provide for cost-effective restoration of dense, overstocked forest stands that are at high risk from catastrophic wildfire

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Mike Dombeck
Chief, USDA Forest Service

Hilda Diaz-Soltero
Associate Chief for Natural Resources, USDA Forest Service

Edward Richards
Director, Small Business Development Department,
Navajo Division of Economic Development

Mae Franklin
Navajo Tribal Liaison Officer for Federal Land Management Agencies

Rosalie Cates
Executive Director, Montana Community Development Center

Thomas Hamilton
Director, Forest Products Laboratory

Entertainment

The Sound Factory

The Sound Factory quartet has entertained organizations and audiences throughout the Midwest since 1983. The quartet can be seen on television and heard on radio singing commercials. They are the 1998 Land O'Lakes Division 1 first place quartet. The quartet recently returned from performing in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Members

Roger Rowell, Tenor	Paul Reedy, Lead
Ken Kittlesen, Baritone	Jim Olmsted, Bass

Dinner music provided by
The Unicorn Consort, recorder group

History Highlights

- March 5, 1909, Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson announced that Madison, Wisconsin, had been selected as the site for the new Forest Products Laboratory.
- May 12, 1909, the State Legislature of Wisconsin passed a resolution approving construction costs of $41,000 for the new Laboratory.
- It was quickly realized that the funding was insufficient, so University of Wisconsin President Van Hise called a special session of the Board of Regents to recommend $9,000 additional funding to complete the project. The State Legislature approved the additional money on June 9, 1909.
- Before the new building was completed, the Forest Products Laboratory was temporarily located at 1610 Adams Street in a three-story white house from October 1, 1909, to April 1, 1910.
- The official opening of the new building on University Avenue was Saturday, June 4, 1910. A total of 500 people registered for the opening.
- The morning of June 4, 1910, was filled with tours of the new Laboratory. The formal opening was scheduled in the afternoon.

Speakers at ceremony:

Ex-Governor William Dempster Hoard

Governor Davidson

Chief of the Forest Service, Henry S. Graves
(who had succeeded Gifford Pinchot)

Captain J.B. White, Chairman, Committee on Conservation,
National Lumber Manufacturers' Association

G.R. Goggins, American Pulp and Paper Association

O.B. Bannister, representing hickory vehicle manufacturers

- Forty-five employees at the Forest Products Laboratory in 1910 were organized into 8 sections:

Wood Preservation	*Engineering*
Timber Tests	*Pathology*
Wood Chemistry	*Wood Distillation*
Timber Physics	*Pulp and Paper*

- The maximum number of employees reached 682 in 1944.
- Currently, 250 permanent employees staff the Forest Products Laboratory.

90th Anniversary of Forest Products Lab.

Talking Points for Chief Dombeck on Tuesday, July 18, 2000

It is my pleasure to be here at Forest Products Laboratory to be a part of your 90th celebration. It is great to see so many of FPL's partners, associates, retirees and employees here. While growing up in Wisconsin next to a National Forest and attending the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, I had heard about FPL. However, I did not know about the extent of the contributions that FPL had made in research until I became a part of the Forest Service. I now talk about your contributions wherever I go since they are so important to the daily lives of the American citizens.

John Erickson

I would like to recognize some of your employees who have made great contributions and were recognized this year with the USDA Secretary's Honor Awards. Mary Collet received the Equal Opportunity award for her dedication to diversity, education of students about government careers, and personal devotion to tutoring students in math and science. Bill Simpson received the Public Service award for outstanding contributions to the American public through wood drying research and technology transfer. The Forest Products Laboratory also had several recipients of my 2000 Honor Award. They are the Juniper Sign and Rangeland Restoration Team for their Excellence in Technology Transfer, Rebecca Ibach for the Early Career Scientist Award and Tom Jeffries for the Superior Science Award. My congratulations to all of the winners of these present and past awards for all of your contributions to the Forest Service.

Gifford Pinchot founded the Forest Service on the principle that "The conservation of natural resources is the key to the future". Even back then, at the turn of the last century, conservation of our forest resources was a growing public concern. Availability of the resources was also a concern and assuring long-term supplies of resources like water and wood was a central part of the conservation movement and important to the establishment of the Forest Service. It wasn't long after the Forest Service was established that the idea for a Forest Products Laboratory was conceived and became a reality right here in Madison.

Wise use

What goes on here is about the future

We've heard about some of your impressive historical contributions today. I would point out that FPL is continuing that tradition through the current issues that FPL is working on to carry out the mission of conserving the wood resource and wood fiber. In March, when I last visited Madison, I was given the opportunity to talk to faculty and students at the University about

the importance of clean water, from the forest to the faucet. I really appreciate the research that FPL is doing in helping to solve the dilemma of having enough clean water for everyone. (Roger Rowell is a member of the quartet providing the entertainment and the MC) As an aside, Roger, where does the entertainment category fit in research? Roger Rowell's work unit, with Jim Han's research, is making strides in filtering water using wood fibers. The work that they've done with the Department of Natural Resources that ~~George Meyer~~ spoke about appears to have high potential for removing heavy metals and pesticides from rainwater run-off. I believe the work that has begun with the National Forests, such as the filtering of mine waste on the Wayne NF has great potential. I'm also fascinated by their use of juniper filters to remove the ammonia in the yellow perch project and the possibilities that could result in the cooperative work being done with NASA. In the near future, I would like to see Raj Atalla's research and the work of Jim Bond's research unit using polyoxometalate bleaching with a closed-cycle mill be adapted by industry. This could have a major impact on water now being used in the paper industry. Finally, Stan Lebow's work on possible leaching from preservative treated wood should be of great value to public land managers and others who use this material in areas around sensitive watersheds. This research going on at FPL is vital and needed, and it fits well with our priorities today and our needs for tomorrow

Another important area of FPL's research is the work involving small-diameter materials. The value of this work became ever so apparent this summer with the forest fires in New Mexico and Colorado. We need to find value-added products that will increase the opportunity to remove these materials from the forest and decrease the fuel source for these devastating fires and also lower the chances of disease and insect infestation to make our forests healthier. The Technology Marketing Unit at FPL continues to find the economic opportunities for timber communities to market the products of small diameter material, using the research that the FPL work units have completed. The demonstration structure, that we will very shortly dedicate, signifies the strides that FPL has made since 1910 in finding ways to extend forest resource availability and solve other forest related problems as well.

Forest Products Laboratory, I congratulate you on your 90 years of research excellence and conserving the forest resource.

Tom Hamilton 6 yrs. as FPL Director
36 yrs in FS

Intelligent Consumption: The Forest Service Role

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
The Intelligent Consumption Forum
Madison, WI—July 19, 2000

It's a pleasure today to join such a distinguished and knowledgeable group of Americans for a dialogue about the responsible use of our natural resources. I'd like to thank Mike Strigel for inviting me. I'm delighted to see such diverse representation among you—State and Federal agencies, the forest products industry, private NGOs. You are exactly the kind of forum we need more of in America—where people from diverse backgrounds find a common basis for discussions that will lead to mutual benefits.

We are here today to address one of the most fundamental and difficult of all conservation challenges we face. Americans are using more of their natural resources legacy than ever, yet support for environmental protection and conservation grows every year. The result? We are increasingly exporting our environmental problems elsewhere—to other lands, other States, other countries. It's a complex problem, and I'll go into it a bit more. Then I'll outline ways the Forest Service can help address the problem.

Changing Public Expectations

Gifford Pinchot founded the Forest Service on the principle that "The Conservation of natural resources is the key to the future." The conservation principle, though not always politically popular, has always served the interests of the land and of future generations of Americans. Through a system of public lands, the fledgling Forest Service protected watersheds in the West. After the Great Depression, we were again called upon to help restore millions of acres of abandoned farmland in the Midwest and East.

Following World War II, we worked with the growing timber industry to help fulfill the national dream of providing families with single-family homes. Our timber harvests escalated for nearly a quarter of a century.

Along the way, social values changed. Eventually, the changing times caught up with and overran us in a flood of controversy, lawsuits, and injunctions. We've learned that we must be responsive to new demands—demands for clean water, healthy habitat for fish and wildlife, recreation opportunities, and ecologically sustainable timber harvests.

Today, we no longer manage public forests primarily for outputs of wood fiber, minerals, or animal unit-months of grazing. In ever-greater numbers, the American people are asking—demanding—that we focus less on what we take from the land and more on what we leave behind. Here are just a few of the many noncommodity benefits the public expects from their lands:

- *Clean water.* The most and the cleanest water in the country comes from our forests. One-third of our Nation is forested, and the forested area produces two-thirds of our runoff. More

than 60 million Americans get their drinking water from watersheds that originate on our national forests and grasslands.

- *Recreation.* In 1946, our national forests and grasslands hosted just 18 million visitor-days; last year, it was nearly 1 billion—that's 50 times more! People are coming from all over the world. They come to enjoy our 7,700 miles of national scenic byways. They come to fish and canoe our 4,348 miles of national wild and scenic rivers. They come to hike our 133,087 miles of trails, to camp in our 4,300 campsites—the list goes on and on.
- *Wildlife and fish habitat.* Our national forests provide 80% of the habitat in the lower 48 States for elk, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. We maintain 28 million acres of wild turkey habitat and half of the country's blue-ribbon trout streams.

Missing Consumption Ethic

Today, our first and highest priority is living within the limits of the land. Sustainability should be our guiding star. We can fulfill our mission of serving the American people only if we first care for the land on the basis of a sound land ethic. In a nutshell, our land ethic is this: We respect the right of every native species to flourish on the land, from our magnificent salmon, elk, and wolves to "the meanest flower that blows," as Aldo Leopold put it. We practice our land ethic through ecosystem-based management.

One effect of our ecosystem-based management and our changing social values has been reduced commodity extraction from our national forests and grasslands: Over the last decade, timber harvest has dropped by 70%, oil and gas leasing by about 40%, and livestock grazing by at least 10%. But demand for forest and grassland products has increased. Consider:

- From 1965 to 1999, our annual paper consumption increased overall by 120% and per capita by 90%, from 468 to 750 pounds per person.
- From 1971 to 1996, the average size of homes in the United States grew from 1,520 square feet to 2,120 square feet. Meanwhile, the average family size has dropped by 16% since 1970. Americans require more wood for larger homes than ever before, often in our rapidly diminishing open spaces: Between 1992 and 1997, nearly 16 million acres of forest, farms, and open space were converted to urban or other uses. In less than a decade, we doubled the loss of undeveloped land.

Improvements in paper recycling and more efficient wood use have somewhat offset our rising demand for wood fiber. Still, from 1965 to 1998, our overall demand for wood fiber increased by about 50%, keeping pace with our population growth. Per year, we consume about 65 cubic feet of wood per person in forest and paper products and an additional 10 cubic feet per person in fuelwood. That's the equivalent of three trees 15 to 18 inches in diameter per person per year. That's an awful lot of trees!

Our ecosystem-based management, coupled with our appetite for forest products, runs the risk of simply shifting our environmental problems to other countries, to rural areas, or to private lands with fewer protections.

- Consider softwood imports from Canada. Between 1991 and 1996, softwood harvest on our national forests fell from about 9 to 3.1 billion board feet per year. Over the same period, U.S. softwood imports from Canada rose from 11.5 to nearly 18 billion board feet per year. Canada now accounts for 34% of the softwood lumber consumption in the United States, up from 26% in 1990. Much of the additional lumber came from old-growth boreal forests in northern Quebec. Old-growth timber harvest is now a public issue in Canada.
- Consider the issue of sustainable forestry in the Southeast. In 1977, the net growth of softwood forests was 6.3 billion cubic feet in the South. About 4.5 billion cubic feet were harvested. In 1997, the net growth of softwood forests was 5.9 billion cubic feet and about 6.5 billion cubic feet were harvested. Although growth levels of hardwood forests still exceed removals, hardwood harvest levels are beginning to approach hardwood forest growth levels. This is not some abstract debate over little known plants, obscure fish, or reclusive owls. This is a question of basic sustainability. Harvest cannot exceed growth if forests are to provide healthy fish and wildlife habitats, clean and pure drinking water, and scenic beauty.

Now, these are not matters that the Forest Service can or will try to regulate. These are largely private matters, issues of international commerce and private land use. But that doesn't mean we should ignore the fundamental problem: the absence of a national consumption ethic.

That's why we're here today. We're here to discuss what we can do to align American consumption with American expectations for healthy watersheds and thriving wildland ecosystems. We're here to discuss how we can help Americans understand an inescapable truth: that our consumption choices drive the way we use and manage the land. We're here to find ways of helping Americans make intelligent consumption choices.

Consumption Strategy

"There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm," Aldo Leopold once wrote. "One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other that heat comes from the furnace." I'd add a third danger: that water comes from the faucet. Aldo Leopold knew that a land ethic must be based on a consumption ethic, and that Americans were losing the basis for a consumption ethic as they lost their agricultural ties to the land. A farmer doesn't waste what takes hours of labor to produce—food to eat, wood to build and warm a home. But for those who shop for food and lumber, the only limiting factor is the pocketbook. Waste, if convenient and affordable, will always be potentially profligate.

What can we do to eliminate waste? You as a group have already identified areas where we can help: educating the public on the need for intelligent consumption; providing public guidance for intelligent consumption; developing more efficient technologies; and establishing institutional incentives for intelligent consumption. I will briefly outline what the Forest Service will do in these areas.

- First, we will encourage all Americans to understand the effects of their consumption—not by placing blame, but rather by asking people to make informed, intelligent consumption choices. Leadership must come from the most credible and visible public sources at every level—our political and religious leaders, government agencies, conservation NGOs, and

resource-producing industries. The Forest Service will support and mediate the effort, partly through such efforts as your good work in this important forum. Through our new, expanded staff area for conservation education, we are using professional outreach techniques with public messages on the need for intelligent consumption. For example, our Washington Office will feature a new visitor center designed to get visitors to critically examine their own daily consumption choices.

- Second, we will develop technical and scientific information to guide intelligent consumption. A priority for Forest Service Research will be to study and compare the implications of alternative consumption choices for our economy and for the conservation of our natural resources at all levels—locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. For example, the Forest Service RPA timber assessment for 2000, to be released later this summer, will indicate the projected effects of our current consumption choices on our range, wildlife, water, mineral, recreation, urban forest, and timber resources.
- Third, we will develop more efficient technologies for utilizing our natural resources. The Forest Service's Forest Products Laboratory—FPL—is a longtime leader in this area. For example, our innovation in recycling and efficient wood utilization helped to increase products we can produce from a single log by 40%. Remember those stamps you had to lick? They were replaced by self-adhesive stamps, and the FPL figured out how to recycle them. The Post Office sold 33 billion self-adhesive stamps last year, and now billions of stamped envelopes can be recycled. Our top priority today is finding uses for the low-value trees that we need to thin from 54 million acres of our national forestlands at unnaturally high levels of risk from fire and pests. FPL has already found ways to use small-diameter Douglas-fir for flooring and furniture, and red maple for trusses and I-joists. If you took the FPL tour, you saw the demonstration structure that uses small-diameter ponderosa pine roundwoods as a new building element. I envision a future where homes are more adaptable and recyclable, where walls can be easily moved to accommodate a growing or shrinking household, and where wood removed from pallets and from building demolition projects is not sent to the landfill, but turned into usable products such as particleboard for furniture.
- Finally, we must develop institutional incentives for intelligent consumption. Leadership must come from political authorities such as Congress, with informational support from government agencies, conservation NGOs, and resource-producing industries. A priority for Forest Service Research will be to help find ways to encourage environmentally friendly products and manufacturing processes in a manner that does not impair the health, diversity, and productivity of the land.

Collectively, these four strategies—educating the public on the need for intelligent consumption; providing public guidance for intelligent consumption; developing more efficient technologies; and establishing institutional incentives for intelligent consumption—will help eliminate wasteful consumption. All are grounded in Gifford Pinchot's insight that "the Conservation of natural resources is the key to the future."

Minimizing Consumption

Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot established a system of public lands—our national forests and grasslands—on the basis of "the greatest good of the greatest number for the longest time." Today, we can perhaps best realize the greatest good for the greatest number through

another principle, a principle stated by E.F. Schumacher in his 1973 book *Small Is Beautiful*: "The aim should be to obtain the maximum of well-being with the minimum of consumption."

Ultimately, that's why we're here today. It's up to us to find ways, individually and collectively, both in this group and in our own agencies and organizations, to work toward intelligent consumption—a maximum of well-being with a minimum of consumption. The health of America's watersheds, the vitality of our forest and grassland ecosystems, depends on intelligent consumption. Through intelligent consumption, we will lay the groundwork for extending our land ethic across the boundaries that divide us—and ultimately all around the world.

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- *Wildlife and fish habitat.* Our national forests provide 80% of the habitat in the lower 48 States for elk, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. We maintain 28 million acres of wild turkey habitat and half of the country's blue-ribbon trout streams.

Missing Consumption Ethic

Today, our first and highest priority is living within the limits of the land. Sustainability should be our guiding star. We can fulfill our mission of serving the American people only if we first care for the land on the basis of a sound land ethic. In a nutshell, our land ethic is this: We respect the right of every native species to flourish on the land, from our magnificent salmon, elk, and wolves to "the meanest flower that blows," as Aldo Leopold put it. We practice our land ethic through ecosystem-based management.

One effect of our ecosystem-based management and our changing social values has been reduced commodity extraction from our national forests and grasslands: Over the last decade, timber harvest has dropped by 70%, oil and gas leasing by about 40%, and livestock grazing by at least 10%. But demand for forest and grassland products has increased. Consider:

- From 1965 to 1999, our annual paper consumption increased overall by 120% and per capita by 90%, from 468 to 750 pounds per person.
- From 1971 to 1996, the average size of homes in the United States grew from 1,520 square feet to 2,120 square feet. Meanwhile, the average family size has dropped by 16% since 1970. Americans require more wood for larger homes than ever before, often in our rapidly diminishing open spaces: Between 1992 and 1997, nearly 16 million acres of forest, farms, and open space were converted to urban or other uses. In less than a decade, we doubled the loss of undeveloped land.

Improvements in paper recycling and more efficient wood use have somewhat offset our rising demand for wood fiber. Still, from 1965 to 1998, our overall demand for wood fiber increased by about 50%, keeping pace with our population growth. Per year, we consume about 65 cubic feet of wood per person in forest and paper products and an additional 10 cubic feet per person in fuelwood. That's the equivalent of three trees 15 to 18 inches in diameter per person per year. That's an awful lot of trees!

Our ecosystem-based management, coupled with our appetite for forest products, runs the risk of simply shifting our environmental problems to other countries, to rural areas, or to private lands with fewer protections.

- Consider softwood imports from Canada. Between 1991 and 1996, softwood harvest on our national forests fell from about 9 to 3.1 billion board feet per year. Over the same period, U.S. softwood imports from Canada rose from 11.5 to nearly 18 billion board feet per year. Canada now accounts for 34% of the softwood lumber consumption in the United States, up from 26% in 1990. Much of the additional lumber came from old-growth boreal forests in northern Quebec. Old-growth timber harvest is now a public issue in Canada.
- Consider the issue of sustainable forestry in the Southeast. In 1977, the net growth of softwood forests was 6.3 billion cubic feet in the South. About 4.5 billion cubic feet were harvested. In 1997, the net growth of softwood forests was 5.9 billion cubic feet and about 6.5 billion cubic feet were harvested. Although growth levels of hardwood forests still exceed removals, hardwood harvest levels are beginning to approach hardwood forest growth levels. This is not some abstract debate over little known plants, obscure fish, or reclusive owls. This is a question of basic sustainability. Harvest cannot exceed growth if forests are to provide healthy fish and wildlife habitats, clean and pure drinking water, and scenic beauty.

Now, these are not matters that the Forest Service can or will try to regulate. These are largely private matters, issues of international commerce and private land use. But that doesn't mean we should ignore the fundamental problem: the absence of a national consumption ethic.

That's why we're here today. We're here to discuss what we can do to align American consumption with American expectations for healthy watersheds and thriving wildland ecosystems. We're here to discuss how we can help Americans understand an inescapable truth: that our consumption choices drive the way we use and manage the land. We're here to find ways of helping Americans make intelligent consumption choices.

Consumption Strategy

"There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm," Aldo Leopold once wrote. "One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other that heat comes from the furnace." I'd add a third danger: that water comes from the faucet. Aldo Leopold knew that a land ethic must be based on a consumption ethic, and that Americans were losing the basis for a consumption ethic as they lost their agricultural ties to the land. A farmer doesn't waste what takes hours of labor to produce—food to eat, wood to build and warm a home. But for those who shop for food and lumber, the only limiting factor is the pocketbook. Waste, if convenient and affordable, will always be potentially profligate.

What can we do to eliminate waste? You as a group have already identified areas where we can help: educating the public on the need for intelligent consumption; providing public guidance for intelligent consumption; developing more efficient technologies; and establishing institutional incentives for intelligent consumption. I will briefly outline what the Forest Service will do in these areas.

- First, we will encourage all Americans to understand the effects of their consumption—not by placing blame, but rather by asking people to make informed, intelligent consumption choices. Leadership must come from the most credible and visible public sources at every level—our political and religious leaders, government agencies, conservation NGOs, and re-

source-producing industries. The Forest Service will support and mediate the effort, partly through such efforts as your good work in this important forum. Through our new, expanded staff area for conservation education, we are using professional outreach techniques with public messages on the need for intelligent consumption. For example, our Washington Office will feature a new visitor center designed to get visitors to critically examine their own daily consumption choices.

- Second, we will develop technical and scientific information to guide intelligent consumption. A priority for Forest Service Research will be to study and compare the implications of alternative consumption choices for our economy and for the conservation of our natural resources at all levels—locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. For example, the Forest Service RPA timber assessment for 2000, to be released later this summer, will indicate the projected effects of our current consumption choices on our range, wildlife, water, mineral, recreation, urban forest, and timber resources.
- Third, we will develop more efficient technologies for utilizing our natural resources. The Forest Service's Forest Products Laboratory—FPL—is a longtime leader in this area. For example, our innovation in recycling and efficient wood utilization helped to increase products we can produce from a single log by 40%. Remember those stamps you had to lick? They were replaced by self-adhesive stamps, and the FPL figured out how to recycle them. The Post Office sold 33 billion self-adhesive stamps last year, and now billions of stamped envelopes can be recycled. Our top priority today is finding uses for the low-value trees that we need to thin from 54 million acres of our national forestlands at unnaturally high levels of risk from fire and pests. FPL has already found ways to use small-diameter Douglas-fir for flooring and furniture, and red maple for trusses and I-joists. If you took the FPL tour, you saw the demonstration structure that uses small-diameter ponderosa pine roundwoods as a new building element. I envision a future where homes are more adaptable and recyclable, where walls can be easily moved to accommodate a growing or shrinking household, and where wood removed from pallets and from building demolition projects is not sent to the landfill, but turned into usable products such as particleboard for furniture.
- Finally, we must develop institutional incentives for intelligent consumption. Leadership must come from political authorities such as Congress, with informational support from government agencies, conservation NGOs, and resource-producing industries. A priority for Forest Service Research will be to help find ways to encourage environmentally friendly products and manufacturing processes in a manner that does not impair the health, diversity, and productivity of the land.

Collectively, these four strategies—educating the public on the need for intelligent consumption; providing public guidance for intelligent consumption; developing more efficient technologies; and establishing institutional incentives for intelligent consumption—will help eliminate wasteful consumption. All are grounded in Gifford Pinchot's insight that "the Conservation of natural resources is the key to the future."

Minimizing Consumption

Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot established a system of public lands—our national forests and grasslands—on the basis of "the greatest good of the greatest number for the longest time." Today, we can perhaps best realize the greatest good for the greatest number through an-

other principle, a principle stated by E.F. Schumacher in his 1973 book *Small Is Beautiful*: "The aim should be to obtain the maximum of well-being with the minimum of consumption."

Ultimately, that's why we're here today. It's up to us to find ways, individually and collectively, both in this group and in our own agencies and organizations, to work toward intelligent consumption—a maximum of well-being with a minimum of consumption. The health of America's watersheds, the vitality of our forest and grassland ecosystems, depends on intelligent consumption. Through intelligent consumption, we will lay the groundwork for extending our land ethic across the boundaries that divide us—and ultimately all around the world.

Intelligent Consumption: The Forest Service Role

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
The Intelligent Consumption Forum
Madison, WI—July 19, 2000

It's a pleasure today to join such a distinguished and knowledgeable group of Americans for a dialogue about the responsible use of our natural resources. I'd like to thank Mike Strigel for inviting me. I'm delighted to see such diverse representation among you—State and Federal agencies, the forest products industry, private NGOs. You are exactly the kind of forum we need more of in America—where people from diverse backgrounds find a common basis for discussions that will lead to mutual benefits.

We are here today to address one of the most fundamental and difficult of all conservation challenges we face. Americans are using more of their natural resources legacy than ever, yet support for environmental protection and conservation grows every year. The result? We are increasingly exporting our environmental problems elsewhere - other lands, other states, other countries. It's a complex problem, and I'll go into it a bit more. Then I'll outline ways the Forest Service can help address the problem.

Changing Public Expectations

Gifford Pinchot founded the Forest Service on the principle that "The Conservation of natural resources is the key to the future." The conservation principle, though not always politically popular, has always served the interests of the land and of future generations of Americans. Through a system of public lands, the fledgling Forest Service protected watersheds in the West. After the Great Depression, we were again called upon to help restore millions of acres of abandoned farmland in the Midwest and East.

at the turn of the last century

CCC era cutover stumplands

Following World War II, we worked with the growing timber industry to help fulfill the national dream

of providing families with single-family homes. Our timber harvests escalated for nearly a quarter of a century.

Along the way, social values changed. Eventually, the changing times caught up with and overran us in a flood of controversy, lawsuits, and injunctions. We've learned that we must be responsive to new demands—demands for clean water, healthy habitat for fish and wildlife, recreation opportunities, and ecologically sustainable timber harvests.

Today, we no longer manage public forests primarily for outputs of wood fiber, minerals, or

animal unit-months. In ever-greater numbers, the American people are asking—demanding—that we focus less on what we take from the land and more on what we leave behind. Here are just a few of the many noncommodity benefits the public expects from their lands:

- *Clean water.* The most and the cleanest water in the country comes from our forests. More than 60 million Americans get their drinking water from watersheds that originate on our national forests and grasslands.
- *Recreation.* In 1946, our national forests and grasslands hosted just 18 million visitor-days; last year, it was nearly 1 billion—that's 50

times more! People are coming from all over the world. They come to enjoy our 7,700 miles of national scenic byways. They come to fish and canoe our 4,348 miles of national wild and scenic rivers. They come to hike our 133,087 miles of trails, to camp in our 4,300 campsites—the list goes on and on.

- *Wildlife and fish habitat.* Our national forests provide 80% of the habitat in the lower 48 States for elk, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. We maintain 28 million acres of wild turkey habitat and half of the country's blue-ribbon trout streams.

Missing Consumption Ethic

(sustainability should be our guiding star) *

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Minimizing Consumption

a century ago

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8/1/00
Water Video

VOICE OVER
VO #1

Water is one of the most abundant natural resources on our planet. Seventy percent of the Earth is covered by water. Yet today, we are challenged to provide enough water, high quality water, to millions of people. Of all the water on Earth only three percent is fresh water, and of that, only a tiny fraction is available for us to use.

Watersheds are at the root of our mission as an agency, and today we are focusing on them even more intensively as part of the Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda.

I grew up surrounded by the lakes of northern Wisconsin. I never thought there would be a shortage of water. It seemed to be an inexhaustible resource. But today when you look at the booming population of the desert Southwest, you soon realize we are running dry...

VO#2

Los Angeles today imports water from hundreds of miles away.

Because its watersheds have been so fundamentally altered the city has long been subjected to winter floods.

The Angeles National Forest, one the nation's oldest, was created specifically to control flooding and supply water to Southern California.

Thirty to forty percent of the drinking water for the Los Angeles basin is supplied locally from the forestland. By managing the

whole urban watershed we can reduce the need to import water.

VO #3

When the West was being settled, the bottomland was sold or distributed for farms, ranches and railroads. The high country remained, and much of this land became the National Forests. From the earliest days of the conservation movement, we were given stewardship of the watersheds. I call the National Forests the headwaters of our nation because so much of our nation's water supply originates on them.

To understand the scale of our responsibility we need only look toward the northern Rocky Mountains.

VO #4

Watersheds work by catching, storing and releasing water over time. Winter snow packs feed Alpine pools. High country streams feed lakes and rivers.

These replenish wetlands and recharge aquifers. Trees and streamside vegetation help regulate the effects of storms and the runoff of water and soil.

The Forest Service objective of maintaining healthy ecosystems

therefore has a crucial impact on the functioning of watersheds.
VO#5

We've learned over the year that water is a product of all that goes on within the watershed. All of our actions on the landscape are reflected by the quality and health of our waters.

As we begin to examine water quality, we have to look at agriculture, industry and urban development.

To see their effects over time we'll look eastward, here, at the Chesapeake Bay. This is an area with a long history of development and use.

VO#6

The National Forests in the east are a patchwork of lands that historically had been heavily abused. By the late 1800's, less than 30 percent of this watershed remained forested. Much of it has been cut over and burned, cut for fuel and for industry, and converted to agriculture. Watersheds were devastated, and the rivers changed forever. In the 20th century, industrial growth was a big part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Factories along with intensive agriculture and urban development changed the landscape dramatically.

VO#7

The scope of this project is enormous. Throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed we intend to plant 2010 miles of riparian forest buffers by the year 2010. It will take all of our efforts to see a project like this through to completion. But we are seeing that we can make a difference. The Chesapeake Bay restoration project has shown us that even heavily degraded ecosystems can be restored.

VO#8

It all comes back to watershed management – conserving water in the Southwest, protecting the high country and nation's headwaters, and working across boundaries to restore our great waterways. Water is such a valuable commodity and the Forest Service plays a vital role in protecting this national resource.

Tapping our Roots -- Voice track

(Draft 7/26/2000)

Open

Chief:
Water is one of the most abundant natural resources on our planet.
Seventy percent of the Earth is covered by water. Yet today, we are challenged to provide enough water, high quality water, to millions of people. Of all the water on Earth only three percent is fresh water, and of that, only a tiny fraction is available for us to use.

Watersheds are at the root of our mission as an agency, and today we are focusing on them even more intensively as part of the Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda.

I grew up surrounded by the lakes of northern Wisconsin. I never thought there would be a shortage of water. It seemed to be an inexhaustible resource. But today when you look at the booming population of the desert Southwest, you soon realize we are running dry…

Segment 1

Dorothy Greene:
We have destroyed just about all of the natural habitat here in the Los Angeles area in our effort to get rid of water. Over the years we have paved over the landscape. As much as eighty percent of the land is now covered with buildings, roofs, roads, street parking lots. And as a result the natural hydrology of the landscape has been changed dramatically. There's no room for the water to soak into the ground naturally. And this is what we're trying to figure out: ways to restore all over the watershed.

Chief:
Los Angeles today imports water from hundreds of miles away. Ironically, for a city in need of water, it is long been subjected to winter floods. The Angeles National Forest, one the nation's oldest, was created specifically to control flooding and supply water to Southern California. Thirty to forty percent of the drinking water for the Los Angeles basin is supplied locally from Forest. By managing the whole urban watershed we can reduce the need to import water.

Mike Rogers;
The Los Angeles River which is really the life source for the development in Southern California, today is a concrete-lined ditch. The vision is to bring riparian species back, to widen the river so we have a natural flood plain, and we have native species, and we bring back a real river system instead of the concrete

lined channel that we have today,
The Forest Service is involved in the community of Los Angeles, creating pocket parks, riparian corridors. We're funding grants for different community groups to do these plantings along the river.
When we bring back medians, when we plant more trees, when we break up pavement and start mulching, the whole system connects to itself. We're creating more jobs, we're creating livable communities and we're maintaining our water supply.

Andy Lipkis:
The good news is the Forest Service has the science and it has the systems, it has the ecosystem management perspective. It has developed a unique ability among agencies to bring communities together and manage stakeholder input and stakeholder process. That's critical and it's the only agency I know that has actually made that part of the culture.

Mike Rogers:
It makes sense to utilize what we have here more efficiently and this is what we need to be doing here in Southern California and if we can do it here we can do it anywhere.

Segment 2

Chief:
When the West was being settled, the bottomland was sold or distributed for farms, ranches and railroads. The high country remained, and much of this land became the National Forests. From the earliest days of the conservation movement, we were given stewardship of the watersheds. I call the National Forests the headwaters of our nation because so much of our nation's water supply originates on them. To understand the scale of our responsibility we need only look toward the northern Rocky Mountains.

Bill Putnam:
This is Lemhi Pass. It's located on the Continental Divide, on the border between the states of Idaho and Montana. Water, which falls in this area has the potential to go either East and flow into the Missouri and Mississippi River systems and ultimately into the Atlantic Ocean, or west into the Salmon and into the Columbia system and ultimately into the Pacific Ocean. The combined area of these two watersheds is better than three-quarters of the United States. So water that originates in this area, and flows through these two river systems, will commingle with water from over three-quarters of the country. It's the largest watershed area for any two systems just about anywhere.

Chief:

Watersheds work by catching, storing and releasing water over time. Winter snow packs feed alpine pools. High country streams feed lakes and rivers. These replenish wetlands and recharge aquifers. Trees and streamside vegetation help regulate the effects of storms and the runoff of water and soil. The Forest Service objective of maintaining healthy ecosystems therefore has a crucial impact on the functioning of watersheds.

Bill Putnam:
Watershed management has been part of the Forest Service mission from the beginning. At the time the West was developing there were needs for all kinds of resources that the National Forest system could provide. There was a great deal of need for lumber and wood fiber; there was a need for grazing cattle on rangeland. There was a need to develop the mineral resources that are on the national forests. All of these things were on going at the same time in the emphasis of a developing nation.

Mining has a very big role in the history of this part of the world. Just within the National Forest system, we have over 4000 abandoned mine sites that we're trying to deal with. About ten percent of these are going to require a significant amount of activity to bring them to what we would consider to be an acceptable standard. We're working in several areas to remove wastes and control erosion on the sites and improve the water quality that is being produced in that system.

Segment 3

Chief:
We've learned over the years that water is a product of all that goes on within the watershed. As we begin to examine water quality, we have to look at agriculture, industry and urban development. To see their effects over time we'll look eastward, here, at the Chesapeake Bay. This is an area with a long history of development and use.

The National Forests in the east are a patchwork of lands that historically had been heavily abused. By the late 1800's, less than 30 percent of this watershed remained in forestland. Much of it has been cut over and burned, cut for fuel and for industry, and converted to agriculture. Watersheds were devastated, and the rivers changed forever. In the 20th century, industrial growth was big part of the Bay watershed. Factories along with intensive agriculture and urban development changed the landscape dramatically.

Al Todd:

The Chesapeake Bay is our nation's largest and most productive estuary, and its watershed is vast: 64,000 square miles. It stretches from New York to Virginia, West Virginia to Delaware. It is home to more than fourteen million people. By the 1970's really, citizens and scientists agreed that the Bay was in trouble. Essentially, excessive pollutants, mainly nutrients and sediments, but some toxic pollutants as well from industry, were harming the bay in a variety of ways. What we're trying to do is bring people together; To find the right players that address a certain problem, and then to apply some solutions on a watershed scale.

Woman:
The challenge is make all this real for people because it seems big, it seems distant. And I think one of the things we've really succeeded in doing here in the Chesapeake Bay is to bring the issue close to home so that people feel a sense of involvement, they feel that can make a difference.

We're trying to organize people in their own communities around their own small watershed. One of the things I think we've learned here is that the Bay region is the sum of its parts. There are a lot of small watersheds all of which affect and ultimately determine the fate of the Bay. And if we can get people to care for and be concerned about what's happening in their own small watershed then ultimately the Bay is going to be okay.

Al Todd:
One of the efforts the Forest Service has been involved with is a major initiative, watershed wide, to try to restore forests along our streams, rivers and shorelines. These riparian forests are incredibly important in terms of the health of our streams and aquatic habitats, but can also serve a valuable role in improving water quality by buffering pollutants that may come from adjacent land uses like agriculture or urban areas.

State forester #1
The saplings that have been planted here were actually planted three to four years ago. So you can already see some of the growth starting to force through there. It's very successful. The tree tubes help to shelter the growth as well as provide a little green house effect to force the plantings. When you're eliminating erosion, you're creating stability with streambanks, providing shade to prevent sunlight from heating up the stream. You also help to absorb a lot of the nutrients and runoff that's coming from the farmland.

Chief:
The scope of this project is enormous. Throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed we intend to plant 2010 miles of riparian forest buffers by the year 2010. It will take all of our efforts to see a project like this through to completion. But we are seeing that we can make a difference. The Chesapeake Bay

restoration project has shown us that even heavily degraded ecosystems can be restored.

It all comes back to watershed management - keeping more water in the LA basin, protecting the high country and headwaters of our nation, and working across boundaries to restore our great waterways. Water is such a valuable commodity and the Forest Service plays a vital role in protecting this national resource.

Federal Interagency Leadership Meeting
On Sustainable Forest Management

Wednesday, August 2, 2000
USDA Whitten Building – Room 221-A

"Work and Progress of the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests"
By Mike Dombeck, Chief of the USDA-Forest Service
(Draft – August 1, 2000)

On July 14, 1998, I convened a multi-stakeholder meeting to discuss sustainable resource management in the United States. I know some of you were at the meeting, and we appreciate your continuing interest and support for this important work. We are pleased to see other agencies get involved during the last two years. We also know there are still some missing players.

we welcome other participant

Together we are following through on the U.S. commitment to sustainable forest management as outlined by Deputy Secretary Rominger. Plus we are responding to a specific request made by six organizations to the Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Management and Budget.

Those six organizations are concerned about sustainability, especially forest inventory and assessment, and want to see the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators use as a common framework in the United States. They include:

- National Association of State Foresters
- Global Forest Policy Project
- American Forest & Paper Association
- National Audubon Society
- Society of American Foresters
- World Wildlife Fund.

At the July 1998 meeting, fifty-two attendees – representing 32 key Federal and State agencies and national organizations – gathered to discuss and affirm their joint commitment to sustainable resource management and use of the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators in particular. That first meeting targeted agencies and organizations with expertise and responsibilities associated with data about forests and their use.

Secretary Glickman attended the meeting and warned us to avoid turf. The candor of all participants was a very positive sign that agencies and organizations indeed wanted to work together. So at that meeting I designated Phil Janik to lead the ongoing work on behalf of the Forest Service. It was vital to have someone who reports directly to me lead the Forest Service's involvement.

This meeting led to the formation of a multi-stakeholder Roundtable on Sustainable Forests which "serves as a forum to share information and perspectives that will enable better decision making in the United States regarding sustainable forests" (as stated in its charter). It is not a policy or decision-making body, rather a group of government and non-government representatives that share stewardship responsibilities. Initially the Roundtable is focusing on understanding and using the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators to foster our understanding of the state of our forests and their use with respect to sustainability in the U.S.

Since July 1998 the full Roundtable has met seven (7) times. The Forest Service is the lead Federal agency in the Roundtable process, with Phil Janik serving as its chair. The Meridian Institute facilitates Roundtable activities and meetings. Ninety-eight organizations and agencies have participated through meetings and the work of its Technical Work Group and its Communications and Outreach Work Group. The Roundtable has a website (www.sustainableforests.net) up and running where you can find its charter, summaries of meetings, questions and answers about the Criteria and Indicators, and the output of three Technical Workshops held this spring. Last year the Roundtable also sponsored a learning session on Sustainable Forest Management at the National Town Meeting for a Sustainable America hosted by the President's Council on Sustainable Development.

Starting last December a Core Group of Roundtable participants began doing some needed ~~staff~~ work, including planning the development of a national report on the state of the Nation's forests and progress toward sustainable forests management in the United States in 2003. A draft of the report will be available in 2002…and so the Roundtable has lots to do over the next two years!

The Roundtable continues to evolve. A number of efforts are underway by Roundtable participants to renew and deepen their commitments to sustainable forest management and to use the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators framework. The American Forest & Paper Association is continuing to advance its Sustainable Forestry Initiative. The National Association of State Foresters is establishing a Select Committee on Implementing Sustainable Forest Management. The Sustainable Forestry Partnership, involving universities, is organizing a non-Federal forests stakeholder effort. Range as well as minerals and energy interests are reviewing the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicator framework for its applicability to their efforts because they see the power in using, if at all possible, a common framework and language to discuss sustainability across sectors.

In the Forest Service we have incorporated sustainable forest and resource management into our national long-term strategic plan, our Natural Resource Agenda, our budget process, our national resource assessment, the Forest Inventory and Analysis program, and other national accountability and monitoring systems. In addition we are making connections to sub-national activities, including the Southern Forest Resource Assessment, to local units of the National Forest System, and State Forest Resource Planning done in cooperatively by State forestry organizations. We have identified

sustainability as the fundamental principle to guide our planning on the National Forests and Grasslands.

The non-Federal participants have articulated the need for Federal agencies to provide leadership in the Roundtable process and to help develop the 2003 National Report. In particular, they want to make sure Federal agencies will coordinate their data activities on an ongoing basis using the Criteria and Indicators framework and will collaborate with the Roundtable to address data issues and fill data and institutional gaps.

This Memorandum of Understanding is a necessary step in building trust and confidence among the non-Federal participants that the Federal agencies will work together on an ongoing basis and help the Roundtable develop the 2003 National Report in a timely manner. It also is an effective tool to guarantee momentum by our agencies.

A lot of thinking and work has been done on the MOU since the Roundtable last met on June 13. I am pleased with the progress to date and now we need to help guide its final development. We do look forward to the MOU signing on September 12. Then we must begin to implement it.

I'd now like to have Ruth McWilliams share the Draft MOU with you.

Meeting the Challenge of Change in a New Century of Service

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
Forest Service Retirees' Reunion 2000
Missoula, MT—September 5, 2000

It's a real pleasure for me to welcome you here today. We are here to share old ties of friendship, to celebrate our mutual achievements, and to discuss the future of conservation on America's national forests and grasslands. I'd like to take a few minutes to address our past and to say a few words about our future in a new century—our New Century of Service.

Acknowledgments

But first, let's take a moment to say goodbye to an old friend—Rudy Wendelin, who recently passed away. The name Rudy Wendelin is virtually synonymous with Smokey Bear. Rudy didn't create Smokey, nor was he the first or the only artist to draw him. Smokey was the creation of many, including Albert Staehle, Bill Bergoffen, and others. But it was Rudy Wendelin who gave the finishing touches to the Smokey we all recognize today. Beginning in 1946, Rudy devoted a large part of his life to Smokey, including many years after his retirement. He spent 27 years producing Smokey art for the Forest Service, creating some 4,000 Smokey images. By 1968, Rudy was virtually Smokey's guardian. In that year, a poll showed that Smokey was more familiar to most Americans than even the President of the United States. Much of the credit goes to Rudy. For his labor of love on behalf of Smokey, on behalf of America's wildland resources, we all owe Rudy Wendelin a debt of lasting gratitude.

I'd also like to take a moment to acknowledge the many retirees who couldn't be with us today because they volunteered for fire duty. I don't need to tell you that this is the worst fire season in recent memory. We're doing everything we can to redeem our pledge that America's heroes on the fireline will have the resources they need to do their job, both safely and well. We have solicited the help of all qualified former employees, asking them to enlist for fire duty. My deepest thanks go to all the retirees who are serving our Nation by helping win the battle against wildland fire.

Our Revolutionary Tradition

"For the greatest good of the greatest number for the longest time." That's a bedrock principle of sound public service formulated by Gifford Pinchot almost a century ago. Today, we take this principle for granted. But a century ago, it was revolutionary. It was revolutionary because the public domain had always been managed as a vast storehouse of inexhaustible resources. Whoever was capable of exploiting those resources for personal profit could do so, in the name of progress and civilization.

Too often, the result was environmental disaster. For example, a commercial operator would acquire a tract, mine its timber, and then move on. The slash fires, floods, and erosion that followed degraded our lands and waters for years to come. A public backlash ensued. Many came to be-

lieve that commercial land uses—including mining, logging, and livestock grazing—should be excluded from the remaining public domain. They fiercely opposed all commercial interests.

The conservation movement led by Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot struck a balance between the opposing extremes—a balance for the health of the land. Using words that anticipated our multiple-use mission, Pinchot called for "foresighted utilization, preservation, and/or renewal of forests, waters, lands, and minerals." The land was to be used for resource extraction, but only in sustainable ways. Pinchot's adversaries roundly condemned his radical insistence on sustainability. Today, sustainability is widely accepted as the only basis for sound forest management, both public and private.

Changing Expectations

"But times do change and move continually," wrote the poet Edmund Spenser. The Forest Service now faces challenges that Pinchot never imagined. Fifty to sixty years ago, Americans wanted more timber from their national forests to help supply our troops against worldwide threats to freedom and then to fulfill the dream of owning a single-family home. We helped win the last world war and then helped make the American dream a reality for many.

Today, Americans want even more from their national forests and grasslands. They want:

- *Pure, clean water.* More than 60 million Americans get their drinking water from watersheds that originate on our national forests and grasslands.
- *Recreation opportunities.* Fifty years ago, our national forests and grasslands hosted just 18 million visitor-days; last year, it was nearly 1 billion—50 times more!
- *Healthy fish and wildlife.* We provide 80 percent of the habitat in the lower 48 States for elk, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. We maintain 28 million acres of wild turkey habitat and half of the country's blue-ribbon trout streams. We have some of the best habitat nationwide for protecting America's noblest symbols, our wolves, eagles, salmon, and grizzlies.
- *Wilderness values.* We protect some 35 million acres of wilderness, comprising about a third of the National Wilderness Preservation System and a fifth of the land in our National Forest System.
- *Biodiversity.* For many species, our national forests and grasslands are their final bastion—a last, best hope for refuge. Of the 327 watersheds identified by The Nature Conservancy as critical for the conservation of biodiversity in the United States, 181 are on our national forests and grasslands. So are 366 species of plants and animals listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, plus another 2,800 sensitive species.

What have we learned from the changing expectations of the people we serve, the owners of our public lands? We have learned that sustainable forest management cannot be defined solely or even primarily in terms of grazing and timberland. Sustainability today includes all the other values and services that Americans want and expect from their national forests and grasslands. We must take the long view and constantly ask, "Who will want the Forest Service and the national forests and grasslands 20 years from now, and why? What about in 50 years?"

The Challenge of Change

And that's the challenge we face: to cope with the fact of change. The writer Edith Wharton offers some sage advice: "One *can* remain alive long past the usual date of disintegration if one is unafraid of change, insatiable in intellectual curiosity, interested in big things."

To be unafraid of change—in fact, we have no other choice. An organization that doesn't constantly readjust to its changing operating environment eventually becomes obsolete. The landscape is littered with former industrial giants that failed to adapt to new markets, to the changing desires and expectations of their customers. Bethlehem Steel, Union Carbide, and American Motors have either disappeared or are languishing because they failed to look to the future once they had secured their market niches. Smith-Corona is a classic case: It failed to recognize that digital technology had rendered the typewriter obsolete. Look at its stock today—in just a few short years, it has plunged by 13,000 percent, from $8 to just 6 cents per share. Conversely, entities that embrace the future and prepare for it are able to survive in a changing world. Delta, once a minor airline, beat out PanAm, the worldwide leader in commercial aviation, because Delta better adapted to change by meeting new market demands.

Decades ago, the Forest Service began framing our future by addressing the changing needs and expectations of our customers, the American people. In 1970, the first Earth Day symbolized a reawakening, a new public awareness of the land. The new movement found legislative expression in the 1960's and 1970's through a battery of new laws to protect our natural resources—through the Wilderness Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, National Forest Management Act, and so forth. The debates and new scientific insights of the 1970's and 1980's—not least of all through the leadership of my predecessors John McGuire, Max Peterson, Dale Robertson, and Jack Ward Thomas—led to the formulation in the early 1990's of our ecosystem-based approach to natural resource management, the framework for everything we do today.

In the last few years, we began preparing a long-term agenda to address a new conservation environment in the 21st century. Today, that agenda is our Natural Resource Agenda, an agenda focused on the future—not on what Americans might have wanted from their national forests 50 years ago, but on what they expect today and will demand 50 years in the future.

The 30,000 Forest Service employees of today stand on your shoulders. We stand on the foundation built by you and your predecessors. I'm proud of our collective accomplishments. Here are just a few recent examples. In fiscal year 1999, we:

- maintained 7,700 miles of National Scenic Byways;
- maintained 4,268 miles of waterways in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System;
- made 1,879 miles of stream improvements;
- reforested 267,013 acres;
- made forest stand improvements on 262,786 acres;
- administered livestock grazing permits for 8.2 million animal head-months;

- administered 4,235 grazing allotments to standard;
- administered 23,792 recreation special use permits;
- collected more than $32 million in recreation user fees;
- assisted 146,000 woodland owners;
- assisted 2,450 volunteer fire departments;
- conducted 190 ecological assessments
- published 2,505 scientific papers and technical reports;
- served more than 120,000 persons through senior, youth, and volunteer programs;
- confiscated 490,000 marijuana plants;
- maintained 5.5 billion board feet of timber under contract; and
- suppressed 97 percent of our wildland fires during initial attack.

That sounds a lot like multiple-use management to me. I ask you to help us learn from the challenges you faced as we look to the challenges ahead.

A New Century of Service

In the year 2005, the Forest Service will celebrate its centennial. Today, I am kicking off a new 5-year effort to connect our roots—our revolutionary foundations in conservation—with our natural resource goals in a new century. Based on our continuing embrace of science and new technology, we must take a customer approach, meeting the needs and expectations of the American people for healthy, thriving watersheds; for sustainable forest and grassland communities; for plentiful recreation opportunities on America's wildland playground; and for spiritual renewal in the solitude and serenity of our vast wildland expanses.

Change won't come easily and without cost. That's why we need your help. You have experience in educating our publics, in finding support in Congress, in working with the Administration, in protecting the lands we value. You help set the tone for today's Forest Service and for Forest Service employees. Our success and the morale of our workforce will depend partly on you.

When you wake up in the morning and reflect on the many changes you have seen in your lifetime, think of the many changes yet to come. Think of the challenges we face today and those we must face tomorrow. Help us meet those challenges by accepting the fact of change and coming to terms with it. Help us implement our Natural Resource Agenda. Join us in a New Century of Service to the American people.

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insert → This we have say good by to Rudy Wendelin aug 31 zip code 20252.
Wife Carol
Sons Michael & David, daughter Elizabeth et al.

But first, let me take a moment to acknowledge those who couldn't be with us today. I don't need to tell you that this is the worst fire season in recent memory. We're doing everything we can to redeem the pledge ~~that I have personally made~~ to America's heroes on the fireline: That they will have ~~all~~ the resources they need to do their job, both safely and well. ~~One thing we did was to permit all~~ We solicited the help of all qualified former employees to enlist for fire duty. My deepest thanks go to all the retirees who couldn't be here today because they are serving our Nation by ~~helping win the battle~~ protecting life & property against wildland fire.

OK

OK

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OK

Too often, the result was environmental disaster. For example, a commercial operator would acquire a tract, mine its timber, and then move on. The slash fires, floods, and erosion that followed degraded our lands and waters for years to come. A public backlash ensued. Many came to believe that commercial land uses—including mining, logging, and livestock grazing—should be excluded from the remaining public domain. They fiercely opposed all commercial interests.

~~Roosevelt~~

OK

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tiple-use mission, Pinchot called for "foresighted utilization, preservation, and/or renewal of forests, waters, lands, ~~and minerals~~." The land was to be used for resource extraction, but only in sustainable ways. Pinchot's adversaries roundly condemned his radical insistence on sustainability. Today, sustainability is widely accepted as the only basis for sound forest management, both public and private.

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- *Pure, clean water.* More than 60 million Americans get their drinking water from watersheds that originate on our national forests and grasslands.
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- *Healthy fish and wildlife.* We provide 80 percent of the habitat in the lower 48 States for elk, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. We maintain 28 million acres of wild turkey habitat and half of the country's blue-ribbon trout streams. We have some of the best habitat nationwide for protecting America's noblest symbols, our wolves, eagles, salmon, and grizzlies.

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What have we learned from the changing expectations of the people we serve, the owners of our public lands? We have learned that sustainable forest management cannot be defined solely or even primarily in terms of grazing and timberland. Sustainability today includes all the other values and services that Americans want and expect from their national forests and grasslands. ~~That's why I believe that we can~~

~~never return to the days of harvesting 12 billion board feet of timber per year from our national forests. By today's standards, using the guidance given to us by the American people, that level of timber harvest is unsustainable.~~

We must take the long view and constantly ask who will want the FS and National Forests and what the ₹ in 20 yrs in 50 yrs. and why?

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share. Conversely, entities that embrace the future and prepare for it are able to survive in a changing world. PanAm, once the worldwide leader in commercial aviation, was beaten out by Delta because Delta adapted to change by meeting new market demands.

In the 1970's, the Forest Service began framing our future by addressing the changing needs and expectations of our customers, the American people. In 1970, the first Earth Day symbolized a reawakening, a new public awareness of the land. The new movement found legislative expression in the 1960's and 1970's through a battery of new laws to protect our natural resources—through the Wilderness Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and so forth. The debates and new scientific insights of the 1970's and 1980's—not least of all through the leadership of my predecessors John McGuire, Max Peterson, Dale Robertson and Jack Ward Thomas—led to the formulation in the early 1990's of our ecosystem-based approach to natural resource management, the framework for everything we do today.

OK

In the last few years, we began preparing a long-term agenda to address a new conservation environment in the 21st century. Today, that agenda is our Natural Resource Agenda, an agenda focused on the future ~~not on what Americans might~~ OK leave in

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continue to embrace science and new technology

Change won't come easily and without cost. That's why we need your help. You have experience in educating our publics, in finding support in Congress, in working with the Administration, in protecting the lands we value. You help set the tone for ~~our organization and our~~ employees. Our success and the morale of our workforce ~~will~~ depends partly on you. ~~So~~ I challenge you to accept the fact of change and help us come to terms with it. Help us implement our Natural Resource Agenda. Join us in a New Century of Service to the American people.

today's Forest Service & Forest Service

When you wake up in the morning and reflect on the many changes you have seen in your life time. Think of the changes yet we face today and those yet to come.

Addendum 1

After nearly a century, what do we have to show for our conservation principles?

- *Clean water.* A century ago, most watersheds were unprotected. Today, the most and the cleanest water in the country comes from our forests. More than 60 million Americans get their drinking water from watersheds that originate on our national forests and grasslands.
- *Fire protection.* Seventy years ago, wildland fires burned tens of millions of acres annually. Today, thanks to the best wildland firefighting force in the world, less than 5 million acres burn in most years. We stop 98 percent of our fires during initial attack—what an achievement! This fire season is unusually severe due to past fire exclusion practices. We have stopped those practices and stepped up fuels treatments by more than 300 percent, from 385,000 acres in 1994 to 1,320,000 acres in 1999. That's still not enough. The richest Nation on Earth ought to be able to make the investments needed to restore our land to health.
- *Reforested lands.* A century ago, tens of millions of acres lay bare, including large parts of the East—cutover, burned over, and farmed out. Today, more than 46 million acres on our national forests in the East have been restored to

health. Nationwide, the headwaters of many Americans rivers are now protected by our national forests from abuse.

- *Sustainable forestry.* Eighty years ago, the rate of timber harvest was twice the rate of forest growth. The imbalance was reversed in the 1950's, thanks in part to sustainable forestry practices pioneered by the Forest Service. By 1997, net growth exceeded removals by 48 percent.
- *Wildlife and fish habitat.* A century ago, many species were severely depleted or on the brink of extinction. Today, many have made remarkable comebacks after finding refuge on our national forests and grasslands. For example, our national forests provide 80 percent of the habitat in the lower 48 States for elk, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. We maintain 28 million acres of wild turkey habitat and half of the country's blue-ribbon trout streams.
- *Wilderness and roadless-area protection.* Fifty years ago, roads were snaking through our Nation's last remaining wilderness areas. Today, we protect some 35 million acres of wilderness, about 18 percent of the land in our National Forest System. We propose to keep another 43 million acres roadless, partly to conserve our biological reserves. One hundred eighty-one of the 327 watersheds identified by The Nature Conservancy as critical for the conservation of biodiversity in the United States are on our national forests and grasslands.

- *A recreational wonderland.* Fifty years ago, our national forests and grasslands hosted just 18 million visitor-days; last year, it was nearly 1 billion—50 times more! People are coming from all over the world. They come to enjoy our 7,700 miles of national scenic byways. They come to fish and canoe our 4,348 miles of national wild and scenic rivers. They come to hike our 133,087 miles of trails, to use our 4,300 campsites—the list goes on and on.
- *Research with results.* A century ago, people knew next to nothing about forest ecosystems, let alone how to manage them for sustainability. Today, after 90 years of Forest Service research, we have a firm scientific foundation for managing sustainable forest ecosystems. For example, our innovation in recycling and efficient wood utilization helped to increase products we can produce from a single log by 40 percent.

These are just a few of the Forest Service's many accomplishments over the past 95 years. They are thanks to you, who dedicated your careers to the conservation of our national forests and grasslands. I am proud to be with you here today, to count myself as one of you. I salute you!

The 30,000 Forest Service employees of today stand on your shoulders we stand on the foundation built by you and ~~those~~ the Forest Service employees that preceed you. I'm proud of our collective accomplishment.

Addendum 2

Selected Fiscal Year 1999 Statistics	
National Forest System	191.8 million acres
National Scenic Byways	7,700 miles
National Wild and Scenic Rivers System	4,268 miles
Wilderness	34.7 million acres
Lake improvements	16,301 acres
Stream improvements	1,879 miles
Wildlife and fish habitat restored/enhanced	184,527 acres
TES habitat restored/enhanced	82,247
Reforestation	267,013 acres
Forest stand improvements	262,786 acres
Livestock grazing permitted	8.2 million animal head months
~~Grazing allotments~~ administered to standard	4,235 allotments
Rangelands treated for noxious weeds	87,000 acres
Energy operations processed	271
Nonenergy operations processed	11,976
Timber volume offered	4.4 billion board feet
Timber harvested	4.0 billion board feet
Road system	380,000 miles
Roads decommissioned	2,907 miles
Landline boundary system	249,058 miles
Heritage sites protected	4,345 sites
Recreation special use permits	23,792
Recreation visitor days	More than 800 million
Recreation user fees collected	$32 million

245

Acknowledgment—Rudy Wendelin

[perhaps after acknowledging the retirees on fire duty]

There's someone else who couldn't be here today, someone who devoted his career to wildland fire prevention. Rudolph Andrew Wendelin, better known as Rudy, passed away last week. Rudy Wendelin is virtually synonymous with Smokey Bear. Rudy didn't create Smokey, nor was he the first or the only artist to draw him. Smokey was the creation of many, including Albert Staehle, Bill Bergoffen, and many more. But it was Rudy Wendelin who gave the finishing touches to the Smokey we all recognize today. Beginning in 1946, Rudy devoted a large part of his life to Smokey, including many years after his retirement. He spent 27 years producing Smokey art for the Forest Service, creating some 4,000 Smokey images. By 1968, Rudy was Smokey's guardian. In that year, a poll showed that Smokey was more familiar to most Americans than even the President of the United States. Much of the credit goes to Rudy Wendelin. For his labor of love on behalf of Smokey, on behalf of America's wildland resources, we all owe Rudy Wendelin a debt of lasting gratitude.

Selected Fiscal Year 1999 Statistics	
Developed recreation sites	23,000
Campsites	4,300
Trails (hiking, horse, OHV)	133,087 miles
Scenic and Historic Trails	6,709 miles
Share of public land trails nationwide	50 percent
Trails reconstructed	1,750
Visitor centers staffed	56
State and Private Forestry	
Woodland owners assisted	146,000
Rural communities using local strategic plans	740
Private land under stewardship management plans	1,866,000 acres
Participating urban communities	11,101
Hazardous substance sites cleaned up	29
Hazardous fuel reduction	1,320,000 acres
Fires suppressed during initial attack	98%
Community/volunteer fire departments assisted	2,450
Research and Development	
Ecological assessments	190
Terrestrial ecologic unit inventories	43,819,000 acres
Scientific papers	1,050
Technical reports	1,455
Senior, Youth, and Volunteer Programs	More than 120,000 persons served
Youth Conservation Corps	717 persons served
Job Corps	8,623 persons served

2,505

Selected Fiscal Year 1999 Statistics	
Senior Community Service Employment Program	5,221 persons served
Volunteers in the National Forests (VNF)	92,840 persons served
Value of VNF work	$35.8 million
Watersheds that Supply Drinking Water	3,400
Number of People Served with Drinking Water	More than 60 million
Law Enforcement	490,000 marijuana plants confiscated (more than 1 million pounds)

5.5 billion bd ft of timber under contract
our fire fighters put out 97% of wild fire in initial attack

That sounds a lot like multiple-use to me.

I asks you to help us learn from the challenges you faced and look to the future.

Protecting America's Pristine Wildlands

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
National Wilderness Conference, Denver, CO
September 9, 2000

It's a pleasure to be here today to speak to you. I'd like to thank Bill Meadows for inviting me. I commend the Wilderness Society for providing this opportunity for a dialogue about protecting our Nation's few remaining pristine areas.

Aldo Leopold once said, "Wilderness is a resource which can shrink but not grow." Today, we have the technical means to create almost any landscape. We can turn wilderness into timberland, timberland into farmland, and farmland into a shopping mall. And, as 60 years of successful restoration of cutover forests and farmed-out croplands in the Great Lakes and Southern States demonstrate, we can even restore a forest ecosystem. We can use the restored wildland for recreation, for science, for wildlife. But, as Aldo Leopold knew, we might never again use the land for wilderness, not within our lifetimes, not even within the lifetimes of our great-great-grandchildren.

Why? Because when we begin to put permanent features on the land, features such as roads and buildings, we change the character of the land. We begin to tame it; to shape the land to our liking, to make it do our bidding. And what was there before—that ineffable wildness that is beyond our control, where we are but visitors—might be gone forever. The land is complex—so complex that we are only beginning to understand all its components and their interrelationships. It's difficult to restore what we don't fully understand—the original wilderness, a condition we didn't create. And even if we could restore the land to its original condition, after we've found other uses for the land, it's very difficult to find the will to restore its wildness.

That's why we need to protect our remaining lands without roads and other development. Where are we today, and where do we need to go? I'd like to highlight a few of our achievements in the wilderness movement, then look to the challenges ahead.

Wilderness Accomplishments

The writer A.Q. Mowbray once said, "The measure of a modern industrialized nation can be taken by observing the quality of its works in the two extremes of its environment—cities and wilderness." We are here partly to take stock of one of those measures—wilderness. How has our Nation fared?

In four centuries, we have lost most of the original American wilderness. We have actually paved more acreage in this country than we have designated as wilderness! The love of wilderness and the tragedy of its loss are common threads in early American literature. Both are driving themes in James Fenimore Cooper's famous *Leatherstocking Tales*, for example. Henry David Thoreau is famous for his wildland walks through the Massachusetts countryside. The solitude he found was balsam for his soul. "In wildness is the preservation of the world," he proclaimed.

In 1860, the artist Frederick Edwin Church painted the masterpiece "Twilight in the Wilderness." He inspired a generation of artists in the so-called Hudson School to celebrate the sublime beauty of the American landscape in their paintings. Thoreau's book *The Maine Woods*, published in 1864, called for establishing "national preserves" in virgin forests, "not for idle sport or food, but for inspiration and our own true re-creation." George Perkins Marsh, in his 1874 book *The Earth as Modified by Human Nature*, gave the first systematic analysis of the human impact on the environment. The book laid the foundation for the modern conservation movement.

Despite early calls for wilderness conservation, the rate of wilderness loss accelerated with the expanding frontier. In 1909—less than a century ago—Aldo Leopold could still rejoice in experiencing, as he put it, "wild country to be in" out West, where "there were grizzlies in every major mountain mass." That's no longer true in the lower 48 States. Leopold well understood the threat to our remaining wilderness areas—the "blank spots on the map," as he called them. He worked tirelessly to exclude roads and grazing use permits from the Gila River headwaters. His efforts paid off—in 1924, the first wilderness was designated, the Gila Wilderness on the Gila National Forest.

At about the same time, Arthur Carhart—another Forest Service employee—was also working for wilderness protection. In 1926, partly thanks to his efforts, another area was designated for special protection. Today, we know it as the Boundary Waters Canoe Area on the Superior National Forest. That same year, in 1926, Forest Service Chief William Greeley initiated the first inventory of roadless areas. The inventory was limited to areas larger than 230,400 acres. The Forest Service identified 74 such tracts, totaling 55 million acres.

By the 1930's, the wilderness movement was off the ground. But Forest Service regulations for designating and managing wilderness areas remained weak until 1939. That's when Bob Marshall—yet another Forest Service employee—drafted much tougher regulations for protecting wilderness areas.

Aldo Leopold and Bob Marshall, joined by a few others, founded the Wilderness Society in 1935. By 1964, with support from the society, the Forest Service had set aside 9 million acres of wilderness. But there was something missing: a common standard of wilderness management. Also, because wilderness designations received only administrative protections, the next administration could reverse them. Wilderness was far from secure.

In the 1940's and 1950's, roads were needed to penetrate America's last remaining wildlands for timber supply to support our troops during World War II and, later, to help realize the American postwar dream of owning a single-family home. Millions of acres of wilderness were lost. But people like Howard Zahniser led a movement to give wilderness permanent protection through an act of Congress. The wilderness movement laid the foundations for wilderness as we know it today. In 1964, the Wilderness Act created the National Wilderness Preservation System. As Congress so poetically proclaimed in the memorable words of Howard Zahniser, principle author of the Wilderness Act, a wilderness is "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

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Of all of the natural resource management laws, the Wilderness Act remains my personal favorite. It has a soul, an essence of hope, a simplicity and sense of connection. Unlike the jargon-filled tomes of most laws, the Wilderness Act says in a very few words that what we have today is worth preserving for future generations. That in a world of compromises, insincere gestures, and half measures, there are lands and waters where we will not allow expediency to override conviction.

Since 1964, the National Wilderness Preservation System has grown from 9 to 105 million acres. Today, we have more than 650 wilderness areas in 46 States—thanks to the visionaries who still inspire us, and thanks also to your hard work! Without you, their vision would never have become a reality—without the many agencies, private citizens, and organizations whose contributions to wilderness protection have been so vital over the years.

Wilderness Advocates

In spite of our many gains, I remain concerned about the future of wilderness. We live in a society dominated by high-tech gadgetry that makes our lives easier, even as we are further removed from our wilderness heritage. In a world of technological innovations that know no bounds, who will speak for the wild places—for the natural landscapes that yearly give way to parking lots, urban sprawl, our insatiable consumption of natural resources, and other indicators of what too many view as "progress."

So as not to appear to lecture you, I will speak to the Forest Service. Too often, from 1950 onward, we allowed our commitment to multiple use—a commitment that has helped fulfill the American dream of home ownership—to imply that we couldn't be "for" wilderness without being "against" multiple use. Many accused us of only arguing for the protection of "rock and ice" as wilderness, leaving the prairie, old growth, and other more "productive" ecosystems open to development.

Happily, I see that trend changing. In North Dakota, for example, in the draft grasslands plan for the Little Missouri Grassland, Regional Forester Dale Bosworth and Grasslands Supervisor Larry Dawson recommended that 22,000 acres be designated as wilderness—the first national grasslands wilderness ever to be proposed by the Forest Service.

Dozens of other Forest Service wilderness advocates have my highest respect and admiration for their wilderness ethic and leadership. The word "advocate" has fallen out of fashion as a term for describing Forest Service employees—we spend so much time seeking to balance advocacy positions on so many issues. But when it comes to wilderness, I expect us to serve as the leaders, the stewards of the wilderness resource—developing proposals for new wilderness and advocating the management of existing wilderness.

In a society that prides itself on recognizing no limits to development, it takes courage and conviction to simply say, "Enough. This land is okay as it is. In fact, it is essential that it remain unchanged except through the hand of Mother Nature."

I have been working with my staff to determine how best to enhance and reinvigorate our commitment to the wilderness resource. Our draft wilderness strategy is a start. I have also considered creating a new staff that would focus on management of wilderness and other special areas. This would make clear our commitment to the wilderness resource and demonstrate that wilderness provides much more than recreation opportunities. There are good arguments for such a shift, certainly any resource that comprises nearly 20 percent of the National Forest System merits special attention.

At the same time, I am impressed by the commitment to the wilderness resource on the part of Denny Bschor and Jim Furnish, our wilderness and recreation leaders in the Forest Service's Washington Office. I intend to make a decision in the next few months, but first I want to hear from you, from our wilderness rangers, and from the many other wilderness advocates in the Forest Service. Regardless of its organizational orientation, however, wilderness—and targeting more funds to hire more wilderness rangers—remain among my highest priorities.

Wilderness Values

Today, the National Wilderness Preservation System accounts for about 5 percent of the land area of the United States. That might not sound like much, and in fact it's not nearly enough. But the scarcity of wilderness makes it all the more precious. We need what wilderness can give us.

Wilderness provides us with clean water and air. Wilderness provides habitats for plants and animals, including a refuge for endangered species; all too often, wilderness is their last, best hope for survival. Wilderness provides a reference for evaluating the effect of management activities on soil, water, air, and ecological processes. Wilderness provides solitude, a refuge from the noise and traffic that plague us in our daily lives. Wilderness provides scenic beauty, a place for quiet reflection on what it means to be alive. And let's not forget—wilderness provides economic benefits to communities through tourism and recreation, and to society at large through clean water and clean air.

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Challenges Ahead

What can we do today to protect our remaining pristine areas? We at the Forest Service are making a start. Here's some of what we're doing:

- Wilderness protection requires planning. In revising our forest plans, we must specifically look for areas suitable for wilderness designation. Eighteen percent of the National Forest System is already wilderness; we must consider more. We need millions of additional acres of wilderness. In particular, we need to extend wilderness protection to lower elevation ecosystems—to bottomlands, to prairie, to karst, to old growth.

- We can't plan for wilderness protection without first knowing what's out there. The latest technology can help. We just released a wilderness database application called Infra-WILD. Using Infra-WILD, wilderness managers have everything they need at their fingertips—information on land history, recreational use, grazing use, and much more.

- Wilderness should be consistently managed across jurisdictional boundaries. We are making steady progress toward our goal of a seamless national wilderness management.

  - Working with leaders from the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Dr. Perry Brown has formed a panel to assess the National Wilderness Preservation System. Dr. Brown's panel has met twice and is preparing a report on the status of wilderness management under different Federal jurisdictions. The report is due in January 2001.

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- Wilderness provides a baseline for determining our Nation's environmental health. We are integrating wilderness monitoring into our long-term surveys, such as our Forest Inventory and Analysis program. We are also forming a wilderness monitoring committee under the guidance of Dr. Peter Landres of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Institute.

- Wilderness is an American endowment. It along with all other public lands are part of your birthright as citizens. The American people are welcome in their wilderness—but we must all recognize the benefits of wilderness and enjoy the land consistent with wilderness values. We put together a task force of wilderness managers and researchers to develop our strategy for

wilderness recreation as part of our draft wilderness agenda, "Thinking Like a Mountain." Our objective is to help people enrich their lives, find inspiration, and discover wonder in their wilderness areas. If we are to maintain wilderness values, we must also protect it from overuse. Maintaining the character and integrity of the wilderness resource is an essential component of our draft agenda.

Much work remains. Too often, we focus exclusively on how to add more wilderness to the system. We forget the difficulties we face in managing the wilderness we already have. The management challenges are daunting—air quality, water quality, recreation use, invasive species, fire management—the list goes on and on. I know you will continue to advocate the proposal of additional wilderness, and so will we. But with notable exceptions, such as former Forest Service employee Bill Worf, too few focus on the challenges of managing the existing wilderness system. I am asking for your commitment to help us maintain the high wilderness standards we have set for ourselves.

Today, more vigilance than ever is needed. We are entering times that will truly test our ability to protect America's wilderness. In the next few decades, America's growing population will spread even farther into the wildland/urban interface. What will that mean for America's wilderness? Consider: Forest fragmentation has doubled in 16 years, partly because 7,000 acres of open space are lost every day. People are demanding more and more space to live in, to work in, to play in. Unless we begin to do something now, we could see our most vulnerable lands—our wildlands—gradually eroded away.

That's why we are acting now to increase protection for our last remaining roadless areas on our national forests and grasslands. These lands comprise some 43 million acres in our lower 48 States, about 22 percent of the land in our National Forest System. Although many roadless areas might never qualify for full wilderness protection, they supply some of our cleanest water in largely undisturbed landscapes of scenic splendor. As refuges for rare and endangered species, they form important biological reserves. They provide abundant recreation opportunities in settings similar to wilderness—opportunities that are easier to manage than actual wilderness recreation. They are a precious national resource that we must not—and, as long as I am on this watch, will not—lose.

Theodore Roosevelt once stood on the rim of the Grand Canyon and said, "Leave it as it is. The ages have been at work on it and man can only mar it." The same can be said about every remaining acre of American wilderness. Our challenge is to lead in the way that Roosevelt, Leopold, Marshall, Zahniser, and so many of our wilderness rangers have led and still lead. These men and women help inspire in us all the awe and reverence, the love for the land—the feelings that alone can ensure the conservation of our wildland heritage.

Protecting America's Pristine Wildlands

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
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September 9, 2000

It's a pleasure to be here today to speak to you. I'd like to thank Bill Meadows for inviting me. I commend the Wilderness Society for providing this opportunity for a dialogue about protecting our Nation's few remaining pristine areas.

Aldo Leopold once said, "Wilderness is a resource which can shrink but not grow." Today, we have the technical means to create almost any landscape. We can turn wilderness into timberland, timberland into farmland, and farmland into a shopping mall. And, as 60 years of successful restoration of cutover forests and farmed out croplands in the Great Lakes ~~basin~~ and the Southern States demonstrate, we can even restore a forest ecosystem. We can use the restored wildland for recreation, for science, for wildlife. But, as Aldo Leopold knew, we might never again use it for wilderness, not within our lifetimes, not even within the lifetimes of our great-great-grandchildren.

Why? Because when we begin to put permanent features on the land, features such as roads and buildings, we change the character of the land. We begin to tame it; to shape the land to our liking, to make it do our bidding. And what was there be-

fore—that ineffable wildness that is beyond our control, where we are but visitors—might be gone forever. The land is complex—so complex that we are only beginning to understand all its components and their interrelationships. It's difficult to restore what we don't fully understand—the original wilderness, a condition we didn't create. And even if we could restore the land to its original condition, after we've found other uses for the land, it's very difficult to find the will to restore it to wilderness.

That's why we need to protect our remaining lands without roads and other development. Where are we today, and where do we need to go? I'd like to highlight a few of our achievements in the wilderness movement, then look to the challenges ahead.

Wilderness Accomplishments

The writer A.Q. Mowbray once said, "The measure of a modern industrialized nation can be taken by observing the quality of its works in the two extremes of its environment—cities and wilderness." We are here partly to take stock of one of those measures—wilderness. How has our Nation fared?

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[Larry Dawson's comments on 9/11] → "recommended in the draft grasslands plan of Little Missouri Grassland

Check for accuracy

Happily, I see that trend changing. For example, under the leadership of Regional Forester Dale Bosworth, Larry Dawson has proposed 10 percent of the national grasslands covered by the Northern Great Plains Initiative as wilderness—the first

are considering

~~pivotal draft~~ ~~draft~~ grasslands plan
~~41,000~~ suitable for wilderness

22,000 acres out of 1.2 million [1.8%]

national grasslands wilderness ever proposed by the Forest Service. ~~Similarly, Rick Cables and Dave Gibbons have proposed at least half, and perhaps more, of the spectacular Copper River Delta as wilderness in the ongoing revision of the Chugach National Forest Plan.~~

(Leadership in a cluttered "environment.")

Dale & Larry

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That's why we need to protect our remaining lands without roads and other development. Where are we today, and where do we need to go? I'd like to highlight a few of our achievements in the wilderness movement, then look to the challenges ahead.

Wilderness Accomplishments

The writer A.Q. Mowbray once said, "The measure of a modern industrialized nation can be taken by observing the quality of its works in the two extremes of its environment—cities and wilderness." We are here partly to take stock of one of those measures—wilderness. How has our Nation fared?

In four centuries, we have lost most of the original American wilderness. We have actually paved more acreage in this country than we have designated as wilderness! The love of wilderness and the tragedy of its loss are common threads in early American literature. Both are driving themes in James Fenimore Cooper's famous *Leatherstocking Tales*, for example. Henry David Thoreau is famous for his wildland walks through the Massachusetts countryside. The solitude he found was balsam for his soul. "In wildness is the preservation of the world," he proclaimed.

In 1860, the artist Frederick Edwin Church painted the masterpiece "Twilight in the Wilderness." He inspired a generation of artists in the so-called Hudson School to celebrate the sublime beauty of the American landscape in their paintings. Thoreau's book *The Maine Woods*, published in 1864, called for establishing "national preserves" in virgin forests, "not for idle sport or food, but for inspiration and our own true re-creation." George Perkins Marsh, in his 1874 book *The Earth as Modified by Human Nature*, gave the first systematic analysis of the human impact on the environment. The book laid the foundation for the modern conservation movement.

Despite early calls for wilderness conservation, the rate of wilderness loss accelerated with the expanding frontier. In 1909—less than a century ago—Aldo Leopold could still rejoice in experiencing, as he put it, "wild country to be in" out West, where "there were grizzlies in every major mountain mass." That's no longer true in the lower 48 States. Leopold well understood the threat to our remaining wilderness areas—the "blank spots on the map," as he called them. He worked tirelessly to exclude roads and grazing use permits from the Gila River headwaters. His efforts paid off—in 1924, the first wilderness was designated, the Gila Wilderness on the Gila National Forest.

At about the same time, Arthur Carhart—another Forest Service employee—was also working for wilderness protection. In 1926, partly thanks to his efforts, another area was designated for special protection. Today, we know it as the Boundary Waters Canoe Area on the Superior National Forest. That same year, in 1926, Forest Service Chief William Greeley initiated the first inventory of roadless areas. The inventory was limited to areas larger than 230,400 acres. The Forest Service identified 74 such tracts, totaling 55 million acres.

By the 1930's, the wilderness movement was off the ground. But Forest Service regulations for designating and managing wilderness areas remained weak until 1939. That's when Bob Marshall—yet another Forest Service employee—drafted much tougher regulations for protecting wilderness areas.

Aldo Leopold and Bob Marshall, joined by a few others, founded the Wilderness Society in 1935. By 1964, with support from the society, the Forest Service had set aside 9 million acres of wilderness. But there was something missing: a common standard of wilderness management. Also, because wilderness designations received only administrative protections, the next administration could reverse them. Wilderness was far from secure.

In the 1940's and 1950's, roads were needed to penetrate America's last remaining wildlands for timber supply to support our troops during World War II and, later, to help realize the American postwar dream of owning a single-family home. Millions of acres of wilderness were lost. But people like Howard Zahniser led a movement to give wilderness permanent protection through an act of Congress. The wilderness movement laid the foundations for wilderness as we know it today. In 1964, the Wilderness Act created the National Wilderness Preservation System. As Congress so poetically proclaimed in the memorable words of Howard Zahniser, principle author of the Wilderness Act, a wilderness is "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Leopold, Marshall, Carhart, Zahniser—we are privileged to enjoy the benefits of their foresight.

Of all of the natural resource management laws, the Wilderness Act remains my personal favorite. It has a soul, an essence of hope, a simplicity and sense of connection. Unlike the jargon-filled tomes of most laws, the Wilderness Act says in a very few words that what we have today is worth preserving for future generations. That in a world of compromises, insincere gestures, and half measures, there are lands and waters where we will not allow expediency to override conviction.

Since 1964, the National Wilderness Preservation System has grown from 9 to 105 million acres. Today, we have more than 650 wilderness areas in 46 States—thanks to the visionaries who still inspire us, and thanks also to your hard work! Without you, their vision would never have become a reality—without the many agencies, private citizens, and organizations whose contributions to wilderness protection have been so vital over the years.

Wilderness Advocates

In spite of our many gains, I remain concerned about the future of wilderness. We live in a society dominated by high-tech gadgetry that makes our lives easier, even as we are further removed from our wilderness heritage. In a world of technological innovations that know no bounds, who will speak for the wild places—for the natural landscapes that yearly give way to parking lots, urban sprawl, our insatiable consumption of natural resources, and other indicators of what too many view as "progress."

So as not to appear to lecture you, I will speak to the Forest Service. Too often, from 1950 onward, we allowed our commitment to multiple use—a commitment that has helped fulfill the American dream of home ownership—to imply that we couldn't be "for" wilderness without being "against" multiple use. Many accused us of only arguing for the protection of "rock and ice" as wilderness, leaving the prairie, old growth, and other more "productive" ecosystems open to development.

Happily, I see that trend changing. In North Dakota, for example, in the draft grasslands plan for the Little Missouri Grassland, Regional Forester Dale Bosworth and Grasslands Supervisor Larry Dawson recommended that 22,000 acres be designated as wilderness—the first national grasslands wilderness ever to be proposed by the Forest Service.

Dozens of other Forest Service wilderness advocates have my highest respect and admiration for their wilderness ethic and leadership. The word "advocate" has fallen out of fashion as a term for describing Forest Service employees—we spend so much time seeking to balance advocacy positions on so many issues. But when it comes to wilderness, I expect us to serve as the leaders, the stewards of the wilderness resource—developing proposals for new wilderness and advocating the management of existing wilderness.

In a society that prides itself on recognizing no limits to development, it takes courage and conviction to simply say, "Enough. This land is okay as it is. In fact, it is essential that it remain unchanged except through the hand of Mother Nature."

I have been working with my staff to determine how best to enhance and reinvigorate our commitment to the wilderness resource. Our draft wilderness strategy is a start. I have also considered creating a new staff that would focus on management of wilderness and other special areas. This would make clear our commitment to the wilderness resource and demonstrate that wilderness provides much more than recreation opportunities. There are good arguments for such a shift, certainly any resource that comprises nearly 20 percent of the National Forest System merits special attention.

At the same time, I am impressed by the commitment to the wilderness resource on the part of Denny Bschor and Jim Furnish, our wilderness and recreation leaders in the Forest Service's Washington Office. I intend to make a decision in the next few months, but first I want to hear from you, from our wilderness rangers, and from the many other wilderness advocates in the Forest Service. Regardless of its organizational orientation, however, wilderness—and targeting more funds to hire more wilderness rangers—remain among my highest priorities.

Wilderness Values

Today, the National Wilderness Preservation System accounts for about 5 percent of the land area of the United States. That might not sound like much, and in fact it's not nearly enough. But the scarcity of wilderness makes it all the more precious. We need what wilderness can give us.

Wilderness provides us with clean water and air. Wilderness provides habitats for plants and animals, including a refuge for endangered species; all too often, wilderness is their last, best hope for survival. Wilderness provides a reference for evaluating the effect of management activities on soil, water, air, and ecological processes. Wilderness provides solitude, a refuge from the noise and traffic that plague us in our daily lives. Wilderness provides scenic beauty, a place for quiet reflection on what it means to be alive. And let's not forget—wilderness provides economic benefits to communities through tourism and recreation, and to society at large through clean water and clean air.

But there's something else we need from wilderness, something only it can give, something that makes it unique: Wilderness is key to our cultural heritage. Other, older peoples have their ancient myths and traditions, their glorious architectures, their classical literatures. We have our wilderness. Wilderness is part of the American spirit, the American character, the American legacy. It's part of who we are as a people. The writer Wallace Stegner put it well: "We need wilderness preserved," he said, "...because it was the challenge against which our character as a people was formed. The reminder and the reassurance that it is still there is good for our spiritual health even if we never once in 10 years set foot in it."

Challenges Ahead

What can we do today to protect our remaining pristine areas? We at the Forest Service are making a start. Here's some of what we're doing:

- Wilderness protection requires planning. In revising our forest plans, we must specifically look for areas suitable for wilderness designation. Eighteen percent of the National Forest

System is already wilderness; we must consider more. We need millions of additional acres of wilderness. In particular, we need to extend wilderness protection to lower elevation ecosystems—to bottomlands, to prairie, to karst, to old growth.

- We can't plan for wilderness protection without first knowing what's out there. The latest technology can help. We just released a wilderness database application called Infra-WILD. Using Infra-WILD, wilderness managers have everything they need at their fingertips—information on land history, recreational use, grazing use, and much more.
- Wilderness should be consistently managed across jurisdictional boundaries. We are making steady progress toward our goal of a seamless national wilderness management.
  - Working with leaders from the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Dr. Perry Brown has formed a panel to assess the National Wilderness Preservation System. Dr. Brown's panel has met twice and is preparing a report on the status of wilderness management under different Federal jurisdictions. The report is due in January 2001.
  - In May 2000, we held a Wilderness Summit in Washington, DC, to discuss a range of wilderness issues. More than 100 attended from various agencies and organizations. Their comments and concerns will be reflected in the Brown panel report.
  - We established the Interagency Wilderness Policy Council, including senior leadership from the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and USGS Biological Resources Division. The council met at the Wilderness Summit and is preparing a blueprint for consistent wilderness management across jurisdictional boundaries. Based on the recommendations in the Brown panel report, the council will modify and implement the blueprint.
- Wilderness protection happens on the ground, at the local level. Last year, I formed a Wilderness Advisory Group of employees at every level and from every region. This group of 10 members informs and advises me on how to build a solid, interdisciplinary wilderness program that is effective in the field and connects with the American people. The group played a key role in developing our wilderness agenda, called "Thinking Like a Mountain." The draft agenda formulates strategies for addressing key areas of wilderness management. Because so many here and across the country played such an integral role in the helping to establish our wilderness system, I am asking for your help in improving and finalizing, our, your, wilderness agenda. After the agenda is reviewed and adopted, the Wilderness Advisory Group will help put it into action.
- Wilderness provides a baseline for determining our Nation's environmental health. We are integrating wilderness monitoring into our long-term surveys, such as our Forest Inventory and Analysis program. We are also forming a wilderness monitoring committee under the guidance of Dr. Peter Landres of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Institute.
- Wilderness is an American endowment. It along with all other public lands are part of your birthright as citizens. The American people are welcome in their wilderness—but we must all recognize the benefits of wilderness and enjoy the land consistent with wilderness values. We put together a task force of wilderness managers and researchers to develop our strategy for wilderness recreation as part of our draft wilderness agenda, "Thinking Like a Mountain." Our objective is to help people enrich their lives, find inspiration, and discover wonder in

their wilderness areas. If we are to maintain wilderness values, we must also protect it from overuse. Maintaining the character and integrity of the wilderness resource is an essential component of our draft agenda.

Much work remains. Too often, we focus exclusively on how to add more wilderness to the system. We forget the difficulties we face in managing the wilderness we already have. The management challenges are daunting—air quality, water quality, recreation use, invasive species, fire management—the list goes on and on. I know you will continue to advocate the proposal of additional wilderness, and so will we. But with notable exceptions, such as former Forest Service employee Bill Worf, too few focus on the challenges of managing the existing wilderness system. I am asking for your commitment to help us maintain the high wilderness standards we have set for ourselves.

Today, more vigilance than ever is needed. We are entering times that will truly test our ability to protect America's wilderness. In the next few decades, America's growing population will spread even farther into the wildland/urban interface. What will that mean for America's wilderness? Consider: Forest fragmentation has doubled in 16 years, partly because 7,000 acres of open space are lost every day. People are demanding more and more space to live in, to work in, to play in. Unless we begin to do something now, we could see our most vulnerable lands—our wildlands—gradually eroded away.

That's why we are acting now to increase protection for our last remaining roadless areas on our national forests and grasslands. These lands comprise some 43 million acres in our lower 48 States, about 22 percent of the land in our National Forest System. Although many roadless areas might never qualify for full wilderness protection, they supply some of our cleanest water in largely undisturbed landscapes of scenic splendor. As refuges for rare and endangered species, they form important biological reserves. They provide abundant recreation opportunities in settings similar to wilderness—opportunities that are easier to manage than actual wilderness recreation. They are a precious national resource that we must not—and, as long as I am on this watch, will not—lose.

Theodore Roosevelt once stood on the rim of the Grand Canyon and said, "Leave it as it is. The ages have been at work on it and man can only mar it." The same can be said about every remaining acre of American wilderness. Our challenge is to lead in the way that Roosevelt, Leopold, Marshall, Zahniser, and so many of our wilderness rangers have led and still lead. These men and women help inspire in us all the awe and reverence, the love for the land—the feelings that alone can ensure the conservation of our wildland heritage.