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Remarks of Chief Mike Dombeck
Northwest Forestry Association
April 14, 1998

Thanks for inviting me to be with you today.

I'd like to talk with you today about the Forest Service's natural resource agenda and the changing face of the agency's forest management program.

First though, I want to tell you that later today, I will be speaking to the Pacific Rivers Council. Conventional wisdom has it that the Chief of the Forest Service shouldn't visit with the Northwest Forestry Association and the Pacific Rivers Council on the same day – that the sides are too polarized to allow for meaningful conversation.

Conventional wisdom is right unfortunately – the debate is too contentious today. We won't change that, however, until we agree to stop focusing so much energy into areas of disagreement. That is my message to you folks today and it will be my message to the Pacific Rivers Council tonight.

Natural Resource Agenda

Let's talk for a few minutes about the Forest Service natural resource agenda. It focuses on four key areas: watershed health and restoration; sustainable forest ecosystem management; forest roads; and recreation.

This agenda charts a new course for the Forest Service. A course that is based on sound science and reflective of what the American people are demanding increasingly from their forests – a course that we believe in the best interests of the land and of the communities who care about, and depend, on it. Most importantly, it is a course that can help us to set aside our differences and begin to work together – yes even the Pacific Rivers Council and the Northwest Forestry Association – to define and implement a shared vision for managing healthy, diverse, and productive forests.

In the course of my first year on the job, many in this room chided me, saying we won't get there through rhetoric alone. You wanted to see leadership. This is precisely the reason that we proposed an aggressive effort to develop a new forest road policy.

Forest Roads

I know that many of you have opposed our proposal to suspend temporarily new road construction into roadless areas. I'd like to explain to you our rationale for the proposal. My hope is that you will resist the temptation to make this issue more political than it already is and help us get to work improving our management of forest roads.

Forest road management is an issue that has long begged decisive leadership. Just two years ago, the House of Representatives came within a single vote of cutting our road budget by 80%. This vote came in spite of the fact that the forest road system is, in many places, the heart of the rural transportation system. The message I took from that debate is that we must do a better job of meeting local transportation needs in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Our road system accommodates 1.7 million vehicles per day that use the forests for recreational purposes. This is 10 times the traffic experienced in 1950. This compares to 15,000 vehicles per day for timber related activities, which is about the same as in 1950. While recreation related use has increased, today there are 7,600 less miles of road available to passenger type vehicles than in 1991. These roads are inaccessible primarily for one basic reason – we cannot afford to maintain them.

Though most in the public have focused on roadless area management, that proposal is only one of several important aspects of policy.

The gradual degradation of the road system has led to a road maintenance and reconstruction backlog of over \$10 billion. We estimate that only 40% of forest roads are maintained to the safety and environmental standards to which they were built. Thus, we have proposed four objectives in developing our long-term road policy.

- First, to more carefully consider decisions to build new roads.
- Second, to eliminate old, unneeded, and unused roads.
- Third, to upgrade and maintain roads important to public access.
- Fourth, to develop new and dependable funding for forest road management.

I think you would all agree that such objectives make sense. Why then propose to suspend road construction in roadless areas? One reason is that we cannot afford to manage our existing road system. It is a matter of common sense and accountability. If we cannot afford to manage over 60% of our existing roads, how can we justify to a skeptical public that we should build new roads into ecologically and socially important roadless areas?

One of the remedies that we are considering to catch up on our road funding backlog is to declare the forest roads most used by the public – the arterial and collector roads – as public roads. This would enable their management to qualify for funding through the Highway Trust Fund.

So long as we cannot take care of our existing roads, so long as we allow the most contentious issues – such as road construction in roadless areas – to define the forest management program, we will continue to lose the support of the American people.

That's hard medicine to take and the prescription is not an easy one but it is a plain and simple fact.

My hope is that we can use the 18-month time-out on road construction into roadless areas to engage the American people in a frank discussion about the forest road system. At the same time, we will develop new scientific tools that our managers can use to make more informed decisions about where, when, or if to build new roads in roadless as well as roaded forest areas.

Sustainable Forest Ecosystem Management

Many of you have asked me what I think the role of the Forest Service is in meeting the nation's wood supply needs. This is a legitimate question, particularly as timber demand continues to increase at a rate of about one-percent annually. Before I speak to that issue, however, I'd like to talk about the changing role of federal lands, and then ask you a question.

Public lands today serve as a refuge of last resort for many species of fish, plants, and wildlife. They are critically important sources of drinking water for communities. Public forests provide a place for families to recreate and reconnect with each other. And yes, public lands continue to help to meet the nation's wood supply demands in an environmentally sensitive manner.

All across the land people are demanding that we do more to sustain and restore the fabric of the whole landscape. Our collective challenge is to find ways to involve *more* people, to provide *cleaner* water, and to make decisions that afford even *greater* protection of, and benefits from – including wood fiber – our public resources.

If this sounds like a conservation agenda that's because it is. The Forest Service natural resource agenda **is** a conservation agenda. The American people demand and the science compels such an agenda.

That said, let me be very clear about something. In recent months we have heard a call for something called "custodial management" from National Forests. In addition, others are calling increasingly for a zero-cut policy. I have already stated my opposition to zero cut and have serious reservations about custodial management.

As more and more people place greater demands on our forests, it is naïve to think that we can restore ecosystem and watershed health *without* active management based on sound science.

Forest management has changed significantly over the years. We know today that healthy forests do far more than grow trees and provide timber. For example, they "grow" water, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities.

Sustainable communities and economic prosperity depend on the full array of products and values from a healthy forest. Simply stated, economic prosperity *cannot occur* without healthy, diverse, and productive watersheds and ecosystems.

As we learn more, we are continually adapting our management. For example, clearcutting on national forests declined as the preferred timber harvest method by more than 80% in the past 10 years. The use of timber sales whose primary objective is to restore forest ecosystem health has increased by 70% in the past five years.

We all know that both science and common sense support active management of national forests. A stable timber program from national forests is essential to many rural communities. We need to help provide this stability so that companies will make needed investments in new equipment and technologies and provide jobs. National Forests should be a model for demonstrating how active forest management can meet economic needs *and* maintain and restore watershed health.

Yet in spite of this knowledge and needed management changes, we continue to hear threats about custodial management and zero cut proposals. That is because many – if not most – of these changes were forced on us. Forced on us by litigation and injunctions, by citizens who believed their voices were ignored, by groups whose members believed our emphasis on timber production came at the expense of environmental protection.

So here is my question to you. What is your role – the role of industrial, state, and private forests in helping the nation to meet its environmental objectives?

I ask this question because for too long, we have been reactionary – both the Forest Service and the forest products industry. For decades, the Forest Service was squarely in step with the conservation values of Americans. Wood production from national forests helped to win a war and build a nation of single family homes. These and many other contributions such as well-paying jobs cannot be overlooked. But societies' values changed; and we must too.

Today people want their forests to look like forests. They reject clear-cuts, diseased forests, and below-cost timber sales. More and more people are turning to their forests for values such as:

- naturalness,
- clean water,
- abundant fish and wildlife,
- a place for personal renewal, and above all
- leaving choices for future generations.

This is what people want from their forests. They are moving to places like the Pacific Northwest because of the abundance of public land, clean water, and open space. I believe this to be one of the primary reasons that this region's economy is so strong. That said, there are many small communities adjacent to, and dependent on, a stable timber supply from national forests. Competition from the North and South are strong. It is because of these reasons that the Forest Service articulated a strong conservation agenda.

It is irresponsible for us to wait for political fixes to societal changes. I won't tell you how to run your own forests but the history of this nation is littered with industries who failed because they did not react in time to changes in markets, demand, and social values.

We know what people want from their forests. We know what local communities need. In the future, we will place a greater emphasis on supplying smaller sales that are targeted to meeting the needs of local communities. Additionally, our sustainable forest ecosystem strategy is focused on:

- Working with other federal agencies and Congress to develop policies that encourage long-term investments in forests and discourage their conversion to other uses.
- Increasing the amount of research and technical assistance to forest products industries so that they can more profitably harvest small diameter wood, increase the use of secondary markets for wood products, and market more finished wood products.
- Finding new ways to use an in-place, highly skilled workforce to accomplish much needed forest management and restoration.
- Providing stable and predictable state and county payments that support public schools and roads.

On lands outside of Forest Service management, our role is to provide leadership, technical assistance, and support for all forests. With your help, we will:

- Work with state, local, and other partners to use criteria and indicators of sustainable forest ecosystem management to report on the health of *all* forested landscapes across the nation by 2003.
- Increase the number of non-industrial private forest landowners that complete long-term forest stewardship plans. We will emphasize tools such as the Stewardship Incentive Program that could enable more than 3,000 landowners to develop scientifically based stewardship plans.

All of these activities and proposals support our agenda. What we are trying to do is articulate a conservation agenda that mirrors the values of society and is based on sound science. And yes, this will allow for the production of timber.

So tonight, I plan to ask the Pacific Rivers Council how we can hope to restore watershed health if we overtax the ability of state and private landowners to meet the nation's timber supply needs and in doing so degrade critically important fish and wildlife habitat. I will ask them if it is responsible to push so much of our wood fiber demands on nations that lack our environmental laws. First, however, I challenge you folks to help us find a way on federal lands to meet timber supply needs in an ecologically sensitive manner.

- How can we work together on all lands to expand the use of timber harvests to meet multiple objectives?
- To continue to de-emphasize clearcutting as a preferred harvest tool?
- To educate more people about the role of forest management in meeting multiple use objectives?

You now know where I stand. I invite you all to become part of the solution. Working together – the Pacific Rivers Councils' and the Northwest Forestry Associations' of the world – can ensure a lasting future for our public forests. There is no other way.

Remarks of Chief Mike Dombeck
Pacific Rivers Council
April 15, 1998

I am honored – truly honored – to be with you tonight. I would like to receive the Pacific River Council's conservationist of the year on behalf of the tens of thousands of Forest Service employees who work on the land to maintain and restore our watersheds.

I spoke earlier today with the Northwest Forestry Association. Conventional wisdom has it that the Chief of the Forest Service shouldn't visit with the Northwest Forestry Association and the Pacific Rivers Council on the same day – that the sides are too polarized to allow for meaningful conversation.

Conventional wisdom is right unfortunately – the debate is too contentious today. We won't change that, however, until we agree to stop looking for ways to disagree. That was my message to the Northwest Forestry Association this afternoon and it is my message to you folks tonight.

Natural Resource Agenda

I'd like to tell you about the Forest Service natural resource agenda. It focuses on four key areas: watershed health and restoration; sustainable forest ecosystem management; forest roads; and recreation.

This agenda charts a course for the Forest Service into the 21st Century. A course that is based on sound science and reflective of what the American people are demanding increasingly from their forests – a course that we believe is in the best interests of the land and of the communities who care about, and depend, on it. Most importantly, it is a course that can help us to set aside our differences and begin to work together – yes even the Pacific Rivers Council and the Northwest Forestry Association – to define and implement a shared vision for managing healthy, diverse, and productive forested watersheds.

In the course of my first year on the job, conservationists and industry groups alike chided me, saying we won't get there through rhetoric alone. This is precisely the reason that we proposed an aggressive effort to develop a new forest road policy.

Forest Roads

I won't talk too much about forest roads tonight. It is interesting to note that most of the debate has focused on our proposal to suspend temporarily road construction in roadless areas. Yet from a conservation perspective -- as important as roadless areas are – if we do not come up with a way to manage forest roads that parallel rivers and that run through valley bottoms, our roadless areas will remain remnant habitats. Little more than isolated pieces of the landscape that remind us of what we have lost in the far more productive parts of the landscape.

I need your help to help others understand that the issue is far larger than management of roadless areas. The degradation of the road system has led to a road maintenance and

reconstruction backlog of over \$10 billion. We estimate that only 40% of forest roads are maintained to the safety and environmental standards to which they were built. These unmaintained roads are bleeding into our mainstem rivers and degrading our most productive wildlife habitat.

One of the remedies that we are considering to catch up on our road funding backlog is to declare the forest roads most used by the public – the arterial and collector roads – as public roads. This would enable their management to qualify for funding through the Highway Trust Fund.

My hope is that we can use the proposed 18-month time-out on road construction into roadless areas to engage the American people in a frank discussion about this and other aspects of managing the forest road system. At the same time, we will develop new scientific tools that our managers can use to make more informed decisions about where, when, or if to build new roads in roadless as well as roaded forest areas.

Sustainable Forest Ecosystem Management

This afternoon I challenged the Northwest Forestry Association. I asked them what they thought their role – the role of industrial, state, and private forests – was in helping the nation to meet its environmental objectives? What conservation tradeoffs are they willing to make to allow for a more stable – albeit smaller – timber program from the National Forests?

I ask this question because for too long, we have been reactionary. For decades, the Forest Service was squarely in step with the conservation values of Americans. Wood production from national forests helped to win a war and build a nation of single family homes. These and many other contributions such as well-paying jobs cannot be overlooked. But societies' values change; and we must too.

Today people want their forests to look like forests. They reject clear-cuts, diseased forests, and below-cost timber sales. More and more people are turning to their forests for values such as:

- naturalness,
- clean water,
- abundant fish and wildlife,
- a place for personal renewal, and above all
- leaving choices for future generations.

This is what people want from their forests. The values that Pacific Rivers and many others have so successfully espoused. They are the reason people are moving to places like the Pacific Northwest – the abundance of public land, clean water, and open space. I believe this to be one of the primary reasons that this region's economy is so strong. That

said, there are many small communities adjacent to, and dependent on, a stable timber supply from national forests.

I think it is irresponsible for us to wait for political fixes to societal changes.

All across America people are demanding that we do more to sustain and restore the fabric of the whole landscape. Our collective challenge is to find ways to involve *more* people, to provide *cleaner* water, and to make decisions that afford even *greater* protection of, and benefits from – including wood fiber – our public resources.

If this sounds like a conservation agenda that's because it is. The Forest Service natural resource agenda is a conservation agenda. The American people demand and the science compels such an agenda.

That said, let me be very clear about something. In recent months we have heard a call for something called ``custodial management' of National Forests. In addition, others are calling increasingly from a zero-cut policy. Both agendas, I believe, are misguided.

As more and more people place greater demands on our forests, it is naïve to think that we can restore ecosystem and watershed health *without* active management based on sound science. We know today that healthy forests do far more than grow trees and provide timber. For example, they ``grow' water, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities. National Forests should be a model for demonstrating how active forest management can meet economic needs *and* maintain and restore watershed health.

As we learn more, we are continually adapting our management. For example, clearcutting on national forests declined by more than 80% in the past 10 years. The use of timber sales whose primary objective is to restore forest ecosystem health has increased by 70% in the past five years. At the same time, timber demand in America is increasing at a rate of one-percent per year.

The unfortunate point is that many – if not most – of these changes were forced on us. Forced on us by litigation and injunctions, by citizens who believed their voices were ignored, by groups whose members believed our emphasis on timber production came at the expense of environmental protection and other values.

So here is my question to you.

How can we hope to restore watershed health if we overtax the ability of state and private landowners to meet the nation's timber supply needs and in doing so degrade critically important fish and wildlife habitat? Because of our unique mandate, restoration **should** begin on national forests and other public lands but if we cannot extend the benefits of that restoration to the more productive habitats on state and private lands, we will continue to lose ground.

As the nation's wood supply demands grow is it responsible to push our demands on other lands or nations that lack our environmental protection measures? Is it wise to promote the use of materials that are less energy efficient than wood?

I don't have the answers to those questions but I do think that we need to spend less time in the courtroom and more finding new ways to work together – industry and conservationists, state and federal agencies, private landowners and public land managers.

Watershed Health and Restoration

I think you will be pleased to know that our first priority is to maintain and restore the health of our ecosystems and watersheds.

Watershed maintenance and restoration are the oldest and highest callings of the Forest Service. The agency is, and always will be, bound to them by tradition, law, and science. The national forests truly are the headwaters of the nation. Our agenda places a renewed emphasis on ensuring that our watersheds are protected and restored for the use and benefit of our citizens.

Our agenda takes the position that we must do more to sustain and restore the fabric of the whole landscape. If we are wise enough to understand the physics of splitting the atom, advanced enough to communicate instantaneously around the globe, if we can feed billions of people, surely we can act with enough foresight and wisdom to protect and restore our lands and waters.

We must protect our healthiest watersheds and restore those that are degraded. We must also continue our long tradition of protecting wild areas such as wilderness so they can remain important sources of clean water and biological diversity. Thus, we have proposed:

- Making maintenance and restoration of watershed health an overriding priority in future forest plans and provide measures for monitoring progress.
- Increasing stream and riparian area restoration by 40% by 1999.
- A 30% increase in habitat restoration and conservation of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.
- Increasing by 50% the number of abandoned mine reclamation sites.
- Improving efforts to prevent non-native species of plants and animals from entering or spreading in the U.S.

Although most of these actions and proposals are specific to national forests, their benefits transcend boundary lines. We will seek voluntary and non-regulatory partnerships with other private, federal and state land managers. For example, we will:

- Work with other state and federal managers, interested private landowners, and community groups to conduct watershed analysis and assessments to better understand the effects of management activities on the landscape.

There are approximately 40 million acres of national forests that are exposed to abnormally high risk of fire, disease, and insect outbreaks. Though insects, disease, and fire

are part of the natural cycle, the vulnerability of these forests is unacceptable high. To respond to this need, we are asking Congress for funding to:

- Increase prescribed fire and forest fuels treatment in critical watersheds from 1.1 million acres in 1997 to 1.5 million acres in 1999 and
- Double the amount of thinning in unnaturally dense forest stands particularly along the urban-wildland interface over the next five years.

Conclusion

Again, I am honored to receive this award on behalf of the Forest Service. I think we have an agenda that is worthy of support. My hope is that this agenda will divert your and others energy into supporting the Forest Service, supporting our watershed restoration efforts and other proposals. No less than the future of our public lands are at stake.

Remarks of Chief Mike Dombeck
Society of American Foresters
April 21, 1998

Thanks for inviting me to be with you today.

I'd like to talk with you today about the Forest Service's natural resource agenda and the changing face of the agency's forest management program.

First though, I want to tell you about my trip to the Pacific Northwest last week. I went out to speak with the Pacific Rivers Council and the Northwest Forestry Association. Conventional wisdom had it that the Chief of the Forest Service shouldn't visit with the Northwest Forestry Association and the Pacific Rivers Council on the same day – that the sides are too polarized to allow for meaningful conversation.

Conventional wisdom is right unfortunately – the debate is too contentious today. We won't change that, however, until we agree to stop focusing so much energy into areas of disagreement. That is my message to you folks today just as it was the gist of my message to Pacific Rivers Council and the Northwest Forestry Association.

Natural Resource Agenda

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This agenda charts a new course for the Forest Service. A course that is based on sound science and reflective of what the American people are demanding increasingly from their forests – a course that we believe in the best interests of the land and of the communities who care about, and depend, on it. Most importantly, it is a course that can help us to set aside our differences and begin to work together to define and implement a shared vision for managing healthy, diverse, and productive forests.

In the course of my first year on the job, many in this room chided me, saying we won't get there through rhetoric alone. You wanted to see leadership. This is precisely the reason that we proposed an aggressive effort to develop a new forest road policy.

Forest Roads

I know that many questioned the need for our proposal to suspend temporarily new road construction into roadless areas. I'd like to explain to you our rationale for the proposal and to ask for your help in de-politicizing the issue and getting on with needed improvements to our management of forest roads.

Forest road management is an issue that has long begged decisive leadership. Just two years ago, the House of Representatives came within a single vote of cutting our road budget by 80%. This vote came in spite of the fact that the forest road system is, in many places, the heart of the rural transportation system. The message I took from that debate is that we must do a better job of meeting local transportation needs in an environmentally sensitive manner.

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Sustainable Forest Ecosystem Management

Many of you have asked me what I think the role of the Forest Service is in meeting the nation's wood supply needs. This is a legitimate question, particularly as timber demand continues to increase at a rate of about one-percent annually. Before I speak to that issue, however, I'd like to talk about the changing role of federal lands.

Public lands today serve as a refuge of last resort for many species of fish, plants, and wildlife. They are critically important sources of drinking water for communities. Public forests provide a place for families to recreate and reconnect with each other. And yes, public lands continue to help to meet the nation's wood supply demands in an environmentally sensitive manner.

All across the land people are demanding that we do more to sustain and restore the fabric of the whole landscape. Our collective challenge is to find ways to involve *more* people, to provide *cleaner* water, and to make decisions that afford even *greater* protection of, and benefits from – including wood fiber – our public resources.

If this sounds like a conservation agenda that's because it is. The Forest Service natural resource agenda **is** a conservation agenda. We need the help of SAF, and your counterparts in other professional societies, to ensure we implement the agenda using the best available science.

Speaking about science and professionalism, in recent months we have heard a call for something called "custodial management" from National Forests. In addition, others are calling increasingly for a zero-cut policy. I have already stated my opposition to zero cut and have serious reservations about custodial management.

As more and more people place greater demands on our forests, it is naïve to think that we can restore ecosystem and watershed health *without* active management based on sound science.

Forest management has changed significantly over the years. We know today that healthy forests do far more than grow trees and provide timber. For example, they "grow" water, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities.

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We all know that both science and common sense support active management of national forests. A stable timber program from national forests is essential to many rural communities. We need to help provide this stability so that companies will make needed investments in new equipment and technologies and provide jobs. National Forests should be a model for demonstrating how active forest management can meet economic needs *and* maintain and restore watershed health.

Yet in spite of this knowledge and needed management changes, we continue to hear threats about custodial management and zero cut proposals. That is because many – if not most – of these changes were forced on us. Forced on us by litigation and injunctions, by citizens who believed their voices were ignored, by groups whose members believed our emphasis on timber production came at the expense of environmental protection.

For too long, we have been reactionary – both the Forest Service and the profession of forestry, I think. For decades, the Forest Service was squarely in step with the conservation values of Americans. Wood production from national forests helped to win a war and build a nation of single family homes. These and many other contributions such as well-paying jobs cannot be overlooked. But societies' values changed; and we must too.

Today people want their forests to look like forests. They reject clear-cuts, diseased forests, and below-cost timber sales. More and more people are turning to their forests for values such as:

- naturalness,
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It is irresponsible for us to wait for political fixes to societal changes. I won't tell you how to run your own forests but the history of this nation is littered with industries who failed because they did not react in time to changes in markets, demand, and social values.

We know what people want from their forests. We know what local communities need. In the future, we will place a greater emphasis on supplying smaller sales that are targeted to meeting the needs of local communities.

Additionally, our sustainable forest ecosystem strategy is focused on:

- Working with other federal agencies and Congress to develop policies that encourage long-term investments in forests and discourage their conversion to other uses.
- Increasing the amount of research and technical assistance to forest products industries so that they can more profitably harvest small diameter wood, increase the use of secondary markets for wood products, and market more finished wood products.
- Finding new ways to use an in-place, highly skilled workforce to accomplish much needed forest management and restoration.
- Providing stable and predictable state and county payments that support public schools and roads.

On lands outside of Forest Service management, our role is to provide leadership, technical assistance, and support for all forests. With your help, we will:

- Work with state, local, and other partners to use criteria and indicators of sustainable forest ecosystem management to report on the health of *all* forested landscapes across the nation by 2003.
- Increase the number of non-industrial private forest landowners that complete long-term forest stewardship plans. We will emphasize tools such as the Stewardship Incentive Program that could enable more than 3,000 landowners to develop scientifically based stewardship plans.

All of these activities and proposals support our agenda. What we are trying to do is articulate a conservation agenda that mirrors the values of society and is based on sound science. And yes, this will allow for the production of timber.

When I met with Pacific Rivers Council, I asked them how we could hope to restore watershed health if we overtax the ability of state and private landowners to meet the nation's timber supply needs and in doing so degrade critically important fish and wildlife habitat. I will ask them if it is responsible to push so much of our wood fiber demands on nations that lack our environmental laws.

So my challenge to you is to help us find a way on federal lands to meet timber supply needs in an ecologically sensitive manner.

- How can we work together on all lands to expand the use of timber harvests to meet multiple objectives?
- To continue to de-emphasize clearcutting as a preferred harvest tool?
- To educate more people about the role of forest management in meeting multiple use objectives?

You now know where I stand. I invite you all to become part of the solution. Working together we can ensure a lasting future for our public forests -- a future where active management and restoration occur in concert with maintaining the long term health, diversity, and productivity of the land.

Remarks of Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
Iowa State University
April 29, 1998

The Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda

Introduction

I am honored to be back with so many old and new friends and colleagues. I would like to talk about the Forest Service's natural resource agenda.

When I outlined this agenda for my employees recently, I told them that we had two very basic choices. We can sit back on our heels and react to the newest litigation, the latest court order, or the most recent legislative proposal. This would ensure that we continue to be buffeted by social, political, and budgetary changes.

Or, we can lead by example. We can lead by using the best available scientific information based on principles of ecosystem management that the Forest Service pioneered. And we can use the laws that guide our management to advance a new agenda. An agenda with a most basic and essential focus – caring for the land and serving people.

The answer is clear, we must lead. Just as we always have – from concepts of sustained yield, to multiple use, to ecosystem management. We have a proud tradition of responding to new information and adapting to change. In fact, as a former Chief said in 1930, “A federal policy of forestry has been evolving for almost 60 years. It has been built up by successive legislative enactment’s and the resulting activities. It is not a specific and limited program but rather is a gradual unfolding of a national purpose.”

“A gradual unfolding of a national purpose.” That is the premise of the agenda I have developed with other Forest Service leaders and I will outline today. We will not be complacent. We have an obligation to lead.

Our job is to care for the land and serve people. On the lands we manage, this means complying with the laws that protect, and help us to manage, our natural resource inheritance. On lands outside of Forest Service management, our role is to provide leadership, technical assistance, and support for all forests. With your leadership, what we talk about today will help the nation set a course that will leave our children a rich – and I hope, even richer – natural resource legacy.

Our agenda focuses on four key areas:

- Watershed health and restoration
- Sustainable forest ecosystem management
- Forest roads and
- Recreation

Returning to Our Roots

In reality there is little new in the agenda. It is as old as the Organic Administration Act of 1897. Over 100 years ago, through the Organic Act, Congress directed that:

No national forest shall be established, except to improve and protect the forest within the boundaries, or for the purpose of securing favorable conditions of water flows, and to furnish a continuous supply of timber for the use and necessities of citizens of the United States.

In recent years, much has been written, said, and done about the Organic Act's provision for timber production. What is far less understood is the Act's strong focus on watershed maintenance and restoration. In fact, the need to protect and enhance water supplies, including flood protection was the driving force behind the Organic Act and other early forest legislation and later laws such as the Clean Water Act. The emphasis on watershed protection was both prophetic and well deserved. There are few resources more important than water

Watershed maintenance and restoration are the oldest and highest callings of the Forest Service. The agency is, and always will be, bound to them by tradition, law, and science. The national forests truly are the headwaters of the nation. Congress recognized this well over 100 years ago and in the intervening years repeatedly reinforced that message. Our agenda places a renewed emphasis on ensuring that our watersheds are protected and restored for the use and benefit of our citizens.

Our agenda builds on this historical and legal foundation and affirms that we must do more to sustain and restore the fabric of the whole landscape.

We cannot simply preserve our wilderness areas and national parks and by extension hope to protect our natural resource heritage. We cannot afford to manage our national forests and other public lands in isolation of state and private lands. We must work with state and local governments and communities to link neighborhood creeks and tree-lined streets to the sea-bound rivers, state and national parks, and forests.

If we are wise enough to understand the physics of splitting the atom, advanced enough to communicate instantaneously around the globe, if we can feed billions of people, surely we can act with enough foresight and wisdom to protect and restore our lands and waters.

Watershed Health and Restoration

So our first priority is to maintain and restore the health of our ecosystems and watersheds. Healthy watersheds are resilient in the face of natural events such as floods, fire, and drought and are more capable of absorbing the effects of human-induced disturbances. Watersheds absorb rain, recharge underground aquifers, provide cleaner water to people, and reduce drinking water treatment costs. They provide wildlife and fish habitat and connect headwaters to downstream areas and wetlands and riparian areas to uplands. Healthy watersheds dissipate floods across floodplains increasing soil fertility and minimizing damage to lives, property, and streams.

We must protect our healthiest watersheds and restore those that are degraded. We must also continue our long tradition of protecting wild areas such as wilderness so they can remain important sources of clean water and biological diversity.

How we manage our forests has a profound effect on the quality of our drinking water and the ability of our watersheds to perform their most basic functions. Recognizing the countless benefits that healthy watersheds provide to the American people, we will:

Make maintenance and restoration of watershed health an overriding priority in future forest plans and provide measures for monitoring progress.

Propose to increase stream and riparian area restoration by 40% by 1999.

Propose a 30% increase in habitat restoration and conservation of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.

Propose increasing by 50% the number of abandoned mine reclamation sites.

Improve efforts to prevent non-native species from entering or spreading in the U.S.

Although most of these actions and proposals are specific to national forests, their benefits transcend boundary lines. We will seek voluntary and non-regulatory partnerships with other private, federal and state land managers. For example, we will:

Work with other state and federal land managers, interested private landowners, and community groups to conduct watershed analysis and assessments to better understand the effects of management activities on the landscape.

There are approximately 40 million acres of national forests that are exposed to abnormally high risk of fire, disease, and insect outbreaks. Though insects, disease, and fire are part of the natural cycle, the vulnerability of these forests is unacceptably high. To respond to this need, we are asking Congress for funding to:

Increase prescribed fire and forest fuels treatment in critical watersheds from 1.1 million acres in 1997 to 1.5 million acres in 1999 and

Double the amount of thinning in unnaturally dense forest stands particularly along the urban-wildland interface over the next five years.

Sustainable Forest Ecosystem Management

Let's turn now to sustainable forest management.

The basic point of our sustainable forest management strategy is this – not only do economic stability and environmental protection go hand in hand – economic prosperity *cannot occur* without healthy, diverse, and productive watersheds and ecosystems.

To keep our watersheds healthy and productive, we must better understand their status and condition across all ownerships. State or private owners manage over two-thirds of the nation's forests. They help to meet our country's need for wood fiber, drinking water, habitat for fish and wildlife, and recreation. We must look across boundary and fence lines and work together to practice sustainable forest management.

By fully funding forest inventory and monitoring programs and using measurements of sustainable forest management such as the "criteria and indicators" that were endorsed by 13 countries in 1995, we would have a common language to measure our effectiveness at managing sustainable forests and grasslands. The Forest Service is committed to:

Working with state, local, and other partners to use criteria and indicators of sustainable forest ecosystem management to report on the health of *all* forested landscapes across the nation by 2003.

Protecting our environmental capital requires maintaining healthy and productive forestlands whether they are in urban or rural areas. From 1978-94, the number of forestlands owned in parcels of 50 acres or less doubled. The increasing diminution of forest tract size can diminish wildlife habitat, reduce access, and degrade water quality. We must share our expertise with landowners and help them to consider long-term objectives. Thus, we will:

Work with State Foresters and others to increase the number of non-industrial private forest landowners that complete long-term forest stewardship plans. We will emphasize tools such as the Stewardship Incentive Program that could enable more than 3,000 landowners to develop scientifically based stewardship plans.

Work with other federal agencies and Congress to develop policies that encourage long-term investments in forests and discourage their conversion to other uses.

Eighty percent of Americans live in towns and cities.

We must literally bring forestry to the people by building on programs such as the Urban Resources Partnership and Community Forestry programs to increase the health of urban forests. Urban forests contribute an estimated \$400 billion in economic benefits through reduced storm-water treatment costs and energy conservation. Urban resource stewardship helps to ensure that all people – regardless of where they live – can share, enjoy, and benefit from a healthy environment.

As more and more people place greater demands on our forests, it is naïve to think that we can restore ecosystem and watershed health *without* active management based on sound science. Forest management has changed significantly over the years. We know today that healthy forests do far more than grow trees and provide timber. For example, they “grow” water, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities. Sustainable communities and economic prosperity depend on the full array of products and values from a healthy forest.

And as we learn more, we are continually adapting our management. For example, clearcutting on national forests declined by 84% in the past 10 years.

The use of timber sales whose primary objective is to restore forest ecosystem health has increased by 70% in the past five years.

Even with these improvements, we hear calls increasingly for a “zero-cut” policy for national forests. I am opposed to this proposition. Both science and common sense support active management of national forests. A stable timber program from national forests is essential to many rural communities. We need to help provide stability so that companies can make needed investments in new equipment and technologies and provide jobs. National Forests should be a model for demonstrating how active forest management can meet economic needs *and* maintain and restore watershed health.

Ensuring sustainable forests requires the involvement of communities that benefit from, and care for, these forests. Our efforts to restore healthy forests can help to sustain rural communities by providing a stable wood supply and jobs to communities. To make this possible, we will work with Congress to:

Increase the amount of research and technical assistance to forest products industries so that they can more profitably harvest small diameter wood, increase the use of secondary markets for wood products, and market more finished wood products.

Find new ways to use an in-place, highly skilled workforce to accomplish much needed forest management and restoration.

As long as our incentive system ties the production of commodities from national forests to funding needed services such as schools and roads, state and county governments' face economic *instability*. Presently, 25% of many of the revenues generated from national forests are returned to states and distributed to counties. These payments have decreased as timber harvest from national forests has declined. To help remedy this situation, we propose to work with Congress and local communities to:

Provide stable and predictable state and county payments that support public schools and roads.

Forest Roads

Our new agenda also emphasizes management of the forest road system. Few natural resource issues in recent years have captured as much political attention and public scrutiny as management of the national forest road system. Forest roads are an essential part of the transportation system in many rural parts of the country. They help to meet recreation demands on national forests and grasslands. They provide economic opportunities by facilitating the removal of commodities from the national forest system, which in turn provides jobs and revenue. Forest roads provide access to conduct needed management.

The benefits of forest roads are many. So too, are the ecological impacts on our watersheds. There are few more irreparable marks we can leave on the land than to build a road. Improperly located, designed or maintained roads contribute to erosion, wildlife and fish habitat fragmentation, degradation of water quality, and the dispersal of exotic species.

Building a new road requires a short-term outlay of cash. Funding its maintenance over time entails a long-term financial commitment. The failure to maintain the forest road system limits public access and does tremendous environmental damage.

So long as road management is unaddressed, public support for needed forest management will disappear.

For these reasons, I recently proposed development of a new long-term forest road policy. The proposal has four primary objectives. First, more carefully consider decisions to build new roads. Second, eliminate old unneeded roads. Third, upgrade and maintain roads that are important to public access. Fourth, develop new and dependable funding for forest road management.

The President's budget recognizes the need to address these issues. It proposes to increase:

Road maintenance funding by 26% and

Major improvements to forest road bridges and culverts by over 66% in FY 1999.

Much of the existing forest road system was built over the last 50 years to facilitate timber harvest and removal. Roads that were built to accommodate logging trucks are increasingly carrying people seeking outdoor recreation opportunities.

Approximately 80% of all public use occurs on about 20% of the forest roads. Where it makes sense, we can manage many of our forest roads as public roads as a full partner with the counties and local communities. This policy shift could qualify these roads for Highway Trust Funds and accelerate improved management of the existing road system.

Because of our increased scientific knowledge about the social and ecological values of roadless areas, we recently proposed calling an 18 month "timeout" on new road construction in roadless areas. We propose to use the time to develop new scientific tools and analytical procedures that our managers can use to decide when, or if, to construct new roads.

Our overriding objective is to work with local people to provide a forest road system that best serves the management objectives and public uses of national forests and grasslands while protecting the health of our watersheds.

Recreation

The final piece of our agenda recognizes that recreation is the fastest growing use of national forests and grasslands. It provides the link – a window through which an increasingly urban society can enjoy and appreciate the natural world. Forest Service managed lands provide more outdoor recreation opportunities than anywhere else in the United States. We are committed to providing superior customer service and ensuring that the rapid growth of recreation on national forests does not compromise the long-term health of the land.

Our recreation agenda will focus on four key areas. First, providing quality settings and experiences. Second, focusing on customer service and satisfaction. Third, emphasizing community outreach. Fourth, strengthening relationships with partners, communities, and others.

Our priority is to provide premier settings and experiences for recreation users. From downhill skiing at Vail, to wilderness expeditions into the Frank Church wilderness, to family outings in the national forests which surround California's 20 million residents. National forests and grasslands provide incredible outdoor opportunities.

We expect to have over one billion recreation visits in the coming years. Such growth poses both serious management challenges and tremendous opportunities. To take advantage of these opportunities, we will:

Improve the quality and quantity of public information about recreation opportunities on national forests. We will use the Internet and the National Recreation Reservation Service and others to highlight the many recreation opportunities from forestlands such as the 2002 Winter Olympics.

Collaborate with state and private landowners that wish to benefit from public recreation use of their lands.

Establish quality standards for the recreational services and more effectively evaluate customer satisfaction and feedback.

Nearly half of this year's recreation visitors will encounter a facility or a service below Forest Service standards. This is unacceptable. My goal is that every visitor to the national forests leaves with a deeper appreciation for, and understanding of, how important their natural resource legacy is to them.

As public demand increases, the Forest Service must ensure that facilities are properly maintained and that people can enjoy a safe and high quality recreation experience. We propose to:

Increase funding for recreation management by \$20 million dollars in 1999.

Increase funding to enhance opportunities for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and conservation education.

Accelerate the conversion of unneeded roads to trails.

Partnerships with the recreation users, concessionaires, permittees, and local communities help us to more effectively deliver quality recreation experiences. The private-sector can often teach us new ways to deliver better services at a lower cost. We will expand the use of such partnerships and encourage more Americans to volunteer time, labor, and experience in helping us to improve interpretive services, trail maintenance, facilities, and conservation education.

Conclusion

This is an agenda that can help us to chart a new course in conservation. I believe that it is a course that will benefit the communities we serve, the resources we are entrusted to manage and the children who will inherit the results of our stewardship. Concern for our natural and cultural resources spans races, religions, generations, and economic backgrounds. This helps to explain why so many people care about our public lands. Indeed, conservation has moved from a "special interest" to a national priority.

Our goal is to help people to live in productive harmony with the watersheds that sustain us all. The Forest Service cannot do it alone. The issues are too broad, the land base too large, and resources too scarce. We can only redeem our role as conservation leaders by working with, and learning from, others.

The German philosopher Goethe once said, "Every man has only enough strength to complete those assignments of which he is fully convinced of their importance."

We can leave no greater gift for our children, show no greater respect for our forefathers, than to leave the watersheds entrusted to our care healthier, more diverse, and more productive. That is my vision for this great agency.

Remarks of Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service

Luncheon Remarks

Stevens Point, WI

April 30, 1998

The Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda

Introduction

I really enjoyed this morning's session and would like, this afternoon to talk about the Forest Service's natural resource agenda.

When I outlined this agenda for my employees recently, I told them that we had two very basic choices. We can sit back on our heels and react to the newest litigation, the latest court order, or the most recent legislative proposal. This would ensure that we continue to be buffeted by social, political, and budgetary changes.

Or, we can lead by example. We can lead by using the best available scientific information based on principles of ecosystem management that the Forest Service pioneered. And we can use the laws that guide our management to advance a new agenda. An agenda with a most basic and essential focus – caring for the land and serving people.

The answer is clear, we must lead.

Just as we always have – from concepts of sustained yield, to multiple use, to ecosystem management. We have a proud tradition of responding to new information and adapting to change. In fact, as a former Chief said in 1930, “A federal policy of forestry has been evolving for almost 60 years. It has been built up by successive legislative enactment’s and the resulting activities. It is not a specific and limited program but rather is a gradual unfolding of a national purpose.”

“A gradual unfolding of a national purpose.” That is the premise of the agenda I have developed with other Forest Service leaders and I will outline today. We will not be complacent. We have an obligation to lead.

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Our agenda focuses on four key areas:

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- Sustainable forest ecosystem management
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In reality there is little new in the agenda. It is as old as the Organic Administration Act of 1897. Over 100 years ago, through the Organic Act, Congress directed that:

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In recent years, much has been written, said, and done about the Organic Act's provision for timber production.

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Watershed maintenance and restoration are the oldest and highest callings of the Forest Service. The agency is, and always will be, bound to them by tradition, law, and science. The national forests truly are the headwaters of the nation. Congress recognized this well over 100 years ago and in the intervening years repeatedly reinforced that message. Our agenda places a renewed emphasis on ensuring that our watersheds are protected and restored for the use and benefit of our citizens.

Our agenda builds on this historical and legal foundation and affirms that we must do more to sustain and restore the fabric of the whole landscape.

We cannot simply preserve our wilderness areas and national parks and by extension hope to protect our natural resource heritage.

We cannot afford to manage our national forests and other public lands in isolation of state and private lands. We must work with state and local governments and communities to link neighborhood creeks and tree-lined streets to the sea-bound rivers, state and national parks, and forests.

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We must protect our healthiest watersheds and restore those that are degraded. We must also continue our long tradition of protecting wild areas such as wilderness so they can remain important sources of clean water and biological diversity.

How we manage our forests has a profound effect on the quality of our drinking water and the ability of our watersheds to perform their most basic functions. Recognizing the countless benefits that healthy watersheds provide to the American people, we will:

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Propose a 30% increase in habitat restoration and conservation of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.

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Let's turn now to sustainable forest management. The basic point of our sustainable forest management strategy is this – not only do economic stability and environmental protection go hand in hand – economic prosperity *cannot occur* without healthy, diverse, and productive watersheds and ecosystems.

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By fully funding forest inventory and monitoring programs and using measurements of sustainable forest management such as the "criteria and indicators" that were endorsed by 13 countries in 1995, we would have a common language to measure our effectiveness at managing sustainable forests and grasslands. The Forest Service is committed to:

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Even with these improvements, we hear calls increasingly for a "zero-cut" policy for national forests. I am opposed to this proposition. Both science and common sense support active management of national forests. A stable timber program from national forests is essential to many rural communities. We need to help provide stability so that companies can make needed investments in new equipment and technologies and provide jobs. National Forests should be a model for demonstrating how active forest management can meet economic needs *and* maintain and restore watershed health.

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Conclusion

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Our goal is to help people to live in productive harmony with the watersheds that sustain us all. The Forest Service cannot do it alone. The issues are too broad, the land base too large, and resources too scarce. We can only redeem our role as conservation leaders by working with, and learning from, others.

The German philosopher Goethe once said, "Every man has only enough strength to complete those assignments of which he is fully convinced of their importance." We can leave no greater gift for our children, show no greater respect for our forefathers, than to leave the watersheds entrusted to our care healthier, more diverse, and more productive. That is my vision for this great agency.

Remarks of Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
Opening Remarks Forum on National Forest Management
Stevens Point, WI
April 30, 1998

To See the Forest for the Watershed:
The Challenges of Managing Natural Resources Across Broad Landscapes

Introduction

I am pleased to speak with you today.

Growing up in the great north woods of Wisconsin and beginning my career as a fisheries biologist on the national forests of Michigan and Wisconsin, I never dreamed that I would one day become Chief of the Forest Service. Many colleagues, including my friend Jack Ward Thomas, told me this was perhaps the most difficult job in Washington.

It is easy to understand the reason for my friends' warning. From conflicts between development and conservation to the imperative of preserving endangered species while helping local communities adapt to changing social and economic conditions, the challenges of this job are formidable. But I like to take the long view.

Taking the Long View

The debate over how to manage this nation's great forests began well over a century ago. In response to public outrage over the devastation of forests in the Great Lakes and a growing concern over flooding and the need to protect watersheds, Congress passed the Organic Administration Act of 1897. Through the Organic Act, which called for the protection and regulation of water flows and a sustainable supply of timber from national forests, the United States became the first country to set aside vast tracts of land for public use and conservation.

Decades later, Congress would act with similar foresight in passing the Clean Air and Water Acts, the Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Forest Management Act.

In the hundred years since passage of the Organic Act, several generations of Americans have come to view conservation as less a political issue than a matter of public trust. This helps to explain why so many people feel so passionate about stewardship of public resources.

Endangered species issues make the headlines of national newspapers.

Water use and conservation are pre-eminent issues for everyone from local planning boards to elected senators. Indeed, conservation has moved from a "special interest" to a national priority.

The unprecedented interest in, and scrutiny of, public land management has prompted proposals to limit public involvement, diminish endangered species protection, even to divest public lands from public ownership. The reason I take the long view is because the controversy surrounding management of our national forests is not new. Democracy rests on a foundation of open debate and public discourse. Our collective challenge is to find ways to involve more people, to provide cleaner water, and to make decisions that afford even greater protection of our natural resource heritage.

Addressing these challenges will not, cannot, be accomplished overnight. Only by forming coalitions among communities, elected officials, conservationists and industry groups can we address our central challenge: to understand that we simply cannot meet the needs of people without first securing the health of the land.

Taking the long view, however, does not allow for complacency. The urgency of maintaining and restoring the health of the land must be our overriding priority; failing this, nothing else we do really matters.

Consider:

- How much could we reduce municipal water treatment costs and property damage from floods if all our forested watersheds performed their basic functions – capturing, storing and safely releasing clean water?
- How much more forage would be available for wildlife and livestock if noxious, exotic weeds did not blanket many public rangelands?
- How much more healthy, productive, and diverse would our forests be if they were not subject to increasing levels of insect and disease or to unnaturally large, stand destroying wildfires?

These questions can only be answered by not allowing poor stewardship to diminish the land's productive capacity.

Living Within the Limits of the Land

For many years, we in the Forest Service "saw the forest for the trees." The production of commodities – primarily timber – drove our budgets, our priorities, and our reward system. This must, and is, changing. In the past 10 years, timber harvest on Forest Service managed lands has gone from approximately 11 billion board feet to four billion, in part because of public controversy. Between 1988 and 1996, the area harvested by clearcutting dropped by 80%. Over the same period, clearcutting has declined as the preferred method of timber harvest by over two-thirds, from 39% to 12%.

Other uses of national forests are growing rapidly. For example, in 1980, 560 million recreational visits were made to national forests. That figure grew to about 860 million by 1996. Today, recreation on Forest Service managed lands contributes \$112 billion dollars to state economies and local communities each year. Nationally, recreation and tourism provide a trade surplus of \$22 billion dollars; the country's single largest positive trade sector. These trends represent some of the major changes in public expectations and use of our nation's public forests and grasslands.

Today, I instruct Forest Service employees to "see the forest for the watershed." The production of commodities such as timber will remain an important use of national forest lands. But as I said earlier, we cannot allow production to diminish the land's productive capacity. Nor can we allow our traditional incentives or budget processes to impede proper silviculture, or range management, or watershed restoration. We must work within the limits of the land.

Healthy watersheds retain flows and are resilient in the face of natural events such as floods, fire, and drought, and more capable of absorbing the effects of human-induced disturbances. They recharge underground aquifers. They connect headwaters to downstream areas, wetlands and riparian areas to uplands, and subsurface to surface flows. Floods may then dissipate across floodplains increasing soil fertility and minimizing damage to lives, property, and the stream course.

The benefits of maintaining and restoring healthy watersheds are well documented in a recent book, *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*. The book repeats the same message again and again.

There is no limit to the good that public and state agencies, local communities, academia, and conservationists can do when they come together in the interest of maintaining and restoring healthy watersheds.

Written and edited by Jack Williams of the Bureau of Land Management, Chris Wood of the Forest Service, and myself, the book documents multiple case-studies where people have come together to conserve and restore the health of the land that sustains us all. Most of these efforts developed locally; all involve landowners, farmers, and ranchers working in partnership with scientists, environmentalists, government agencies, and a host of local citizens.

There are many reasons to see our forests for our watersheds. We all live within a watershed and all of our actions on the land are reflected by their health. Watersheds are the basic building blocks of ecosystems and of sound resource stewardship. Without improving the ability of our watersheds to perform their most basic functions, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that the costs of increased water treatment over the next fifteen years could exceed \$140 billion dollars.

In New York City it was estimated that filtration costs for drinking water from the Delaware River basin would range from \$8-\$15 billion— while only filtering out half of the targeted pollutants.

The message is clear. We cannot meet the needs of present or future generations without first sustaining the health of the land. And, conversely, we cannot secure the health of the land without the support of the people who live on it.

Role of State and Private Lands

Our most important task is to manage our ecosystems – public and private using the best science and technologies available – in ways that utilize our resources without jeopardizing the opportunity for future generations to have healthy, diverse and productive lands. This is the essence of sound stewardship.

As more Americans move to urban and suburban environments – approximately 80% of the American people live in towns and cities – they become increasingly disconnected from the land. This trend has profound social and ecological consequences. For example:

- Crime is higher in urban areas without a natural resource base than those with urban forests, parks, and riverside greenways.
- Drinking water and storm-water treatment costs increase exponentially when forests, floodplains, wetlands, and streamside corridors are overdeveloped.
- Air quality in urban areas is significantly diminished when urban forests are lost.

Approximately 60% of the nation's forestlands are owned by non-industrial private landowners, an additional 14% are considered industrial timberlands. Yet, less than 5% of these non-industrial forests have written management plans for their land.

These private lands provide innumerable ecosystem services as well as habitat for an estimated half of the federally protected species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Unfortunately, many of these lands are increasingly being converted to smaller ownerships. According to the Pinchot Institute, from 1978 to 1994, the proportion of private forest ownerships of less than 50 acres nearly doubled. Rapid turnover of these lands can discourage long-term stewardship and sound forestry practices.

There are innumerable private woodland owners who want to participate in watershed restorations, habitat conservation programs, and development of sustainable forest management plans. We must expand landowner assistance, stewardship, and stewardship incentives programs to assist private landowners.

Our challenge is to continue and expand the dialogue, to educate and communicate with people the importance of conserving and restoring the health diversity, and productivity of all our watersheds – regardless of whether they are publicly owned or private.

Watershed Restoration

The author Barry Lopez has a wonderful quote that I think perfectly captures both the social and ecological values of restoration. He says:

Restoration work is not fixing beautiful machinery, replacing stolen parts, adding fresh lubricants, cobbling and welding and rewiring. It is accepting an abandoned responsibility. It is a humble and often joyful mending of biological ties, with a hope clearly recognized. That working from this foundation we might, too, begin to mend human society.

Lopez's quote is particularly relevant today. For many years, our nation's approach to conservation was based on the premise that we must protect the best of what remains, as Aldo Leopold would say, "to save all the parts." Progressive actions and laws such as the creation of the national forest System, the preservation of wilderness areas, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and the Antiquities Act reflect such an approach.

Though they have served us well and are emulated the world over, these are not enough. We must do more. We know today that we cannot simply preserve our national parks and by extension hope to protect our natural resource heritage. We cannot afford to manage our national forests in isolation of other federal, state, and private lands. We must work in partnership with others to link our communities' neighborhood creeks and tree-lined streets to the sea-bound rivers, state and national parks and forests.

If ever there was a nation with the technology, the resources, and the will to heal their lands and waters, this is it.

The community watershed restorations such as those depicted in the Watershed Restoration book herald a new era.

An era that will be marked by state and federal agencies working hand-in-hand with interested landowners, and local communities to restore our forests, rangelands, and watersheds. In an era of government downsizing, it is essential that less federal funding does not result in less conservation. Two restoration efforts speak to the value of partnerships and the importance of working with diverse interests.

Three thousand miles separate the heavily urbanized Anacostia River watershed – the downstream reach of which flows through the nation's capital – from the more rural Mattole watershed in northern California. The Anacostia has been called one of the most polluted rivers in the country; the ecosystem robbed of its most basic functions by channelization, riparian and wetland loss, forest removal, sewer overflows, and other pollution.

The headwaters of the Mattole begin in the King Range among stands of coastal redwoods and flow through Douglas-fir and hardwood forests before emptying into the Pacific Ocean near Petrolia, California.

Following World War II, more than 90% of the watershed's old growth coniferous forests were logged and an extensive road network developed. Little reforestation was attempted. As a result, by 1980, erosion rates in the watershed exceeded the typical rate of soil formation by more than two orders of magnitude.

The fact that land use practices and past management actions degraded the two river systems is not unusual. Through the Clean Water Act, we have in many places reduced point sources of pollution from industry and municipalities. Yet, we still have a long way to go to restore the health of our lands and waters. For example, fewer than two percent of the rivers and streams in the contiguous 48 states remain in a "high quality state." In a recent report, The Nature Conservancy documents that over 40% of our fish and amphibian species are at risk of extinction. This is particularly alarming, as aquatic species are excellent indicators of watershed health.

What links the Mattole and the Anacostia is that restoration efforts in both watersheds are bringing people together to restore their lands and waters, and through the process of restoration are healing their communities themselves.

Conclusion

Like the barn raisings of old, community-based restorations reconnect people to the land that sustains them. By no means are collaborative watershed approaches a panacea to resolving difficult resource issues. We need the help of Congress to make the annual appropriation process an opportunity to make investments in the land. We need the assistance of the Administration to remind the American people of conservation's national imperative. We need the participation, support, and honest criticism of citizens. Most important, we, the nation's oldest federal conservation organization, must deliver on our basic mission of caring for the land and serving people.

But collaborative watershed restoration efforts do provide a new framework for moving beyond the polarization of the debate that too often permeates Washington, D.C. In closing I will restate the findings of *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*. Successful watershed coalitions:

- Must be balanced among the full array of watershed users and other interests.

- They should identify a scientifically based vision or a collective goal for conserving or restoring healthy ecosystems.
- Finally, they must know that collaboration is a process not an outcome. It should never be used to abrogate decision-making responsibility – whether it rests with federal, state or private landowners.

The measure of success of any community-based approach is better decisions on the land and improved working relationships among interests. Effective, long and short-term monitoring is essential.

We can do no less. The American people expect no less. Our collective effort to restore the health of our lands and waters reflects our nation's inherent optimism. It affirms a belief that ours is a way of life worth passing on, that we respect the gifts of our forebears, and that we are surely leaving a better place for those we know will follow. Such efforts are, as Aldo Leopold might have said, the basic requirements of membership in the land community.

Remarks of Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
Tennessee Conservation League

The Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda

Introduction

I am pleased to be with you today among old and new friends and colleagues. I'd like to spend some time talking with you about the Forest Service's natural resource agenda.

When I outlined this agenda for my employees recently, I told them that we had two very basic choices. We can sit back on our heels and react to the newest litigation, the latest court order, or the most recent legislative proposal. This would ensure that we continue to be buffeted by social, political, and budgetary changes.

Or, we can lead by example. We can lead by using the best available scientific information based on principles of ecosystem management. And we can use the laws that guide our management to advance a new agenda. An agenda with a most basic and essential focus – caring for the land and serving people.

The answer is clear, we must lead. Just as we always have – from concepts of sustained yield, to multiple use, to ecosystem management. We have a proud tradition of responding to new information and adapting to change. In fact, as a former Chief said in 1930, “A federal policy of forestry has been evolving for almost 60 years. It has been built up by successive legislative enactment’s and the resulting activities. It is not a specific and limited program but rather is a gradual unfolding of a national purpose.”

“A gradual unfolding of a national purpose.” That is the premise of the agenda I have developed with other Forest Service leaders and I will outline today. We will not be complacent. We have an obligation to lead.

Our job is to care for the land and serve people. On the lands we manage, this means complying with the laws that protect, and help us to manage, our natural resource inheritance. On lands outside of Forest Service management, our role is to provide leadership, technical assistance, and support for all forests.

Judging by the work you are doing here in Tennessee through the Blue Ridge ecosystem analysis, I do not think I need to explain what I mean.

Partnerships among state and federal agencies and interested private citizens' help to establish dialogue, promote shared objectives, and lead to better land management.

And that is what it's all about is it not? People working together to restore the health, diversity, and productivity of the land.

Such an approach builds good relationships and good neighbors. It represents good conservation policy. Most important, it is good common sense. It is also the underpinning of our conservation agenda.

Our agenda focuses on four key areas:

- Watershed health and restoration
- Sustainable forest ecosystem management
- Forest roads and
- Recreation

Returning to Our Roots

In reality there is little new in the agenda. It is as old as the Organic Administration Act of 1897. Over 100 years ago, through the Organic Act, Congress directed that:

No national forest shall be established, except to improve and protect the forest within the boundaries, or for the purpose of securing favorable conditions of water flows, and to furnish a continuous supply of timber for the use and necessities of citizens of the United States.

The need to protect and enhance water supplies, including flood protection was the driving force behind the Organic Act and other early forest legislation and later laws such as the Clean Water Act.

The emphasis on watershed protection was both prophetic and well deserved. There are few resources more important than water. But judging from the efforts of many here that are involved in the Conasauga River Alliance, you know that already.

Watershed Health and Restoration

So our first priority is to maintain and restore the health of our ecosystems and watersheds. Healthy watersheds are resilient in the face of natural events such as floods, fire, and drought and are more capable of absorbing the effects of human-induced disturbances. Watersheds absorb rain, recharge underground aquifers, provide cleaner water to people, and reduce drinking water treatment costs.

They provide wildlife and fish habitat and connect headwaters to downstream areas and wetlands and riparian areas to uplands. Healthy watersheds dissipate floods across floodplains increasing soil fertility and minimizing damage to lives, property, and streams.

We must protect our healthiest watersheds and restore those that are degraded. We must also continue our long tradition of protecting wild areas such as wilderness so they can remain important sources of clean water and biological diversity.

How we manage our forests has a profound effect on the quality of our drinking water and the ability of our watersheds to perform their most basic functions.

Recognizing the countless benefits that healthy watersheds provide to the American people, we will:

Make maintenance and restoration of watershed health an overriding priority in future forest plans and provide measures for monitoring progress.

Propose to increase stream and riparian area restoration by 40% by 1999.

Propose a 30% increase in habitat restoration and conservation of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.

Propose increasing by 50% the number of abandoned mine reclamation sites.

Improve efforts to prevent non-native species from entering or spreading in the U.S.

Although most of these actions and proposals are specific to national forests, their benefits transcend boundary lines. Drawing off lessons learned from places such as the Conasauga River Alliance, we will seek voluntary and non-regulatory partnerships with other private, federal and state land managers. For example, we will:

Work with other state and federal land managers, interested private landowners, and community groups to conduct watershed analysis and assessments to better understand the effects of management activities on the landscape.

There are approximately 40 million acres of national forests that are exposed to abnormally high risk of fire, disease, and insect outbreaks. Though insects, disease, and fire are part of the natural cycle, the vulnerability of these forests is unacceptably high. To respond to this need, we are asking Congress for funding to:

Increase prescribed fire and forest fuels treatment in critical watersheds from 1.1 million acres in 1997 to 1.5 million acres in 1999 and

Double the amount of thinning in unnaturally dense forest stands particularly along the urban-wildland interface over the next five years.

Sustainable Forest Ecosystem Management

Let's turn now to sustainable forest management.

The basic point of our sustainable forest management strategy is this – not only do economic stability and environmental protection go hand in hand – economic prosperity *cannot occur* without healthy, diverse, and productive watersheds and ecosystems.

To keep our watersheds healthy and productive, we must look across boundary and fence lines and work together to practice sustainable forest management.

By fully funding forest inventory and monitoring programs and using measurements of sustainable forest management such as the "criteria and indicators" that were endorsed by 13 countries in 1995, we would have a common language to measure our effectiveness at managing sustainable forests and grasslands. The Forest Service is committed to:

Working with state, local, and other partners to use criteria and indicators of sustainable forest ecosystem management to report on the health of *all* forested landscapes across the nation by 2003.

Protecting our environmental capital requires maintaining healthy and productive forestlands whether they are in urban or rural areas. From 1978-94, the number of forestlands owned in parcels of 50 acres or less doubled.

The increasing diminution of forest tract size can diminish wildlife habitat, reduce access, and degrade water quality. We must share our expertise with landowners and help them to consider long-term objectives. Thus, we will:

Work with State Foresters and others to increase the number of non-industrial private forest landowners that complete long-term forest stewardship plans. We will emphasize tools such as the Stewardship Incentive Program that could enable more than 3,000 landowners to develop scientifically based stewardship plans.

Work with other federal agencies and Congress to develop policies that encourage long-term investments in forests and discourage their conversion to other uses.

Eighty percent of Americans live in towns and cities.

We must literally bring forestry to the people by building on programs such as the Urban Resources Partnership and Community Forestry programs to increase the health of urban forests. Urban forests contribute an estimated \$400 billion in economic benefits through reduced storm-water treatment costs and energy conservation.

As more and more people place greater demands on our forests, it is naïve to think that we can restore ecosystem and watershed health *without* active management based on sound science. Forest management has changed significantly over the years.

And as we learn more, we are continually adapting our management. For example, clearcutting on national forests declined by 84% in the past 10 years. The use of timber sales whose primary objective is to restore forest ecosystem health has increased by 70% in the past five years.

Even with these improvements, we hear calls increasingly for a “zero-cut” policy for national forests. I am opposed to this proposition. Both science and common sense support active management of national forests. A stable timber program from national forests is essential to many rural communities. We need to help provide stability so that companies can make needed investments in new equipment and technologies and provide jobs. National Forests should be a model for demonstrating how active forest management can meet economic needs *and* maintain and restore watershed health.

Ensuring sustainable forests requires the involvement of communities that benefit from, and care for, these forests. Our efforts to restore healthy forests can help to sustain rural communities by providing a stable wood supply and jobs to communities. To make this possible, we will work with Congress to:

Increase the amount of research and technical assistance to forest products industries so that they can more profitably harvest small diameter wood, increase the use of secondary markets for wood products, and market more finished wood products.

Find new ways to use an in-place, highly skilled workforce to accomplish much needed forest management and restoration.

As long as our incentive system ties the production of commodities from national forests to funding needed services such as schools and roads, state and county governments' face economic *instability*. Presently, 25% of many of the revenues generated from national forests are returned to states and distributed to counties. These payments have decreased as timber harvest from national forests has declined. To help remedy this situation, we propose to work with Congress and local communities to:

Provide stable and predictable state and county payments that support public schools and roads.

Forest Roads

Our new agenda also emphasizes management of the forest road system. Few natural resource issues in recent years have captured as much political attention and public scrutiny as management of the national forest road system. Forest roads are an essential part of the transportation system in many rural parts of the country. They help to meet recreation demands on national forests and grasslands. They provide economic opportunities by facilitating the removal of commodities from the national forest system, which in turn provides jobs and revenue. Forest roads provide access to conduct needed management.

The benefits of forest roads are many. So too, are the ecological impacts on our watersheds. There are few more irreparable marks we can leave on the land than to build a road. Improperly located, designed or maintained roads contribute to erosion, wildlife and fish habitat fragmentation, degradation of water quality, and the dispersal of exotic species.

Building a new road requires a short-term outlay of cash. Funding its maintenance over time entails a long-term financial commitment. The failure to maintain the forest road system limits public access and does tremendous environmental damage.

So long as road management is unaddressed, public support for needed forest management will disappear.

For these reasons, I recently proposed development of a new long-term forest road policy. The proposal has four primary objectives. First, more carefully consider decisions to build new roads. Second, eliminate old unneeded roads. Third, upgrade and maintain roads that are important to public access. Fourth, develop new and dependable funding for forest road management.

The President's budget recognizes the need to address these issues. It proposes to increase:

Road maintenance funding by 26% and

Major improvements to forest road bridges and culverts by over 66% in FY 1999.

Much of the existing forest road system was built over the last 50 years to facilitate timber harvest and removal. Roads that were built to accommodate logging trucks are increasingly carrying people seeking outdoor recreation opportunities.

Because of our increased scientific knowledge about the social and ecological values of roadless areas, we recently proposed calling an 18 month "timeout" on new road construction in roadless areas. We propose to use the time to develop new scientific tools and analytical procedures that our managers can use to decide when, or if, to construct new roads.

Our objective is to work with people to provide a forest road system that best serves the management objectives and public uses of national forests and grasslands while protecting the health of our watersheds.

I want to make a few things clear that I understand might not be. First, the interim suspension, once final, would last for 18 months -- no more. Second, the suspension only addresses new road construction and reconstruction in roadless areas.

Wildlife and fish projects, prescribed fire, even timber harvests that do not require new road construction can proceed during the 18 months. Wildlife habitat will not be somehow lost or compromised. In fact, our hope is that at the end of 18 months we would have improved tools that allow our managers to make even more informed, more popularly supported management decisions concerning when to build new roads.

Recreation

The final piece of our agenda recognizes that recreation is the fastest growing use of national forests and grasslands. It provides the link – a window through which an increasingly urban society can enjoy and appreciate the natural world. Forest Service managed lands provide more outdoor recreation opportunities than anywhere else in the United States. We are committed to providing superior customer service and ensuring that the rapid growth of recreation on national forests does not compromise the long-term health of the land.

National forests and grasslands provide incredible outdoor opportunities. We expect to have over one billion recreation visits in the coming years.

Such growth poses both serious management challenges and tremendous opportunities. To take advantage of these opportunities, we will:

Improve the quality and quantity of public information about recreation opportunities on national forests. We will use the Internet and the National Recreation Reservation Service and others to highlight the many recreation opportunities from forestlands such as the 2002 Winter Olympics.

Collaborate with state and private landowners that wish to benefit from public recreation use of their lands.

Establish quality standards for the recreational services and more effectively evaluate customer satisfaction and feedback.

Nearly half of this year's recreation visitors will encounter a facility or a service below Forest Service standards. This is unacceptable. My goal is that every visitor to the national forests leaves with a deeper appreciation for, and understanding of, how important their natural resource legacy is to them.

As public demand increases, the Forest Service must ensure that facilities are properly maintained and that people can enjoy a safe and high quality recreation experience. We propose to:

Increase funding for recreation management by \$20 million dollars in 1999.

Increase funding to enhance opportunities for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and conservation education.

Accelerate the conversion of unneeded roads to trails.

Partnerships with the recreation users, concessionaires, permittees, and local communities help us to more effectively deliver quality recreation experiences. The private-sector can often teach us new ways to deliver better services at a lower cost. We will expand the use of such partnerships and encourage more Americans to volunteer time, labor, and experience in helping us to improve interpretive services, trail maintenance, facilities, and conservation education.

Conclusion

This is an agenda that can help us to chart a new course in conservation. I believe that it is a course that will benefit the communities we serve, the resources we are entrusted to manage and the children who will inherit the results of our stewardship. Concern for our natural and cultural resources spans races, religions, generations, and economic backgrounds. This helps to explain why so many people care about our public lands. Indeed, conservation has moved from a “special interest” to a national priority.

We can leave no greater gift for our children, show no greater respect for our forefathers, than to leave the watersheds and ecosystems entrusted to our care healthier, more diverse, and more productive. That is my vision for this great agency.

Texas Forest Service:

Bobby Young is head of the Fire Control Division of Texas Forest Service and stationed in Lufkin, Texas. He will be representing State Forester Jim Hull. The National Forests and Grasslands in Texas enjoy a mutually beneficial cooperative relationship with the State Forester and his entire organization, and currently share a fire dispatch organization in the East Texas area

Stephen F. Austin University:

Dr. Jack McCullough is professor in the Department of Biology at Stephen F. Austin University (Nacodoches, TX); is an active supporter of USFS programs, and is currently cooperating in the development of watershed monitoring programs.

Thursday, May 14 (Tennessee Trip)

The Tennessee Conservation League

Tennessee Conservation League: TCL is the state affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation. This organization began 52 years ago and has a membership of 12,000. It is committed to the protection and wise use of Tennessee's natural resources. TCL works closely with the Governor's Office, State Legislators, and various local, state and federal agencies. TCL is dedicated to the interests and needs of Tennessee's sportsmen and recognizes hunting, fishing, and trapping as legitimate recreational pursuits and as important to the conservation and management of the nation's wildlife resources. TCL membership is diverse and works together for the benefit of outdoor conservation and the environment.

TCL has been very supportive of the Forest Service mission. It has been involved with the Forest Land Management Planning process, Neo-tropical migratory bird study, and small mammal surveys. TCL supports "best management practices" and encourages private landowners to use them when harvesting timber from their land. They supported the development of the State's "model logger program" where loggers are trained in silviculture, safety, BMP's, and small business practices.

Current emphasis areas for TCL include the following: Conservation education throughout the Tennessee school system; Review of various national forest proposals and monitoring of a variety of management projects in TN; Providing information and working closely with legislators on conservation related issues; Serving on the Governor's wetlands task force; Serving on the Governor's forestry task force; Taking the lead in Tennessee's biodiversity program; and Serving as the lead for Tennessee's neo-tropical migrant bird survey.

Each year at their annual meetings TAL devotes a portion of a day to reviewing and voting on various resolutions related to conservation and environmental protection. Resolutions range from wetlands, landscape practices, hunting/fishing/trapping, forestry, and soil and water issues.

TAL and the Forest Service have a very good working relationship. Many Cherokee NF employees are TCL members and take part in various activities. TCL is an outstanding partner and is very supportive of the overall goals and objectives of the Cherokee NF.

Summary of Roundtable Meeting on Sustainable Management

Convened in Washington, D.C. on July 14, 1998

INTRODUCTION

On July 14, Mike Dombeck, Chief of the USDA Forest Service, hosted a Roundtable on Sustainable Management in Washington, D.C. Fifty-two attendees, representing 32 key Federal and State agencies and national organizations, gathered to discuss and affirm their joint commitment to coordination and collaboration regarding sustainable forest and rangeland management. All were invited to sign an agreement on future collaboration. (See attached agenda and list of attendees.)

This first Roundtable targeted parties with relevant expertise and responsibilities associated with data needed to move ahead with the Sustainable Forest Management Criteria and Indicators (C&I) agreed to in 1995 in the Santiago Declaration as part of the overall Montreal Process involving 12 countries including the United States (US). The long-term plan is to include a broader spectrum of partners, stakeholders, and publics.

FORMAL REMARKS - Summary**Adela Backiel (USDA Director of Sustainable Development)**

Welcome. This Roundtable is an important reinforcement and component of the overall internal effort underway in the Department of Agriculture to provide national leadership in 3 arenas: sustainable agriculture, sustainable forest management (SFM), and sustainable rural communities.

Mike Dombeck (Chief of the Forest Service, and roundtable facilitator)

It is increasingly difficult to find a subject that everyone can agree on. Sustainable forest management seems to be something people do agree on.

Dan Glickman (Secretary of Agriculture)

Thank you for letting me participate. The dirtiest word in Washington is turf; so I think this is really good that we can meet in partnership.

The Department's involvement with sustainability goes back decades to the beginnings of the Soil Conservation Service which was established after the dust bowl years.

We need to start talking the same language, using the same math; and we need to establish one way to measure whether or not we are moving toward sustainability (ecosystems, economies, and communities).

Just as one agency, acting alone, could not achieve sustainability across the landscape, no single agency can create a system for measuring our nation's progress toward SFM.

We need a common sense of where we are going to gain support of the American public.

Don't let agency traditions or turf battles get in our way. Involve the public.

Tom Cassadevall (USGS; remarks offered in absence of Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior, who called away at the last minute by the White House)

We see the mission of USGS as one of helping agencies with coordinated data and to help them work together with that data.

John Moeller will provide more details in his presentation.

Ernest Moniz (US Department of Energy)

Energy has a strong interest in forests and their sustainable management. There are a number of logical connections.

Forest products is a major industry and a big user of energy.

There is an important relationship between forests and climate change. The President has given very high visibility to this connection; the US has now formally recognized the link between SFM and climate change. Vegetation is responsible for 16 trillion tons of carbon exchange each year.

The Department of Energy looks forward to working with you.

Dinah Bear (Counsel for Council on Environmental Quality; remarks offered while waiting for McGinty to arrive)

One of CEQ's major reasons for being is to foster interagency coordination on environmental issues. We need data compatibility across agencies.

This is exactly the kind of thing we want to encourage; and it has enormous implications for other related efforts (e.g., planning regulations, Environmental Report Card, forest health, etc.).

Mike Dombeck

We need to erase boundaries; the landscape doesn't know who the steward is.

John Moeller (Federal Geographic Data Committee)

The Committee is a geographic information partnership which coordinates geographic (spatial) data activities (including policy and standards) among Federal agencies, coordinates with other organizations, and member agencies share Federal leadership on developing a National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI).

All should be interested in the work of the FGDC because data concerns cut across jurisdictions. No one agency has responsibility to collect all data.

Geographic or place-based approaches provide more understanding of issues; and in FY 2000 we will be working on a Community/Federal Information Partnership to help build the NSDI.

The US is in a good position to build a coordinated data base which will feed into an emerging global infrastructure which can be used for a variety of purposes (e.g., climate change, urban growth, sustainable forest management, etc.).

We support the use of the C&I as contributing to a common language and set of measures, and encourage your agencies to work together to define common data needs and standards.

Mike Dombeck

It is clear John Moeller is passionate about a common language.

Katie McGinty (Chair of Council on Environmental Quality)

We want to offer CEQ's support and encouragement for the following reasons: the international forestry community is in an endless do-loop of dialogue with more talk than action associated with the Global Forest Convention; and by focusing on temperate and boreal forests we can provide leadership internationally in measuring progress toward SFM.

Domestically we need to report progress on three fronts:

- Ecologically...we need to break out of crises and get past short sighted planning or fuzzy concepts like ecosystem management and start showing how the various parts of the landscape come together and how the government is part of helping landscape solutions come together; and
- Socially and Culturally...we need to move away from either/or approaches and must look beyond government actors and make people part of the process by bringing in societal actors who can help find the path to maximize environmental, economic, and social goals.

Recent experiences on the Clearwater National Forest emphasized the role of government in helping provide forums for citizens to understand the conflicts between issues, like maintaining timber harvests and declining elk herds, and for communities to be able to see how social and environmental issues are connected to forest management.

We honor and respect the complex set of values that Americans have, and it is a challenge to help harmonize priorities when working with what Americans hold most dear.

The plan to take on the task of identifying objective indicators is a very good thing to do.

Rafe Pomerance (Department of State)

We have a great national interest in SFM and we care, as a country, because SFM helps conserve biodiversity, reduce carbon, and support trade; and because people care about forests.

It is linked to the conservation of biodiversity and negotiations underway about a biodiversity convention. The convention could result in American shippers of plant products being required to get a certificate for every shipment.

SFM helps reduce carbon in the atmosphere and is connected to global climate change. If we can use

forests to meet national obligation we will not have to meet them in other ways which may be far more costly.

SFM has potentially enormous world trade implications. Look at the implication of a global forest agreement or convention.

Lastly, people do care deeply about the health and vitality of the world's forests.

The Montreal Process involving 12 countries (which represent 60% of all the world's forests and 90% of the world's temperate and boreal forests) is key to assessing national trends in forest conditions via biological, social, economic, and policy indicators.

We value the C&I and hope for continued implementation.

We need to show US leadership.

At the Earth Summit, nations said we need to manage all forests for sustainability.

The US has endorsed this goal.

The President at the G8 meetings in Denver and Birmingham agreed with the 7 other heads of State that implementation of the SFM C&I is a key component of the action plan.

The Global Forest Convention is not being negotiated, allowing agencies to focus their energies otherwise on the C&I. It is to be revisited in 2000 and the US intends to demonstrate progress toward achieving SFM.

The First Approximation Report (FAR) documented the need for expanded inventory efforts. To get it done requires a long term concerted effort having the full support of all interest groups.

Marvin Brown (President of National Association of State Foresters)

This is a very important undertaking and I am encouraged by the folks here.

The way the US goes about this will affect international issues.

Agreement is not common in the US on forest management issues; but we have agreement on the C&I and can move forward together on that basis.

There is a clear need for collaborative fact-based dialogue in the US.

The US has the best professional Federal and State forestry agencies in the world, the most progressive industry, and more forest landowners. Domestically, we need a more integrated effort to show we are doing a good job. We could be the example.

The C&I provide a unifying framework. We, on the panel, have agreed to the C&I framework.

A diverse set of people has said that the C&I are a good place to start in reaching agreement among diverse interests.

So what will the product be? It will be a comprehensive assessment that considers all the benefits across all ownerships in the US. We will have to consider intensive forest management, agroforestry, and other management activities as well. We will not get all good grades, but it will show what we need to fix to be sustainable. In a way, I do not really want a perfect score, there will be no challenges left.

Bill Mankin (Global Forest Policy Project)

I am encouraged to see other Federal agencies here. The Forest Service and State Department were the only voices in the international arena. Others need to be here now.

If we cannot agree on how our forests are currently doing, then we cannot agree on what they should be doing.

The C&I are simply data collection tools, not standards. The C&I are value neutral. They are a means of facilitating the creation of a shared view of the state of forests, but not a shared goal of what the state should be per se. Without a shared view, however, it will be hard to have a shared goal.

We have been making such good progress because the C&I are not standards, goals, or targets.

A shared view must come before a shared goal.

We must use the tools; and I hope the C&I will help us get better data.

The US has been at the forefront in creating the C&I. Let's be at the forefront of implementing them.

John Heissenbuttel (American Forest and Paper Association)

Thanks for all the good work. AF&PA thinks this is exactly what is needed.

Industry supports the C&I because:

- they are a good link to Agenda 21 and forest principles agreed to there;
- they are a credible framework at the national level to assess SFM in the US; and ---they allow us to look at the big picture...the full range of values.

The C&I themselves are not value laden.

We may never have a common definition of SFM among all countries.

We recognize right up front that we currently lack the science to collect some data at this time. Problem areas are OK. It's part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

AF&PA, whose members represent most of the forest industry land in the US, made a bold move to its Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) which is linked to the Montreal C&I and Agenda 21.

We think the C&I allow us to link on-the-ground management through SFI to national and international levels.

We firmly believe in the US commitment to good forest management. With the C&I we will be able to show this to the world.

It is not useful or desirable for a single agency to work on this. There needs to be a lead agency and, as the Secretary said, you need to set aside turf battles.

Dan Beard (National Audubon Society)

I have worked in Washington for 25 years and have some advice. Victory is hard to achieve in natural resource management. Forest management is an ongoing process.

We need to involve leadership at the top and sustain their involvement. It is fundamentally important to keep them involved. Non-government organizations can help highlight the importance.

We need to keep the issues in the public light. That will help motivate the top levels of management.

Don't lose sight of the original goals and the fundamentals. Don't make this more complicated than it needs to be.

Maintain strong interagency relationships and cooperation.

Keep making the process inclusive by involving non-government organizations, professional societies, foundations, etc.

We need to sustain this effort over time in order to see the trends and bring information into the policy debates.

Data is a tough job. It is not very interesting, but it is very important.

Thought needs to be given as to how to make data available to the public in the fastest and easiest ways.

Do not forget that US forests are predominantly non-Federal; and the data requests and demands need to be sensitive to this reality.

Bill Banzhaf (Society of American Foresters)

It is clear that there is broad support within the conservation community for the C&I effort, and that it is very important.

We, therefore, must keep the momentum and energy going.

The value we place on information is key to the C&I. Information allows for freedom to manage in the future.

We need to bring data together into one system.

The Montreal process has created a cooperative culture among stakeholders.

We are already working with parts of Criterion 7 by looking at the capacity of forestry school curricula to train foresters for the future and looking at the codes of ethics for professional foresters.

Dominick DellaSalla (World Wildlife Fund)

Sustainability is representative of protected areas and responsible forest management.

WWF wants to lend support to the international sustainability mission, the involvement of the public, and the use of the C&I framework.

This will help the G8 conference implementation.

The US has lots of data on forest structure and productivity, it needs to broaden that data out. Biodiversity deserves more attention.

The Blue Ribbon Panel on Forest Inventory and Assessment said that better data needs to be collected on biodiversity.

We need to know by ecoregion the condition and quality of forest types, and degree of threats from forest conversion and fragmentation.

WWF offers to assist in collecting data on biodiversity; and wants to share US data it has assembled on the ecological significance of forest types, protected areas, and fragmentation.

WWF believes 1/3 of American forests is ecologically significant on a global basis.

WWF proposes a 7-point plan:

- More effective partnerships and cost-share arrangements with groups that have data
- Use science teams, keeping them small and manageable
- More directly link monitoring to biodiversity
- Include measurements of forest quality
- Make C&I a funding priority
- Solicit outside peer review (helps expand science teams)
- Lead by example
-

DISCUSSION - Key Points of Participants**Chris Risbrudt (FS WO-Ecosystem Management Coordination Staff)**

After hearing all of this maybe the C&I really are a vehicle to bring people together.

Today we want to start a discussion of the roles of participants in helping us move forward in the process.

It is clear from the panelists that stakeholders can serve as prodders.

Mike Dombeck

We need cooperation. The train is leaving the station.

We also need simplicity...success depends on it. Simplicity is not to be confused with simplistic. The system behind is often more complex.

Doctors have health care down to a few indicators (e.g., blood pressure). We should learn from it and be able to do it.

Pat Shea (Director of the Bureau of Land Management)

Keep monitoring simple. Get it down to a green, yellow, red card approach.

We need some ending criteria.

Keith Argow (National Woodland Owners Association)

Private landowners must be part of the process. NWOA represents 58% of US woodlands.

We have been with you all along on this, but many private landowners have red carded this process.

I personally agree that the C&I should empower private landowners with information and be viewed as an opportunity; and try to point out that the government is not doing C&I to private landowners.

Reach out to landowners and be positive.

Keep up the good work but be careful. Many private landowners are concerned that the government might tell them what to do with their land.

Paul Brouha (American Fisheries Society)

We are just beginning to join the dialogue at this point; and am concerned that we don't see much focus on the productivity and value of fisheries as part of SFM.

Suggest we need a higher focus on fisheries.

We need to value water. Water is the most valuable product coming from the forest.

Nick Keller (National Association of Counties, and Joint Center for Sustainable Communities)

Local government is a key player. Multi-jurisdictional work in bioregions around cities and counties can be valuable to this effort.

Often local government is seen as a problem. This discussion is no longer one of just data. This is an issue of knowledge and technology.

We are talking about connections--spend more time on making the connections with people. More

people need to be involved. Local leaders are being asked to do things they never envisioned they would have to do.

We are talking about political will. We need to allow and offer local elected officials the opportunity to do the right thing.

The Front Range experience has demonstrated that local government has a huge stake in SFM; but economic and forestry data come from different organizations.

You can help by bringing the data together. The C&I is a way to break down barriers.

Kendall Johnson (Society for Range Management)

We are being left out. We should be talking about forests and rangelands. What is the definition of a forest?

About half the US is rangeland.

The Society for Range Management has gone through searching efforts in recent years; and this work can be a springboard toward further definition that applies to rangeland.

We don't need to start at ground zero to include range in this effort.

Robin O'Malley (Heinz Center, and National Environmental Report Card)

By 2001 we will have a National Report which includes various ecosystems including forests, croplands, marine and coastal areas, etc.

We are trying to do for all ecosystems what is being discussed today for forests.

The C&I provide a mechanism to measure progress in the forest sector.

Each system or sector is extremely valuable; and need the involvement of everyone here today.

We really need consensus and give the American people information they want to look across systems or sectors.

Rob Wolcott (US Environmental Protection Agency)

Congressional goals are simply unattainable without broad, landscape integration as we are discussing today.

The C&I effort is a vehicle for integrating, synthesizing, categorizing, and making data available.

As part of reinvention, EPA is spawning entrepreneurial environmental action and using community-based environmental protection to help people act in enlightened and system-based ways.

We are going to be helping people act by providing them with information. How can the EPA information portal be linked and connected with this effort?

Real, place-based work is our future.

We will be pleased to sign the agreement.

Paul Brouha

Professional societies have a role. We could be leaders in developing the protocols.

Education of members and how to use the indicators is another contribution we could make.

John Moeller

We can provide a starting point for dealing with a lot of the data issues.

We can provide a clearinghouse function on spatial data.

We also have procedures for accessing data.

I encourage people to help with the standards, etc.

Ben Tuggle (US Fish & Wildlife Service)

What I have heard here today is what we want to pursue.

We have 90 million acres to manage in the National Refuge System.

But the major trust in stewardship of the land lies with the private landowner.

The whole concept of ecosystem management is tied to the need to integrate and think broader.

Our leadership wishes to sign this letter.

Bill Banzhaf

I sense this is the beginning of a real partnership...a shift in culture and the way we work together.

We may want a steering group to get things done in a non-traditional manner. We cannot just sit back and review or criticize the final product. We want to be there from the beginning. Non-government organizations as well as agencies need to be in charge of certain activities; and help gather data.

The next step should be organizations and people from various sectors working together.

Stuart Kasdin (Office of Management and Budget)

\$800 million across the government is spent on inventory work in this country every year. We need more bang for the buck.

From the management perspective, GPRA puts a lot more emphasis on evaluating the outcomes of

agency work.

C&I are important for line managers in assessing how they are doing, as well as for showing people how improvements are being made. They can help build trust.

We certainly support this kind of activity, and look forward to helping agencies with coordination.

Mike Soukup (National Park Service)

National Parks will be more difficult to manage in the future. We will have to manage in the context of fragmented and un-natural landscapes.

Parks are part of the fragmented landscape.

GPRA highlights the lack of measures for preserving natural systems.

There is a need for more research behind C&I and how the system works. It will take a larger community process.

Colien Hefferan (Cooperative State Research, Economics, and Extension Service)

C&I are most valuable over time.

The science used at the beginning of the process will need to be continually evaluated.

CSREES is eager to sign the agreement and work with universities to make their work part of the science base of the effort.

Arch Wells (Bureau of Indian Affairs)

We agree that range and other systems should be viewed in this context of sustainability.

A caveat is offered however...542 tribes manage 56 million acres of land. Each has its own separate government which controls its own information.

The tribes have been conducting inventories of timber lands for 30-50 years.

We do need to get out of the turf stuff.

Jamie Pinkham (President of Intertribal Timber Council)

Tribes have a much larger interest than owning and managing land. Each has treaty rights on other lands and has unique interests in sustaining its culture and way of life. We need to talk about sustainable ways of life.

Tribes will be stingy with information. There is a lot of competition for roots and berries, sites, etc.

This is a worthy process.

Bruce deGrazia (Department of Defense)

DoD manages 45 million acres of land, including a lot of forests, and have sustainability goals.

We are interested in cooperative methods in dealing with other agencies and are working with the Interagency Military Land Use Committee, for instance.

This is a noble endeavor; and will be signing the letter.

Deborah Jensen (The Nature Conservancy)

TNC has 1400 nature reserves. We all need data for sound ecological decision making and work with communities.

We are very heartened by the conversation today.

This is exactly what we need...credible data and useful at different geographic scales.

Don't, however, underestimate the magnitude of this important task.

So often disputes over data kill the possible outcomes.

Many data sets are not readily available. Lack of trust is another obstacle.

TNC also is struggling with performance measures on forestry practices.

Success depends on clarity of purpose and continuity of effort.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Mike Dombeck

The candor today is a positive sign.

I invite each agency and organization here to designate a lead person to work with us in continuing this work.

I am designating Phil Janik, Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry, to lead this work for the Forest Service.

Phil Janik (Forest Service)

I feel humble but not intimidated by this task since we are not doing it alone.

Secretary mentioned the need to avoid turf. This is a global issue with international connections.

In the US we have made progress but we have a long way to go.

The letter sent to CEQ by the panelists today served as a nudge...a welcome nudge.

Sustainable forests, rangelands, and communities calls for collaboration by a diverse mix of players.

In a recent listening session, the National Association of State Foresters challenged the Deputy Chief of State and Private Forestry to provide leadership in sustainability. It is an umbrella issue within the FS Natural Resources Agenda and the FS Action Strategy for State and Private Services.

We are casting a broader net of partnership. We need to talk further about appropriate roles--we need to look at what we each can best contribute.

Private landowners have rights that need to be carefully respected.

Rangeland and water issues need further discussion.

We also will discuss the Steering Committee idea.

We are ready for any one who can sign the commitment letter today; but if not, please give us the name of a contact who will continue to work with us on this important effort.

AGENDA FOR ROUNDTABLE MEETING

JULY 14th, 1998

8:30 - 8:40 -- Welcome: Adela Backiel, USDA, Director of Sustainable Development; Introductions: USDA Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck

8:40 - 9:10 -- Opening Remarks: Secretary Glickman (USDA) , Secretary Babbitt (USDI); Undersecretary Ernest Moniz (USDOE)

9:10 - 9:30 -- Sustainable Development: What is the need? Katie McGinty, Chair, C E Q

9:30 - 9:50-- Piecing Together Multiple Ownerships in the Landscape, The need for common measures, John Moeller, Federal Geographic Data Committee, US Geological Survey
"Montreal Process" Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management, Rafe Pomerance, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of State

9:50 - 10:50 -- Panel Presentation: Montreal Criteria and Indicators: A Unifying Framework, Panel Moderator Chris Risbrudt , USDA FS Director, Ecosystem Management
Marv Brown, National Association of State Foresters
Bill Mankin, Global Forest Policy Project
John Heissenbuttel, American Forest & Paper Association
Dan Beard, National Audubon Society
Bill Banzhaf, Society of American Foresters
Dominick DellaSala, World Wildlife Fund

10:50 - 11:00 -- SHORT BREAK:

11:00 - 12:00 -- Discussion, Chief Dombeck, Feedback on framework from participants

12:00 - 12:30 -- Future Challenges, Phil Janik, USDA FS Deputy Chief, State & Private Forestry
Sign Letter of Commitment, Designate primary contacts for respective agencies

12:30 -- Adjourn

14 July 1998

SUSTAINABILITY ROUNDTABLE :

List of Attending Agencies and Organizations and Their Representatives

American Fisheries Society -- Paul Brouha, Ex.Dir.

American Forests and Paper Association -- John Heisenbuttel, VP, Julie Jack

Ecological Society of America -- Katherine McCarter, Ex.Dir.

Federal Geographic Data Committee -- John Moeller, Staff Director

Global Forest Policy Project -- Bill Mankin, Dir.

International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies -- Gary Taylor, Legislative Dir.

Intertribal Timber Council -- Jamie Pinkham, Pres.

National Association of Counties -- Nick Keller, Dir. JCSD

National Association of State Foresters -- Marvin Brown, Pres.

Native American Fish and Wildlife Society -- Mike Fox, Bd.Mem.

National Audubon Society -- Mike Leahy, Dir. ; Bill Beard, Dir. R.Mtn.Rgn.

National Governors Association -- Barbara Wells

National Woodland Owners Association -- Keith Argow, Pres.; Suzanne Mangino

Council on Environmental Quality -- Kathleen McGinty, Dir.; Dinah Bear

Office of Management and Budget -- Stuart Kasdin, USDA FS Liaison

Society of American Foresters -- Bill Banzhaf, Ex.Dir.

Society for Range Management -- Kendall Johnson, Bd.Mbr.

The Heinz Center for Sci,Econ&Envt. -- Robin O'Malley, Proj. Dir.

The Nature Conservancy -- Deborah Jensen, Dir.Consv.Sci.

The Wildlife Society -- Harry Hodgson, Ex.Dir.

World Wildlife Fund -- DominicDellaSala, Dir.F.Consv.

USD of Agriculture -- Dan Glickman, Sec.

USDA, Coop State Res, Ed, & Extn Service -- Colien Hefferin, Dir.; Larry Biles ; Don Nelson; Ralph Otto

USDA, Director of Sustainable Development -- Adela Backiel, Dir.

USDA, Forest Service -- Mike Dombeck, Chief ; Phil Janik, Dep.Chief S&PF; Chris Risbrudt

USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service -- Tom Weber, Dep. Chief.

USD of Defense -- Bruce deGrazia, Asst.Dep.USec. ; Noel Gerson

USD of Energy -- Ernest Moniz, Under Secretary ; W.S. Breed

USDI, Bureau of Indian Affairs -- Arch Wells, Chief Forester

USDI, Bureau of Land Management -- Patrick Shea, Dir. ; Chris Jauhola

USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service -- Benjamin Tuggle, Asst.Dir.

USDI, Geological Survey -- Thomas Casadevall, Act.Dir.; John Moeller, FGDC

USDI, National Park Service -- Michael Soukup, Assoc.Dir.

US Environmental Protection Agency -- Rob Wolcott, Act.Dep.Asst.Administrator ; Joe Ferrante ; Dana Minerva

USD of State -- Rafe Pomerance, Dep.Asst.Sec. ; Stephenie Caswell ; Mary McLeod

Contact: [Mike Higgs](#)

Modified: 8/11/98

Chief of the Forest Service Mike Dombeck
Ecological Society of America
August 3, 1998

Invasive Species: Science, Management, and Policy Options

It is an honor to be with you today.

*My predecessor
chief*

I'd like to share a story with you that I think illustrates just how important the topic we are here to discuss is. Jack Ward Thomas, who as many of you know is a great story-teller, once told me how, as a young biologist working for Texas Fish and Game, he became angry at poorly reported newspaper story. Jack, as you also may know has quick temper, and he decided to "learn that reporter a thing or two."

*In true
JWT spirit
he*

On the way to track down the reporter, he stopped by his boss' house and informed him of his plans. His boss sat him down and said:

||| Son, let it go. What you fail to realize is that we are insignificant people working on but us insignificant issues that few people care about. Until the time comes that conservation issues move from the sports page and onto the front pages, no-one will care. |||

endless

Well, if Jack's boss was correct -- our time has arrived. In a ten day period last week, the Washington Post ran stories about the loss of honeybees and other ^{insects} pollinators to pests such as the South African small hive beetle; the unchecked spread of kudzu; and a new report that documents hundreds of rare species being driven to extinction by exotic plants, animals, and diseases.

The spread of invasive non-native insects, diseases, and weeds is the single ^{key} greatest threat to the integrity, biological diversity, and viability of forest and grassland ecosystems. Invasive species are a contributing factor in the decline of over 40% of the threatened and endangered species in the United States. Other effects of invasive species include:

- Seven million acres of land in the South is infested by kudzu -- growing at a rate of 130,000 acres ^{are} per year.
- Hemlock Wooly Adelgid in the northern and southern U.S. is now threatening forests in 11 ^{in my back yard} states
- Gypsy moths continue to spread southward to North Carolina and west to Indiana and Wisconsin.

- Exotic weeds are increasing at a rate of 20% annually resulting in a loss of land per year that approximates the size of Delaware.

ffecting
a land
lose
that

When we

Look at the effects of such diseases as the chestnut blight and American Elm disease, and ^{we} you have a better understanding of how pervasive the effects of alien species can be on the character of the American landscape. They affect everything from the character of our tree-lined neighborhood streets to the economic and productive capacity of the landscape.

or less ecological integrity

Consider, the costs of controlling nonnative diseases, insects, and weeds:

- Economic loss to forest, range and crop productivity ~~increases~~ ^{costs} \$12 billion per year.
- Sixty-eighty percent losses in land values have been documented in western rangelands due to the spread of noxious weeds.

Starved
lady sponge

- Pine shoot beetle has spread from Ohio to nine other states in a six year period and could soon invade all pine growing regions of the U.S.

These are simply a sampling of the economic effects of these pests and weeds. Their "human" and emotional affect is harder to measure but all too real as I learned last year on a trip to Greenpoint, New York to tour the area infested by the Asian long-horned beetle and to ~~assess~~ replant the city's urban forest. The beetle as many of you know bores ~~large~~ deep holes into trees and kills them. Following a technical scientific presentation on the threat from invasive species such as the beetle, an elderly woman approached me, thanked ~~us~~ for helping to replant their lost trees and asked how the tree she planted the day she learned of her son's death in Vietnam could be replaced. *the FS* *large dome sized*

History is ~~full of~~ replete with examples where we thought that by introducing species into this country we would "improve on nature." The goldfish was established in US waters by 1680 and the common carp was widely introduced throughout the nation as a food fish and by the 1830s was established in the Hudson River.

Di

This type of intentional introduction -- which Peter Moyle of the University of California has called the "Frankenstein effect" -- is less prevalent than in the past. Today we have a better understanding that when you push ecological systems in one direction, ultimately they will bulge somewhere else.

Today, the greatest risk of ~~invasive~~ ^{exotic} species comes not from attempts to "improve" on nature -- although those cases do continue -- instead the greatest threats are coming from trade barriers being lowered, world markets opening up, transportation networks becoming more efficient and effective.

These trends cannot be reversed. Change is inexorable. Our challenge is to anticipate change, use our science and technology, and help society to learn to live within the limits of the land. I'd like to share with you just a few examples of how the Forest Service is helping to prevent, control, and eliminate the spread of noxious invasive species.

- Within the National Forest System we are using native species ^{not} ~~instead~~ of exotics to replant and restore burned, logged, and flooded areas. We are forming new partnerships to eradicate these invasive species and increasing local, regional and educational efforts.

- Our research organization is increasing the study and evaluation of biological controls. We are leading the charge in genetic research -- finding seed sources for restoration and host plant resistance.
- We are working with states and private landowners to provide increased amounts of technical assistance to private landowners. Helping slow the spread of the gypsy moth, helping control pests such as the Asian long-horned beetle.

*FIFP
Monitoring*

No Agency

But the Forest Service cannot do it alone. Nor can the Department of Interior or any of the state agencies. We must work together.

In 1997, over 500 scientists wrote to Vice President Al Gore criticizing the lack of integration among federal efforts to control these noxious invaders. The Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and Interior, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Office of Science and Technology and Policy to craft a new cross-departmental strategy on alien invasive species. The purpose of the partnership is to build creative partnerships for leveraging dollars for dealing with this important issue.

are working

Some of the specifics of the various agencies' duties, coordination protocols, and implementation strategies will be spelled out in a forthcoming Executive Order on the subject of alien invasives. It is only through coordinated efforts such as these that we will be able to finally slow, control, and eliminate the spread of these invasive species.

Our connection to the land is innate and deeply held. It is the source of the water and food that sustain us, the clothes that warm us, the place we retreat to reconnect to our families and ourselves. Yet year by year, indeed day-by-day, we are allowing this legacy to be compromised. With every hour that we delay, we lose more land, another species vanishes, another opportunity is lost.

Let's get to work.



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Administrative Office
Financial
Meetings
Membership

Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the 49th Annual Meeting of the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS). This meeting also represents the beginning of the "second-half century" of AIBS activities since its founding in 1947 as a scholarly federation dedicated to advancing biological research and education.

We are especially pleased to be able to hold this meeting at the Baltimore Convention Center in close proximity to the famed Inner Harbor historic sites, the National Aquarium, Camden Yards, and the Charles Street Corridor. Nine participating scientific societies will be meeting with the AIBS at this historic site including the Ecological Society of America and the Botanical Society of America. The theme of this year's meeting, "Managing Human-Impacted Systems," captures the scale and integration of the meeting. This integration includes the goal of wedging basic with applied science, the challenge of integrating humankind with natural ecosystems and landscapes, and of witnessing the benefits of managing landscapes and systems based on sound "biological and ecological" science and technology.

The theme of this year's meeting will be captured at our Opening Ceremonies on Sunday evening by Dr. Donald F. Boesch, President of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental and Estuarine Studies, whose biological and ecological plenary session address is entitled "Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem: A Challenge for Science and Society." Also on Sunday evening, we will have the distinct pleasure of being addressed by Dr. Rita Colwell, President of the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute and Director-designate of the National Science Foundation. Dr. Colwell's address, entitled "Environmental Issues of the 21st Century," will help start our meeting with a broad-based presentation of what the next century may bring.

The AIBS continues to encourage the exchange and integration of biological, ecological, cultural, and socio-economic approaches and resources (educational, research, and service) as programmatic objectives for the 49th Annual Meeting. The AIBS takes special pride in organizing and conducting meetings that serve to enhance this mission.

I am looking forward to interacting with each of you and your respective affiliate societies in Baltimore. This promises to be an extremely stimulating and exciting meeting.

Sincerely,

Gary W. Barrett
President, AIBS

The Ecological Society of America
Annual Meeting

Invasive Species - Science, Management, and Policy Options

A Special Workshop at the Annual Meeting of the Ecological Society of America

Monday, August 3

10:15 a.m. to Noon

Baltimore Convention Center, Room 341

Non-native invasive species are the single greatest threat to America's natural resources. Increased efforts to expand global trade and the increasing movement of humans across boundaries has lead to increased risks of invasion by plant and animal pests. Whether miconia and brown tree snakes in Hawaii, gypsy moths in the eastern U.S., leafy spurge throughout the western rangelands, or zebra mussels in the Great Lakes, our ecosystems are being impacted. Agencies and non-governmental organizations have recognized the risks and are increasing their management options to combat these threats. This workshop is designed to bring together scientists, managers, and policy-makers through presentations and discussion. Taking advantage of the proximity to Washington, DC, Federal agency and Hill staff are invited to participate.

PANEL: [15 mins each]
Moderator: Ann M. Bartuska, Vice-President for Public Affairs, ESA

- (1) *Peter Vitousek, Stanford University* – The current status and future risks to terrestrial ecosystems.
- (2) *William Cooper, Michigan State University* – The current status and future risks to aquatic ecosystems.
- (3) *Elizabeth Chornesky, The Nature Conservancy* – The realities of managing with invasive species and a few case studies of the best and the worst.
- (4) *Michael Dombeck, Chief, US Forest Service* – Taking a more aggressive approach to non-native invasive species.

DISCUSSION: [30 mins]
Facilitator: Thomas Stohlgren, Biological Resources Division, USGS

ABOUT THE MEETING...

The Ecological Society of America's 1998 Annual Meeting will be held in **Baltimore, Maryland, on August 2-6, 1998**. This year's meeting is being held in conjunction with The American Institute for Biological Sciences and eight other societies. The theme is "Ecological Exchanges Between Major Ecosystems" and some 4,200 scientists will be in attendance. The meeting will feature symposia, field trips, and numerous poster and paper presentations. For more information and registration forms, please visit <http://esa.sdsc.edu/>.

- Fragmentation
- Presence of Endangered spp

*People
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Remarks of Mike Dombek
BASS Anglers Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S.)
August 6, 1998

Legacy of the Clean Water Act

Over 25 years ago, the American people and their elected representatives in Congress made a commitment to restore and protect our Nation's waters through the passage of the Clean Water Act. The Act established two goals:

- 1) Restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the Nations waters and
- 2) Attainment and maintenance of fishable and swimmable waters.

We have much to celebrate about the Clean Water Act! Significant progress has been made in controlling and repairing the degradation of our waterways. Witness, for example, the improvements in many of our urban watersheds such as the Potomac, a river whose basin has millions of people living within miles of its shores.

Prior to the passage of the Act, the river was often referred to as an open sewer. Clean up of point source pollution in the Potomac helped turn the river around -- which is no surprise to anyone who follows the BASSMASTER tournament trail. In 1994, the Potomac set numerous records for a BASS tournament, including most five fish limits in a three-day tournament (430) and the most fish caught in a three-day tournament (3,359). Twenty-five years ago, no one could even imagine fishing on the river there, let alone conducting a BASS tournament!

Success stories similar to the Potomac have been repeated across the nation as the legacy of the Clean Water Act has literally stopped billions of pounds of pollutants from entering our nation's waters. The Clean Water Act has resulted in significant improvement in controlling and repairing the chemical degradation of our waterways.

In 25 years, the percentage of assessed waters meeting the water quality goals for fishing and swimming has doubled. The rate of wetland loss has decreased to one fourth of the rate 25 years ago. Since 1982, soil erosion has been reduced by one third.

The number of people served by sewage treatment facilities has doubled.

These are significant accomplishments but much remains to be done. When you think that rivers are the arteries of the landscape -- pulsing clean water to crops, nourishing and cleansing families, cleaning and renewing life all across the landscape -- we still have a long way to go. Consider:

- The Nature Conservancy recently found that 35% of freshwater fishes, 38% of amphibians, 50% of all crayfish, and 56% of freshwater mussels are at some risk of extinction.
- An estimated 70-90% of riparian areas in the US have been extensively altered.
- Almost 40% of the perennial streams in the US are affected by reduced flows and 41% by siltation, bank erosion, and channelization.
- Approximately 53% of all wetlands in the US have been lost in the past 200 years.

I do not mean to take the luster off of today's event but we still have much work to do. Today, nearly 40% of the Nation's surveyed waters are still not clean enough for basic uses such as fishing and swimming. The national goal of providing for the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife will not be fully achieved without a renewed commitment and sustained effort to protect and restore fisheries habitat and enhance access for fisheries uses for present and future generations.

Non-point source pollutants, including runoff from agriculture, municipalities and mining, account for more than half of the Nation's water quality impairment. The rates of fish extinctions have doubled within the past century, with no indications these downward trends have been slowed by ~~are~~ *our* national pollution control efforts.

Watershed Approach

Our understanding of the dynamic structure of watersheds and aquatic ecosystems has evolved, and so should our management of them. Successful management of aquatic ecosystems is predicated upon the sound management of their watersheds.

This is not a new concept. The very foundation of the establishment of our National Forests revolves around Water and Watershed health.

We must protect our healthiest watersheds and restore those that are degraded. Healthy watersheds are resilient in the face of natural events such as floods, fire, drought, and they are more capable of absorbing the effects of human-induced disturbances.

of numerous economic value to natural, stable local economies

Watersheds absorb rain, recharge underground aquifers, provide cleaner water to people and reduce drinking water treatment costs. They provide wildlife and fish habitat, and they connect headwaters downstream and wetland and riparian areas to uplands.

Healthy watersheds dissipate floods across floodplains, increasing soil fertility and minimizing damage to lives, property and streams. The benefits of maintaining and restoring healthy watersheds are well documented.

Two cases are particularly illustrative of where people have come together to conserve and restore the health of the lands that sustain us all.

Three thousand miles separate the heavily urbanized Anacostia River watershed much of which lies in the nation's capital from the rural Mattole watershed in northern California. The Anacostia has been called one of the most polluted rivers in the country; the ecosystem robbed of its most basic functions by channelization, riparian and wetland habitat loss, forest removal, sewer overflows and other pollution.

The headwaters of the Mattole begin among stands of coastal redwoods and flow through Douglas fir-hardwood forests before emptying into the Pacific Ocean near Petrolina, California. Following World War II, more than 90% of the watershed's old growth coniferous forests were logged and an extensive road network developed. Moreover, little reforestation was attempted. As a result, by 1980, erosion rates in the watershed exceeded the typical rate of soil formation by more than two orders of magnitude.

The fact the land uses and past management have degraded these two watersheds is not unusual. Fewer than 2% of the rivers in the 48 contiguous states remain in a "high quality state." These rivers are examples of how the Clean Water Act, while providing protection from point source pollution, have fallen short from protecting watersheds from non-point pollution and land management practice.

Watersheds are the basic building blocks of resources stewardship. Whenever I hear scientists or natural resources managers getting hung up on the definitions of words such as ecosystem, I always steer them back to watersheds. We all live within a watershed and all of our actions on the land are reflected by their health. It is clear that we cannot meet the needs of people if we do not first secure the health of our watersheds.

Our collective challenge is to find ways to involve more people, to provide cleaner water, better fish habitat which will result in healthier watersheds and ultimately for this audience more and bigger bass!

There is no limit to the good that groups such as B.A.S.S. can do when you come together with ^{Federal} public and state agencies, local communities, academia, and conservationists in the interest of maintaining and restoring healthy watersheds. In 50 years we will not be remembered for the resources we developed; we will be thanked for those we maintained and restored for future generations.

We all live within a watershed. Go home after these fine days here in Greensboro and start a legacy of physical, biological and chemical integrity in the watershed where you and your family live. Thank you.

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Since the Act's passage:

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Watershed Approach

Our understanding of the dynamic structure of watersheds and aquatic ecosystems has evolved, and so should our management of them. Successful management of aquatic ecosystems is predicated upon the sound management of their watersheds.

I believe this so strongly that I made watershed health and restoration the top priority for the Forest Service in our agency's natural resource agenda. In fact, we are committed to making watershed health and restoration the overriding priority in all future forest plan revisions.

The point is that we must protect our healthiest watersheds and restore those that are degraded. Healthy watersheds are resilient in the face of natural events such as floods, fire, drought, and they are more capable of absorbing the effects of human-induced disturbances. Watersheds absorb rain, recharge underground aquifers, provide cleaner water to people and reduce drinking water treatment costs. They provide wildlife and fish habitat and they connect headwaters downstream and wetland and riparian areas to uplands.

Healthy watersheds dissipate floods across floodplains, increasing soil fertility and minimizing damage to lives, property and streams. The benefits of maintaining and restoring healthy watersheds are well documented.

Some of you may know that Jack Williams, Chris Wood and I recently edited and wrote a book entitled, *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*. In it we track a series of examples where people have come together in the name of restoring their watersheds. Perhaps the most important lesson we learned was that in the act of healing their lands and waters, citizens began to heal their communities, too.

Two cases are typical of the challenges facing restoration coalitions. Three thousand miles separate the heavily urbanized Anacostia River watershed much of which lies in the nation's capital from the rural Mattole watershed in northern California. The Anacostia has been called one of the most polluted rivers in the country; the ecosystem robbed of its most basic functions by channelization, riparian and wetland habitat loss, forest removal, sewer overflows and other pollution.

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There is no limit to the good that groups such as B.A.S.S. can do when you come together with public and state agencies, local communities, academia, and conservationists in the interest of maintaining and restoring healthy watersheds. Back on July 1, I sent a letter to all my employees. I'd like to share a portion of that message with you today -- because in my mind, whether we are anglers, biologists, or developers we all face the same challenge in the end: leaving behind a safer, cleaner environment for our children's children.

A conservation leader is someone who consistently errs on the side of maintaining and restoring healthy and diverse ecosystems even when -- no, especially when -- such decisions are not expedient or politically popular. Our collective challenge is to work together to maintain and restore ecologically and socially important environmental values.

I recently read a letter from a line officer who was chiding local managers for being behind schedule relative to meeting the region's "timber targets." My expectation is that line officers will demand similar accountability for meeting watershed restoration, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian, recreation, cultural resource or wilderness management goals.

We need to do a better job at talking about, and managing for, the values that are so important to so many people. Values such as wilderness and roadless areas, clean water, protection of rare species, old growth forests, naturalness -- these are the reasons most Americans cherish their public lands.

For example, twenty percent of the National Forest System is wilderness, and in the opinion of many, more should be. Our wilderness portfolio must embody a broader array of lands -- from prairie to old growth.

As world leaders in wilderness management, we should be looking to the future to better manage existing, and identify potential new, wilderness and other wild lands.

Fifty years ago, Aldo Leopold wrote, his seminal work, A Sand County Almanac. In it, Leopold spoke of his personal land ethic and the need for land managers to extend their own ecological conscience to resource decisions. The Forest Service natural resource agenda is an expression of our agency's land ethic. If we are to redeem our role as conservation leaders, it is not enough to be loyal to the Forest Service organization. *First and foremost*, we must be loyal to our land ethic.

I'll close today with the same message that I closed with to all our employees, "In 50 years we will not be remembered for the resources we developed; we will be thanked for those we maintained and restored for future generations."

We all live within a watershed. We all benefit from, and are responsible for, their health. Let's agree to begin the hard work of building the sort of coalitions we will need to finish the work of the Clean Water Act and make more of our watersheds fishable and swimmable. Let's begin today. Thank you.