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Remarks of Mike Dombeck
National Association of State Foresters
Monday, September 15, 1997

I'd like to thank Paul Frey and the rest of the State Foresters for inviting my leadership team and I to be here today. I truly enjoy working with the State Foresters and I sincerely appreciate all that you do to support our fire, inventory and monitoring, research, and stewardship programs.

In my short time here, I have always found the State Foresters to be an informed, insightful, and important voice and source of leadership for forest stewardship.

Joan Comanor and Janice McDougale

I'd like to start by thanking Joan Comanor for her excellent service over the past few years as the Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry. As most of you probably know, Joan has accepted a position working with Paul Johnson and our sister agency, the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Joan will continue to work with us as she helps NRCS and the Forest Service to more effectively integrate our landowner stewardship programs. It is a formidable and important challenge and I'm pleased to have Joan's continued help.

I'd also like to announce today the selection of Janice McDougale as the Associate Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry. Janice formerly served as the Associate Chief for National Forest Systems. I know that you will enjoy her energy and vigor and her commitment to conservation. Janice, please take a bow.

Organizational Effectiveness in the 21st Century

Before I became Chief, I looked with envy at the Forest Service's State and Private Forestry Program. Because of our collaboration, there was an organization with the staff and infrastructure to deliver conservation to where it was most needed – directly to the people.

Other Chiefs may have had different views but it is my firm belief that if we work closely with our partners such as the State Foresters, our State and Private Forestry programs can be the most potent force and effective voice for conservation and sound stewardship in the nation.

Think about it. Over 70% of our nation's forests are held in state or private hands. We have essentially two options. Do we want our national forests to become isolated islands while we neglect the vast majority of lands held in state or private ownership?

Or, should we couple our management of these lands with our sister state and federal agencies and private land owners to manage an interconnected whole – an integrated

landscape best able to meet the needs of present and future generations? It's really not a choice at all. The answer must be the latter.

In the past, I think we too often managed the Forest Service's three primary program areas – the National Forest System, State and Private Forestry, and Research – independent of each other.

The fact is that for decades, management of the national forest system was the Forest Service's highest priority. It is easy to understand why. The production of timber drove our budget processes, framed our internal reward system, and provided the primary impetus for congressional funding.

Today, timber harvest levels from national forests, which for many years remained consistently between 11-12 billion board feet per year, have declined to about 4 billion. At the same time we are seeing exponential growths in other recreational uses of the national forest system. By the year 2,000, we anticipate that our forests will sustain more than 1 billion recreation-related visits per year. At the same time:

- More and more private landowners and state agencies are looking to our State and Private Forestry programs to help them to manage their lands in a more sustainable manner.
- Our research capabilities are more and more in demand as consumers seek to recycle and conserve more wood fiber. Forest Service research is helping industry use new technologies to employ smaller and smaller wood diameter products. In the past few years alone, we have saved billions of board feet of wood fiber through Forest Service related research.

All of this is helping us to meet the ever-increasing demands of the American people. No longer is timber production the engine that drives the Forest Service – over the years, through the leadership of people such as Max Peterson, Dale Robertson, and Jack Ward Thomas; we have begun to move to a more balanced approach that values forest and watershed health above all else.

A Strategic Vision for State and Private Forestry

We must continue to move in this direction. To more effectively integrate research, state and private forestry, and management of the national forest system. It is my sincere belief that the future of this agency rests in large part with the ability of state and private forestry to:

- provide greater services to state resource management agencies;
- more effectively deliver programs to private landowners that encourage sustainable forest management; and

- communicate to a more environmentally conscious American public the importance of maintaining the health, diversity, and productivity of the land that sustains us.

That is why I am extremely pleased today to announce the creation of a team to help me develop a strategic vision for the future of State and Private Forestry. As an expression of our commitment to, and appreciation of all that you do, I have asked Paul Frey to allow a State Forester to co-lead this team.

Over the next 90 days, Phil Janik, Regional Forester from Alaska and Jim Hubbard, the Colorado State Forester will lead a team to craft this vision. Their recommendations will guide the direction of State and Private Forestry into the 21st century.

Criteria and Indicators

I talked earlier about integrating the work of all Forest Service programs so that we can more effectively deliver services to the American people. Through the leadership of the State Foresters, I think we have found a tool to help accomplish this challenge.

In response to a letter from Paul, in July I committed to using the criteria and indicators developed through the Montreal Process to provide a clearer vision for the management of our nation's public and private forest lands.

- We will link our manager's performance ratings to reflect these measures of sustainable forest management.
- We will adjust our inventory and monitoring – through both National Forest System management and State and Private – to integrate and measure long term attainment of sustainable forest management.
- We will increase our work with both national and international interests to employ and shape sustainable forest management criteria and indicators so that they are commonly and broadly applied across all landscapes.
- Ron Stewart will talk with you later about how we will integrate the criteria and indicators into RPA, the Government Performance and Results Act and other agency planning guidance.

Through the use of criteria and indicators for the first time ever we will have a common language to measure our effectiveness at managing sustainable forests. If employed consistently across multiple landscapes, this can potentially save us millions of dollars in duplication and redundant work, it will also enable resource managers to make better, more informed decisions on the land.

This is not only good economic and ecological policy – it is basic common sense. We will need your help, and the help of many others to employ these management tools on the ground. Some of that conversation will take place later today. I expect that we will

fully involve other conservation and industry interests in a balanced and collaborative manner.

The Blue Ribbon Panel on Forestry Inventory and Analysis could be an effective forum to begin these discussions. If so, I would like to see the Panel represent an even greater diversity of forest interests – with even more conservation and citizen group representation than in the past.

It is only through greater cooperation and closer working relationships that we will ever move beyond the polarization and litigation that too often marks forest management today. Call it what you will – ecosystem management, sustainable development, or sustainable forest management – what matters most is that diverse groups of people are working together to define and implement a shared vision for healthy, diverse, and productive lands.

That is the future of forest and resource management as I see it. And with your help, that's where we are headed. Thanks for all that you do.

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• Role of fire - Cooperative Fire Programs.

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We should
be talking
about what
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- Urban programs - 5 80% live in Urban areas
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- *Importance of Urban Forestry*

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Thank Paul Frey & Bill Imberger

Remarks of Mike Dombeck
Urban Forestry Conference
Atlanta, Georgia, September 18, 1997

Urban Natural Resource Stewardship:
A Pathway to Ecological Restoration and Social Renewal

I am delighted to be here. I am truly honored to be among such a dedicated group of conservationists and thank Deborah Gangloff and her fine organization, American Forests for inviting me to speak with you today. American Forests work in urban forestry is truly groundbreaking and instructive for all of us who care about the future of conservation in America.

Why Urban Natural Resource Stewardship?

I must admit that after growing up in the woods of Wisconsin, 20 miles from a town of 1,500 people, urban forestry did not come "naturally" to me. Growing up we had two career choices. We could brave the mosquitoes, gnats, and "no-see-ums," and work as loggers or become fishing guides on the lakes that define that wonderful country. I happily chose the latter.

So I remember very clearly when I first truly understood the importance of urban forests to people. I was visiting Greenpoint, New York, an area whose urban forest was decimated by an outbreak of exotic Asian Long-horned beetle. I was there to explain that even though we had to remove many of the trees that lined their streets and shaded their yards, that the Forest Service was committed to replanting and "re-greening," Greenpoint.

After attending a community meeting, an elderly woman took my arm and walked me outside. She pointed down a street whose trees were scheduled for removal and with tears in her eyes explained, "this is my street. I appreciate your help but how can you possibly replace the tree I planted the day I learned my son was killed in Vietnam?"

So today when people ask me why, as Chief of the Forest Service, I should emphasize the importance of urban resources stewardship, I tell them about Greenpoint.

I explain that for most Americans, urban conservation and stewardship is conservation and stewardship. Urban sprawl in the 1980s and 90s has taken place at three times the rate that occurred in the first part of the century. This presents a host of resource exploitation, pollution, and waste management problems.

Eighty percent of Americans live in towns and cities. These people are a critical support base for conservation in America. These are the people who very clearly understand how human impacts on the land affect environmental services such as clean air and water and their families' quality of their families' life.

In fact, these are the people whose elected officials will help to determine the future of the national forest system itself. The Forest Service must be a leader in promoting urban forestry and conservation. And in fact, our commitment to urban resources stewardship is greater today than ever before.

I've asked a team led by Michael Rains of the Northeastern Area to work with State and Private Forestry and my leadership team to develop a strategy to ensure that the Forest Service expends more energy, devotes more resources, delivers more services to the conservation of urban natural resources. I look forward to sharing with you the team's recommendations.

Benefits of Urban Natural Resource Stewardship

The fact that so many Americans are living in such concentrated areas has caused widespread and acute erosion and sedimentation problems; increased polluted run off and flooding; loss of open space and wetlands; loss of fish and wildlife habitats; and elevated air temperatures in urban and developing areas. All of these factors compromise:

- the cleanliness of the air we breathe,
- the quality of the water we drink,
- the soil that grows our food, and
- the open space to which we turn for respite and relief.

Less obvious, but equally important, increased urbanization disconnects people from the land that sustains them. This has profound social, economic, and ecological effects. 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 floodplains, wetlands, and streamside corridors are over-developed.
- Air quality in urban areas is significantly diminished when urban forests are lost.

These are complicated issues but quite often their answer can be as simple as planting a tree.

As I learned in Greenpoint, trees are often the most direct link between people and their urban environments. Trees intrinsically improve society and secure tranquility. Planting a tree not only yields environmental and social benefits, it affirms our optimism for the future.

The simple act of planting trees – of regreening our urban forests – yields incredible benefits. Forest Service research documents that a single mature tree catches and stores up to 26 pounds of carbon dioxide from the air and releases enough oxygen for a family of four to breathe for a full year.

Other research demonstrates how urban forests help to reduce the effects of storm-water runoff.

For example, a study of the Gwynn's Falls watershed in Baltimore, Maryland indicates that heavily forested areas can reduce total runoff by more than 25% and increase low water flows by up to 13% over areas that lack trees.

Even rare fish, wildlife, and plant species benefit from urban forests. For example, Cook County, Chicago – the most densely populated county in that metropolitan area – provides a home to 20 wildlife species and 130 plant species that are listed as threatened or endangered by the state of Illinois.

Here in Atlanta, a recent study documents that planting three single trees of the right species and in the right locations, can reduce the average home's air-conditioning costs by 40%. This example is borne out in many other studies across the country. In my home state of Wisconsin, a similar study documented the following benefits for the people of Milwaukee. Increasing the city's tree canopy from 16% to 40% would help to:

- Sequester nearly five tons of airborne carbon, at a value of \$4.4 million dollars.
- Save homeowners approximately \$20 on their average energy bill.
- Save approximately \$336,000 per year in clean-up costs from erosion flood control.
- Save approximately \$15.4 million dollars by offsetting the need to build additional storm water storage facilities.

The average cost of cooling a home in Milwaukee is \$200. To reduce that demand by 1 kilowatt hour would cost consumers about one cent to plant a tree; 2.5 cents to improve the efficiency of electrical appliances; or ten cents to build a new power plant. These types of savings and benefits from urban conservation are transferable across the nation.

Although many of the examples I share with you focus on areas east of the Mississippi River, the West is the fastest growing part of the country with the largest percentage of people living in urban areas. Many western cities are already grappling with the effects of urbanization on the environment. In many of our national forests such as the Los Padres in California and the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie in Washington, recreation demands from urban visitors are growing exponentially. Urban resource stewardship helps to ensure that all people – regardless of where they live – can share, enjoy, and benefit from a healthy environment.

Urban Resource Stewardship and the Restoration Era

Our challenge is to communicate these benefits, to share our resources, and to lend our expertise to town planners, community organizers, and civic organizations nationwide.

We are here today because we care enough to make a difference. We must better understand how our daily actions – whether we live in Washington D.C. or Bend, Oregon – affect the health, diversity, and productivity of the land. Our challenge is to help people appreciate the interconnectedness of society to the land that sustains us all. We are here because we accept the responsibility for being better stewards of our planet and care enough to leave a better world for those who follow.

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." Our being here today is an affirmation that this is not enough. We must do more. We know today that we cannot simply preserve our national parks and wilderness areas 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 ocean-going rivers, national parks and forests.

I believe the 21st century is ushering in an era of restoration. This Restoration Era 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. We already see the harbingers of this change all across the country. For example:

- Through the leadership of Under Secretary Jim Lyons, twelve Urban Resources Partnerships have been formed that serve as models for increasing awareness of, energizing support for, and communicating the importance of urban resource stewardship.
- In Oregon, state sponsored watershed coalitions are bringing industry and conservationists together in the name of conservation.
- In Washington D.C., the Department of Agriculture is working with community leaders to reduce hunger, improve recreational opportunities for kids, and clean up degraded areas.
- In southwestern Idaho water users and anglers are collaborating to ensure the future of the Henrys Fork watershed, a world-renowned fishery.

In urban and rural areas alike, a remarkable transformation is taking place.

Through the work of organizations such as American Forests, the National Tree Trust Foundation (which has planted over 5 million trees) and the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, the physical act of ecological restoration is reuniting communities and neighborhoods. By restoring the health, diversity, and productivity of our lands and waters we are healing our communities themselves – improving the quality of life, reducing crime, increasing energy efficiency, and saving countless tax dollars.

As the writer Barry Lopez puts it:

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.

Like the barn raisings of old, community-based restorations are re-connecting people to the land that sustains them.

Your work makes this ecological restoration and social renewal possible. I am honored to commend the resources of the Forest Service to this noble and worthy cause. You are proving that together we can make a difference.

Remarks of Mike Dombeck
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Through the work of organizations such as American Forests, the National Tree Trust Foundation (which has planted over 5 million trees) and the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, the physical act of ecological restoration is reuniting communities and neighborhoods. By restoring the health, diversity, and productivity of our lands and waters we are healing our communities themselves – improving the quality of life, reducing crime, increasing energy efficiency, and saving countless tax dollars.

As the writer Barry Lopez puts it:

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.

Like the barn raisings of old, community-based restorations are re-connecting people to the land that sustains them.

Your work makes this ecological restoration and social renewal possible. I am honored to commend the resources of the Forest Service to this noble and worthy cause. You are proving that together we can make a difference.

Remarks of Mike Dombeck
7th Urban Forestry Conference
Atlanta, Georgia, September 18, 1997

Urban Natural Resource Stewardship:
A Pathway to Ecological Restoration and Social Renewal

I am delighted to be here. I am truly honored to be among such a dedicated group of conservationists and thank Deborah Gangloff and her fine organization, American Forests for inviting me to speak with you today. American Forests work in urban forestry is truly groundbreaking and instructive for all of us who care about the future of conservation in America.

Why Urban Natural Resource Stewardship?

I must admit that after growing up in the woods of Wisconsin, 20⁵ miles from a town of 1,500 people, ^{in the Chequamegon N.F.} urban forestry did not come “naturally” to me. Growing up we had two career choices. We could brave the mosquitoes, gnats, and “no-see-ums,” and work as loggers or become fishing guides on the lakes that define that wonderful country. I happily chose the latter.

So I remember very clearly when I first truly understood the importance of urban forests to people. I was visiting Greenpoint, New York, an area whose urban forest was decimated by an outbreak of ^{the} exotic Asian Long-horned beetle. I was there to explain that even though we had to remove many of the trees that lined their streets and shaded their yards, that the Forest Service was committed to replanting and “re-greening,” Greenpoint.

After attending a community meeting, an elderly woman took my arm and walked me outside. She pointed down a street whose trees were scheduled for removal and with tears in her eyes explained, “this is my street. I appreciate your help but how can you possibly replace the tree I planted ^{as a memorial to} ~~the day~~ I learned my son ^{who} ~~was~~ killed in Vietnam?”

So today when people ask me why, as Chief of the Forest Service, I should emphasize the importance of urban resources stewardship, I tell them about Greenpoint.

I explain that for most Americans, urban conservation and stewardship is conservation and stewardship. Urban sprawl in the 1980s and 90s has taken place at three times the rate that occurred in the first part of the century. This presents a host of resource exploitation, pollution, and waste management problems.

Eighty percent of Americans live in towns and cities. These people are a critical support base for conservation in America. These are the people who very clearly understand how human impacts on the land affect environmental services such as clean air and water and their families' quality of ~~their families'~~ life.

In fact, these are the people whose elected officials will help to determine the future of the national forest system itself. The Forest Service must be a leader in promoting urban forestry and conservation. And in fact, our commitment to urban resources ~~stewardship~~ is greater today than ever before.

established
I've asked a team led by Michael Rains of the Northeastern Area to work with State and Private Forestry and my leadership team to develop a strategy to ensure that the Forest Service expends more energy, devotes more resources, delivers more services to the conservation of urban natural resources. I look forward to sharing with you the team's recommendations.

Benefits of Urban Natural Resource Stewardship

The fact that so many Americans are living in such concentrated areas has caused widespread and acute erosion and sedimentation problems; increased polluted run off and flooding; loss of open space and wetlands; loss of fish and wildlife habitats; and elevated air temperatures in urban and developing areas. All of these factors compromise:

- the cleanliness of the air we breathe,
- the quality of the water we drink,

- the soil that grows our food, and
- the open space to which we turn for respite and relief.

Less obvious, but equally important, increased urbanization disconnects people from the land that sustains them. This has profound social, economic, and ecological effects. 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 floodplains, wetlands, and streamside corridors are over-developed.
- Air quality in urban areas is significantly diminished when urban forests are lost.

These are complicated issues but quite often their answer can be as simple as planting a tree.

As I learned in Greenpoint, trees are often the most direct link between people and their urban environments. Trees intrinsically improve society and secure tranquility. Planting a tree not only yields environmental and social benefits, it affirms our optimism for the future. The simple act of planting trees – of regreening our urban forests – yields incredible benefits. Forest Service research documents that a single mature tree catches and stores up to 26 pounds of carbon dioxide from the air and releases enough oxygen for a family of four to breathe for a full year.

Other research demonstrates how urban forests help to reduce the effects of storm-water runoff.

For example, a study of the Gwynn's Falls watershed in Baltimore, Maryland indicates that heavily forested areas can reduce total runoff by more than 25% and increase low water flows by up to 13% over areas that lack trees.

Even rare fish, wildlife, and plant species benefit from urban forests. For example, Cook County, Chicago – the most densely populated county in that metropolitan area – provides a home to 20 wildlife species and 130 plant species that are listed as threatened or endangered by the state of Illinois.

Here in Atlanta, a recent study documents that planting three single trees of the right species and in the right locations, can reduce the average home's air-conditioning costs by 40%. This example is borne out in many other studies across the country. In my home state of Wisconsin, a similar study documented the following benefits for the people of Milwaukee. Increasing the city's tree canopy from 16% to 40% would help to:

- Sequester nearly five tons of airborne carbon, at a value of \$4.4 million dollars.
- Save homeowners approximately \$20 on their average energy bill.

- Save approximately \$336,000 per year in clean-up costs from erosion flood control.
- Save approximately \$15.4 million dollars by offsetting the need to build additional storm water storage facilities.

The average cost of cooling a home in Milwaukee is \$200. To reduce that demand by 1 kilowatt hour would cost consumers about ~~one~~ 10 cents to plant a tree; 2.5 cents to improve the efficiency of electrical appliances; or ten cents to build a new power plant. These types of savings and benefits from urban conservation are transferable across the nation.

or a single
penny to
plant a tree

Although many of the examples I share with you focus on areas east of the Mississippi River, the West is the fastest growing part of the country with the largest percentage of people living in urban areas. Many western cities are already grappling with the effects of urbanization on the environment.

In many of our national forests such as the Los Padres in California and the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie in Washington, recreation demands from urban visitors are growing exponentially. Urban resource stewardship helps to ensure that all people – regardless of where they live – can share, enjoy, and benefit from a healthy environment.

Urban Resource Stewardship and the Restoration Era

Our challenge is to communicate these benefits, to share our resources, and to lend our expertise to town planners, community organizers, and civic organizations nationwide.

We are here today because we care enough to make a difference. We must better understand how our daily actions – whether we live in Washington D.C. or Bend, Oregon – affect the health, diversity, and productivity of the land. Our challenge is to help people appreciate the interconnectedness of society to the land that sustains us all.

We are here because we accept the responsibility for being better stewards of our planet and care enough to leave a better world for those who follow.

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." Our being here today is an affirmation that this is not enough. We must do more. We know today that we cannot simply preserve our national parks and wilderness areas 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 ocean-going rivers, national parks and forests.

I believe the 21st century is ushering in an era of restoration. This Restoration Era 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. We already see the harbingers of this change all across the country. For example:

- Through the leadership of Under Secretary Jim Lyons, twelve Urban Resources Partnerships have been formed that serve as models for increasing awareness of, energizing support for, and communicating the importance of urban resource stewardship.
- In Oregon, state sponsored watershed coalitions are bringing industry and conservationists together in the name of conservation.

- In Washington D.C., the Department of Agriculture is working with community leaders to reduce hunger, improve recreational opportunities for kids, and clean up degraded areas.
- In southwestern Idaho water users and anglers are collaborating to ensure the future of the Henrys Fork watershed, a world-renowned fishery.

In urban and rural areas alike, a remarkable transformation is taking place.

Through the work of organizations such as American Forests, the National Tree Trust Foundation (which has planted over 5 million trees) and the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, the physical act of ecological restoration is reuniting communities and neighborhoods.

By restoring the health, diversity, and productivity of our lands and waters we are healing our communities themselves – improving the quality of life, reducing crime, increasing energy efficiency, and saving countless tax dollars.

As the writer Barry Lopez puts it:

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.

Like the barn raisings of old, community-based restorations are re-connecting people to the land that sustains them.

Your work makes this ecological restoration and social renewal possible. I am honored to commend the resources of the Forest Service to this noble and worthy cause. You are proving that together we can make a difference.

**Remarks of Mike Dombeck
Society of Environmental Journalists
October 3, 1997**

Watersheds and the Evolving American Land Ethic

I'm truly honored to speak with you today. I know of no other group that has the potential to educate people about the importance of conservation as this one. I'd like to briefly talk with you today about watersheds and the evolving American land ethic.

Watersheds are the basic building block of sound resource stewardship. Whenever I hear scientists or natural resource managers getting hung up on the definition of words such as ecosystem, biome, or landscape, 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.

Watersheds perform three basic functions. They catch, store and safely release water over time. The health of our watersheds and forests is reflected by their ability to produce sustainable supplies of wood products, clean water, recreational opportunities, and fish and wildlife habitats. Healthy watersheds retain historic 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 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 streamcourse itself.

The benefits of healthy watersheds are well documented in a forthcoming book, *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices* due for release by the American Fisheries Society in 1997). The message of the good that we can do when public and state agencies, local communities, academia, and conservation interests come together is repeated over and over again in the book.

Written and edited by Jack Williams of the Bureau of Land Management, Chris Wood of the Forest Service, and myself, *Watershed Restoration, Principles and Practices* documents thirteen 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 local landowners, farmers, and ranchers working in partnership with scientists, environmentalists, government agencies, and a host of local citizens.

People working together to restore their lands and waters; in the Forest Service, we call this collaborative stewardship. But it is really just plain common sense. We simply cannot meet the needs of present or future generations without first sustaining the health of the land. This is the reason that one of my first acts as Forest Service Chief was to implement new performance measures for all agency managers that are based on the health of the land. We cannot allow one use or value to take precedence over any other.

Our most important task is to manage our forests in ways that utilize our resources without jeopardizing the opportunity for future generations to have healthy, diverse, and productive lands. Nothing less will be acceptable! This is the essence of 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.

The community watershed restorations such as those depicted in *Watershed Restoration*, herald a new American Restoration 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. We already see the harbingers of this change all across the country. Two case studies are illustrative of this trend.

Three thousand miles separate the heavily urbanized Anacostia River watershed – much of which lays in 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 among stands of coastal redwoods and flow through Douglas fir-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. 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 that land use practices and past management actions degraded the two river systems is not unusual. Fewer than 2% of the rivers and streams in the contiguous 48 states remain in a "high quality state." 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 rebuilding their surrounding communities.

This is critically important because as more and 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 ramifications. For example:

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

These are complicated issues but quite often their answer can be as simple as planting a tree.

Trees are the most direct link between people and their environment – be it urban or rural. Trees intrinsically improve society and secure tranquility. Planting a tree not only yields environmental and social benefits, it affirms our optimism for the future – our belief that ours is a way of life passing on and that we are surely leaving a better place for those we know will follow.

The simple act of planting trees – of regreening our forests – yields incredible benefits. Forest Service research documents that a single mature tree catches and stores up to 26 pounds of carbon dioxide from the air and releases enough oxygen for a family of four to breathe for a full year. In Atlanta, a recent study documents that planting three single trees of the right species and in the right locations, can reduce the average home's air-conditioning costs by 40%.

Other research demonstrates how urban forests help to reduce the effects of storm-water runoff. For example, a study of the Gwynn's Falls watershed in Baltimore, Maryland indicates that heavily forested areas can reduce total runoff by more than 25% and increase low flow runoff by up to 13% over areas that lack trees.

Even rare fish, wildlife, and plant species benefit from urban forests. For example, Cook County, Chicago – the most densely populated area in that metropolitan area – provides a home to 20 wildlife species and 130 plant species that are listed as threatened or endangered by the state of Illinois.

By restoring the health, diversity, and productivity of our lands and waters we are healing our communities themselves – improving the quality of life, reducing crime, increasing energy efficiency, and saving countless tax dollars. Like the barn raisings of old, community-based restorations are re-connecting people to the land that sustains them. By no means are collaborative watershed approaches a panacea to resolving difficult resource issues. But they do provide a new framework for moving beyond the polarization of the natural resource debate that too often permeates Washington, D.C. For example:

- Rather than fighting over the last remaining old growth, wouldn't it be more constructive to expand *Jobs in the Woods* type programs across the nation to retrain displaced loggers and mill workers to assist with physical restoration?
- Rather than debating public land divestiture proposals, wouldn't it be far more productive to assist rural communities to diversify their economies?
- Instead of weakening clean water protections wouldn't the American people rather we spend our time finding ways to fund watershed restorations that improve the health, diversity, and productivity of the land?

Three principles are critical to the success of any successful community-based project or resource coalition.

First, collaborative groups must be balanced among the full array of users and diversity of interests.

Second, they should immediately identify a shared vision or a collective goal for conserving or restoring healthy ecosystems.

Third, collaboration is a process not an outcome. It should never be used to abrogate decisionmaking responsibilities – whether they rest with federal, state or even 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.

These principles are the essence of the future of forest management and watershed restoration. And, as a former Forest Service employee, Aldo Leopold, might have said, a basic requirement of membership in the land community.

Collaboratively working with people is the foundation we will use as we move into the next century. In addition, we will live by a land ethic that protects the rights of future generations to use their natural inheritance and benefit from the decisions that we make today.

Remarks of Mike Dombeck
Recreation Exchange
October 22, 1997

Introduction

It's great to be with you today. I'll only talk for a few minutes because I really came here to listen to you and to share ideas about recreation management on Forest Service managed lands. I'd like to talk about some of the wonderful opportunities and unique challenges faced by the recreation industry and federal land managers, alike.

Back in April, my leadership team and I identified the following priorities for the agency.

- First, maintaining and restoring water quality and quantity, riparian health, forest ecosystem health, and rangeland ecosystem health.
- Second, promoting partnerships and the ecologically responsible recreation use of public lands.

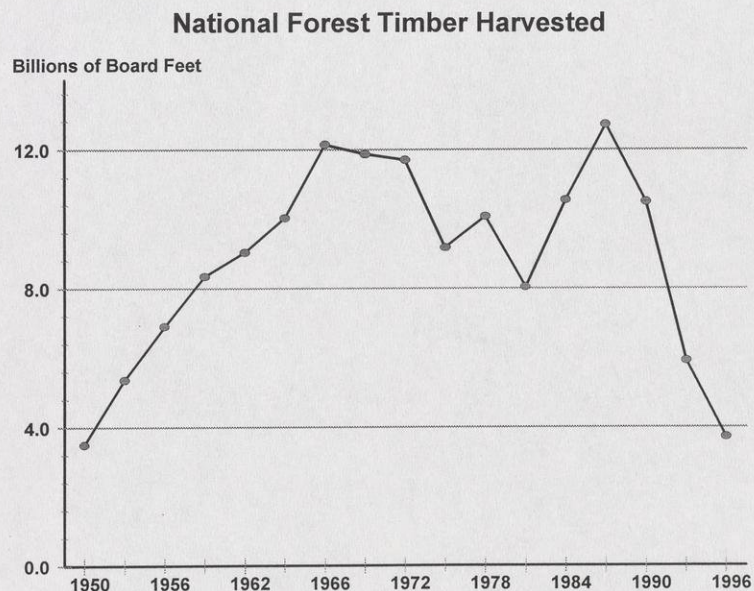
In the past, we were sometimes criticized for seeming to value or emphasize one suite of multiple uses -- commodity production -- over other uses. To be sure, we also developed world class research capabilities, a first-rate State and Private Forestry program, and provided many other multiple use benefits. But, commodities such as timber seemed to drive our budgets, our incentive and reward systems; it even drove a fair amount of our wildlife and fish habitat work, watershed restoration, and recreation projects.

Shifting Values and Uses

Today, however, society's priorities are shifting. People care deeply about the management and conservation of their public land legacy. Nowhere is that more clear than with recreation on national forests and grasslands.

In the back of the room, I've left copies of my remarks. There are two tables in it. They graphically point to the dramatic social changes confronting the Forest Service.

The first chart shows that in the past ten years, timber harvest on federal lands has gone from approximately 11 billion board feet to 4

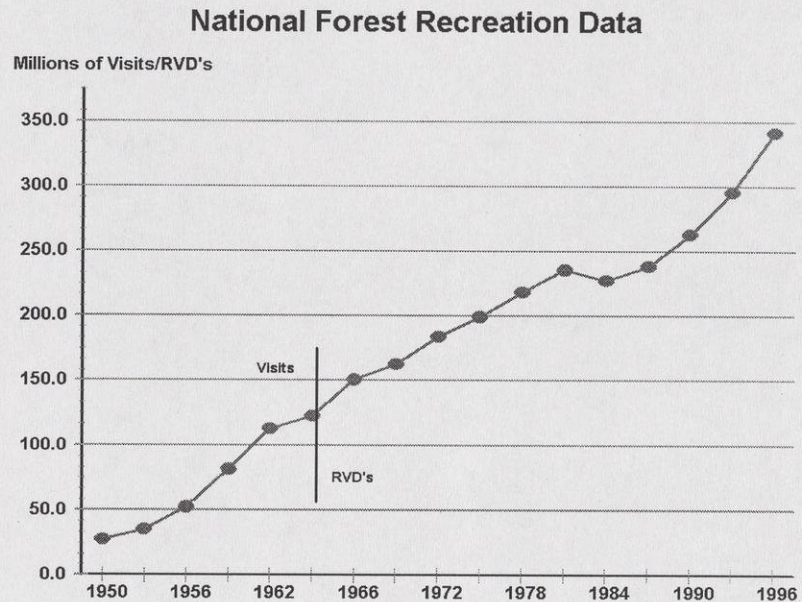


billion. Federal lands that used to supply 25% of the nation's soft wood saw timber; today supply about 10%.

As timber harvest has declined, the growth of recreation usage of national forests and grasslands has exploded.

For example, in 1980, 560 million recreational visits were made to national forests. That figure grew to about 860 million by 1996.

Recreation on Forest Service managed lands contributes \$112 billion dollars to state economies and local communities each year.



This is not new information to you but it illustrates major changes in use patterns of our nation's forests and grasslands.

In a relatively short period, and through the able leadership of people such as Lyle Lavery and dozens of other talented Forest Service employees, we have become *the world's largest supplier of outdoor recreation*. Over 800 million visits occur on national forests and grasslands per year. This represents almost 50% of all recreation visits to our nation's public lands.

With all due respect to Bob Stanton, the Forest Service is the Proctor and Gamble of outdoor recreation with some of the strongest "outdoor recreation brands" in the world. After the year 2000, we expect recreation-related visits to Forest Service managed lands to exceed one billion visits.

Such a dramatic growth presents us all with some significant challenges and opportunities. I have given Forest Service employees a single basic charge: to help make watershed health, ecosystem health, the health of the land -- whatever we call it -- the driving force. The production of commodities such as timber will remain an important use of national forest lands. These are the things that make multiple use agencies unique and relevant and important. But 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, recreation management, or watershed restoration.

Economic Contributions of Public Land Recreation

Our challenge is to better understand the economic contributions of public lands to local, regional, and the national economies. I've always been baffled by the fact that we have people in the Department of Agriculture who can track the value of soybeans, corn, or wheat to the penny by the day. Yet, rarely is recreation on federal lands discussed as a revenue generator. Instead it is too often perceived as an amenity – something extra that we are privileged to enjoy. That's beginning to change.

Just last year, we discovered that wildlife and fish related recreation on Forest Service lands generated over \$12 billion to local communities. That's \$12 billion in revenue that small communities can use to build ball parks, schools, and hospitals. As an industry, it is your best interests to demonstrate to the policymakers, folks in Congress, and community leaders just how significant the value of recreation is to economic stability and community well being.

Not only does recreation provide an economic impact to local communities, but through the Recreation Fee Demonstration Project it will help us to return more revenues to meet the growing recreational demands of the American people. Revenue from the Recreation Fee Demo will enable us to begin to address the backlog of maintenance needs, improve and expand interpretative programs, upgrade recreational facilities, reduce vandalism. In short, these additional revenues will be returned back to the sited from whom they were collected in order to improve the overall recreation experience. Now, I think we owe it to people to explain that these are relatively modest fees. We don't want the "backyard of the little guy" to become the "playground of the wealthy." The fact is that 99% of our recreation lands will remain free for all to recreate on.

Conservation Challenges and Opportunities

Dramatic recreation growth poses other challenges. As I mentioned, our first priority must be to the land and its attendant resources. We will never be able to meet the needs of people if we cannot secure the health of the land. Inevitably, such growth leaves a mark on the land. Our challenge is to promote environmentally responsible recreation use of public lands. Public land recreationists are at a true crossroads. There should be no greater supporters of a strong conservation ethic than public land recreationists. More so than any other use, the quality of your experience is dependent on healthy, diverse, and productive forests and grasslands.

As industry leaders you have a terrific opportunity to both help provide for quality recreation experiences and to promote a conservation ethic among the millions of Americans who recreate on public lands. *We must be fierce advocates of living within the limits of the land.*

As people look for more and more places to escape from the tug and pull of day to day stress, they will increasingly look to recreate on public lands. Some come to connect

with nature. Some to enjoy the companionship of friends and family. And some to paraphrase Huck Finn, "to flat out get away." For whatever reason they come, they expect a healthy and diverse forest ecosystem. As more and more people appreciate the recreational opportunities available to them, they will tread more lightly on the land. If people respect and care for the land; the land will continue to serve people.

Partnerships

Finally, I wanted to talk about partnerships. More so than any other program with the possible exception of Wildlife and Fish, the Forest Service Recreation Program points to the value of partnerships. Public-private partnerships bring people together to advance common goals.

Partnerships demonstrate how state and federal agencies, conservationists, and industry -- can come together to reconnect their social and cultural values to the land that sustains them. I call this commitment to working with people *collaborative stewardship*. It is the dedication of Forest Service employees who go the extra mile and the commitment of folks such as you that help to stretch federal dollars and improve people's recreational experiences on federal lands. Creating successful partnerships takes creativity, patience, and a willingness to take risks and do things a little differently than in the past.

I'm thinking, for example, of Sheela McLean and Curtis Edwards, two forest rangers in Washington state who asked poet, William Stafford to help with interpretive signing along North Cascades Scenic Highway.

Tired of drafting the "same old thing" and fearing their words didn't do justice to the beautiful highway, they asked Stafford, a former poet laureate, write a series of poems to commemorate the roadway.

Here are a few lines from one of the poems, called, Where We Are:

Fog in the morning here
Will make some of the world far away
And the near only a hint. But rain
Will feel its blind progress along the valley,
Tapping to convert one boulder at a time
Into a glistening fact. Daylight will
Love what came.

Whatever fits will be welcome, whatever
Steps back in the fog will disappear
And hardly exist. You hear the river
Saying a prayer for all that's gone.

The initiative of the two rangers will deepen people's appreciation for the natural beauty of the area. Believe it or not, we are now actually looking to form other partnerships with

local poets. By thinking out of the box, the efforts of two Forest Service employees will make more meaningful the recreational experience of millions thousands of people.

I could recount any number of similar partnerships that people in this room have initiated or helped to make happen. The take away message is universal, if we work together we can both improve the quality of people's recreational experience and deepen their appreciation for the beauty and value of public lands.

Seeing the Forest for the Watershed

Technical Competency and Professional Confidence

When Dean Tombaugh invited me here to speak with you today, he asked me to address “confidence building” because he believes that educational programs are doing a better job of “developing competency” than they are of building confidence.

A better job of “developing competency than of building confidence.” Let’s talk about that for a moment. Most of the resource professionals of my generation chose their jobs because they enjoyed hunting and fishing, being alone in the woods, solving technical problems – we were fascinated by how natural systems worked and how they could be manipulated to provide for human needs. Our schools and universities taught us wonderful skills and exposed us to the best technical training. In short, they developed our “technical competency.”

Back then, that was enough. Because there were fewer people and fewer demands on the land, we could achieve our goals with less conflict. We helped define the starting point and decided how to get to the endpoint. That has grown more complex as society has changed and become more complex.

Today, we are faced with competing demands, new pressures on the land and greater challenges than ever before and better-informed people who care deeply about the land. Additionally, over time we have gained a deeper understanding of how our actions on the land affect the long-term health of ecological systems.

The people we serve, all of the people, are now more fully engaged in defining how natural resources – particularly publicly owned resources – should be managed. Today, most of our resource challenges are less technical than they are social.

Thus, it is no longer enough to simply be “technically competent.”

Today, we must also be what I'll call, "professionally confident." Not the sort of confident that dictates outcomes or drives agendas; rather, confident enough to let go of the reins. To foster, even encourage debate. The hardest thing for many resource professionals of my generation to do is to simply "let go."

Yet, the skills the Forest Service most needs are those of the facilitator, the supplier of knowledge and expertise, the educators and communicators who help people search for shared solutions. I call the place where technical competency and professional confidence meet, *collaborative stewardship*.

Collaborative stewardship entails bringing people together. If we are to maintain and conserve the land's health, we must learn to balance local and national needs. We must learn to more effectively work with people who use and care about the land while serving their evolving needs. We must be catalysts in bringing people together.

Why Watersheds?

About now you may be wondering what, if anything this talk has to do with its title, “Seeing the Forest for the Watershed.” Well, for many years we “saw the forest for the trees.” The production of commodities – primarily timber – drove our budgets, our priorities, and our rewards system.

But, in the past ten 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. Federal lands used to supply 25% of the nation’s softwood saw timber; today they supply about 10%.

At the same time, 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. Recreation on Forest Service managed lands contributes \$112 billion dollars to state economies and local communities each year.

These trends represent some of the major changes in public expectations and use patterns of our nation's forests and grasslands. Our record of commodity production, is not something to be ashamed of -- quite the contrary.

Timber from Forest Service lands helped build homes for service men and their families after World War II. It fueled the industrial growth of this nation. It helped to sustain economies and resource dependent communities. It helped the United States become a society of single-family homes.

Today, however, society's priorities are shifting. Our management priorities must keep pace with our scientific knowledge of ecological systems and society's values. Our challenge is to link our processes, rewards, and incentives to the health of the land, to places where we intersect with societies needs.

Today, I instruct my 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 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.

There are many reasons to see our forests for our watersheds. Watersheds are the basic building block of sound resource stewardship. We all live within a watershed and all of our actions on the land are reflected by their health. Watersheds perform three basic functions. They catch, store and safely release water over time. Nothing is more intrinsic to resource management than those basic functions.

The health of our watersheds and forests is reflected by their ability to produce sustainable supplies of wood products, clean water, recreational opportunities, and fish and wildlife habitats. Our activities cannot diminish the land's productivity for future generations.

Healthy watersheds retain historic 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 healthy watersheds are well documented in a forthcoming book, *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*, due for release by the American Fisheries Society in several weeks. The message of the good that we can do when public and state agencies, local communities, academia, and conservationists come together is repeated over and over again in the book.

Written and edited by Jack Williams of the Bureau of Land Management, Chris Wood of the Forest Service, and myself, the book documents 13 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.

People working together to restore their lands and waters; if you help them, this is where you will meet your greatest challenges and greatest rewards as resource professionals. To be successful requires a good bit of “professional confidence.” Given your training, it shouldn’t be too hard to plan a timber harvest; to conduct a fish survey; to re-seed an old road. What *is* really difficult is to bring together people of different backgrounds, interests, and perspectives and work with them to identify a shared vision for managing healthy lands and waters.

There is no other way. We simply 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.

Watershed Restoration

Our most important task is to manage our forests 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 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 *Watershed Restoration* herald a new American restoration 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. We already see the harbingers of this change all across the country.

Here in North Carolina, the Tennessee Valley Authority created multiple River Action Teams, which include a diverse group of resource professionals, and had them coordinate with community leaders within the Hiwassee River watershed. The River Action Team and the community leaders worked together to:

- Balance human use of the watershed with the need to restore ecological integrity
- Factor the needs of stakeholders in watershed management
- Prioritize protection of high-quality or rare aquatic resources

The team worked with local communities to develop a methodology to ensure that scarce funds are targeted where they can do the most good. The criteria are:

- Protect “high value” resources
- Solve problems that most threaten the sustainability of the watershed
- Target and emphasize collaborative partnerships

In an era of government downsizing, it is essential that less federal funding does not result in less conservation.

Role of State and Private Lands

This is critically important because as more and 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 ramifications. 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 over-developed.
- Air quality in urban areas is significantly diminished when urban forests are lost.

Consider this fact. Approximately 60% of the nation's forestlands are owned by non-industrial private landowners.

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

We must expand landowner assistance, stewardship, and stewardship incentives programs to assist these private landowners. And I know from my state forester colleagues that there are innumerable private woodland owners who want to participate in watershed restorations, habitat conservation programs, and development of sustainable forest management plans.

As the next generation of natural resource professionals, your challenge will be to continue and expand the dialogue, to continue to educate and communicate to people the importance of conserving and restoring the health diversity, and productivity of *all* our lands.

The Role of Science in Forest Management and Restoration

As a Ph.D., who spent several years doing research, I must throw in a plug for science. Scientific research and study is often slow and painstaking but it is absolutely essential to good stewardship. From a practical standpoint, given the increased scrutiny of, and concern for, national forest management if our plans are not based on the best available science, they won't pass legal muster. In fact, the definition of "scientific legitimacy" that has become accepted by the courts is essentially the same that scientific historian, Thomas Kuhn advanced. Namely, that a scientific fact is only accepted if a consensus of leading scientists agrees upon it.

Although I believe that most of our challenges are less technical than they are social, we do have significant scientific hurdles. The application of the social sciences to watershed restoration, forest and rangeland management – actually all natural resource management – is limited.

We need to better understand how local, regional, even international economies drive how people use the land. We need to find more effective ways to display the economic values of recreation opportunities on national forests; the intrinsic value of undeveloped forests; the social values afforded to families and local communities by the very presence of public lands. We must find ways to help struggling resource-dependent communities to diversify their economies and to put displaced workers back to work restoring their forests.

A second formidable challenge is expanding our scientific analysis from small areas over limited periods of time to larger scales that include river basins and extend through decades.

Through examples in the Appalachians, the Pacific Northwest, and the Columbia River Basin we are learning the value of taking bigger looks over longer time frames.

By restoring the health, diversity, and productivity of our lands and waters we can heal our communities themselves – improving the quality of life, reducing crime, increasing energy efficiency, and saving countless tax dollars.

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. But they do provide a new framework for moving beyond the polarization of the natural resource debate that too often permeates my present home, Washington, D.C

In closing I'd simply like to restate the findings of *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*.

- Successful watershed coalitions must be balanced among the full array of users and diversity of interests.
- They should immediately 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 responsibilities – 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.

So my advice to you is quite simple. In your remaining time here, study hard, listen to your professors, and achieve technical competency. And as your careers progress, make a commitment to strive for professional confidence by engaging your friends, your neighbors – your very communities themselves in finding ways to live more lightly on the land.

The combination of technical competency and professional confidence are the essence of what is required of a successful resource professional – and, as Aldo Leopold would have said, a basic requirement of membership in the land community.

**Remarks of Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies
November 10, 1997**

***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 and honored to be named Adjunct Professor on the Faculty at the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. I would like to thank Dean Gordon and the Board of Permanent Officers for their kind recognition.

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 – as resource professionals, educators, legislators, and communicators – 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

About now you should be wondering what, if anything this talk has to do with its title, "To See the Forest for the Watershed." Well, 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.

Our record of commodity production is not something to be ashamed of. Timber from Forest Service lands helped to win World War II and to build homes for returning service men and their families. It fueled the industrial growth of this nation. It helped to sustain economies and resource dependent communities. It helped the United States become a society of single-family homes. But our management priorities must keep pace with both our scientific knowledge of ecological systems and society's values.

Today, I instruct my 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 forthcoming book, *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*, due for release by the American Fisheries Society in several weeks. 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.

People working together to restore their lands and waters; if you help them, this is where you will find your greatest challenges and rewards as resource professionals. Given your training, it should not be too difficult to plan a timber harvest, to conduct a fish survey, to re-seed an old road. What is really difficult is to bring together and place those activities within a shared vision of healthy lands and waters.

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. Closer to Yale, New York City recently 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.

This is precisely why efforts such as the Yale Forest Forum's Initiative for Private Forests are so important. 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.

One of the key tenets of Yale's efforts is the Partnership for Research on Private Forests. The partnership will help to address private forestland research questions, promote research in key regions; and assist landowners to make informed decisions for their lands. We must expand landowner assistance, stewardship, and stewardship incentives programs to assist private landowners.

I know from my state forester colleagues that there are innumerable private woodland owners who want to participate in watershed restorations, habitat conservation programs, and development of sustainable forest management plans. Dean Gordon, I think this so important that I am committing the assistance of Forest Service Research to your efforts.

As the next generation of natural resource professionals, your challenge will be 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 Watershed Restoration 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 forthcoming 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.

The Role of Science in Forest Management and Restoration

As a Ph.D., who spent several years doing research, I know that scientific research and study is often slow and painstaking but it is absolutely essential to good stewardship. From a practical standpoint, given the increased scrutiny of and concern for national forest management, if our plans are not based on the best available science, they will not pass legal muster.

Although I believe that most of our challenges are less technical than they are social, we do have significant scientific hurdles. The application of the social sciences to forest and rangeland management, for example, – actually all natural resource management – is limited.

We need to better understand how local, regional, even international economies drive how people use the land. We need to find more effective ways to display: the economic values of recreation opportunities on national forests; the intrinsic value of undeveloped forests; and the social values afforded to families and local communities by the very presence of public lands. We must find ways to help struggling resource-dependent communities to diversify their economies and to put displaced workers back to work restoring their forests.

A second formidable challenge is expanding our scientific analysis from small areas over limited periods of time to larger scales that include river basins and extend through decades. Through examples in the Appalachians, the Pacific Northwest, and the Columbia River Basin we are learning the value of taking the long view.

Finally, we must develop methodologies for measuring the health of our watersheds. It is one thing to agree as resource professionals that a successful restoration is accomplished when 1) ecosystem structure and function are repaired and 2) natural ecosystem processes operate unimpeded.

It is another challenge altogether to determine, fund, and commit to measuring concepts such as ecosystem structure and function over time.

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 efforts to restore the health of our lands and waters reflects our nation's inherent optimism – 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. And, as Aldo Leopold might have said, the basic requirements of membership in the land community.

For more information, contact Chris Wood at 202-205-1083.

I'm pleased to be with you. My comments will be brief because I'd like to hear your thoughts and ideas for moving the Forest Service into the 21st century.

Introduction

As folks who follow natural resource policy, you well know that we are in the midst of a period of profound change. The ways people use, value, and care for the land is changing. So too is the Forest Service. When I was starting out on the Hiawatha National Forest, my fellow fish biologists would jokingly refer to the Forest Service's unspoken policy of "Forester Uber Alles." We always complained that most of our budgets, priorities and incentives revolved more around timber management than they did wildlife, fisheries, wilderness, or other resource values.

That is all changing. For example, timber harvest levels from national forests, which remained consistently between 11-12 billion board feet per year, have declined to about 4 billion. At the same time we are seeing exponential growths in other uses of national forests and grasslands.

For example, in 1980, the Forest Service recorded 560 million recreation visits to the National Forest System. In 1996, that number grew to 860 million.

In a relatively short period, the Forest Service has become the world's largest supplier of outdoor recreation. Recreation visits to the National Forests and Grasslands represent almost 50 percent of all recreation visits to our Nation's public lands. After the year 2000, we expect recreation-related visits to Forest Service managed lands to exceed one billion annually.

The exponential growth in recreation on national forests and grasslands is reflective of the dramatic growth in bird watching. Bird watching is considered to be that fastest growing outdoor activity in America. In 1983, 21 million Americans participated in bird watching. By 1995, that number grew to 54 million. That represents a 155% growth in just 12 years.

Priorities

In light of these changes, many have questioned the guiding laws, the mission, and the very purpose of the Forest Service. To my way of thinking it is all rather clear. Our job is to sustain and restore the health, diversity, and productivity of our lands and waters. The fact is that we will never be able to meet the needs of people if we do not first secure the health of the land.

In addition to making the health of our watersheds – and their uplands, riparian areas, and streams our overriding priority, we must work together to increase the use of partnerships that leverage scarce resources and help to ensure that people have ownership in land management policies and practices. The Wildlife and Fish programs of the Forest service have long been masters of the art.

For example, in 1996, the Forest Service joined with state wildlife agencies, conservation organizations and others to supplement Congressionally appropriated funds by \$28 million for a combined total of \$44 million for habitat improvement projects for wildlife, fish and rare plants. The Forest Service Challenge Cost-Share program included 1,832 partners and 2,157 projects in 1996. Of these, 353 projects benefited neotropical migrant birds.

● We need more of these type of partnerships to ensure that we have the resources to exceed the 56,000 acres of habitat we improved in 1996; to help us to build more that the 940 structures we did last year; to exceed the 898,000 acres we inventoried for neotropical migratory birds last year.

The broad ranges and ecosystems upon which bird species depend extend well beyond National Forest System boundaries. Stemming declines often requires broad, integrated approaches to conservation in which many components – geographical, social, and biological – are taken into account.

● Thankfully, we have some good examples of places where state and federal agencies have worked hand-in-hand with citizen groups, industry, and even other nations to restore critical habitat for rare birds. I'd like to share some of them with you now.

Success Stories

Kirtland's Warbler

● The Kirtland's Warbler has one of the most restricted breeding ranges of any North American bird. They evolved in fire dependent ecosystems and depend on early successional stands of jack pine to persist.

Though there are many reasons from their decline, years of fire suppression is key and their breeding range is limited to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Today, however, the state, the Huron-Manistee National Forest, and others are managing the forest in ways that promote better habitat for the warbler. The jack pine stands on the dry sand plains of northern Michigan are now managed by logging, burning, and planting on a rotational basis to ensure productive nesting habitat.

Swainson's Hawk

We are particularly proud, as are you I'm sure, of the outstanding multi-national partnership effort to conserve Swainson's Hawks from declines associated with pesticide use in their Argentine wintering grounds. It was a 1995 satellite telemetry study by Forest Service wildlife biologist, Brian Woodbridge of the Klamath National Forest in California, that identified the primary wintering area of this species in Argentina. Later it was discovered that pesticides were poisoning thousands of Swainson's Hawks. Kudos to the American Bird Conservancy Policy Council for the role you've played in reducing the mortality and in preventing the decline of other bird species from pesticide applications.

Other Forest Service bird conservation activities include:

- The protection and restoration of native grasslands through the use of prescribed fire on the Mark Twain National Forest in Missouri, benefiting both Bachman's and Henslow's Sparrows.
- The Delta National Forest in Mississippi – an island of bottomland hardwood amidst a sea of agriculture – is an important haven to many species of neotropical migrants and non-migratory species. This forest also serves as important over-wintering waterfowl habitat and is a key feature of the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. We must continue our efforts to look at the management and protection of neotropical migrant songbirds in bottomland hardwood forests in conjunction with waterfowl management efforts.
- Participation in an interagency riparian ecosystem management team to develop guidelines for managing riparian areas and specifically, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher habitat. The Forest Service is also looking closely at the impacts of livestock grazing on this and other federally listed endangered species.

Forest Planning

In addition to on-the-ground habitat improvement partnerships, we are encouraging people to become more engaged in our forest planning process. By the year 2000, 78 forest management plans, covering half of our 191 million acres of national forests and grasslands, will be revised. Through these plans, Forest Service managers will chart a course for the future. I have instructed forest supervisors to focus on improving water quality and quantity, riparian, forest and rangeland health, and recreation.

Since national forests belong to *all* Americans, such a planning effort can only succeed with help from the public. The issues and values under consideration are certain to be more complicated than ever before. Resolving them will require collaboration in conservation planning and stewardship on a scale not previously attempted. Later this afternoon, you will have an opportunity to hear from Jim Fenwood from our Wildlife, Fish and Rare Plants Staff, on how you can become involved in this process.

Partners in Flight

The future success of “Partners in Flight” is clearly related to forest planning. The future management of national forests and grasslands will have a great impact on the health of many high priority bird species. By the same token, Partners in Flight conservation plans for physiographic areas can provide a context for Forest Service conservation opportunities as well as identify opportunities among a large number of participants and landowners for protecting biological diversity.

The Forest Service's Southern Region provides a tangible example of how this process can work. The *Southern Appalachian Assessment* provides detailed information regarding:

- the status of land use
- forest types, and
- birds in all or parts of five Partners in Flight physiographic areas and seven states.

Five national forests that are covered within the *Southern Appalachian Assessment* are in the process of forest plan revisions.

The Forest Service and American Bird Conservancy *Charter of Resolve* strengthens our commitment to work together to draft long-term bird conservation plans for the physiographic areas and states included in the Southern Appalachians. Key federal agencies, seven state wildlife agencies, other interested organizations, corporations, and individuals share Partners in Flight responsibilities for the Southern Appalachians. The *Charter* will help turn the collaboration into tangible improvements on the ground. As Aldo Leopold said, “the only progress that truly matters is on the landscape of the back 40.”

It is important that Partners in Flight information be made available to national forests for consideration during their planning process. In the Southern Region, the *Southern Appalachian Assessment* will have an impact on bird conservation and will be used to take the next steps necessary to craft geographically broad objectives. This approach helps us to consider Partners in Flight-related information and to make forest-based decisions within broader geographic contexts.

Forest Service Landbird Conservation Strategy

Since 1990, the Forest Service been an active participant in Partners in Flight particularly in the areas of inventory and monitoring, research, habitat management, information and education, and international efforts.

Partners in Flight continues to evolve. That's as it should be. No longer focussed solely on neotropical migratory birds, Partners in Flight now embraces all non-game landbirds. No longer focussed largely on research, monitoring, and information and education efforts, Partners in Flight is focussing on conservation planning.

Like Partners in Flight, the Forest Service is evolving in the way it thinks about landbird conservation. The Agency is currently involved in a strategic planning effort to reexamine the Forest Service's landbird conservation priorities and to develop implementation plans. As with any strategic planning effort, we hope to:

- clarify the vision of the program,
- promote effective decision-making,
- enhance our ability to anticipate and prepare for the future, and
- promote accountability.

To date, efforts have focussed on assessing: current program status; short- and long-term priorities; barriers; and opportunities for the future

Conclusion

Two years ago, at the Partners in Flight Workshop in Cape May, New Jersey, Chief Thomas closed by noting that the workshop attendees "*will be positioned to file a flight plan.*" I think it's fitting that Partners in Flight conservation plans have since been dubbed "*flight plans.*" These plans play a critical role in getting information that decision-makers need – in a form they can understand and use. Maintaining quality habitat that will support wild birds now and into the new millennium is a vision we all share. Let's continue to work together to make that vision a reality.

Remarks of Mike Dombeck
NASF, 12/10/97

One of the great pleasures I have had since becoming Chief is getting to know you folks, the State Foresters. I will be very brief this morning but I really want to 1) say thanks for letting me be here and 2) for all of your help, advice, and encouragement over the past 11 months.

You know, I have always believed that State and Private Forestry is one of the most under-utilized but potentially powerful voices for conservation in America. That is why I am extremely pleased to announce the selection of several outstanding people to key State and Private leadership positions.

- Phil Janik, presently the Regional Forester in Region 10, will come back to Washington to serve as the Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry beginning in May or June.
- Jim Hubbard, presently the State Forester of Colorado, will come to the Forest Service for a six to twelve month detail to serve as the Special Assistant to the Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry.
- Steve Satterfield, who is presently the Director of Program Development and Budget, will be the new Director of Cooperative Forestry.

Phil, Jim, and Steve bring critically important skills to their new jobs. Because healthy ecosystems are such a high priority for all of us, I had already asked Phil, Jim, and Janice McDougale to lead the development of a strategic vision for State and Private Forestry.

Phil, no stranger to tough issues, will put his skills as a negotiator and relationship builder to good use as he directs State and Private Forestry into the 21st century.

Jim Hubbard is widely respected and I am excited at the prospect of the new relationships he will help us to build.

Finally, given his vast knowledge of Forest Service programs and the budget, Steve will immediately help to raise the visibility of Cooperative Forestry.

It is not by accident that I waited until the State Forester's Executive Committee Meeting to make these announcements. I am counting on your help and advice as we move forward implementing sustainable forestry, communicating the importance of criteria and indicators, and promoting conservation on lands of all ownerships all across America.

Phil, Jim, and Steve join Bov Eav, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station Director and Jack Blackwell, Regional Forester for Region 4 -- both of whom were selected last week -- as the newest members of our leadership team. For those of you who do not know them personally, let

me assure you that they are top resource managers who understand the need to maintain and restore the health of our lands and waters.

The extremely varied and diverse skills represented within this group include assignments at all levels and in all major program areas of our agency including: Regional Forester, Deputy Regional Forester, Director of a National Scientific Center, District Ranger, Forest Supervisor, and WO Staff Budget Director. Significant experience from other agencies and the private sector are also well represented.

There can be no doubt that this group will have much to contribute to sound, science based decision-making, and collaborative stewardship as the Forest Service moves into the next century.

In the coming months, you will be hearing from me on the state of the Forest Service after my first year aboard. I will be relying on these new leaders and their counterparts to help identify the challenges and exciting opportunities that lie ahead. As exemplified by everyone listed here, their new responsibilities require a mix of interpersonal, resource, technological, and managerial skills, and I am completely confident that they will be successful in their new roles. I also know that I can rely on your assistance to help them through a quick and efficient transition.

Once again, please join with me in welcoming our newest National Leadership Team members. They will serve us well and help to ensure that the Forest Service mission of caring for the land and serving people is successfully carried into the twenty-first century.

Chief Mike Dombeck
Remarks to Washington Office Employees
12/18/97

Thank you all for taking the time to join me here today to talk about my first year at the helm of our great agency. I want you to know how much I appreciate the many successes you have achieved this year. People outside the agency continually remind me that the Forest Service is filled with hardworking, dedicated people who are setting the nation's conservation agenda.

I would like to review where we are and where we need to go as an agency. Leadership transitions are always challenging especially when accompanied with the organizational changes the Forest Service has been experiencing for the past few years.

I know that some of you and some of our retirees are less comfortable as we make adjustments in response to the constantly changing world we live in. Although our mission is as relevant today as 100 years ago, we cannot simply rely on tradition to get our jobs done. Each of us needs to continually search for new and better ways to do our jobs. We must also be tolerant of a few missteps as we go along.

As part of today's dialogue, I would like to hear your thoughts and concerns about the past year. Then we will go back across the street to my office for a holiday reception to celebrate your 1997 successes.

Retrospective

When I look back to a year ago, it is difficult to put into words how much I anticipated the prospect of returning to the Forest Service. It was a defining moment in my life's work in natural resources and conservation.

During my first days on this job, my anticipation was also tempered with apprehension. We were in the middle of tough times. Critics abounded and controversy surrounded many of our issues and decisions. For many, morale was sagging and people wondered if they were valued. Congress and the Administration were concerned about our need to be more accountable. As we grappled with changing social values, some worried about losing control of our destiny. In times such as these, organizational focus often turns inward, and we found ourselves on the defensive on many fronts.

My first few months validated those perceptions. I recall coming back from tough hearings on the Hill thinking, "we have this great agency, with tremendous accomplishments and dedicated people. But perceptions about us are negative. And we seem to be hunkered down in a defensive posture most of the time." I know many of you felt distress over dealing with the crisis of the moment, and by not getting the public to focus on our agenda and our messages.

Yet there are bright spots out there. Through the year we focused on positives and are successfully advancing a natural resource conservation agenda for the 21st century. Although most of what we'll talk about today focuses on the Washington Office, lately I have noticed a more positive tone in the media about our agency's work. That tells me we are headed in the right direction.

I think we have turned a corner. Relationships with the Department, the Administration, and Congress have improved. We are making good progress externally. Our priorities on forest ecosystem health, watershed restoration, recreation, and partnerships resonate with stakeholders. Internally, we are more focused on accountability, civil rights and the health of our business systems.

Our reputation as conservation leaders extends across the country. For example,

- In September, with help from the Wildlife and Fisheries staff, I participated in the 17th World Fly-Fishing Championship and Conservation Symposium. For the first time ever, a national forest hosted this international event and native fish were the quarry. Both of these facts prove the Forest Service's leadership role in managing healthy watersheds. Everyone I talked to had something positive to say about the Forest Service: from our conservation ethic, to collaboration with partners to protecting sensitive watersheds.

Our leadership extends well-beyond national forests and grasslands – well-beyond our own nation. For example,

- Later in September, Robert Lewis and I headed the U.S. delegation to the 12th World Forestry Congress. Four thousand participants from governments, industry, academia and associations gathered to promote the need for environmentally sound forest management and to share ideas about responsible land management. Virtually everyone with whom we came in contact acknowledged our agency's premier status as a worldwide leader in caring for the land. Many people, such as the Indonesian delegation thanked me for the assistance we provide through our international programs.

CORE ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

On my first day as Chief, I outlined my objectives for moving the Forest Service and its mission into the 21st century. Let's take a moment to review that direction. My focus areas included:

- Restoring and maintaining the health of the land – clearly our most important task.
- Accountability for (1) what we do on the land, (2) our financial resources and business systems, and (3) the civil rights of our employees.
- My resource philosophy of living within the limits of the land, collaborative stewardship, promoting partnerships, and making decisions based on good science.

As I said then, accomplishing these tasks requires mobilization of all of our employees, volunteers – all who use and care for the natural resources in our care. At a National Leadership Team meeting last April, the team and I confirmed the future direction for the agency. Our priorities are forest and rangeland health, healthy riparian and aquatic areas, recreation and partnerships. Simply put, my vision – as now – was that we should strive to be the very best at what we do, whether that be conservation, collaboration with partners, business practices, or how we treat each other in the workplace.

Being the best at what we do means keeping our sights on core values: health of the land, collaboration, good stewardship, and accountability. These values, our work ethic and creativity, have – as Gifford Pinchot said in 1947 – "made and kept the Forest Service the best organization in the Government of the United States."

CHANGE IS INEVITABLE

There have been many changes in our senior leadership. I have heard some folks voice concerns about my bringing in people from outside the agency. I recognize that this may be non-traditional, but such changes bring different points of view. Hybrid vigor makes us stronger.

Within the past year, we filled vacancies for four Deputy Chiefs, four Regional Foresters, three Station Directors, three Associate Deputy Chiefs and two Staff Directors. These leaders, along with my personal staff, will help me provide proactive leadership to guide our agency. By that, I mean the leadership that will allow us to control our own destiny. We cannot wait to be told what must be done. We must take the initiative, even if that entails taking risks or encountering occasional setbacks.

In August, we held another leadership team meeting in St. Paul. The focus was on civil rights, water, forest health, roads, national forest treasures, and urban forestry. This agenda continued the trend in 1997 of focusing on a few high priorities that relate to the bedrock mission of our agency, *caring for the land and serving people*. Amid turnover and the inevitable apprehension it brings, Forest Service employees here and in the field consistently rose to the challenge and produced excellent work.

Some staffs have told me that I am not as accessible as previous Chiefs. I realize that in the past the Chief's Office was a place where staff could go most anytime to personally discuss problems or provide input on their program areas with the Chief.

After a few months, I realized that always being here and having an open door was great for the staff, but it also led to that inward focus I mentioned earlier. Perhaps my biggest challenge is also one of the most basic – and that is time management. But to be effective I need to coordinate with Congress, other agencies and interest groups. So my new approach is a compromise between time available for staff, and time spent with others in Government agencies, the Administration, and partners whose support we need to further our mission.

This change in my availability unsettled some of our employees. Still, our situation has changed with respect to the Congress, and the Administration, and to the people who own and use the lands we manage. We all must spend more time reaching out, telling our story, making new friends and partners who will help network our successes. The Forest Service simply cannot do it alone.

We have no choice but to change. We can either change ourselves, or allow events and others to change us. As the next century arrives, the only certainty we have is in knowing that the rate of change will accelerate. I am mindful of what Chief Peterson said 10 years ago, "Our traditional values are important, but we must change the way we do business."

As I spend more time with Congress and outside partners, I would like the role of the Staff Directors to become more visible and pronounced. I expect them to be engaged in

all of our substantive issues and to look creatively at alternatives that will guide our decisions and actions. I expect spirited discussion and staff interaction, and close contact with interest groups. There will be a certain level of disagreement as issues are resolved. But once a decision is rendered I expect everyone to pull together and give it their full support.

Last October in a memorandum to the National Leadership Team, I mentioned a common concern that the Forest Service is not demanding enough in the critical area of accountability. I am committed to improving accountability, and my memorandum was a first step in that process. Like many undertakings, some parts of that directive could have been improved. But it caused people to begin thinking and discussing accountability—a big challenge for this agency.

Now I have a challenge for you. By the first Monday in January I would like all of you to provide input to your supervisors – who can forward your thoughts up through the Deputy Chiefs – so we can consider your suggestions and update and improve my direction on accountability. If you have concerns about accountability, make them known in a constructive manner.

Let me touch on an area that we are going to strengthen in 1998 -- relationships with the State Foresters. This should be an easy task coming on the heels of the recent leadership changes in State & Private Forestry. Our new Special Assistant to the Deputy Chief is Jim Hubbard, the State Forester from Colorado. Please take the time in the new year to find ways to do more partnering on all fronts of our work.

I would like to encourage each of you to take more responsibility for coordination and communication in a way that enhances morale and efficiency in the workforce. I recognize that there are times when you dislike a decision, or have a hard time supporting an initiative. There will always be a time and place for input and debate. But let's not allow small negatives to undermine our many successes. Bringing a positive outlook to the workplace is an important aspect of civil rights and all employees and managers should strive to focus on the positives – for we have a lot of them to celebrate.

SUCSESSES ABOUND

There are many more success stories than we have time for today. But I would like to mention a few.

First off, I want to recognize all of the people who keep the doors open, answer the phones, process the mail, keep our buildings clean and do the myriad tasks that keep a large office running every day. Without your good work and commitment, we couldn't do our jobs. Thank you.

NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM:

In the arena of resource management, NFS is always in the middle of the fray, and they usually find a way to deliver.

- We are involved in an effort in paleontology with the USDA Farm Service Agency and several states. Fossil finds recorded on National Forests and Grasslands include a

Champsosaurus en route for display here in the Auditors Building escorted by the North Dakota State Paleontologist.

- In 1997, wildlife partnerships through challenge cost share agreements grew to \$44 million.
- We are taking a lead role in developing National Strategy for Noxious Weeds.
- Land exchanges added tens of thousands of acres to the Ouachita and other National Forests further protecting watersheds, wetlands and endangered species.
- The Recreation Fee Demo Program generated over \$7 million in its first year of operation.

Given the number of programs and issues being worked by the National Forest System staff, I want to just extend a general thank you for their collective efforts.

STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY:

- For urban and community forestry it has been an exciting year. In Brooklyn, New York, the Forest Service helped a community to come together and develop an urban forest restoration plan, after hundreds of trees were removed to eliminate the Asian long-horned beetle.
- The Revitalizing Baltimore Project has drawn national attention to our efforts to address watershed issues in urban and community forests.
- We are leaders in collaboration and partnership efforts. For example, we provide assistance to over 8,000 urban and 1,400 rural communities. We are making great strides in watershed management through programs such as the Chesapeake Bay Partnership and the DC Initiative.
- "On the Fireline," a documentary produced through partnership with the State Foresters won a Silver Screen award at the U.S. Film Festival; and aired on numerous major TV stations.
- Our focus on ecosystem health resulted in a 15 percent increase in hazardous fuels treatment this year – now up to three-quarters of a million acres nationally.

State and Private Forestry is looking to the future with new leadership and challenges. I'm grateful for the efforts of all the folks in S&PF and look forward to more successes in 1998.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT:

- Provided input on legislation and policy initiatives such as the Research Title of the Farm Bill, the Global Warming Initiative in Kyoto, the USDI/FS Interagency Fire

Sciences Plan, and the lead effort for the Earth Day celebration attended by Vice President Gore in Anacostia Park.

- This year, the National Science Foundation named Baltimore as the first-ever urban site to be selected for a long-term ecological research project, with a grant of \$5 million.
- Through their work on the Tongass revision, the Columbia River Basin EIS, and the Southern Appalachian Assessment, Research is helping us to develop the scientific framework to manage forests within the limits of the land.

These are but a few examples of how research is woven into many other program areas. I am a scientist at heart and very appreciative of the fine work of our Research staff.

OPERATIONS:

- Downsizing and Buyout: This year's buyout will result in 1,262 people leaving the Forest Service and the loss of many thousands of years of institutional memory skills. Thankfully, those folks trained us well and many will stay engaged as retirees.
- Transition to IBM is complete in the WO. This major undertaking has the potential to provide much more responsive technology for our resource, financial and research efforts.

Both the buyout and the IBM transition made 1997 a challenging year for the people in operations who responded with dedication and hard work. I'd like to thank all of you who are part of the operations team for helping us through a tough year.

PROGRAMS AND LEGISLATION:

Programs and Legislation are an essential part of the Washington office. They are engaged in many of the highest profile, highly visible issues. For example:

- Legislative Affairs prepared us for over 70 hearings
- Programs and Legislation is taking the lead in coordinating development of our Government Performance Results Act implementation.

LAW ENFORCEMENT & INVESTIGATIONS:

- LE&I was involved in several significant resource and property protection activities in 1997. One Archeological Resource Protection Act case in the Intermountain Region is believed to be the largest successful prosecution since the law was passed in 1979, and it resulted in a felony indictment for an ARPA violation; and assisted in recovery of a \$1.5 million aircraft stolen in Region Eight in 1993.

- On the drug enforcement front LE&I personnel were involved in eradication of over 300,000 marijuana plants from NFS and adjacent lands.
- Law Enforcement also assisted in enhancing partnerships with other Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, and was of great assistance with development and coordination of the Recreation Fee Demonstration Project.

Overall, the people in Law Enforcement continue to do a fine job in ensuring human safety and protection of our Nation's resources. Like other program areas, they have to deal with rapidly growing numbers of forest users and multiple challenges and I appreciate the work they are doing.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS:

- The Forest Service was instrumental in leading the effort to develop comprehensive information on forest uses here and abroad, and to develop concepts for sustainable forest management as part of the 1992 Rio Summit Agreement, and the Montreal Process on Criteria and Indicators
- The U.S. delegation at the World Forestry Congress, led by the Forest Service, provided an outstanding exhibit on the diversity of forest lands and the uses of those lands in our nation.

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

A few other noteworthy activities deserve mention.

Compared to 1994 and 1996, we had a very mild fire season with only a few areas of intense activity. However, our increased focus on safety made this year one of the safest in terms of injuries to people, and damage to equipment. I applaud the efforts of the fire staff for protecting our people and our natural resources.

- **EEO Complaint Resolution:** The resolution of the EEO backlog is on the fast track. One hundred seventy three of the complaints were either settled or in mediation as of last week. By the end of this week nearly all mediations will be complete and settlements should be signed by January 15, 1998. The remaining unresolved cases will be out of the Forest Service and USDA hands and on to the Merit Systems Protection Board.
- **Office of General Counsel:** Good news related to accountability, financial health, and care of the land also flowed from the Office of General Counsel in 1997. Several court decisions and out of court settlements upheld Forest Service policy and land management decisions by limiting damages on cancellation of timber sale contracts. Claims were also resolved against permittees who caused major damage by starting forest fires. The efforts of OGC helped to protect endangered species and prevent damage to the environment, and resulted in dismissal of millions of dollars worth of lawsuits, and collection of several hundreds of thousands of dollars in claims. OGC is a part of our natural resource team and their work continues to promote our Forest Service agenda.

- **Financial Health:** The financial management and organizational analysis project is well underway by Coopers & Lybrand. This effort will help establish a long needed relationship among our financial, corporate and functional reporting, create a baseline for financial competency, and relate the benefits of fiscal integrity to stewardship on the land.
- **Combined Federal Campaign:** The Forest Service achieved 141 percent of our target with 62 percent participation and over \$131,000 contributed. This exceeded the banner year of 1996 by 3 percent in total contributions. The bottom line is that this effort underscores your commitment to teamwork, and your willingness to help the less fortunate. I am proud and grateful to you for demonstrating that our workforce is made up of people who care. Special thanks to Mary Davis and James Mobley for their help.
- **Retiree Communications:** Efforts are underway to improve two-way communications with Forest Service retirees. The Office of Communications and other staffs are working on a long-range strategy for electronic and hard-copy flow of information from the Chief's Office to and from retirees, and scheduling learning seminars with retired experts on priority areas for the Chief and other Washington Office staff.

Finally, I want to honor all the people who took the buyout this fall and have left or will be leaving us soon. Their thousands of years of service have greatly benefited this nation's natural resources. I intend to call on their experience as we move the Forest Service into the next century, for there is much to do.

Since we are in the middle of the holiday season, I encourage all of you to take a little time to reach out and make peace with someone -- perhaps someone with whom you have disagreed in the past, or someone you have never had the chance to get to know. Take that first step of initiating a contact, listening, sharing something of yourself and risking some change. Do it today. It may help broaden your networks, add camaraderie, establish a new friendship or result in a more friendly workplace.

So with that I think you will recognize one of our well-known symbols of the need for healthy landscapes. Woodsy is an important part of our message:

- Since 1971, Woodsy Owl has been the national symbol for conservation education.
- Woodsy's message, "Give a Hoot, Don't Pollute" has been expanded to include a new challenge "Lend a Hand - Care for the Land".

Thank you Woodsy for joining us and bringing your important messages about caring for our land into this discussion. Now if the Deputy Chiefs will also join Woodsy and I, we would like to take your questions.

**BUSINESS PRINCIPLES COURSE
PRESENTATION**

**DENVER, COLORADO
FEBRUARY 3, 1998**

**REINVENTION
and
ACCOUNTABILITY**

In many ways, the term “reinvention” is terribly inadequate for the process it describes. It’s one of those 40,000 foot words which pictures the generalized idea of the process but completely fails to capture the deadly details that make true and lasting reinvention so difficult to achieve.

The most fundamental reason for the difficulty in achieving success in reinvention is that reinvention is far less about changing the physical way we do things - such as altering a form to make it easier to fill out or eliminating a few outdated steps in a lengthy process so that it proceeds faster - than it is about providing incentives to change peoples’ behavior. Unless people change how they behave, they won’t willingly fill out the new forms or cut out steps in a process that they’ve been following for 20 years and, in their minds, believe those steps to be worthwhile. After all, would they have done something for 20 years that was worthless or stupid? Of course not.

Reinvention is, of course, a response to change; and change always has been with us and always will be. Change is inevitable, except from vending machines. But change seems to move faster in these days of instantaneous electronic communication that makes new ideas travel faster than ever and the ability to hide from them more difficult than ever. In fact, to get truly comfortable with the current faster pace of reinvention will most likely take a generational change, one we are in the middle of right now (candidly, my 12-year old son is a more comfortable with Microsoft Windows than I am, and I was in the computer software business for 8 years, pre Windows I might add!).

Nonetheless, we can’t ignore change and we have to reinvent where appropriate. There is, here, a strong link to accountability that we need to

understand. So what is accountability? I think we try to make this a lot more complicated than it need be.

{ overhead }

Here's how accountability and reinvention are inextricably intertwined. As society's requirements evolve in so many ways, our goals and actions must evolve in parallel. That's why, for example, we cut fewer trees and provide more recreation days than we did 20 or even ten years ago. Since we are accountable to the taxpayer for the \$3.5 billion we spend each year, and since our work is changing, the need for reinvention is a natural and undeniable requirement of social change. Otherwise we would use outdated processes and measures to try to hold ourselves accountable for entirely new outcomes. It is, in fact, reinvention that makes accountability possible as time goes by. Accountability in a changing world would be totally impossible without reinvention.

Why is it that people are so worried about change and resistant to reinvention? All you need to understand is that Boeing is about to lay off 40,000 people (more than the entire Forest Service) because things have changed and they are reinventing the way they do business, going well beyond just shutting down a few 747 production lines. While this Boeing example may be more of a cyclical sales driven issue than a long-term trend, it will have many of the same consequences; and Boeing in five years will look and behave a lot differently than Boeing does today.

While we in the Forest Service don't necessarily have to worry about a massive layoff at this point, we do need to change the way we do business to anticipate the changes that we see coming. Otherwise, we will have several painful layoffs and they will continue over lengthy periods (as they are resisted by both management and employees) damaging the agency and ruining its ability to fulfill its mission. It's a slow and sad process much like getting kicked to death by a rabbit if we let it happen.

Unlike Boeing, and because we are generally taking the initiative right now to reinvent well in advance of the arrival of problems, we have a tool to use to encourage reinvention and the resulting accountability it produces. That tool is the explanation of the incentives that our people, if they understand

them, can use to encourage themselves to support and participate willingly in reinvention. In my view, the most important incentive we have to offer is that, by improving efficiency through reinvention, we will direct more dollars back to supporting the health of the land. That's why the majority of us work here. I often ask the question when I travel, "What is it that turns you on about working for the Forest Service?" Far and away, the most common answer is, "Because I love the land and feel I can make a difference in caring for it." Perhaps things are drifting as new hires come into the Agency, and the old culture which supports this incentive is weaker. But there's no question that that strong part of our culture is still largely in place and we can make it work for us. Our people must be made to understand that if they resist reinvention and change, the land will very clearly suffer. I can think of no better incentive to put forward than the opportunity to see that that does not happen.

Now let's talk about why you are here for the next three days. What you are about to learn is reinvention of how you manage your businesses. You are about to embark on a particularly important experiment which, if successful, could have ramifications beyond the Forest Service.

Government today is saddled with some significant problems when it comes to managing what we are supposed to deliver to the American people. In my observation, activity in the Federal Government (with the exclusion of the Judicial Branch) can be broken down into two very general areas: (1) creating policy and then (2) delivering the goods or services defined by the policy. Unfortunately, government has little ability and even less interest in effectively managing delivery systems. There is interest in policy creation without equivalent interest in implementation. And this problem is vividly illustrated by the fact that we can't, in the federal government, keep even some of the most fundamental records straight. And the reason for this is obviously that no one has cared enough to get the job done relative to what else is going on, i.e., creating policy.

Last year I read an article in the Washington Post by James K. Glassman (Washington Post, 4/21/98, p. A21) as follows:

"Imagine that a top accounting firm performs its annual audit of a giant corporation. It finds the books in such a horrific state that it is forced to write in its official transmittal letter: 'We are unable to, and we do not, express an opinion on the accompanying financial

statements.' No opinion! Consequences would be swift and dire. The stock of the giant corporation would plummet ... , its bond rating would fall, the SEC would investigate, the CEO might be forced out, stockholders would bombard management with lawsuits and the story would be smeared all over the newspapers. Now imagine that it's not a giant corporation being audited but the federal government. Consequences? Next to zero."

Next I want to quote to you from the "1997 Consolidated Financial Statements of the United States Federal Government:"

"For over 200 years, effective management of the U.S. Government has suffered from a lack of comprehensive financial information."

For more detail from the same report, consider the following comments from the General Accounting Office dated 3/20/98. "Major problems included the federal government's inability to:

- properly account for and report billions of dollars of property, equipment, materials, and supplies;
 - properly estimate the cost of most federal credit programs and the related loans receivable and loan guarantee liabilities;
 - estimate and report material amounts of environmental and disposal liabilities and related costs;
 - determine the proper amount of various reported liabilities, including postretirement health benefits for military and federal civilian employees, veterans compensation benefits, accounts payable and other liabilities;
 - determine the full extent of improper payments that occur in major programs and that are estimated to involve billions of dollars annually;
 - properly account for billions of dollars of basic transactions, especially those between government entities;
- "Additionally, (1) serious computer control weaknesses expose the government's financial information to inappropriate disclosure, destruction, modification, or fraud and (2) material control weaknesses affect the government's tax collection activities. Further, tests for compliance with selected provisions of laws and regulations related to financial reporting disclosed material instances of noncompliance ..."

- “Because of the government’s serious systems, recordkeeping, documentation and control deficiencies, amounts reported in the consolidated financial statements and related notes do not provide a reliable source of information for decision-making by the government or the public. The deficiencies also diminish the reliability of any information contained in the accompanying Management’s Discussion and Analysis and any other financial management information -- including budget information and information used to manage the government day-to-day -- which is taken from the same data sources as the consolidated financial statements.”
- “Hundreds of billions of dollars of the more than \$1.2 trillion of these reported assets are not adequately supported by financial and/or logistical records.”
- “The systems and data were not available to accurately estimate significant portions of the more than \$2.2 trillion reported as federal employee and veterans benefits liabilities.”
- “The government was unable to support significant portions of the more than \$1.6 trillion reported as the total net costs of government operations.”
- “The government is unable to determine the full extent of improper payments -- that is, payments made for other than valid, authorized purposes.”
- “To make the consolidated financial statements balance, Treasury recorded a net \$1.2 billion item on the Statement of Changes in Net Position, which it labelled unreconciled transactions. This out-of-balance amount is the net of more than \$100 billion in unreconciled transactions -- both positive and negative amounts - - which Treasury attributes to the government’s inability to properly identify and eliminate transactions between federal government entities and to agency adjustments that affected net position.”

What I’ve just read to you is merely an abstract of a much longer list of failures and problems. And, note that there are approximately 2,000 individual financial reporting components in the federal government. So the problem we face to achieve good business management in government is absolutely huge; and it certainly cannot be solved in full for ten to 20 years. But the good news is that we have started to identify and expose these weaknesses; and without doing that, they’d never, ever be solved.

So, again the question I posed, "Let's talk about why you are here for the next three days. What you are about to learn is reinvention of how you manage your businesses. You are about to embark on a particularly important experiment which, if successful, could have ramifications beyond the Forest Service."

You have the opportunity here not just to learn techniques that will help you to manage the Forest Service more efficiently but which can also serve as a model for the rest of government. Do you think that's too much to wish for? I do not, because what we need to learn does not require a degree in brain surgery, much less an MBA, and certainly not an accounting degree. It's for the most part simple and straightforward. Its main requirement is often just plain old common sense. However, there must be a willingness to try to learn and then apply some effective techniques. In other words, to change your behavior, that bugaboo I spoke about earlier. I am encouraged that there are so many of you here who apparently have that willingness. What we are about to learn is not brand new. Lots of it has been around for years in the private sector and a few pockets of government.

As an aside, allow me just say a couple of words about why what we will learn this week is not widely practiced in government. It all goes back to that dichotomy I spoke about earlier: policy vs. implementation. Many of our leaders are enamored with policy creation. For those who have positions of responsibility but have never had the privilege to manage an organization, implementation is often considered dirty work.

I find that frequently the seven basic assumptions of someone who has significant management responsibility but who has no management experience are that:

1. They deal with the things that interest them the most.
2. Other people take care of the things that don't interest them.
3. Priorities are irrelevant and you always deal with the crisis of the moment.
4. When demanding assistance on the crisis of the moment, do not ask what else a person might be doing.
5. Coordination of effort happens by magical means.

6. By raising one's voice when trouble erupts, those who theoretically caused the trouble will be intimidated, fear for their jobs and thus immediately fix the problem.
7. The judge of a good job done is a complimentary story in tomorrow's newspaper.

You are here to prove that this is not the way to behave. To learn some simple, fundamental, common-sense ideas that you can employ yourselves and pass on to your colleagues and subordinates.

Leadership is innovating and providing incentives to change behavior. Leadership is understanding what the market wants and delivering it (i.e., marketing). And, there is not necessarily any correlation between dedication to mission and the ability to lead or manage.

You are different, though. You can do both; and the work we complete here this week will help you to provide real, genuine leadership to the Forest Service and ultimately to all of government.

Thank you for your dedication and for the fact that you care enough to take the time to be here. I know you have other demands on your time. However, the land will benefit by your actions more than you might believe. That is the real incentive for us to be here.

Chief Mike Dombeck

Andrus Center for Public Policy, Boise, ID

February 11, 1998

Thanks for being here today. In the next few minutes I want to give you a status report on where the Forest Service is going with management policy for public lands. The bottom line is that we are charting a new course for dealing with natural resources. Here's what we have in mind.

Dealing with Change (Getting to the Future)

Our most important mission is to ensure the long-term health and productivity of over 191 million acres of forest and grasslands. And for the immediate future our highest priorities are two areas of particular importance here in Idaho -- water use and roads.

One of the reasons I made healthy watersheds a top priority is that clean water affects everyone, regardless of where they live. What many don't realize, however, is that about 80% of the nation's streams originate on national forest lands. So we have an enormous burden of responsibility when it comes to managing public watersheds.

Roads are also vital to public lands, but sometimes cause adverse ecological impacts, especially with water. So our long term roads policy is intended to lead to making informed decisions on:

- ◆ When and where we will build roads;
- ◆ How to decommission unneeded roads;
- ◆ Selectively upgrading some roads to meet changing public use and rural access needs; and
- ◆ Finding sustainable sources of funding for future road management.

Regardless of whether the measure is the quality of a recreational experience -- or the quantity of the water a family uses every day -- the challenge is to ensure future generations inherit healthy and productive watersheds. As the 21st century beckons, we are made increasingly aware, by evolving science and public demand, that new management approaches are needed.

Looking toward that future, I am encouraged by President Theodore Roosevelt's observation that, "it is evident that natural resources are not limited to the boundary lines which separate nations." Clearly, this was ecosystem-wide thinking well ahead of its time. That type of thinking is essential for agencies, organizations and people here today.

Changing patterns of public land use suggest that we who manage it must be more innovative than in the past. What we have in mind is applying more anticipatory, and participatory processes to identify, track, prioritize and manage natural resource issues.

Often, we could only react as issues we had not anticipated became crises. In order to identify potential issues before they reach a critical state we intend to engage customers and stakeholders early

on; be aware of demographic changes in our society, and marshall the collective knowledge of our leadership.

Within the existing framework of laws and regulations, we will work with communities to develop strategies and alternatives based on good science, public input and feedback. At the end of the each day we need to know we were a proactive force in the natural resource decision-making process. If not, we will be buffeted by change and politics, and the results will be less stability and predictability, and consequently the land will be less healthy than it is today.

Looking back, my first few months with the Forest Service were spent dealing with one crisis after another. Outgoing Chief Jack Ward Thomas had warned that mine might be the most difficult job in Washington. His advice was timely. I often found myself in the middle of conflicts between development and conservation interests. Though the challenges are formidable, my personal belief is that we need to take the long view to resolve these issues.

Taking the Long View

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

Decades later, Congress acted with similar foresight in passing Acts covering Clean Air and Water, Endangered Species, National Environmental Policy, and National Forest Management. In the hundred years since the Organic Act became law, several generations of Americans have come to view conservation as less a political issue than a matter of public trust. This helps explain why so many people feel so passionately about stewardship of public resources.

Endangered species issues make headlines of national newspapers. Water use and conservation are pre-eminent issues for everyone from local planning boards to the White House. In fact, conserving water has moved from a "special interest" to a national priority. Let me offer a couple of examples.

As you know, here in Idaho the Forest Service is an active participant in the water rights adjudication process. Some of our actions are directed toward reserved water rights which can be vital to watershed protection. The Snake and Klamath drainages are cases in point. Our long range goals are for these watersheds to be healthy and durable, with water remaining in the streams so that they will remain among Idaho's special places.

Another example concerns elk in the Clearwater drainage. As the largest in Idaho and once one of the country's premier elk herds, this herd is the backbone of Idaho's elk management program. In fact, the herd has been a critical part of the social, cultural, and economic fabric of the region since before the arrival of Europeans. But over the last four years the herd size plummeted by almost 50%.

The Clearwater herd's health is proportional to its habitat, and the amount and distribution of vegetation. Since the 1930s the vegetative layers have changed significantly, mostly due to fire

suppression efforts. The altered vegetation caused a domino effect: greatly reduced herd size, which required limits on hunting, and resulted in economic decline in several associated commercial activities.

In collaboration with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe, county governments, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association and others, a major initiative is underway to restore healthy elk populations in the Clearwater. This diversity of interests and passion for conservation success will make a real difference for this special resource.

Yet more remains to be done. The unprecedented interest in 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 controversy about national forest management is not new. 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 while providing a wide array of goods and services.

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 we could reduce property damage from floods if all forested watersheds performed their basic functions of capturing, storing and safely releasing clean water? Such questions can only be answered by not allowing poor stewardship to diminish the land's productive capacity.

Initiatives for Natural Resources

In the near future I will announce a comprehensive natural resource stewardship effort. This plan's focus areas are watershed health and restoration, sustainable forest management, a national forest transportation system, and the increasing demand for recreation. For this plan to succeed we must connect people with each other and with the land. Because concerns for natural resources are linked to our economic, cultural and social values, it is imperative that we align our approach with what the public needs and supports.

Across the nation people are increasingly finding common ground within the concept of the interdependence between public lands and communities. To make a difference on a national scale, we must organize many efforts on a local scale, and use the energy of communities, individuals and interest groups to achieve meaningful outcomes. For example:

Our natural resources initiative will have some simple and straightforward operating principles. First, we will rely on partnerships and collaboration in order to create synergy around our stewardship efforts. Connecting the urban, suburban and rural parts of our society with decisions about the land will ensure we make decisions in an informed environment built on trust.

Next, we are in the process of streamlining our financial management and accountability processes. Our bottom line in these two important areas is to design the most efficient organization to meet public needs and expectations, and one that is tied directly to the natural resources we manage.

And third, we will obtain and use sound science to make decisions. Right now a committee of scientists is working on suggestions for regulatory changes in forest planning. Efforts focused on science are crucial, since about 60% of our forest plans need revisions over the next five years.

We are applying good science right here in the Columbia River Basin to learn how areas without roads have become disproportionately important to the surrounding land base by providing critical habitat and travel corridors for wildlife, and aquatic strongholds for rare fish species. For example:

- Over 70% of 94 key species are negatively affected by one or more road construction factors
- Over 60% of the best remaining aquatic habitats in the Columbia Basin are within roadless areas
- Unroaded areas are by far the most valuable output administered by federal agencies

The Columbia River Basin Project is providing the kind of information we need to understand the relationships between the public needs for access, and their demands for clean water. Lets turn to roads.

Roads and a National Forest Transportation System

The issue of roads and roadbuilding has become one of our most critical issues. A personal example can illustrate this point. Most of us here grew up along or near a road that provided access to public lands. My experience was in Wisconsin, near Forest Road #164 when it was just a gravel afterthought from the turn of the century timber harvest era. I recall that in the winter, hours would sometimes go by without a car coming down that road.

When I return home now, that road is a paved thoroughfare providing access to the forest and adjacent areas for many types of users. School busses use it twice a day. People frequent the route to hike and hunt and fish and watch wildlife. It is throughway for people going to and from work. Basically, #164 is now a highway; a major artery in the lives of residents and visitors to that part of Wisconsin. And only infrequently does a logging truck rumble down it.

In a small way this story defines the changed uses, over the past three decades, of our more than 373,000 miles of roads in the national forest system. The public needs such a transportation system for the safe, affordable, efficient use of forest lands with minimum ecological impacts.

Among the factors driving our proposed new policy on roads are: shifting public demands, the irreversibility of road construction, social and ecological values of roadless areas, and our inability to maintain the present system. Here are some facts and figures to quantify this issue.

Historically, many forest roads were constructed to facilitate logging. But in the past 10 years timber production has declined by two thirds, while recreation use has soared. This roads system still provides access to commodities, for resource management and protection, to private property. But mostly it provides access for recreation. About 1.7 million vehicles associated with recreation use forest system roads every day -- a factor of magnitude increase since 1950 -- while the number of vehicles using the roads for timber harvest activities is roughly the same as 50 years ago.

The bad news is that our backlog in road system maintenance and repair exceeds \$10 billion, and 60% of these roads cannot be maintained to design levels for safety and environmental standards due to lack of funding. Over 1,000 (13%) of our 7,700 bridges are rated as deficient. In 1991, we rated 93,600 miles of roads driveable by passenger cars. But by last year that number had fallen by 7,600 miles, and many of those undriveable roads are also causing environmental damage from erosion. To the public these trends mean more difficult access, and decreased opportunities to recreate.

Let me illustrate with a couple of specifics. The road to Riverside Campground on the Targhee National Forest could have been chip sealed a few years ago for about \$22,000, but we didn't have the funding. Now the road has deteriorated to the point where it needs reconstruction that will cost about \$110,000. The same is true for the Scout Mountain Road on the Caribou National Forest. To reconstruct the 4.9 miles of that road will require \$1.4 million. Had we had \$100,000 available in the budget five years ago we could have chip sealed it and preserved most of our investment. Cases like these show that if roads were an easy issue, someone would have solved it long ago.

Along with the numbers, we have obtained new scientific evidence on the ecological impacts of roads and roadbuilding. Examples include increased frequency of flooding and landslides; more stream sedimentation with impact on fish habitat; fragmentation and degradation of wildlife habitat; more people caused fires; and increased introduction of exotic species that displace native plants and animals.

I could go on but you see the problem, so I'll summarize our rationale for developing a long-term transportation policy. In the future we intend to:

- ◇ More carefully consider decisions on when and where to build roads;
- ◇ Prioritize the needs to restore some roads and be proactive in decommissioning unneeded roads;
- ◇ Aggressively upgrade roads that most meet the public needs and changing use patterns;
- ◇ Pursue adequate funding for maintenance, repair, and access management needs.

Healthy Watersheds are a National Imperative

Roads, because of their relatively irreversible nature and impact on ecosystems, lead me to the broader topic of watersheds. Healthy watersheds retain flows and are resilient in the face of natural events such as floods, fire, and drought and are 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 and increase soil fertility while minimizing damage to lives, property, and the stream course.

In fact, water is arguably among our most precious resources. Much of our water comes from the higher elevations and mountainous regions of public lands. This may sound simplistic, but a basic fact about water is that gravity works cheap and never takes a day off. The health of our public lands, and our measure of success in managing them can be found in the pulse of our rivers, streams and lakes.

The benefits of maintaining and restoring healthy watersheds are well documented. In fact, I've been telling people that 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.

I could cite numerous 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, industry, government agencies, and a host of local citizens. All are examples of people working together to restore their lands and waters.

One specific that comes readily to mind is the Henry's Fork Watershed Council. Formed in the early 1990s by groups concerned about the future of one of Idaho's finest rivers, this effort developed into a highly successful example of positive water management for multiple interests. Among others, it brought together groups such as the Henry's Fork Foundation, and the Freemont and Madison Irrigation Districts. Thus people involved in fishing, farming, ranching, and other water uses got together in a forum for all affected interests, and adopted a watershed approach for a unique natural resource.

Restorations such as the one underway with the Henry's Fork herald a new era. This era will be marked by state and federal agencies working hand-in-hand with interested landowners, business interests, and local communities to restore our forests, rangelands, and watersheds. In an era of smaller government, it is essential that reduced federal funding does not translate into declining conservation.

There is much to recommend putting our best effort forward for watersheds. We all live within a watershed and 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. So 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.

Conclusion

If ever there was a nation with the technology, the resources, and the will to heal its lands and waters, ours is that nation.

We know today that we cannot rely on just preserving our national parks, and by extension hope to protect our natural resource heritage. Lands under Forest Service management cannot be handled in isolation of other federal, state, and private lands.

People in local communities will continue to have employment in commodity production such as timber, oil, gas and minerals. Those activities will remain important uses of public lands. But as I said earlier, we cannot allow commodity production to diminish the land's productive capacity. We must work within the limits of the land.

Last month in his State of the Union address the President called on all citizens to join with him in launching a new Clean Water initiative. We in the Forest Service are eager to use our expertise and knowledge of watersheds to assist in this effort, and make significant contributions to ensuring clean water from public lands is always available.

The future of public lands depends on efforts such as this. We can do no less. The American people expect no less. Our collective efforts to restore the health of our lands and waters reflects our nation's inherent optimism -- 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.

Thank you.

Updated: 2/6/98

Contact: Dan Ellison (202) 205-1059

MIKE DOMBECK
Speeches & Talking Points
1998

February 11
Andrus Center for Public Policy

February 20
Remarks to Forest Service Employees and Retirees

February 23
Garden Club of America Speech

February 27
NACO Speech

February 28
National Wild Turkey Federation

March 2
*"A Gradual Unfolding of a National Purpose: A Natural Resource Agenda
for the 21st Century"*
State of the Forest Service Address to All Employees

March 20
Independent Forest Products @ NAWNR Conference, Orlando FL

March 24
Servicewide CR Committee

July 10
National Audubon Society
Estes Park, CO

July 14
Roundtable Meeting on Sustainable Management

August 3
"Invasive Species: Science, Management and Policy Options"
Ecological Society of America

August 6
"Legacy of the Clean Water Act"
BASS Anglers Sportsman Society

August 24
"From Combat Biologists to Restoration Practitioners"
American Fisheries Society

October 5
NASF Annual Meeting

October 9
"Working Together in the 21st Century: Partnering for Success"
The Tuskegee University Forest/Natural Resources Program

October 27
"Words to Action: Conservation Leadership in the 21st Century"
National Leadership Team Meeting

December 15
WO Employees Meeting

April 14
Remarks to Northwest Forestry Association

April 15
Remarks at Pacific River Council

April 27
ELRC & WSLCA "Agenda" Speech

April 21
Remarks at Society of American Foresters

April 29
"The Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda"
Remarks at Iowa State University

April 30
"The Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda"
Remarks at University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

April 30
"To See the Forest for the Watershed: The Challenges of Managing Natural Resources Across Broad Landscapes"
Opening Remarks at Forum on National Forest Management

May 15
"The Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda"
Tennessee Conservation League

June 23
Intertribal Timber Council – Hon Dah AZ

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Dealing with Change (Getting to the Future)

Our most important mission is to ensure the long-term health and productivity of over 191 million acres of forest and grasslands. And for the immediate future our highest priorities are ~~two~~ areas of particular importance here in Idaho -- 1 water use, and 2 roads, and 3 sustainable forestry

One of the reasons I made healthy watersheds a top priority is that clean water affects everyone, regardless of where they live. What many don't realize is that about 80% of the nation's streams originate on national forest lands. So we have an enormous responsibility when it comes to managing public watersheds.

Among others, it brought together groups such as the Henry's Fork Foundation, and the Freemont and Madison Irrigation Districts. Thus people involved in fishing, farming, ranching, and other water uses got together in a forum for all affected interests, and adopted a watershed approach for a unique natural resource.

Restorations such as the one underway with the Henry's Fork herald a new era. This era will be marked by state and federal agencies working hand-in-hand with interested landowners, business interests, and local communities to restore our forests, rangelands, and watersheds. In an era of smaller government, it is essential that reduced federal funding does not translate into declining conservation.

There is much to recommend putting our best effort forward for watersheds. We all live within a watershed and our actions on the land are reflected by their health. Watersheds are the basic building blocks of ecosystems and of sound resource stewardship.

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efficient use of forest lands with minimum ecological impacts.

Among the factors driving our proposed new policy on roads: shifting public demands, the irreversibility of road construction, social and ecological values of roadless areas, and our inability to maintain the present system.

Historically, many forest roads were constructed to facilitate logging. But in the past 10 years timber production has declined by two thirds, while recreation use has soared. The road system still provides access to commodities, for resource management and protection, to private property. But mostly it provides access for recreation. About 1.7 million vehicles associated with recreation use forest system roads every day -- a ~~factor of~~ *ten-fold* magnitude increase since 1950 -- while the number of vehicles using the roads for timber harvest activities is roughly the same as 50 years ago.

The bad news is that our backlog in road system maintenance and repair exceeds \$10 billion, and 60% of these roads cannot be maintained to design levels for safety and environmental standards due to lack of funding. Over 1,000 (13%) of our 7,700 bridges are rated as deficient.

In 1991, we rated 93,600 miles of roads driveable by passenger cars. But by last year that number had fallen by 7,600 miles, and many of those undriveable roads are also causing environmental damage from erosion. To the public

11

I have also proposed a 18 month ^{Temporary} suspension of new-road construction ~~as~~ while the new policy is developed

Both Proposals - the longer term roads policy development and 18-month suspension are open for comment

FEB 05 '98 05:21PM MERIDIAN GOLD MINE

P.16

HOLLAND & HART

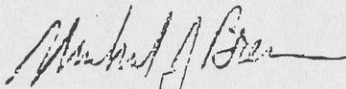
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Messrs. Daley, Schmitten and Stelle
January 16, 1998
Page 14

See 58 Fed. Reg. at 68548. Nor did NMFS ever make a finding that stream reaches above impassable barriers such as Napias Falls are essential to the conservation of the species when those inaccessible areas cannot provide habitat for the listed species. In the absence of a record-based regulatory basis for treating upper Napias Creek as critical habitat, and in light of the extensive area-specific scientific and other information presented herein, Meridian's previously-filed Petition request to clarify that upper Napias Creek is not within critical habitat is warranted.

NMFS' failure to act upon Meridian's Petition to revise its critical habitat designation to clarify that upper Napias Creek is not critical habitat continues to place burdensome consultation requirements on Meridian, to threaten the imposition of prohibitively expensive requirements, and to jeopardize continuing operation of the Beartrack Mine. It will therefore be necessary to file suit if NMFS does not rule on Meridian's Petition before sixty days have expired from the date of this Notice. Meridian also intends to file suit within sixty days time to challenge the deficiencies outlined above in NMFS' critical habitat designation for listed Snake River spring/summer chinook salmon.

Very truly yours,



Michael J. Brennan
Murray D. Feldman
Robert T. Connery
OF HOLLAND & HART

cc: Brian Kennedy
Robert Deurloo
Donald Beckwith

JACKSON:0013261.04

Prioritize the needs to restore some roads and decommission unneeded roads;

Aggressively upgrade roads that most meet the public needs and changing use patterns;

Pursue adequate funding for maintenance, repair, and access management needs.

Healthy Watersheds are a National Imperative

Roads, because of their relatively irreversible nature and impact on ecosystems, lead me to the broader topic of watersheds. Healthy watersheds retain flows and are resilient in the face of natural events such as floods, fire, and drought and are 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 and increase soil fertility while minimizing damage to lives, property, and the stream course.

these trends mean more difficult access, and decreased opportunities to recreate.

Let me illustrate with a couple of specifics. The road to Riverside Campground on the Targhee National Forest could have been chip sealed a few years ago for about \$22,000, but we didn't have the funding. Now the road has deteriorated to the point where it needs reconstruction that will cost about \$110,000. The same is true for the Scout Mountain Road on the Caribou National Forest. To reconstruct the 4.9 miles of that road will require \$1.4 million. Had we had \$100,000 available in the budget five years ago we could have chip sealed it and preserved most of our investment. Cases like these show that if roads were an easy issue, someone would have solved it long ago.

Along with the numbers, we have obtained new *informative* ~~scientific evidence~~ on the ecological impacts of roads and road building. Examples include increased frequency of flooding and landslides; more stream sedimentation with impact on fish habitat; fragmentation and degradation of wildlife habitat; more people caused fires; and increased introduction of exotic species that displace native plants and animals.

I could go on but you see the problem. In the future we intend to:

More carefully consider decisions on when and where to build roads;

cannot secure the health of the land without the support of the people who live on it.

Columbia River Basin Project

Health of the land and the support of people is a driving force of the Interior Columbia River Basin Ecosystem Management Project. The science from this project has revealed significant concerns about the health of our lands. We have already talked about roads and watersheds. Two other issues of national significance are the health of our forests and the spread of noxious weeds.

Nationally, 39-40 million acres of forest land are at risk of unnatural catastrophic fires. New scientific findings from the Columbia Basin project tell that the risk of these fires have more than doubled over 40 million acres.

Addressing forest and rangeland health will require active management. Our managers need the tools necessary for thinning, harvest, and prescribed fire to improve the health of the land. We need to tie these issues to improving our watersheds and taking better care of our ^{Forest} roads.

The Interior Columbia project has its controversies, no doubt. I have listened to the arguments of those who oppose the project. And I respond, what are our alternatives?

Is there another way to address species' decline across broad landscapes?

If we take care of the land it will take care of us and all will benefit. The important thing is that no single interest can have it all. Because there isn't enough to go around. Our challenge is to balance these but stay within the limits of the land.

Chief Mike Dombeck's Remarks to Forest Service Employees and Retirees-University of Montana--Missoula, MT--February 20, 1998

Thank you Dean Brown and Dale Bosworth for the warm remarks and hospitality you have shown to me and my team over the last 2 days. And a special thank you to Jack Thomas for taking time out of your busy schedule to be here. It was my intent today to unveil a natural resource agenda for the 21st Century. After further review, I have directed my staff to re-examine data that we have not focussed on in the past and consequently we are not ready to make the announcement. I hope to have the agenda completed in the next several weeks. It is more important that we do it right rather than do it fast. But, today offers me an opportunity to speak with you to discuss highlights of the President's proposed FY99 budget and core principles of the agenda. And, to hear your concerns and perspectives on issues that are important to the integrity of the Forest Service.

For many years, the Forest Service has stated its mission as "caring for the land and serving the people." On the 191 million acres of National Forest System lands we manage, this means providing goods and services to people within both the limits of the land and the framework of laws. On state and private lands, our mission is to provide leadership, technical assistance, and support for all forest management and conservation.

Our mission frames our purpose. It frames what we are all about. Secretary Glickman and Under Secretary Lyons have asked me to lay out a framework for natural resource management for the next century. I cannot do this alone. I need your help and the help of the entire Forest Service community. And the task is already underway. We will work with the Secretary, the Congress, the academic community and those who care for and depend on this nation's forests. We will base our efforts on four principles:

- A foundation for science, and technology, and continued research.
- Principles of ecosystem management.
- Sound business management practices and accountability.
- Partnership and principles of collaborative stewardship.

We must concentrate our efforts incrementally to those tasks that supports our mission. I have discussed these priorities with Forest Service leadership, employees, and many others. These are areas that I believe we can move forward on.

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

As you know, we have in place a committee of scientists that will be making recommendations for improving our planning regulations. In talking to them, I looked back and re-read the Organic Act. The words of that 100 year old law, are relevant today as ever.

"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."

Much has been said of the Organic Act's emphasis on timber production. What is far less understood is the Act's emphasis on watershed maintenance and restoration. Over 900 municipal watersheds are within national forests. Watershed maintenance and restoration are perhaps the oldest and highest calling of the Forest Service and the agency is, and always will be, bound to them by tradition, law, and science.

The Organic Act lends credence to the position that we must do more to sustain and restore the fabric of the whole landscape. Environmental concern spans races, religions, generations, and economic backgrounds. People are demanding that we do more. 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, our natural resources.

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. If this nation, with all of our wealth, technology, and experience cannot demonstrate how to live in harmony with the natural world that sustains us, what hope is there for other countries or for future generations of Americans? I think Congress realized a very simple premise in passing the Organic Act, we cannot meet the needs of people without first securing the health of the land.

Watershed Health and Restoration

That is why I believe our first priority must be to maintain and restore the health of our watersheds. Our objective is to protect our healthiest watersheds and restore the ecological integrity of those where it has been disrupted.

Healthy properly functioning 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 and recharge underground aquifers. 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. They reduce drinking water treatment costs and increase reservoir storage life.

How we manage our forests and rangelands has a profound effect on the quality of our watersheds. Therefore, I am pleased with the emphasis that the President's proposed budget forecast for watershed restoration and maintenance. For example, the budget would help us to:

- Use the Vice President's Clean Water Action Plan to double over the next five years the miles of restored streams and rivers.
- Increase by one-third fish and wildlife habitat restoration and efforts to conserve and recover threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.
- Increase by 50% the number of cleaned-up and reclaimed abandoned mine sites.

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 a normal part of a forest's cycle, because of the exclusion of fire and some past management practices and lack of investment, the vulnerability of these forests is higher than normal. To respond to this need, the President's budget proposes 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.

We all live within a watershed and all of our actions on the land are reflected in its health. The point is that people want – demand – clean water and healthy watersheds. I think we can deliver this goal.

Sustainable Forest Ecosystem Management

I'd like to talk for a few moments about sustainable forest management. Protecting our environmental capital requires maintaining productive forest ecosystems. According to a Pinchot Institute report, from 1978-94, the number of tracts of land of 50 acres or less has doubled. The increasing diminution of forest tract size can fragment wildlife habitat, lead to deforestation and other conversions to non-forest uses, and degrade water quality.

To help prevent this from happening, we propose to

- Work with the state foresters and others to increase the number of non-industrial private forest owners that complete long-term voluntary forest stewardship plans. The \$8.2 million request in the FY 1999 budget will help provide scientific and technical assistance to more than 3000 landowners.

The second key concept in sustainable forestry involves providing for public uses, goods, and services within the ecological limits of the land. In the past

15 years, wood consumption in this nation has increased by 12% and imports are at record levels. Shifting wood production demands to other lands and other countries that lack environmental protection is not a responsible solution.

A forest management program that will produce a predictable array of products, goods and services is essential to many rural communities. So long as we remain within the limits of the land, national forests will help meet our nation's needs.

If we wish to protect the productive capacity of our natural resources and manage landscapes using the best science, we must work in partnership with small landowners, industrial landowners, Native Americans, state governments, local government, the academic community, and everyone else who shares a stake in our goal for sustainability. Our partnerships must recognize that rural communities depend on forest benefits for many aspects of their quality of lives and livelihoods.

Nearly, 80% of the all Americans live in cities and towns -- and as taxpayers they have an equal stake in the management decisions of public lands.

Urban forests contribute an estimated \$400 billion in energy conservation, storm-water management, air quality, and other economic benefits to people in cities and towns. Our partnerships must build support for our programs across all constituencies and serve the demands of urban populations and remote rural families in a balanced way. We will:

- Work in partnership with our urban constituencies to build an understanding for sound ecosystem management while serving their immediate needs. Our FY 1999 budget has \$31 million for Urban Forestry -- the highest funding level ever.

Finally, we must maintain and re-enforce our commitment to monitoring. This is critical to our ability to know whether we are doing our job well or not. You know from experience in the field that monitoring does not get the attention it deserves, and I want to work with you to get this effort up to a level that meets our needs.

- We propose to fully fund the forest inventory and monitoring program in all 50 states by the year 2005 using the criteria and indicators endorsed by the major forested nations of the world so that we have a common measurement of our effectiveness at managing for sustainability.

Forest Roads

Let's turn for a minute now to forest roads. Forest roads are an essential part of the transportation system in many rural parts of the country.

The benefits of forest roads are many. But they also often cause serious ecological impacts. There are few more irreparable marks we can leave on the land than to build a road.

Building a new road requires a short-term outlay of cash. Funding its maintenance over time requires a long-term financial commitment. The failure to maintain the forest road system limits public access and does tremendous environmental damage. So long as these needs remain unresolved, public support for needed forest road management erodes.

For these reasons, I recently proposed development of a new long-term forest road policy based on science. The proposal has four primary objectives.

- 1) More carefully consider decisions to build new roads.
- 2) Eliminate old unneeded roads.
- 3) Upgrade and maintain the roads important to public access.
- 4) Develop new and dependable funding for forest road management.

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

The President's budget points us in the right direction. It proposes to increase:

- Road maintenance funding by 26% and
- Major improvements to forest road bridges and culverts by over 66%.

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 lands and waters.

Recreation

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. 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.

- 1) Providing quality settings and experiences.
- 2) Focusing on customer service and satisfaction.
- 3) Emphasizing community outreach.
- 4) Strengthening relationships with partners, communities, and others.

Nearly half of this year's recreation visitors will encounter a facility or a service that is 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 precious and 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 quality recreation experience. To help achieve these goals, 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 by 50% in 1999.
- Accelerate the conversion of unneeded roads to trails.

Our priority is to provide premier settings and experiences for recreation users. National forests and grasslands provide incredible outdoor opportunities. From downhill skiing at Vail, to wilderness expeditions into the Frank Church wilderness, to active family fun in the national forests which surround California's 20 million residents. Forest Service lands provide more outdoor recreation opportunities than anywhere else in the United States.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude by asking for your help and the help of all of the Forest Service community in moving forest management into the 21 Century. Since I was a young boy fishing and working in the great north woods of Wisconsin through today when I canoe with my wife and daughter, I marvel at how lucky we are – every one of us – to be blessed with such a rich natural resource endowment. Maintaining and restoring the health of the land is not only our privilege as resource professionals it is our obligation to our children and our children's children.

USDA Forest Service
FY 1999 President's Budget
(\$ in Thousands)

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PROGRAMS

DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS

	Budget Authority FY 1997 Final Approp	Budget Authority FY 1998 Enacted to Date	Budget Authority FY 1999 President's Budget
FOREST and RANGELAND RESEARCH	179,786	187,944	198,122
STATE and PRIVATE FORESTRY			
Forest Health Management			
Federal Lands	33,165	36,690	37,170
Cooperative Lands	15,000	16,800	16,050
Cooperative Fire Management	18,001	20,152	0
Subtotal--Forest Health Management	66,166	73,642	53,220
Cooperative Fire Protection			
State Fire Assistance	0	0	21,510
Volunteer Fire Assistance	0	0	2,000
Subtotal--Cooperative Fire Protection	0	0	23,510
Cooperative Forestry			
Forest Stewardship	23,378	23,880	27,630
Stewardship Incentives Program	4,500	6,500	8,500
Forest Legacy Program	2,000	4,000	6,000
Urban and Community Forestry	25,505	26,750	30,040
Economic Action Programs	17,150	11,465	9,000
Pacific Northwest Assistance Programs	16,762	15,000	5,000
Subtotal--Cooperative Forestry	89,295	87,595	86,170
TOTAL--STATE and PRIVATE FORESTRY	155,461	161,237	162,900
INTERNATIONAL FORESTRY	{3,000}	{3,500}	{3,500}
NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM			
Land Management Planning, Inventory, and Monitoring	130,088	0	118,650
Land Management Planning	0	36,174	0
Inventory and Monitoring	0	91,964	0

USDA Forest Service
FY 1999 President's Budget
(\$ in Thousands)

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PROGRAMS

DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS

	Budget Authority FY 1997 Final Approp	Budget Authority FY 1998 Enacted to Date	Budget Authority FY 1999 President's Budget
Recreation Use			
Recreation Management	164,314	170,318	190,318
Wilderness Management	33,267	34,069	35,800
Heritage Resources	13,570	13,906	13,300
Subtotal--Recreation Use	211,151	218,293	239,418
Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat Management			
Wildlife Habitat Management	28,263	31,263	35,500
Inland Fisheries Habitat Management	14,756	17,787	23,500
Anadromous Fisheries Habitat Management	21,029	22,021	24,020
TE&S Species Habitat Management	21,763	25,763	28,700
Subtotal--Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat Management	85,811	96,834	111,720
Rangeland Management			
Grazing Management	22,506	27,540	27,840
Range Vegetation Management	15,506	17,807	37,807
Subtotal--Rangeland Management	38,012	45,347	65,647
Forestland Management			
Timber Sales Management	196,000	209,000	199,000
Forestland Vegetation Management	55,768	65,765	58,300
Subtotal--Forestland Management	251,768	274,765	257,300
Soil, Water, and Air Management			
Soil, Water, and Air Operations	22,111	25,645	26,220
Watershed Improvements	20,003	25,584	38,184
Subtotal--Soil, Water, and Air Management	42,114	51,229	64,404
Minerals and Geology Management	35,767	36,000	38,100

**USDA Forest Service
FY 1999 President's Budget
(\$ in Thousands)**

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PROGRAMS

DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS

Landownership Management
Real Estate Management
Land Line Location

Subtotal--Landownership Management

Infrastructure Management
Road Maintenance
Maintenance of Facilities

Subtotal--Infrastructure Management

Law Enforcement Operations

General Administration

SUBTOTAL--NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM

Emergency Supplemental--Floods
Emergency Supplemental--Hurricanes

TOTAL--NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM

WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

Preparedness and Fire Use
Suppression Operations
Preparedness
Fire Operations
FY 1999 Fire Contingency
FY 1997 Emergency Fire Contingency

TOTAL--WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

Budget Authority FY 1997 Final Approp	Budget Authority FY 1998 Enacted to Date	Budget Authority FY 1999 President's Budget
43,047	47,047	44,220
14,006	15,006	15,006
57,053	62,053	59,226
81,019	84,974	107,020
23,008	24,277	29,630
104,027	109,251	136,650
59,637	63,967	67,373
259,353	262,500	259,220
1,274,781	1,348,377	1,417,708
39,677	0	0
3,395	0	0
1,317,853	1,348,377	1,417,708
319,315	0	0
510,701	0	0
0	319,315	319,437
0	265,392	235,000
{0}	{0}	{102,000}
{250,000}	{250,000}	{250,000}
830,016	584,707	554,437

USDA Forest Service
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PROGRAMS

DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS

	Budget Authority FY 1997 Final Approp	Budget Authority FY 1998 Enacted to Date	Budget Authority FY 1999 President's Budget
RECONSTRUCTION and CONSTRUCTION			
Facilities			
Research	2,000	2,737	5,010
Fire, Administrative, and Other	9,974	16,096	20,890
Recreation	48,000	30,823	25,720
Subtotal--Facilities	59,974	49,656	51,620
Roads and Trails			
Roads	93,000	88,094	96,094
Trails	22,000	27,295	13,200
Purchaser Credit Program	{50,000}	{0}	{0}
Subtotal--Roads and Trails	115,000	115,389	109,294
SUBTOTAL--RECONSTRUCTION and CONSTRUCTION	174,974	165,045	160,914
Emergency Supplemental--Floods	27,685	0	0
Emergency Supplemental--Hurricanes	5,210	0	0
TOTAL--RECONSTRUCTION and CONSTRUCTION	207,869	165,045	160,914
LAND ACQUISITION--L&WCF--WEEKS ACT			
Acquisition Management	7,500	7,500	8,000
Land Purchase	33,075	45,476	48,057
SUBTOTAL--LAND ACQUISITION	40,575	52,976	56,057
Priority Land Acquisitions	0	167,000	0
TOTAL--LAND ACQUISITION--L&WCF	40,575	219,976	56,057

USDA Forest Service
FY 1999 President's Budget
(\$ in Thousands)

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PROGRAMS

DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS

OTHER APPROPRIATIONS

Complete Land Exchange--Land Acquisition
National Forests, Special Acts--Land Acquisition
Range Betterment Fund
Gifts, Donations, and Bequests--Forest Research

TOTAL--OTHER APPROPRIATIONS

TOTAL--DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS

MANDATORY APPROPRIATIONS

PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS

Working Funds

Brush Disposal
Licensee Programs--Smoky Bear/Woodsy Owl
Restoration of Northern Forestlands
Recreation Fee Collection Costs
Recreation Fee Demonstration Program
Purchaser Election Program--Timber Roads
Timber Salvage Sales
Timber Sales Pipeline Restoration Fund
Roads and Trails for States--National Forest Fund
Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie--Rental Fees
Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie--Restoration Fund
Operation and Maintenance of Quarters

Subtotal--Working Funds

Budget Authority FY 1997 Final Approp	Budget Authority FY 1998 Enacted to Date	Budget Authority FY 1999 President's Budget
364	210	210
1,048	1,069	1,069
3,453	3,811	3,300
55	92	92
4,920	5,182	4,671
2,736,480	2,672,468	2,554,809
20,875	23,340	25,856
56	121	121
31,829	600	600
1,071	1,800	1,100
3,653	17,979	20,000
7,486	6,388	6,610
174,024	150,632	140,883
0	0	6,000
0	50,052	28,342
0	1,000	1,000
0	5	100
6,945	8,181	8,000
245,939	260,098	238,612

**USDA Forest Service
FY 1999 President's Budget
(\$ in Thousands)**

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PROGRAMS

DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS

Payment Funds
 Payment to Minnesota
 Payments to Counties--National Grasslands
 Payments to States--Northern Spotted Owl
 Payments to States--National Forest Fund

Subtotal--Payment Funds

TOTAL--PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS

COOPERATIVE WORK--TRUST FUNDS

Knutson-Vandenberg (K-V) Act
 K-V Reforestation
 K-V Timber Stand Improvement
 K-V Other

Subtotal--Knutson-Vandenberg Act

Cooperative Work--Other

TOTAL--COOPERATIVE WORK--TRUST FUNDS

REFORESTATION TRUST FUND

TOTAL--MANDATORY APPROPRIATIONS

GRAND TOTAL--FOREST SERVICE

Budget Authority FY 1997 Final Approp	Budget Authority FY 1998 Enacted to Date	Budget Authority FY 1999 President's Budget
1,267	1,267	1,267
4,645	6,093	6,055
135,022	129,894	124,767
119,524	103,123	134,814
260,458	240,377	266,903
506,397	500,475	505,515
52,500	72,333	71,340
24,800	42,061	38,420
86,730	75,245	70,258
164,030	189,639	180,018
42,673	42,246	40,028
206,703	231,885	220,046
30,400	30,000	30,000
743,500	762,360	755,561
3,479,980	3,434,828	3,310,370

2 March 1998

*A Gradual Unfolding of a National Purpose:
A Natural Resource Agenda for the 21st Century*

Mike Donohue

I'd like to begin ~~this speech~~ by thanking Secretary Glickman and Under Secretary Jim Lyons for their continued leadership and support of the Forest Service. Their efforts within the Administration on our behalf are essential to advancing our agenda.

I also want to thank my leadership team and all Forest Service employees for your good work. Our jobs are not easy. I am very proud of your performance. Today, we often find ourselves caught in the midst of social changes, shifting priorities, and political crosscurrents.

I wish that I could tell you that what I have to say today would change all of that. It likely will not. Social values will continue to change. New information about how to manage sustainable ecosystems will continue to evolve. Political interests will continue to intersect with resource management decisions.

What I can do today is lend focus to our efforts.

The agenda that I will outline ~~for you~~ will help us to engage more effectively in what I think is one of the noblest, most important callings of our generation – bringing people together and helping them find ways to live within the limits of the land.

We must lead and adapt to change – just as we always have – from concepts of sustained yield, to multiple use, to ecosystem management. 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. My expectation is that you will share this with, and learn from, your colleagues, local communities, interest groups, and others to further refine and promote an agenda that is sensitive to the needs of people and implemented within the limits of the land.

Our agenda will focus on four key areas:

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

Before getting into the specifics of our agenda, let's take stock of where we are and where we've been. This new agenda will guide future policies and decisions. But in reality 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. For example, today over 900 municipal watersheds are within national forests.

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.

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, our natural resources as we carry out our multiple use mandate.

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 reducing 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 ^{while} ~~and~~ minimizing damage to lives, property, and streams.

We must protect our healthiest watersheds and restore those that are degraded. 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.

~~Thus~~, we will:

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

We will 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.

We will 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 agencies, 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 *to*

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

Sustainable Forest 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.

State and private landowners 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 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. 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 tracts of forestlands of 50 acres or less has doubled. The increasing reduction 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.

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

We will bring the benefits of forestry to the 80% of people that live in urban and suburban America by building on programs such as the Urban Resources Partnership and Urban and Community Forestry programs.

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.

And as we learn more, we are continually adapting our management. For example, clearcutting has declined on national forests by 84% in the past 10 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. Improperly located, designed or maintained roads contribute to erosion, wildlife and fish habitat fragmentation, degradation of water quality, and the dispersal of exotic species.

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.

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 priority is to provide premier settings and experiences for recreation users. From downhill skiing at Vail, to 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.

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

We will 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.

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

We propose to
Accelerate the conversion of unneeded roads to trails.

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 protecting our cultural and natural 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. We cannot do it alone. The issues are too broad, the land base too large, and resources too scarce. So my instruction to you today is to go out and engage your communities, colleagues, friends, and neighbors; work with them to refine and implement this agenda. We can only redeem our role as conservation leaders by working with, and learning from, others.

Goethe

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. And with your help, it can be our most important and lasting legacy.