

Meeting the Challenge of Change in a New Century of Service

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

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

Acknowledgments

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

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

Our Revolutionary Tradition

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

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

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

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

Changing Expectations

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

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

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

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

The Challenge of Change

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A New Century of Service

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

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

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



Biography

USDA FOREST SERVICE



Dr. Michael P. Dombeck

Dr. Michael P. Dombeck became the 14th Chief of the Forest Service on Jan. 6, 1997.

He was born on Sept. 21, 1948 in Stevens Point, Wisc. It was here in northern Wisconsin's lake country that his appreciation for natural resources was cultivated. Dombeck worked as a fishing guide in the region for 11 summers. He earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in biological sciences and education from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point and the University of Minnesota. He earned his doctorate in fisheries biology from Iowa State University and is noted for research contributions on muskies and lake habitat management. In addition, Dr. Dombeck has authored numerous scholarly publications and made frequent national as well as international scientific presentations.

Dr. Dombeck taught biology, chemistry, science, zoology, and fisheries management at public schools and universities. He spent 12 years with the Forest Service primarily in the midwest and western United States. In his last Forest Service post as National Fisheries Program Manager in Washington, D.C., he was recognized for outstanding leadership in developing and implementing fisheries programs and forging partnerships. He also spent a year as a Legislative Fellow working in the United States Senate with responsibility for natural resource and interior appropriations issues.

Dr. Dombeck was named acting director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in February 1994. In that position, he focused on two major objectives: creating a long-term BLM vision to improve the health of the land and reinventing the agency to reduce red tape, streamline functions and improve customer service.

As Forest Service Chief, Dr. Dombeck has focused his efforts on promoting partnerships, collaborative stewardship, accountability, and financial health. Early in 1998, Dr. Dombeck introduced the Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda. This agenda identifies four emphasis areas. They are:

- Watershed Health and Restoration
- Development of a Long-Term Forest Roads Policy
- Sustainable Forest Management
- Recreation

He resides with his wife and daughter in Northern Virginia.

Education

Ph.D. 1984 Fisheries Biology, Iowa State University

M.S. 1977 Zoology, University of Minnesota

M.S.T. 1974 Biology & Education, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

B.S. 1971 Biology & General Science, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

Career Summary

1/97 to Pres. Chief, USDA Forest Service

2/94 - 1/97 Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management

9/93-2/94 Chief of Staff to Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, Department of Interior (DOI), Washington, D.C.

1/93-9/93 Acting Assistant Secretary/Deputy Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, DOI, Washington, D.C.

1989-1992 Science Advisor and Special Assistant to Director, Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D.C.

1987-1989 National Fisheries Program Manager, Forest Service, Washington, D.C.

1985-1987 Regional Fisheries Program Manager, Pacific Southwest Region, USDA Forest Service, Calif.

1978-1985 Fisheries Biologist, USDA Forest Service, Michigan and Wisconsin

1971-1973 Instructor of Zoology, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

1966-1977 Fishing guide, Hayward, Wisc.

Professional Affiliations

American Fisheries Society (Certified Fisheries Scientist), Society of American Foresters, American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists, Gamma Sigma Delta, Honorary Society (Agriculture), Sigma Xi, Scientific Research Society Board of Governors, Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame

(Current as of 7-12-98)

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Michael P. Dombeck, Ph.D.

Pioneer Professor of Global Environmental Management
University of Wisconsin System Fellow of Global Conservation

[Mike's Message](#)[Home](#)[Publications](#)[Speeches](#)[Contact](#)

Brief Biography

One of the most renowned and respected contemporary conservationists, Mike Dombeck dedicated a quarter of a century to managing federal lands and natural resources in the long-term public interest. His leadership in the Bureau of Land Management and as former chief of the Forest Service impacted nearly 500 million acres. His legacy is one of steadfast stewardship for the land, and he is most noted for significant efforts toward watershed health and restoration, sustainable forest ecosystem management, sound forest roads and roadless area protection. As the capstone to his life-long career in public service, he was granted the highest award in federal service, the Presidential Rank – Distinguished Executive Award.

Dr. Dombeck is also the recipient of the prestigious Audubon Medal and the Lady Bird Johnson Conservation Award. He has authored, co-authored, and edited over 200 popular and scholarly publications, including the book *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*, and most recently the book *From Conquest to Conservation: Our Public Lands Legacy*.

Dr. Dombeck now serves as GEM Pioneer Professor and UW System Fellow of Global Conservation. The Global Environmental Management Education Center at the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (GEM) aims to develop and share world-class educational programs in natural resources and environmental management for building a sustainable future locally and abroad. He writes popular and technical articles, lectures and makes frequent national and international presentations on current environmental, natural resource management, and social issues.

Dr. Dombeck and his wife, Patricia, live near Stevens Point, Wisconsin. They have one daughter, Mary, who recently completed her Peace Corps assignment in Africa.

[Click here for to view Mike Dombeck's full CV](#)

Education:

Ph.D., Fisheries Biology, Iowa State University

M.S., Zoology, University of Minnesota

M.S.T., Biology & Education; B.S., Biology & General Science, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Recent Career Titles:

Current: GEM Professor & University of Wisconsin System Fellow for Global Conservation

1997-2001: Chief, Forest Service
Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC

1994-1997: Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management
Department of the Interior, Washington, DC



MICHAEL P. DOMBECK

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Fisheries Biology, Iowa State University, 1984
M.S. Zoology, University of Minnesota, 1976
M.S.T. Biology & Education, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, 1974
B.S. Biology & General Science, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, 1971

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Senior Executive Service Development Program, Washington, D.C., 1992
Federal Executive Institute, Charlottesville, VA, 1991
Legislative Fellow: U.S. Senate staff handling agriculture, natural resources, and interior appropriations issues, Washington, D.C., 1988
Executive Management for Natural Resource Managers, Penn State, 1987

EXPERIENCE

| | |
|---|---|
| Professor of Global Environmental Management & UW System Fellow of Global Conservation | University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point, 2001-present |
| Chief | USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C., 1997-2001 |
| Acting Director | USDI Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D.C., 1994-1997 |
| Acting Assistant Secretary/Deputy Assistant Secretary/ Chief of Staff | USDI Land and Minerals Management, Washington, D.C., 1993-1994 |
| Science Advisor and Special Assistant to the Director | USDI Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D.C., 1989-1992 |
| National Fisheries Program Manager | USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C., 1986-1989 |
| Regional Fisheries Program Manager | USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, San Francisco, CA, 1985-1986 |
| Regional and District Fisheries Biologist | USDA Forest Service, Eastern Region, WI, 1978-1985 |
| Instructor of Science | Holcombe Schools, Holcombe, WI, 1974-1975 |
| Instructor of Zoology | University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point, 1971-1973 |
| Fishing guide | Hayward, WI, 1963-1977 (summers) |

CURRENT BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Trustee, The Johnson Foundation, Racine, Wisconsin

Director-at-Large, National Wildlife Federation, Reston, Virginia

Councilor-at-Large, Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Madison, Wisconsin

Director, The Aldo Leopold Foundation, Baraboo, Wisconsin

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Chief, USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C., 1997-2001

Responsible for 33,000 employees, 192,000,000 acres of national forests and a \$4.4 billion annual budget.

- Established leadership priorities including creating natural resource and land health priorities, resolving pervasive financial management and accountability issues, and rebuilding credibility with Congress and the Administration.
- Developed the four-point *Natural Resource Agenda*, which refocused the Forest Service mission.
- Developed long-term fire management strategy.
- Initiated the use of a marketing-based approach to establishing programmatic priorities.
- Established and filled first Chief Operating Officer and first Chief Financial Officer positions.
- Installed modern general ledger (Foundation Financial Information System) and restored auditability.
- Launched Forest Service-wide business management seminars.
- Created tool kit of financial reports.
- Established land health and business management performance measures for line managers.
- Completed first real property inventory.
- Testified at over 100 Congressional and public hearings.
- Simplified budget structure, reducing Congressional line items from 33 to 13.
- Received national recognition for actively recruiting to encourage increased ethnic and gender diversity in leadership positions.

The above actions and others resulted in a 44% increase from \$2.9 to \$4.4 billion in the Congressional appropriation in Fiscal Year 2001.

Acting Director, USDI Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D.C., 1994-1997

Responsible for 12,000 employees, 270,000,000 acres of public lands and a \$1.8 billion annual budget.

- Established leadership priorities including creating a long-term vision, reducing red tape and improving customer service.
- Led the development of a new strategic plan, "*A Blueprint for the Future.*"
- Established and filled first executive level Chief Financial Officer position.
- Achieved the agency's first clean financial audit (1995).
- Reduced the number of administrative levels from four to three, resulting in increased staffing and funding at the field level.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Wisconsin Idea Professor, University of Wisconsin System, 2004
Boyce Thompson Outstanding Lecturer Award, Cornell University, 2003
Sustained Achievement Award, Renewable Natural Resources Foundation, 2003
Distinguished Service Award, Society for Conservation Biology, 2003
Boyce Thompson Outstanding Lecturer Award, Cornell University, 2003
Audubon Medal, National Audubon Society, 2002
Lady Bird Johnson Conservation Award, 2002
Edgar Wayburn Award, Sierra Club, 2002
Presidential Rank – Distinguished Executive Award, 2001
Chief Emeritus, United States Forest Service, 2001
Honorary Doctor of Public Service, Northland College, Ashland, WI, 2001
Chair's Award, Natural Resources Council of America, 2001
Conservation Hero of the Year, The Wilderness Society, 2001
Conservationist of the Year, National Wildlife Federation, 2001
Man of the Year, American Sportfishing Association, 1999
Outdoor Life Magazine Annual Conservation Award, 1999
Secretary's Award for Outstanding Federal Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1999
Wetlands Conservationist Award, Ducks Unlimited, 1998
Distinguished Alumnus, University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point, 1997
President's Fishery Conservation Award, American Fisheries Society, 1996
Certificate of Merit for Sustained Outstanding Performance, 1989 & 1991 (Cash Award)
Certificate of Merit for Outstanding Leadership of the National Fisheries Program, 1988 (Cash Award)
Certificate of Merit for Fisheries Program Leadership in the Pacific Southwest Region, 1987
Certificate of Appreciation for Contributions to the National Plan for Fish Habitat Research and Research Coordination, 1987
Employee Suggestion Award (Incubation of Fish Eggs on Artificial Turf Mats), 1987 (Cash Award)
Best Paper Award, American Fisheries Society, Wisconsin Chapter, 1984
Employee Suggestion Award (Developing a Technique for Measuring Dissolved Oxygen in Aquatic Microzones), 1983 (Cash Award)
Darling Award for Outstanding Conservation Journalism, Iowa State University, 1983
Darling Award for Outstanding Conservation Journalism, Iowa State University, 1982
Darling Award for Outstanding Conservation Journalism, Iowa State University, 1981
National Scholarship, Writers Association of America, 1982
Theodore Roosevelt Scholarship, American Museum of Natural History, 1975

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Fisheries Society - Life Member and Certified Fisheries
Society of American Foresters
American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists

Gamma Sigma Delta, Honorary Society (Agriculture)
Sigma XI, Scientific Research Society

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Dombeck, M.P., C.A. Wood and J.E. Williams. *From Conquest to Conservation: Our Public Lands Legacy*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2003.
- Dombeck, M.P. Introduction to *The Roadless Yaak*, edited by Rick Bass. Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2002.
- Dombeck, M.P. Introduction to *No Distant Place: Roads and Motorized Recreation on America's Public Lands*, by David Havlick. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2002.
- Dombeck, M.P. "The People's Forests in the Twenty-first Century," in *The People's Forests*, 2nd ed. Edited by Bob Marshal. Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 2002.
- Dombeck, M.P. "Protecting the Stuff of Life—Water." *Wisconsin Academy Review* 48(2001): 14-18.
- Dombeck, M.P., C.A. Wood and J.E. Williams. "Restoring Watersheds, Rebuilding Communities." *American Forests*, 1998.
- Wood, C.A., J.E. Williams, and M.P. Dombeck. "The Art and Science of Stream Restoration." *Trout*, (Winter 1998).
- Kennedy, J.J., and M.P. Dombeck. "The Evolution of Public Agency Beliefs and Behavior Toward Ecosystem-based Stewardship." In *Ecological Stewardship*. Volume III, pp. 85-96. Edited by W.T. Sexton, A.J. Malk, R.C. Szaro and N.C. Johnson. Oxford, UK: Elsevier Science Ltd., 1998.
- Kennedy, J.J., M.P. Dombeck and N.E. Koch. "Values, Beliefs and Management of Public Forests in the Western World at the Close of the Twentieth Century." *Unasylva* 49(1998): 16-26.
- Dombeck, M.P. and C.A. Wood. "Ecosystem Management on Publicly-owned Lands." In *Principles of Conservation Biology*. 2nd ed. Edited by Gary K. Meffe and C. Ronald Carroll, Sunderland, Maine: Sinauer Associates, 1997.
- Williams, J.E., C.A. Wood, and M.P. Dombeck. "Watershed Restoration: Social and Scientific Challenges for Fish Biologists." *Fisheries* 22(1997): 26-27.
- Williams, J.E., C.A. Wood and M.P. Dombeck, eds. *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*. Bethesda, MD: American Fisheries Society, 1997.
- Wood, C.A., J.E. Williams, and M.P. Dombeck, "Learning to Live Within the Limits of the Land." In *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*. Edited by J.E. Williams, C.A. Wood and M.P. Dombeck. Bethesda, MD: American Fisheries Society, 1997.
- Dombeck, M.P., J.W. Thomas and C.A. Wood. "Changing Roles and Responsibilities of the Public Lands in Restoring Watershed Health." In *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*. Edited by J.E. Williams, C.A. Wood and M.P. Dombeck. Bethesda, MD: American Fisheries Society, 1997.
- Williams, J.E., C.A. Wood and M.P. Dombeck. "Toward an Understanding of Watershed-scale Restoration for Aquatic and Riparian Resource Conservation." In *Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices*. Edited by J.E. Williams, C.A. Wood and M.P. Dombeck. Bethesda, MD: American Fisheries Society, 1997.
- Thomas, J.W. and M.P. Dombeck. "Ecosystem Management in the Interior Columbia River Basin." *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 24 (1996): 180-186.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS (continued)

Dombeck, M.P. "BLM's Ecosystem Approach to Management." *Natural Resources and Environmental Issues* 5 (1996): 106-107.

Dombeck, M.P. "Ecosystem Management: Successes within the Bureau of Land Management." *Fisheries* 21 (1996): 30-31.

Dombeck, M.P. and J.E. Williams. "Roles, Responsibilities, and Opportunities for the Bureau of Land Management in Aquatic Conservation." In *Evolution and the Aquatic Ecosystem: Defining Unique Units in Population Conservation*. Edited by J.L. Nielsen, ed. Bethesda, MD: American Fisheries Society Symposium #17, pp. 430-433, 1995.

Salwasser, H., G. Contreras, M. Dombeck and K. Siderits. "A Marketing Approach to Fish and Wildlife Program Management." In *Transactions of the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference* 54 (1989): 261-270.

Dombeck, M. P. "Artificial Turf Incubator for Muskellunge Eggs." *North American Journal of Fisheries Management* 7 (1987): 425-428.

Dombeck, M. P. "Muskellunge Habitat with Guidelines for Habitat Management." *American Fisheries Society Special Publication* 15 (1986): 208-215.

Dombeck, M.P., B.W. Menzel and P.N. Hinz. "Natural Muskellunge Reproduction in Midwestern Lakes." *American Fisheries Society Special Publication* 15 (1986): 122-134.

Dombeck, M.P., R.W. Bachmann and B.W. Menzel. "A Method for Measuring Oxygen Microstratification." *Journal of Freshwater Ecology* 2 (1984): 535-540.

Dombeck, M.P. "Ecological Factors Affecting Muskellunge (*Esox masquinongy*) Reproduction in Midwestern Lakes." Ph.D. diss., Iowa State University, 1984.

Dombeck, M.P., B.W. Menzel and P.N. Hinz. "Muskellunge Spawning Habitat and Reproductive Success." *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society* 113 (1984): 205-216.

Dombeck, M.P., J. Hammill and W. Bullen. "Fisheries Management and Fish Dependent Birds." *Fisheries* 9(1984): 2-4.

Dombeck, M.P. "Movement and Behavior of the Muskellunge Determined by Radio-Telemetry." *Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Technical Bulletin* No.113 (1979), Madison, Wisconsin.

Dombeck, M.P. "The Meristic Variation of the Rainbow Darter." M.S.T. thesis, University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point, 1974.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

_____, October 28, 2004, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.

The Politics of Conservation, October 7, 2004, Williams College Environmental Studies Public Lecture Series, Williamstown, Massachusetts.

History of the Public Lands of the U.S. and Conservation Policy, October 7, 2004, Williams College Class of 1960 Scholars Program, Williamstown, Massachusetts.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS (continued)

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, Audubon Society, October 6, 2004, UW-Fond du Lac, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, July 15, 2004, Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

America's Last Wild Places—Past and Present, June 22, 2004, Outdoor Writers' Association of America 77th Annual Conference, Spokane, Washington.

Conservation and Accountability Issues in the Northern Forests, June 15, 2004, Consultative Group on Biological Diversity Annual Meeting, Two Harbors, Minnesota.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, May 19, 2004, Institutes for Journalism & Natural Resources Institute, Isle Royale, Michigan.

From the Forest to the Faucet: Water, the Issue for the New Millennium, May 15, 2004, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, April 8, 2004, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont.

Public Lands Conservation Challenges, National Association of Environmental Law Society Annual Conference, Lewis & Clark College, March 26, 2004, Portland, Oregon.

Water: The Conservation Challenge of the Century, Future of World Water Conference, UC-Davis, March 16, 2004, Davis, California.

Securing the Health of the Land, National Wildlife Federation Annual Meeting, March 12, 2004, St. Louis, Missouri.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society, March 5, 2004, Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

Securing the Health of the Land, Izaak Walton League, March 3, 2004, Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, Baird Creek Parkway Foundation, March 1, 2004, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

The Politics of Conservation, Trout Unlimited Board of Directors Meeting, February 20, 2004, Arlington, Virginia.

Perspectives on Land Conservation in Wisconsin, Wisconsin Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, January 30, 2004, Madison, Wisconsin.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, January 21, 2004, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, The Nature Conservancy Smith Fellows, January 10, 2004, St. Croix, Virgin Islands.

Thinking Like a Watershed, Midwest Natural Resources Group Roundtable, November 13, 2003, Delavan, Wisconsin.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, College Endowment Association, October 15, 2003, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, Sierra Club, John Muir Chapter Annual Meeting, October 11, 2003, Fall Creek, Wisconsin.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS (continued)

The History of Conservation Efforts, Renewable Natural Resources Foundation Awards Luncheon, October 3, 2003, Potomac, Maryland.

Protecting Our Wild Places: Where Do We Go From Here?, Keynote Address, Natural Areas Conference, September 24, 2003, Madison, Wisconsin.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century: Where do we go from here?, Plenary Address, Society for Conservation Biology Annual Meeting, June 29, 2003, Duluth, Minnesota.

Public Lands Conservation Challenges, 2003 State of the World Conference, June 22, 2003, Aspen, Colorado.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, May 21, 2003, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

A UWSP Education: The Foundation of Your Future, Commencement Address, May 18, 2003, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

Status and Trends in Great Lakes Forestry, May 11, 2003, Institutes for Journalism & Natural Resources Great Waters Institute, Ashland, Wisconsin.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, April 29, 2003, Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, Third Spring Environmental Symposium: Healthy Forests and Healthy Economies: Finding the Balance, April 22, 2003, Western State College of Colorado, Gunnison, Colorado.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century, April 16, 2003, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon.

Water: The Forgotten Forest Product, Seminar presentation, February 4, 2003, Autonomous University of Chapingo, Chapingo, Mexico.

Conservation Challenges for a New Century: Where do we go from here?, 2002 Paul Errington Memorial Lecture, November 11, 2002, Iowa State University.

Protecting the Stuff of Life, Closing plenary speech, Waters of Wisconsin Conference, October 22, 2002, Madison, Wisconsin.

Status and Trends in Great Lakes Forestry, The Great Waters Institute for Journalism & Natural Resources, September 22, 2002, Ashland, Wisconsin.

The Big Ten Public Land Conservation Challenges For a New Century: Where do we go from here?, Keynote Speech, Annual Meeting of Great Lakes United, June 8, 2002, Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois.

Forest Management Issues in the United States, Seminar Presentation, May 30, 2002, Freiburg University, Freiburg, Germany.

Forest Management Issues in the United States, Seminar Presentation, May 27, 2002, BOKU University, Vienna, Austria.

Protecting Soil & Water: The Stuff of Life, Earth Week/Banquet Speech, American Water Resources Association-Student Chapter, April 21, 2002, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

The Big Ten Public Land Conservation Challenges For a New Century: Where do we go from here?, Distinguished Lecture sponsored by Pacific Crest Biodiversity Project, April 6, 2002, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS (continued)

The Big Ten Conservation Challenges for a New Century, Plenary Speech, Humanities Symposium, Institute for Ethics in Leadership, February 2, 2002, Viterbo College, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Water: The Under Valued Forest Product, Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies Lecture, February 2, 2002, University of Wisconsin- La Crosse.

The Big Ten Conservation Challenges for a New Century, 2002 Scott Margolin Environmental Affairs Lecture, January 14, 2002, Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT.

The Big Ten Conservation Challenges for a New Century: Where do we go from here?, Albright Distinguished Lecture in Conservation, 2001, University of California-Berkeley.

Taking the Long View: Conservation Investments for Future Generations, 2001, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

Protecting America's Pristine Wildlands, National Wilderness Conference, 2000, Denver, Colorado.

Intelligent Consumption: The Forest Service Role, The Intelligent Consumption Forum, 2000, University of Wisconsin- Madison.

The Future of Recreation on Your National Forests & Grasslands, 73rd Annual Outdoor Writer's Association of America Conference, 2000, Greensboro, North Carolina.

Moving Toward Sustainable Forestry in the United States, North American Forestry Commission, 2000, St. Andrews, NB.

The Changing Role of Timber Harvest in Our National Forests, American Forest & Paper Association, 2000, Washington, D.C.

The State of the Forest: Extending Our Land Ethic, The Commonwealth Club of California, 2000, San Francisco, California.

The Future of Forests? It Takes a Community to Decide, Centennial Celebration of Public Forests, 1999, Washington, D.C.

Building on Leopold's Vision: Conservation for a New Century, Leopold Conference, Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, 1999, Madison, Wisconsin.

The United States Forest Service: The World's Largest Water Company, University of California-Berkeley, 1999, Berkeley, California.

Thinking Like a Mountain, Gila Wilderness 75th Anniversary, 1999, Silver City, New Mexico.

Protecting and Restoring a Nation's Land Health Legacy, School of Forestry's Plum Creek Lecture Series, 1999, University of Montana, Missoula, Montana.

To See the Forest for the Watershed: The Challenges of Managing Natural Resources Across Broad Landscapes, 1997, Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, New Haven, Connecticut.

Past, Present, and Future: Sharing of Common Ground, Sharing Common Ground Symposium, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, 1996, Sparks, Nevada.

From Commodity to Community: A Common Sense Approach to Understanding Ecosystem Management, Distinguished Lecture Series III, 1995, Pennsylvania State University State College.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS (continued)

Wilderness Management of Public Lands Administered by the BLM: Past, Present, and Future, Distinguished Lectureship, 1995, University of Idaho Wilderness Research Center, Moscow, Idaho.

The Public Lands; Past, Present, and Future, Natural Areas Conference, 1992, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 1992.

Integrating Fisheries into Land Management Planning, Third International Natural Resources Conservation Conference, 1988, Taipei, Republic of China.

Trends In Fishing Use - Impacts on Future Programs, Keynote Address, Annual Meeting of the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, 1988.

Rise to the Future: The Forest Service Fisheries Program, 117th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society, 1987.

Muskellunge Habitat Management with Emphasis on Reproductive Habitat, International Symposium on Muskellunge, 1984.

Ecological Factors Influencing Muskellunge-Northern Pike Interaction in Midwestern Lakes, International Symposium on Muskellunge, 1984.

Muskellunge Spawning Habitat and Reproductive Success, American Fisheries Society, Wisconsin-Minnesota Chapter Meeting, 1984.

Ecological Factors Affecting Natural Muskellunge Reproduction, American Fisheries Society, 113th Annual Meeting, 1983.

The Influence of Substrate on Muskellunge Egg Mortality, Seventh Annual Larval Fish Conference, 1983, and 44th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference, 1982.

Fisheries Management and Fish Dependent Birds, American Fisheries Society 110th Annual Meeting, 1980.

Movement and Behavior of the Muskellunge Determined by Radio-Telemetry, 39th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference, 1977.

Speech Material

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

Introduction

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. Our jobs are not easy and I am very proud of your performance. 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 have two very basic choices. We can sit back on our heels and react to the newest litigation, the latest court order, or the most recent legislative proposal. This would ensure that we continue to be buffeted by social, political, and budgetary changes.

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

The answer is clear, we must lead. Just as we always have - from concepts of sustained yield, to multiple use, to ecosystem management. We have a proud tradition of responding to new information and adapting to change. In fact, as a former Chief said

in 1930, "A federal policy of forestry has been evolving for almost 60 years. It has been built up by successive legislative enactment's and the resulting activities. It is not a specific and limited program but rather is a gradual unfolding of a national purpose."

"A gradual unfolding of a national purpose." That is the premise of the agenda I have developed with other Forest Service leaders and I will outline today. We will not be complacent. We have an obligation to lead. 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 job is to care for the land and serve people. On the lands we manage, this means complying with the laws that protect, and help us to manage, our natural resource inheritance. On lands outside of Forest Service management, our role is to provide leadership, technical assistance, and support for all forests. With your leadership, what we talk about today will help the nation set a course that will leave our children a rich - and I hope, even richer - natural resource legacy.

Our agenda will focus on four key areas:

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

Returning to Our Roots

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. All of our laws - from the Organic Act to the National Environmental Policy Act through the Clean Water Act - are based on a fairly straightforward premise. We must 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 as we carry out our multiple use mandate.

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

Our agenda takes the not-so-new position that we must do more to sustain and restore the fabric of the whole landscape. If we are wise enough to understand the physics of splitting the atom, advanced enough to communicate instantaneously around the globe, if we can feed billions of people, surely we can act with enough foresight and wisdom to protect and restore our lands and waters. If this nation, of all others, cannot demonstrate how to live in harmony with the natural world that sustains us, what hope is there for other nations?

Watershed Health and Restoration

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sustainable Forest Ecosystem Management

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

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

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

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

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

- Work with State Foresters and others to increase the number of non-industrial private forest landowners that complete long-term forest stewardship plans. We will emphasize tools such as the Stewardship Incentive Program that could enable more than 3,000 landowners to develop scientifically based stewardship plans.
- Work with other federal agencies and Congress to develop policies that encourage long-term investments in forests and discourage their conversion to other uses.

Eighty percent of Americans live in towns and cities. We must literally bring forestry to the people by building on programs such as the Urban Resources Partnership and Community Forestry

programs to increase the health of urban forests. Urban forests contribute an estimated \$400 billion in economic benefits through reduced storm-water treatment costs and energy conservation. Urban resource stewardship helps to ensure that all people - regardless of where they live - can share, enjoy, and benefit from a healthy environment.

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

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

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

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

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

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

As long as our incentive system ties the production of commodities

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

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

Forest Roads

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

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

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

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

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

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

over 66% in FY 1999.

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

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

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

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

Recreation

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

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

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

outdoor opportunities.

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

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

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

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

Nearly half of this year's recreation visitors will encounter a facility or a service below Forest Service standards. This is unacceptable. My goal is that every visitor to the national forests leaves with a deeper appreciation for, and understanding of, how important their natural resource legacy is to them. As public demand increases, the Forest Service must ensure that facilities are properly maintained and that people can enjoy a safe and high quality recreation experience. We propose to:

- Increase funding for recreation management by \$20 million dollars in 1999.
- Increase funding to enhance opportunities for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and conservation education.
- Accelerate the conversion of unneeded roads to trails.

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

Conclusion

This is an agenda that can help us to chart a new course in conservation. I believe that it is a course that will benefit the communities we serve, the resources we are entrusted to manage and the children who will inherit the results of our stewardship. Concern for our natural and cultural resources spans races,

religions, generations, and economic backgrounds. This helps to explain why so many people care about our public lands. Indeed, conservation has moved from a "special interest" to a national priority.

Our goal is to help people to live in productive harmony with the watersheds that sustain us all. 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.

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.

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Subject: Fwd: Unite And Conserve ; Mike Dombeck Guest Editorial; Washington Post 4/28

Date: Sat, 28 Apr 2001 13:21:58 EDT

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Unite And Conserve

By Mike Dombeck
Saturday, April 28, 2001; Page A21

A closely divided government reflects a closely divided populace. In such a climate, issues that do not enjoy broad public support are likely to become enmeshed in gridlock and rancor. Rarely before has our political system needed a unifying theme more than it does today. Why not conservation?

In the early 1970s, in the aftermath of an unpopular war in Southeast Asia, Congress passed and Republican presidents signed a series of laws to protect our air and water, the wildlife species that define our landscapes, and the public lands we own and enjoy. Our quality of life is much improved because elected leaders helped to reunite a divided country by joining people in common cause to eliminate belching smokestacks, pipes that drained sludge into rivers and threatened public health, and chemicals that killed

living national symbols such as the bald eagle.

Conservation could once again provide a unifying framework, demonstrating to a frustrated citizenry that elected leaders can work in a bipartisan manner toward what Republican President Theodore Roosevelt called "common sense solutions to common problems for the common good."

This fact makes it difficult to understand why the Bush administration has chosen to advocate drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, disavow commitments to reduce carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, suspend new cleanup requirements for mining companies and rescind efforts to diminish arsenic levels in drinking water. The administration is now poised to compromise away a Forest Service rule protecting 58.5 million acres of undeveloped national forests -- a policy that would affect only one-quarter of 1 percent of our nation's timber supply and a fraction of a fraction of our potential energy.

Weakening protections for clean air, drinking water and open space compromises bipartisan efforts to improve human health and quality of life, and in the process pits urban against rural, East against West, prosperity against the environment. How the administration chooses to address legal challenges to protection of roadless areas likely foreshadows whether conservation will serve as a bipartisan rallying theme or a divisive wedge issue.

Although cast by opponents as a "last-minute decision by the Clinton administration," the roadless rule is a balanced solution to a decades-old controversy. Upon passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act and continuing into the 1970s, the Forest Service inventoried large, unfragmented tracts of national forests for their wilderness values. Since then, attempts to build roads or otherwise develop these areas have met with a torrent of controversy, litigation and court-ordered injunctions. For example, early in my tenure as chief of the Forest Service, the House of Representatives came within a single vote of eliminating 80 percent of our road budget, largely as a surrogate to slow development in roadless areas.

This background helps explain why the Forest Service proposed a moratorium on the construction of new roads in most roadless areas of the national forest system in January of 1998. The public response and the support for the proposal were so overwhelming that in October 1999 the agency initiated an open public process to review whether broader protection of these wild and undisturbed landscapes was warranted.

After more than a year of analysis and scientific study, during which 600 public meetings were held in communities across the country, the Forest Service acted to prohibit new road construction in 58.5 million acres of publicly owned forests and grasslands. More than 1.5 million public comments were considered. An astonishing 95 percent advocated protection of these last remaining wild areas.

The Forest Service is staggering under an \$8.4 billion backlog in maintenance of its existing 386,000-mile road system. No private business or landowner would continue to build new roads into pristine forests in the face of such a liability. Moreover, between 1992 and 1997, an average of 3.2 million acres per year of forest, wetland, farmland and open space in the United States were lost -- more than twice the rate of development of the previous decade.

Roadless areas occupy less than 2 percent of the American land-base, but in an increasingly developed and urbanized landscape, they represent a tangible reminder of our vanishing frontier heritage. The ecological value of these remaining wild lands is significant. Roadless areas provide a place for families, hunters, anglers and other recreation users to reconnect with the lands and waters that sustain them. They serve as a bulwark against the spread of invasive species and a laboratory for study and knowledge.

Roadless areas contain all or portions of 354 municipal watersheds contributing drinking water to tens of millions of citizens. Maintaining these areas in a relatively undisturbed condition saves downstream communities hundreds of millions of dollars in water filtration costs.

The Forest Service policy would not block any existing access to national forests for recreation, fire suppression, timber harvest or any other use. Nor would it close a single mile of existing road. It is puzzling that a policy that maintains the status quo and preserves options for future generations is painted by some as radical instead of conservative.

The writer was chief of the U.S. Forest Service from January 1997 to March 2001.

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File Code:

Date: March 27, 2001

Secretary Ann Veneman
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th & Independence
Washington, DC

Dear Secretary Veneman:

As you know, this is my final week as Chief of the United States Forest Service. I grew up on the Chequamegon National Forest along forest road 164. As a young boy, I made many trips up and down the West Fork lookout tower that was in full view from our kitchen window. As perhaps the only Chief to have actually grown up on a National Forest, it has been a distinct honor to serve with 33,000 employees dedicated to caring for the land and serving people.

One hundred years ago, one of your predecessors, Secretary James Wilson, directed the Forest Service to manage public resources for "the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run." What defines the "greatest good" has changed significantly since 1904, even since 1997 when I accepted this job. Our modern industrialized society of 275 million people recognizes today that the values of open space, clean drinking water, and recreation far outstrip more traditional commodity values.

Although the mix and intensity of uses have changed significantly over the years, the multiple use mission of the Forest Service remains as important today as ever. Consider our many multiple use accomplishments of the past year. We:

- Provided drinking water to approximately 60 million Americans;
- Managed about 35 million acres of wilderness;
- Performed watershed improvements on 35,500 acres;
- Restored 470,500 acres of wildlife and fish habitat
- Permitted 9.3 million animal head months of livestock;
- Maintained 23,000 developed recreation sites and 4,300 campsites;
- Assisted 146,700 woodland owners and 690 rural communities;
- Reduced hazardous fuels on 1.4 million acres;
- Developed 2,500 research reports and other technical documents;
- Maintained 4.5 billion board feet of timber under contract; and
- Processed 1,075 energy and bonded non-energy operations.



Early in my tenure, we faced congressional threats of "custodial funding" due to a decline in the production of commodities. Four years later after an incredibly challenging fire season and an unprecedented debate on the value of clean water and unfragmented landscapes, the overall Forest Service budget increased by 65 percent. National Forest System funding increased by 22 percent. State and Private Forestry increased by 159 percent and Research by 28 percent. I hope that you are able to continue these sorts of investments in conservation and knowledge that pay such high dividends to future generations.

As you begin your tenure as Secretary of Agriculture, I would like to share with you recommendations to help resolve specific longstanding conservation challenges as the Forest Service enters a new century of managing for "the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run."

Roadless Area Protection

I hope the Administration's intent is not to negotiate a settlement with those opposed to roadless area protection. Doing so would undermine the most extensive multi-year environmental analysis in history; a process that included over 600 public meetings and generated 1.6 million comments – the overwhelming majority of which supported protecting roadless areas. Controversy over roadless areas has persisted for decades. I hope you will withstand political pressure and not reopen this divisive debate.

Due to complexity, cost, and controversy more projects fail in roadless areas than anywhere else. Most important, not a single private land owner or corporate interest would continue to build new roads in pristine areas while saddled with a crumbling 386,000 mile road system with an \$8.4 billion road maintenance backlog liability. One quarter of one percent of our nation's timber and a fraction of a fraction of our oil and gas is a small price to pay for the protection of 58.5 million acres of our children's natural resource inheritance. The long-term public interest in conserving these areas should prevail over short-term private interests.

Civil Rights and Financial Management

Much progress has been made in the areas of civil rights and financial management and accountability, but more remains to be done. The Forest Service must remain vigilant in promoting a civil rights agenda that treats employees and customers fairly and with decency and respect.

Financial management and accountability remain a significant vulnerability. Although the traditional culture of the agency does not readily accept outside assistance, I recommend your bringing in the highest quality expertise to bolster Forest Service skills and accelerate the achievement of financial and program accountability goals. With a \$4 billion budget and 35,000 employees, the Forest Service is akin to a Fortune 500 company in size and complexity. It deserves comparable leadership and expertise in the arena of financial management.

Old Growth

More than any other, the old growth issue symbolizes the conflict and controversy that crippled the Forest Service for 30 years or more. Former Chief Dale Robertson called for the inventory and mapping of old growth forests more than a decade ago. It is time we completed those inventories and maps.

Moreover, it makes little sense to harvest old growth forests simply to bring their short-term economic values to market. The greatest good of these remnant forests is found through their research and study, conservation and restoration. The mark of a truly wealthy nation is not measured in acres harvested, rivers dammed, oil barrels filled, or mountaintops mined. Our maturity is most ably displayed by demonstrating mastery over ourselves. Our willingness to say, "Enough, these ancient forests cannot be improved through commodity timber production" honors our nation far more than engineering an expensive road to harvest an old growth stand.

Timber harvest remains an important function of the National Forest System. For example, thinning of brush and small diameter trees may help protect communities and restore fire dependent ecosystems, and in the process employ thousands of people in high quality jobs. But not if timber harvest comes at the expense of our rarest and most biologically significant old growth forests. Ensuring the conservation of old growth forests should become among the highest Forest Service priorities.

Timber Trust Funds

The incentive system that drives many Forest Service activities, despite the best intentions of field employees, continues to be modeled on an outdated system from a bygone era. The Forest Service helped to prompt congressional reform of a 1908 law that separates funding for rural schools and roads from timber harvest levels. If implemented as passed, this legislation can help to diminish controversy and reconnect communities to the lands and waters that sustain them.

Congress should now turn its attention to reforming the financial incentive system that promotes roadless area development and old growth harvest. The fact that timber receipts are used to pay employees and finance important programs too often pits long-term land health objectives against short-term financial considerations.

For the past two years ago, the Forest Service proposed that Congress make nearly \$400 million of Forest Service timber related trust funds (e.g., Knutson-Vandenberg, Salvage, and Brush Disposal funds) subject to public scrutiny and congressional review through the annual appropriations process. Given the increases in our budgets over the past few years, it is past time that all Forest Service programs are treated on an equal par.

Wilderness

Few congressional decisions are more forward-looking than those involving wilderness designation. We must highlight the profile of, and increase the funding for, the dwindling number of wilderness employees in the field. This helps to explain why I committed to hiring a hundred new wilderness field staff and created a separate wilderness program apart from Recreation, where Wilderness formerly resided. It is far more than a recreation resource. Wilderness is a salve to the human spirit. In an increasingly developed and urbanized society it is a tangible reminder of our pioneer heritage.

As an agency, we have always had a schizophrenic relationship with wilderness. Although the Forest Service practically invented the wilderness ethic, we struggle with recommending new wilderness designations from the most biologically productive lands. Existing wilderness areas remain under threat today – from proposed mining operations under the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness of Montana to chronic under-funding. Remaining vigilant against these threats and recommending the expansion of wilderness from remote high elevation areas to old growth forests, prairie grasslands, and bottomland hardwoods would demonstrate your commitment to this enduring resource.

Fire Management

Six years ago, in the wake of a deadly fire season, Congress passed, and the President signed, the Salvage Rider. The Salvage Rider applied short-term solutions to the long-term degradation of forest ecosystem health through past management actions and fire suppression. I became Chief on the heels of this 18-month law that suspended citizen appeals and directed agency resources into timber harvest of burned and associated green trees, and inherited the rancor and gridlock it wrought.

By contrast, in the aftermath of last summer's similarly intense fire season, we crafted a bipartisan approach to protecting communities and restoring fire dependent ecosystems not dependent on the use of traditional commercial timber sales. Our long-term solution directs protective work on the areas directly adjacent to communities most at risk, through thinning of brush and other fine fuels that are most flammable, and broader use of prescribed fire. Thousands of jobs and economic opportunities await those communities willing to perform the needed stewardship work and to use the wood fiber generated incidental to accomplishing restoration objectives. The effort will meet controversy and gridlock, however, if used to simply accelerate commercial timber harvest in the name of fire protection.

The 1872 Mining Law

The General Mining Act of 1872 is the product of an era when women and many minorities could not vote, the nation was struggling through Civil War reconstruction, and St. Louis represented the western frontier to many citizens. The 1872 Mining Law confounds Forest Service efforts to balance multiple uses. Problems with the Law's antiquated royalty provisions are well known. In addition, the Law allows privatization of public lands for as little as \$2.50 to \$5 per acre. Every single use of the National Forest System: recreation, timber harvest, oil and

gas development, for example, is subject to the approval or rejection of a field official for environmental or safety reasons. All but one, that is – hard rock mining.

It is Congress, not the Forest Service that must act to bring this law into a modern context. Because they have not, I recommended the segregation and withdrawal from development under the 1872 Mining Law of the Rocky Mountain Front, the Guadalupe Caves in New Mexico, portions of the biologically rich Siskiyou National Forest of Oregon, and other areas of the National Forest System. I had little choice in the matter because the anachronistic law vests anyone capable of filing a valid claim with the right to develop an area regardless of its other social or environmental values. Until Congress demonstrates the willingness to reform the outdated 1872 Mining Law, I urge you to continue to aggressively recommend the segregation and withdrawal of our most sensitive forests and grasslands from hard rock mining.

Off Highway Vehicles

More people recreate on National Forests and Grasslands than on any other public lands. Technological innovations in motorized recreation enable people to get into more remote areas than ever before, often resulting in degraded water quality and wildlife habitat and erosion. Off highway vehicles should remain a legitimate use of public lands where expressly allowed. We must ensure, however, that their use does not compromise the integrity of the soil and water resource and wildlife habitats.

Last year, more than 100 groups petitioned me to initiate a national rulemaking regarding off highway vehicles. I resisted in part due to other priorities. This issue, however, will not get any easier for local managers. I urge to you to ratify and implement policies that I articulated last year for the use of off road vehicles on the National Forest System. They include:

- All off road vehicle decisions, including those that change present levels of use, should be made through an open and public process, except where emergency closure is needed to protect public safety or forest resources.
- Motorized use should occur only on designated routes and areas. Development and use of unauthorized roads and trails should be illegal. This will require adequate signing and mapping for responsible off road vehicle users.

If such recommendations are not implemented, the litigation and controversy that greatly reduced the timber program, will almost certainly soon haunt the Recreation Program.

Private Land Conservation

Fewer areas offer more promise for conservation and watershed restoration than private lands. Decisions by the nation's largest wood retailers to not purchase wood from endangered forests and to only sell appropriately certified wood products speak to the promise and momentum of this issue. The Forest Service State and Private and Research programs offer urban and rural residents alike voluntary options for improving management, conservation, and restoration of private lands. These programs are chronically under-funded yet entirely consistent with this

Administration's stated intent to offer incentives to private land conservation, and should be a priority for the Department of Agriculture.

Water

Recent international studies indicate that by 2025, two-thirds of the world's people will face water shortages. As Chief, it was my policy that watershed health and restoration serve as the overriding priority of all forest plan revisions. Fewer States demonstrate the importance of the National Forest System to drinking water than your home state, California. Although National Forests comprise only 20 percent of the State's land base, they supply nearly 50 percent of the surface runoff. Ensuring the multiple benefits of the National Forests water resource will require, among other things, a willingness to assert water rights to preserve wilderness values, providing minimum instream flows for fish, and securing bypass flows for other resources.

I recognize that short-term political imperatives run rampant in Washington, DC. Please remember that the decisions you make through your tenure will have implications that last many generations. You cannot fail if you allow your loyalty to the land and to those yet to be born to take precedence over all other organizational and political fealties.

I wish you much success as Secretary of Agriculture, and hope that you receive these recommendations in the constructive manner they are intended. With clear conservation policy direction, and without micromanagement from political forces, the Forest Service is the world's finest conservation organization. Allow Forest Service employees to follow their land ethic and they will provide for "the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run."

Sincerely,

/s/ Mike Dombeck

Michael P. Dombeck
Chief of the Forest Service

News Release

USDA Forest Service
Washington, D.C.



FS-0129

Contact: Joe Walsh, 202-205-1134

USDA FOREST SERVICE CHIEF MIKE DOMBECK TO RETIRE

WASHINGTON, March 27, 2001 - Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck announced today his retirement from federal service effective Saturday, March 31. Announcing his retirement with senior staff, Dombeck expressed satisfaction in his efforts to guide the agency and looked forward to pursuing new opportunities outside government service.

"I have enjoyed every minute of my tenure as Chief of the Forest Service, Dombeck told the leadership team. Any successes I may have had were achieved only through the dedication and commitment of the 33,000 men and women of the Forest Service, who have made these the best four years of my life." Dombeck said the agency's transition under the new administration appeared to be on track. "I feel that this is the right time to step down, spend time with my family, and then look at new opportunities."

Dombeck, 52, a native of Wisconsin, became the 14th Chief of the Forest Service on January 7, 1997. His retirement caps more than a quarter century of service as a federal employee, college professor, and high school teacher. Prior to his arrival at the Forest Service, Dombeck served as Acting Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

"I have been pleased by the support and effort Chief Dombeck has extended to me and the transition team," Secretary Veneman remarked following Dombeck's announcement. "Mike has been a dedicated professional who has given over half his life to public service. I appreciate his many years of leadership in government. All of us at USDA wish him and his family the very best."

Phil Janik, Chief Operating Officer for the USDA Forest Service will serve as acting chief until a successor is named.

Dombeck's biography is available on the Forest Service Website
<http://www.fs.fed.us/intro/chiefbio.shtml>.



Biography

USDA FOREST SERVICE



Dr. Michael P. Dombeck

Dr. Michael P. Dombeck became the 14th Chief of the Forest Service on Jan. 6, 1997.

He was born on Sept. 21, 1948 in Stevens Point, Wisc. It was in northern Wisconsin's lake country that his appreciation for natural resources was cultivated. Dombeck worked as a fishing guide in the region for 11 summers. He earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in biological sciences and education from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, and the University of Minnesota. He earned his doctorate in fisheries biology from Iowa State University and is noted for research contributions on muskies and lake habitat management. In addition, Dombeck has authored numerous scholarly publications and made frequent national as well as international scientific presentations.

Dombeck taught biology, chemistry, science, zoology, and fisheries management at public schools and universities. He spent 12 years with the Forest Service primarily in the midwest and western United States. In his last Forest Service post as National Fisheries Program Manager in Washington, D.C., he was recognized for outstanding leadership in developing and implementing fisheries programs and forging partnerships. He also spent a year as a Legislative Fellow working in the United States Senate with responsibility for natural resource and interior appropriations issues.

Dombeck was named acting director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in February 1994. In that position, he focused on two major objectives: creating a long-term BLM vision to improve the health of the land and reinventing the agency to reduce red tape, streamline functions and improve customer service.

As Forest Service Chief, Dombeck has focused his efforts on promoting partnerships, collaborative stewardship, accountability, and financial health. Early in 1998, Dombeck introduced the Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda. This agenda identifies four emphasis areas. They are:

- Watershed Health and Restoration
- Development of a Long-Term Forest Roads Policy
- Sustainable Forest Management
- Recreation

He resides with his wife and daughter in Northern Virginia.

Education

Ph.D. 1984 Fisheries Biology, Iowa State University

M.S. 1977 Zoology, University of Minnesota

M.S.T. 1974 Biology & Education, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

B.S. 1971 Biology & General Science, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

Career Summary

1/97 to Pres. Chief, USDA Forest Service

2/94 - 1/97 Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management

9/93-2/94 Chief of Staff to Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, Department of Interior (DOI), Washington, D.C.

1/93-9/93 Acting Assistant Secretary/Deputy Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, DOI, Washington, D.C.

1989-1992 Science Advisor and Special Assistant to Director, Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D.C.

1987-1989 National Fisheries Program Manager, Forest Service, Washington, D.C.

1985-1987 Regional Fisheries Program Manager, Pacific Southwest Region, USDA Forest Service, Calif.

1978-1985 Fisheries Biologist, USDA Forest Service, Michigan and Wisconsin

1971-1973 Instructor of Zoology, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

1966-1977 Fishing guide, Hayward, Wisc.

Professional Affiliations

American Fisheries Society (Certified Fisheries Scientist), Society of American Foresters, American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists, Gamma Sigma Delta, Honorary Society (Agriculture), Sigma Xi, Scientific Research Society Board of Governors, Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame

(Current as of 7-12-98)

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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington Office

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

File Code: 1300

Date: March 27, 2001

Route To: All Employees

Subject: Message From the Chief

To: All Employees

Today I informed the National Leadership Team that I will step down as Chief of the Forest Service on March 31, 2001. As many of you know, I grew up on the Chequamegon National Forest in the north woods of Wisconsin, along forest road 164. As a young boy, I made many trips up and down the West Fork lookout tower that was in full view from our kitchen window.

I first came to work in the Chief's Office in 1987, never dreaming I would be blessed with the opportunities of the years that followed. As perhaps the only Chief to have actually grown up on a National Forest, and as someone that started their career in Michigan as a GS 6 technician, I can assure you that opportunities within the career ranks of the Forest Service are boundless. The only constraints are those we place on ourselves.

I am proud to have played a small role in your many conservation accomplishments over the past four years. The work that each of you do in thousands of communities across the country is incomparably important. I cannot begin to thank enough the hundreds of you that welcomed me into your offices, homes, and even on occasion, secret fishing spots.

I can think of no better way to thank you all than to share again with you the words of Gifford Pinchot from his dedication to Breaking New Ground: "To the men and women of the Forest Service, whose courage, devotion and intelligence have made it and kept it the best organization in the government of the United States." Those words are as true today as ever.

As I retire from the Forest Service, my future plans include getting reacquainted with my family and old friends, spending a lot of time in the woods and on the water, and dedicating the rest of my life to continuing to advocate the importance and benefits of healthy, diverse, and productive lands and waters.

In closing, I'll offer you one last piece of advice. Through the political and social changes that are normal in a democracy, I hope that you will always remember the reason that you first became Forest Service employees. Continue to advocate and teach the imperative of conservation and restoration. Enjoy yourselves and have fun. Get out into the woods to hunt,



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fish, hike, or camp, or just enjoy the wild places with your family. Share with young people the love and respect for nature that placed you on this conservation path. Take in the splendor of an old growth forest, a prairie grassland, or jagged mountain. Follow your hearts and never allow your lives to be controlled by the desk bound, those that equate a National Forest solely to board feet or barrels of oil, and others that see only the vistas of their computer screen or the tabular columns of their calculators or only hear the beeps of their pagers and cell phones. Above all, allow your commitment to your conservation ethic and the lands and waters that sustain us to take precedence over other political or organizational fealties.

And finally, thank you for allowing me to serve as your Chief.

/s/ Mike Dombeck

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

Our National Forests: Values Other Than Timber

Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA Forest Service
Conservation Roundtable
New York, NY
September 19, 2000

Thank you very much for asking me to share with you my vision for America's forests in the 21st century. For more than a century, Americans have debated how to manage our forests. Americans care deeply for the land; our conservation roots reach back to the literature of James Fenimore Cooper, to the philosophy of Henry David Thoreau, to the landscape paintings of the Hudson School.

Our passion for the land leaves many Americans with strong feelings about how best to use the land. Fueled by emotion, land use disputes can be long and intense. In recent decades, the result has been litigation, new information, injunctions—all prompting great, and often overdue, change—but not without social and economic disruption.

It's time to look beyond the disputes of the moment to ask what we want our forests to look like in 20 to 50 years. What do we want from America's forests? Can we find ways of moving beyond confrontation to envision together a better future for our forests?

First, let us take stock of our forests and how we got where we are today.

America's Forest History

We live in a highly urbanized society. It's easy to forget the vital role that forests played in the history and development of our country. Wood was practically our only fuel for most of our history. It warmed our citizens, produced our iron, and powered our machines. Lumber, timber, and other wood products went into our houses, barns, fences, bridges, even our dams and locks. Everything depended on wood from America's forests—rural economies, industry, transportation, the building of cities. In a very real sense, the forests were the economic foundation of the Nation.

In a spiritual sense, too, the forest—and the wilderness values it represents—played a key role in shaping our identity as a Nation. Our Nation's forests inspired Thoreau, Emerson, John Muir, and many other great Americans. Our wildlands are uniquely American. Other cultures have their ancient architectures, their classical sculptures and literatures; we Americans have our wildlands. Our wildlands have shaped our character as a people. Our children regard woodsmen like Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone as our national heroes. Our political history has been shaped, more than for other nations, by the great conservation movements that arose to address concerns over wildlife decimation and forest depletion.

By 1900, "cut-and-run" forestry practices had demolished forests in the Appalachians, the Northeast, and the Great Lakes area. To protect the Nation's watersheds and timber reserves, Theodore Roosevelt laid the foundations for our National Forest System today. Management was entrusted to the Forest Service under its first Chief, Gifford Pinchot. What made Pinchot's young Forest Service unique was a set of conservation values that were not necessarily popular but were always in the long-term interest of land health.

Following World War II, another set of values came to the fore—helping to fulfill the national dream

of providing families with single-family homes, good and important values. Our timber harvests escalated for nearly a quarter of a century.

However, along the way, social values changed. As early as 1928, Aldo Leopold understood that timber could no longer drive national forest management. "Whether we like it or no," he mused, "national forest policy is outgrowing the question of boards." Today, Americans want more than timber from their national forests and grasslands. They want:

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

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

Through the work of Aldo Leopold and others who followed in his footsteps, we learned how better to manage the land to meet our goal of sustainable management. Today, we take a holistic approach—an ecosystem approach—to wildland management. We know that we must protect the health of our forest and grassland ecosystems. All the threads in the tapestry of life must be strong and securely interwoven. High-quality water must flow freely; the soil must be abundant and stable; a full array of habitats and species must be present; and all the complicated ways that living organisms function and interact must be working together well.

If everything is working well, then we have a healthy ecosystem—an ecosystem that maintains its natural integrity, functions, and processes. Then and only then will the ecosystem be able to provide, in a sustainable way, the commodities and amenities that we as a society need and have come to expect from our national forests and grasslands.

America's Forests Today

So do we have healthy forests today?

In many areas, especially on Federal lands, forest health is reasonably good. For this we can thank our predecessors—Roosevelt, Pinchot, Leopold, and all the others who showed the way. But the picture is not all rosy. In some areas, conditions in America's forests are poor and getting worse; so much worse that we even speak of a forest health crisis. Consider this:

- Wildland fragmentation continues to increase as woodlots and grasslands are subdivided and sold, with parcels developed for nonforest uses. Habitat is lost daily for species that shun human contact, such as wolves and grizzlies, and for forest interior species, including many neotropical songbirds.
- 58 million acres are at risk from insects and diseases, including 24 million acres on our national forests and 34 million acres on other lands.
- Many riparian areas nationwide continue to decline. Thirty-five percent of freshwater fish, 38 percent of amphibians, and 56 percent of freshwater mussels are imperiled or vulnerable.
- Introduced pests are devastating our wildland resources. More than 2,000 invasive and noxious plant species, 400 nonnative forest insects, 20 tree pathogens, and countless exotic aquatic species are already established in the United States. On public lands, the annual spread of invasive plant species exceeds the size of Delaware. The cost of invasive species to our economy is estimated at more than \$136 billion per year.

These are just some of the many problems facing our forests today. I'd like to discuss two of them in a little more detail.

The first problem has to do with levels of timber harvest. On our national forests, we've reduced timber harvest by more than two-thirds—from about 12 billion board feet in the late 1980's to some 3 to 4 billion board feet today. Make no mistake. Although we did what was expected of us at the time, we were cutting too many trees for too long. We've stopped that.

But have we really solved the problem? Demand for the 8 to 9 billion board feet formerly harvested from national forests did not disappear. It simply found other supplies. Consider:

- From 1965 to 1999, our annual paper consumption increased overall by 120 percent and per capita by 90 percent, from 468 to 750 pounds per person.
- The average size of homes in the United States grew from 1,520 square feet in 1971 to 2,120 square feet in 1996. Meanwhile, family sizes have grown smaller.
- Between 1991 and 1996, U.S. softwood imports from Canada rose from 11.5 to nearly 18 billion board feet per year. Old-growth boreal ecosystems have suffered in northern Quebec.

The Forest Service can't solve such problems alone. In the absence of a national consumption ethic, our land ethic only shifts our environmental problems to other lands where environmental protections are fewer.

Aldo Leopold's admonition is worth repeating: "A public which lives in wooden houses should be careful about throwing stones at lumbermen, even wasteful ones, until it has learned how its own arbitrary demands as to kinds and qualities of lumber help cause the waste which it decries." I challenge you to help us build a national consumption ethic to reduce the need for timber harvest. But until we do, I believe that we have a national obligation to help meet our own demand for wood fiber

through sustainable timber harvest on our national forests—as long as the health of the land is not in any way compromised.

And that brings me to another problem that defies simple administrative solutions. Our forest ecosystems most in trouble are those where low-intensity fires once swept through the forest every few years. Since the 1800's, we thought that virtually all fire was bad for the land. By the 1940's, we finally had the means to put out almost every fire. Small trees and brush, no longer kept out by frequent low-intensity fires, built up in our forests.

These fuels are the biggest threat we face today in the interior West. When fires now occur, the dense fuels can make the fires so intense that they destroy entire forest stands. Some 24 million acres of national forests in the interior West are at high risk of wildland fires that could compromise ecosystem integrity and human safety. An additional 32 million acres are at moderate risk. That's 56 million acres at risk, or about 29 percent of the land in our National Forest System.

Collaborative Action

So how do we restore our forests to health?

One thing is very clear: The Forest Service can't do it alone. Our problems are too vast—they cross jurisdictional boundaries. Our national forestlands hold only a small proportion of the Nation's forests—about 18 percent. Our proportion of acres burned is even smaller in most years; in 1999, it was about 11 percent.

Our forest health problems are not a Forest Service problem—not even a Federal lands problem. They are a national problem. That's why President Clinton called this year for a national approach to address the problem of unnaturally severe wildland fires. On September 8, Secretaries Glickman and Babbitt delivered a report to President Clinton outlining steps to address the problem. Here are four steps endorsed by the President:

First, the President will continue to provide all the firefighting resources we need to protect lives, property, and natural resources. We have the finest wildland firefighting organization in the world; for every large fire in the headlines, 49 others never make the news because we put them out so fast. The key to our success has been nationwide cooperation. Wildland firefighting today involves many partners at multiple levels, from rural fire departments to Federal land managers. We will continue to provide everything our firefighters need at every level to do their job, both safely and well.

Second, we will restore our landscapes and rebuild our communities. We will help people in hard-hit rural communities to rebuild their homes, businesses, and neighborhoods. Wildland fires leave behind safety hazards and the potential for property damage and resource degradation through postfire flooding and erosion. We will use our interagency burned area rehabilitation teams to protect public health and safety, safeguard our natural and cultural resources, and restore environmentally sensitive areas.

Third, we will make long-term investments to reduce fire risk. Wildland fire knows no boundaries. We will collaborate across Federal, State, tribal, and local jurisdictions in planning and implementing fuels treatments, based on the best available science. Our highest priority will be the wildland/urban interface, where communities are most at risk. Our treatments will include prescribed fire and the removal of excess brush, small trees, and dead fuels.

Fourth, we will work directly with local communities to identify fuels treatment projects tailored to meet local needs. We will use local labor for fuels treatment and restoration work, and we will expand our financial and technical assistance to rural fire departments, our first line of defense. We will help local landowners make their homes and properties firesafe by clearing away enough fuels to create a survivable space.

A Vision in Common

Our fire strategy is based on a collective, locally driven approach to solving our forest health problems. It builds on our history of success in collaborating at every level—Federal, State, and local—to form the most effective wildland firefighting organization in the world. It's worth remembering that 70 years ago, 52 million acres burned in a single fire season. So far this year, thanks to the skill and dedication of our wildland firefighters, less than 7 million acres have burned, despite terrible fuel and drought conditions.

For too long, we have allowed the extremes to define our agendas. Confrontation has bred suspicion; litigation has led to paralysis and inaction. But a new paradigm is emerging. It's happening in communities all across the Nation, where loggers and environmentalists, ranchers and anglers are growing weary of the controversy. They are sitting down in coffee shops or leaning together against pickups and getting to know one another. They are learning that what divides them need not prevent them from working together to achieve the goals that unite them.

It's happening in places like Kalispell, Montana. That's where old adversaries decided to try something new. Defenders of Wildlife, the Montana Logging Association, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Intermountain Forest Industry Association all came together to form Flathead Common Ground. This collaborative group agreed to:

- Decommission 116 miles of old and unused roads to help grizzly bears.
- Restore many miles of stream.
- Burn 8,700 acres to improve deer and elk browse and regeneration for whitebark pine.
- Harvest timber and treat vegetation on 633 acres.

What are the goals that can bring people together? One of them is water. Everyone needs water. Everyone needs clean water and all the benefits that flow from it. Watersheds and streams are the lifeblood of our grasslands and forests. They are the barometers of the health of the land. By focusing on areas of agreement such as water quality improvement, maintaining streamflows, and allowing for the ecological processes that make our forests healthy, we can bring people together to restore the soil, water, and air upon which we and future generations will depend.

This Nation is founded on the premise that diverse groups, creeds, and races of people can come together in good will and resolve any challenge, no matter how daunting. I have a vision. I envision a time when our differences no longer divide us in managing the land. I envision a time when America's lands, like the ecosystems on them, are interwoven in a seamless tapestry, a tapestry of collective and collaborative management to protect the land while meeting the needs of people, within the limits of the land. I envision a time when everywhere you go in our country, you find healthy, vigorous forests that support multiple habitats for a rich variety of native species.

What will the role of the Forest Service be? Our greatest value to society in the future will be to

develop and deliver good science on ecosystem management and watershed conservation—and to help people develop a shared vision for managing healthy watersheds. Our national forests and grasslands will serve as models of sustainable management while helping to meet our Nation's need for clean water, wood fiber, dispersed recreation, healthy fish and wildlife, solitary places for spiritual renewal, and all the other multiple uses that are every American's birthright.

It won't happen overnight. It might take 20 years, maybe 50 years, maybe 100. After all, it took a century or more to create the problems we face today.

One last time, Aldo Leopold: "Conservation, viewed in its entirety, is the slow and laborious unfolding of a new relationship between people and land." I would add, and a new relationship among the people who live and play on the land. I believe that practicing our land ethic—treating the land with respect—depends on first treating each other with respect. With your help, it can happen. It will happen if we overlook our past differences and finally join together for the health of the land.

The Changing Role of Timber Harvest in Our National Forests

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

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

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

History of Service

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

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

Forest Service Mission

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

In the past, we sometimes neglected to take the long view in managing our

forests. In response to what we perceived as society's demands, we built a 380,000-mile road system, cut wide swaths of forest, and didn't listen carefully enough to the growing chorus of public discontent. I do not know anyone who would suggest we return to the era of harvesting 12 billion board feet of timber per year from our national forests. But the unfortunate reality is that those not-so-long-ago days are still fresh in the minds of many, feeding residual distrust and conflict. But things have changed much, and the only certainty I know is that the rate of change will accelerate.

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

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

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

Changing Public Demand

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

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

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

escalated for nearly a quarter of a century.

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

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

Role of Timber Harvest

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

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

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

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

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

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

Partnership or Confrontation?

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

- In Oregon's Sumpter Valley, we experimented by thinning a stand of beetle-infected ponderosa pine. Tree mortality declined by more than 90 percent.
- On Lake Pend Oreille in northern Idaho, we removed thickets from open forests of ponderosa pine. Then we burned the underbrush. The forest is now on its way to recovery.

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

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

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

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

- No "wall" surrounds our national forests. The reality is that more Americans are using their national forests in more ways than at any other time in history.
- Your Website implies that 65 million acres in our national forests are at risk without roads in roadless areas. The reality is that many of our national forestlands are indeed at risk, and it is sometimes easier to treat them using roads. But the highest priority areas for treatment already have roads, for the most part; and those high-priority areas won't be affected by our roadless

proposal. So how much land will be affected? Here's one way to look at it: On all national forestlands, we are planning to treat about 2.5 million acres at risk through timber harvest in the next 5 years. Our roadless proposal would reduce that number by about 54,000 acres—or about 2 percent.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Partnership Opportunities

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

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

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

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

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

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

Looking Ahead

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

environmental and material goals?

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

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

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

The State of the Forest Extending our Land Ethic

Mike Dombeck, Chief, USDA Forest Service

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Introduction

Three years ago, there was widespread concern within Congress, the public, and even the agency that the Forest Service had lost sight of its mission. The sense of confusion over our core purpose permeated congressional hearings, media reports and even internal dialogue. We crafted the Natural Resources Agenda to focus an ecosystem-based approach to our multiple use mission.

The Natural Resource Agenda focuses on:

- Watershed health and restoration • Roads/Roadless
- Sustainable forest and grassland ecosystems • Recreation

This Agenda reaffirms our commitment to our roots, our commitment to caring for the land, our commitment to serving people, our commitment to sustainability, our commitment to conservation.

I'm proud of the many accomplishments of the men and women of the Forest Service. These accomplishments would not be possible without the collaborative efforts of our many partners. Just consider some examples of the many achievements and National Forest uses in fiscal year 1999. We:

- Enhanced 11,300 acres of inland lakes
- Treated 87,700 acres of rangelands for noxious weeds
- Managed 34.7 million acres of wilderness
- Helped place 1.8 million acres of non-industrial private forest lands under stewardship management plans
- Issued 23,000 recreation special use permits
- Preserved 4,350 heritage sites
- Maintained 5.2 billion board feet of timber under contract
- Decommissioned 2,900 miles of road
- Reconstructed 1,750 miles of trail

- Reforested 267,000 acres
- Restored 185,000 acres of wildlife habitat
- Maintained 262,000 acres of forestlands through stand improvement
- Cleaned up 29 hazardous substance sites
- Published 2,700 research publications
- Improved 82,000 acres of threatened and endangered species habitat
- Assisted 11,000 communities through urban forestry
- Assisted 2,450 community and volunteer fire departments
- Administered 8.2 million animal head months of grazing
- Put out more than 98 percent of wildfires in initial attack

Multiple use is alive and well but the balances continue to change as society changes. Multiple use has never meant that we should do everything on every acre simply because we can. For over a century, citizens have debated management of their forests. The result is played out in a messy and awkward dialogue with which we are all familiar.

Today, I'd like to step aside from these debates and begin a dialogue on the most basic of questions: what can we do today to ensure our forests, grasslands, and river systems retain their health, diversity, and productivity? How can we work together to ensure sustainable communities that thrive and prosper in a way that promotes land health and social well-being?

The dialogue I describe must extend beyond the walls of this room. It must define the political debates in Congress, across the nation's editorial pages, and into local meetings across our largest cities and smallest townships. It is not the work of any single political party, land management agency, conservation or wise use group. What I describe is the essence of democracy. It is the mark of a mature nation willing to demonstrate world leadership through cautious example, education, and humility. It represents nothing less than our collective obligation to live in productive harmony with the lands and waters that sustain us all.

If our challenges were a function of science, technology or planning, we would engineer our way to a solution. The fact is that most natural resource issues are less technical than they are social. We can build better dams, design better roads, and enact policies that thwart exotic species from entering our borders. Whether we can change the way people think, act, or treat one another and the land that sustains them is another issue altogether. In that context, I would like to share with you our priorities for the coming year.

Watershed Health and Restoration

Consistent with our Organic Act, watershed health and restoration remain the oldest and highest calling of the Forest Service. We will continue to make watershed health the overriding objective of National Forest and Grassland management. Forested lands comprise about one-third of the nation's land area and supply about two-thirds of the total water runoff in the United States. We estimate the marginal value of water on National Forest lands to be more than \$3.7 billion per year.

Over 3,400 communities rely on National Forests in 33 states for their drinking water, serving over 60 million people. Impaired watersheds can threaten public health and force expensive drinking water treatments on taxpayers. For example, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates an \$11 billion need for the rehabilitation of sources of drinking water.

- Recognizing the essential contribution of National Forests and Grasslands to public sources of drinking water, by 2001, we will work with the States to identify and map each community that depends on National Forests for their drinking water supply and estimate how many people each system serves. We will also assess each of our relevant forest plans to ensure they provide adequate protection to drinking water supplies.

Directly outside my office window is evidence of the success of the Clean Water Act in reducing point source pollution. The Potomac River is today one of the finest bass fisheries in the nation.

- Our challenge is to better understand the causes and effects of polluted runoff on our waterways. To that end, Forest Service Research will work with interested States, American Indian tribes and others to develop cost effective and accurate monitoring techniques to discern between natural erosion and that influenced by human actions.

Collaborative approaches to restoration ensure that healthy watersheds produce high quality water and provide for the long-term sustained yield of other goods, values, and services. When people come together to develop a shared vision for healthier lands and waters, ownership is built in successful restoration efforts.

In fiscal 2000 and 2001, the Forest Service will invest more than \$18 million to implement 12 large-scale collaborative watershed restoration projects covering millions of acres. This funding will be matched by partner organizations. The projects demonstrate diversity in project scope and location:

- The Upper Pit River Restoration Project encompassing approximately 500,000 acres within the 2 million acre Modoc National Forest in California.

- The Upper Sevier River Restoration Project on the Dixie National Forest in Utah.
- The 3 million acre Blue Mountain Demonstration Area in Oregon.
- The Chattooga River Watershed Restoration Project, located within a corner of the three adjoining states of Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina
- The Chesapeake Bay Watershed Partnership among the Forest Service, Virginia Department of Forestry, Maryland Forest Service, Ducks Unlimited and others.
- The Conasauga River Watershed Restoration Project on the Cherokee and Chattahoochee National Forests.
- The Delta Watershed Restoration Project in the lower Mississippi alluvial valley.
- The New York City Watershed Study looks at combining methods of protecting working forests and high quality drinking water to approximately 9 million residents.
- The Pacific Coast Watershed Restoration Initiative will restore private and public coastal lands in the Northwest.
- The Upper South Platte Watershed Protection and Restoration Project in Colorado.
- The White River Partnership in central Vermont.
- The Rio Penasco Restoration Project within the Lincoln National Forest.

These large watershed projects all encompass mixed ownerships with many Federal, state, tribal, and private partners involved.

Multiple use management is based on sound science and a firm understanding of what makes complex ecological systems hum and tick. Regional assessments conducted in Alaska, the southern Appalachians, the Pacific Northwest, and the Columbia River Basin provide us with a better understanding of the effects of management decisions on the landscape. National Forest System lands are among the most biologically diverse in the nation. We must protect these strongholds through sound management. This, in turn requires a strong science base.

- We will work with the EPA, States, and the Fish and Wildlife Service to complete the Southern Resources Assessment for 13 southern states in FY 2001. These assessments provide scientific

information needed to help States and local communities to make informed resource use and conservation decisions.

Of growing concern is the threat to watershed health from the introduction and spread of invasive and noxious species. More than 2,000 invasive and noxious plant species, 400 non-native forest insects, 20 tree pathogens, and countless exotic aquatic species are already established in the United States. On public lands, the annual spread of invasive plant species exceeds the size of Delaware. Economic and ecological losses continue to spiral upward. The cost of invasive species to our economy is estimated at over \$136 billion per year.

The recent introduction of the Asian longhorned beetle, for example, threatens nearly 45 percent of the hardwood forests in the Northeast. The Forest Service has a long history of working with partners to control pests but the magnitude of the issue calls for new approaches. The Forest Service will work with its Federal, state, local partners and tribal governments to:

- Integrate all of its program areas to slow the spread of invasive species on public and private lands, and restore the ecological integrity of already impacted areas. Flexible funding and resources can make the difference between eradication and infestation of exotic species. Forest Service program areas will coordinate efforts to monitor invasive species, develop new tools for control, and implement solutions that prevent new introductions across the landscape.

Sustainable Forest and Grassland Ecosystems

John Muir once wrote, "when we try to pick anything out of the universe, we find it hitched to everything else." The effects of National Forest and Grassland management influence social and ecological conditions across the nation and the world. As conservation leaders, we cannot turn away myopically from the effects of our decisions on local communities or other countries.

New tools such as the criteria and indicators adopted through the Montreal Protocols provide us with a common language that transcends land ownerships and allows us to better monitor and understand the effects of our decisions on local landscapes and global economies.

Sustainable resource management entails a consideration of basic social, economic, and ecological factors. For example, our draft forest planning regulations are based on the simple premise that we cannot meet the social and economic needs of people without first securing the health of the land.

- We will finalize our new planning regulations for National Forests and Grasslands this year. These regulations are based on the principles of collaborative stewardship, sound science, and sustainability and will lead to revisions of forest and grassland management plans that comprise 192 million acres of public land - 8

percent of the nation's land area.

New forest planning regulations alone will not secure the sustainability of our nation's forests or the communities that depend on them. In the South, for example, research indicates that softwood timber harvest rates may exceed forest growth rates. In the future, we will broaden the non-regulatory efforts of our State and Private Forestry programs to help non-industrial private landowners accomplish their land management objectives. These lands comprise 58 percent of the nation's forests and produce 59 percent of the nation's wood supply.

- Through the National Agroforestry Center, the Forest Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and our State partners will promote the integration of forestry into agricultural settings to protect soil and water resources, provide corridors for wildlife, and enhance farm efficiency and production.
- We will work with private landowners through such programs as the Stewardship Incentive Program to help interested private landowners to meet their land management objectives, promote wildlife conservation, improve water quality, and produce sustainable timber harvests.
- Proposed increases in our Forest Legacy program will allow willing landowners to protect over hundreds of thousands of private land from the effects of sprawl while allowing traditional forest uses. Investing more resources into conservation easements and land acquisition of critical habitat for imperiled species, as proposed by Congress will also conserve rare species and their habitats.

Forest Service Research and Development has, and will continue to, play an important role in our approach to promoting sustainability. For example:

- Forest Service Research and Development has played a vital role in the recovery and use of about 45 percent of our waste paper.
- Research from our Forest Products Lab in Wisconsin could lead to more high quality paper being produced from less wood fiber by mixing precipitated calcium carbonate into wood pulp. This could reduce the amount of sludge produced from paper production and is expected to lead to a return investment for papermakers of between 60 and 95 percent.

The need for research associated with all forest resources and uses will increase. The role of the Forest Service is to provide accurate, timely, and impartial information on the condition of forests through such programs as Forest Inventory and Analysis. In the future, we will integrate forest ecosystem health measures into this program and work with our State and federal partners to assess the overall health of the nation's forests, across all

ownerships.

States such as Kentucky are leading sustainability efforts by requiring applicants for State development funds to implement sustainability plans that may ensure implementation of best management practices, use of forestry professionals, groundwater protection, and conservation of special areas. Other States such as Maryland are developing assessment tools that will help them to set management priorities for the State's most ecologically sensitive lands and waters.

Consider the issue of forest ecosystem health on public lands. Increased knowledge leads to better management. Historic low-intensity fires in the West often did not kill the big trees, but they did thin the forest under-story. Low-intensity fires were ignited by American Indians to promote browse for game, to enhance berry crops, and for other purposes. Over time, we got so good at fire control that we quickly put out most fires, even beneficial natural ones.

Two things happened. First, the landscape started to lose its natural diversity - the mosaic of early, mid, and late seral stage habitats. The second thing that happened was that in many of our old open forests, young vegetation, no longer regulated by fire, grew into a dense tangle of young trees. If a fire did occur, the dense fuels could ladder into the crowns, and destroy old growth trees. Past timber harvest practices and grazing further altered land health, and increasing global trade increased the spread of exotic pests and diseases.

Today, we estimate some 24 million acres of National Forest in the Interior west are at a high risk of wildfires that could compromise ecosystem integrity and human safety. An additional 32 million acres are at moderate risk. In the absence of fire, many forests are more prone to increased insect and disease epidemics and when fires do occur in these areas, they can destroy forest stands and soils.

Our objective is to manage entire forest ecosystems, not simply the trees. Restoring forest ecosystems involves a variety of disciplines including hydrology, soil science, and biology. Our prescriptions must be science based. Sometimes simply leaving areas alone to heal is the preferred option. Or a suite of treatments may be necessary such as road stabilization or decommissioning, prescribed fire, the thinning and fuel reduction. When possible, utilizing this wood to meet the increasing fiber demands makes good economic and environmental sense.

- Our goal is to promote ecosystem health and conservation using collaborative approaches to sustain the Nation's forests, grasslands, and watersheds. We will soon release a national wildland fire strategy that will help us to focus restoration efforts on protecting communities, restoring essential ecological processes, and prioritizing areas most in need of treatment.

Some argue the need for a "zero-cut" policy on public lands. I reject such a notion and think it inappropriate for the wealthiest nation in the world to export its wood fiber demand to other lands. National Forests should serve as an international model for sustainable forestry. Without the harvest of low value material, fire cannot be used safely to restore many areas. In addition, stewardship-oriented timber harvest of low value material encourages new business opportunities that can utilize and process small diameter wood

fiber as well as improving habitat for many important wildlife species. Without this commitment, private sector and congressional investments in restoration and stewardship will be reduced.

Our challenges are immense, but if we act with creativity, and focus on developing a shared vision for ecologically sustainable forests and grasslands, the opportunities for job creation and new stewardship industries are significant. For example, our legislative proposal to stabilize payments to states and the Healthy Investments in Rural Environments initiative could lead to thousands of high paying, family wage jobs that emphasize ecosystem restoration, forest stewardship, and maintenance of our existing roads, facilities, and recreation infrastructure. Maintaining our roads, reducing fire risk, and restoring our watersheds is a local jobs program waiting to happen.

Roads and Roadless Areas

We will continue in the year 2000 to provide leadership to try and resolve the divisive issues of roads and roadless areas. We have published a draft road policy with the objective of improving public access to public lands within the limits of the land. This policy will focus on the road system of the future, instead of the current struggle over an eroding road system that we cannot afford to maintain.

The draft policy provides a science-based framework for local forest managers, local governments and the communities of interest to make decisions together about the future of the National Forest road system. It will help address issues such as: What Forest Service roads are high priority and should be upgraded? What roads are of lesser importance or no longer needed? What should be done with these roads? Should they be closed, decommissioned, or converted to other uses such as hiking, biking, or hunter walking trails?

The Forest Service road system should mesh "hand in glove" with the local community road system to best meet conservation and management needs and the transportation needs of the community. And the Forest Service road system must be affordable.

- An important part of resolving the debate over roads involves funding. Our maintenance and reconstruction backlog on our existing 380,000 mile road system exceeds \$8 billion. We presently receive less than 20 percent of the funding needed to maintain our roads to safety and environmental standards. One possible solution is to make approximately 60,000 miles of our most traveled roads available for funding through the federal Highway Trust Funds. We are working with Congress and the Federal Highway Administration to qualify for over \$400 million per year to reconstruct public roads across National Forests and Grasslands.

There are also major environmental and budgetary concerns about creating roads and other activities in roadless areas. The Forest Service believes that rather than attempt to build new roads in roadless areas, it should invest its limited fiscal resources in projects that have broader support, cost less, and have fewer environmental impacts.

We are not the first to take on the issue of roadless areas. Forest Service Chief Ed Cliff first

attempted to resolve the roadless area question through a wilderness inventory that evolved into RARE II and was completed by Chief Max Peterson. Then followed the first round of forest planning that was brought to completion under the tenure of Chief Dale Robertson. Most recently, my immediate predecessor, Jack Thomas, instructed that roadless areas be removed from the timber base if managers didn't intend to enter them.

For too many years we have spent too much time and energy on the roadless areas issue, which has caused a considerable drain on other important priorities. It is time we move forward with a decision on the future management of roadless areas in the National Forest System.

Completion of our roadless area initiative will not be easy. There are those who seek to stall or otherwise thwart our efforts, but we remain committed to implementing the President's direction to protect the significant values of 54 million acres of inventoried roadless areas. The conservation options before us today are a tribute to the foresight of our earlier leaders. It is a legacy of which to be proud - one that will be remembered and appreciated by future generations. Now it is our turn. I am confident that our approach will ensure that the Forest Service, the world's foremost conservation organization stands tall in that accounting.

Recreation

Recreation is the fastest growing use of our National Forests. Outdoor recreation is the window through which an increasingly urban society learns about conservation of natural resources and develops an appreciation for the outdoors and enjoys nature. As with any use we must tread lightly on the land and live with its limits. Our strategy will focus on six key areas.

- *First, know the people we serve.* Train employees and employ social science to better understand public values, expectations, and potential conflicts in order to meet the needs of the recreating public.
- *Second, invest in special places most valued by people.* Identify the most sought after places and ensure quality experiences while providing opportunity for community investment in recreation and tourism. Reduce unacceptable damage to sensitive areas, such as wilderness and roadless areas, and encourage use of more resilient areas.
- *Third, reduce the maintenance backlog on the recreation infrastructure.* Employ recreation fees to improve facilities and services, leverage challenge-cost share funds, encourage local forest-community partnerships, and strengthen volunteer programs.
- *Fourth, develop partnerships for natural resource conservation education and interpretation.* Build upon successful partnerships with groups such as the Girl and Boy Scouts, expand successful inner-city programs such as the Urban Resources Partnership, and develop business plans to improve customer service for eight of our 56 visitor centers.

- *Fifth, develop business opportunities for under-served and low income communities.* Improve access, services, and programs to under-served and low-income communities.
- *Sixth, improve access to public lands within the ecological limits of the land.* Pursue rights of way and other means to ensure access to National Forests.

The objective of our recreation strategy is to expand upon recreation opportunities in a manner that benefits local communities and improves the health of our lands and waters. Such noble objectives are not without cost. In an era of flat budgets, we must find new ways to ensure quality visitor experiences while maintaining our existing infrastructure.

- We all want the public lands to remain the backyard for all Americans. For that reason, the vast majority of public lands remain free for use by all people. The Recreation Fee Demonstration program, however, remains a valuable tool to provide improved recreation facilities and services and to take care of recreation sites in selected areas. We will work with Congress to make the Recreation Fee Demonstration authority permanent.
- It is essential that we reflect upon what we have learned through the past several years. For this reason, I am commissioning an evaluation of the Recreation Fee program involving key recreation partners, stakeholders and interested citizens. This effort will help us to improve and guide future efforts.

One of the more challenging recreation issues involves off road vehicle use of public lands. Off highway vehicles are a legitimate use of most national forests and grasslands. As with all other uses of the National Forest System, our responsibility is to ensure that no single use compromises the basic integrity of the public's land. To that end, the following will guide future management of off highway vehicles.

- Off road vehicle use decisions will be made through an open and public process unless there is justifiable need for immediate action to protect forest resources or public safety.
- Where unauthorized roads and trails are an issue, our management should reflect the general policy that motorized use occurs only on designated routes and areas. We do not condone the development of unplanned or unauthorized trails and roads. This obligates the Forest Service to ensure that designated roads, motorized trails, and other areas are adequately signed, mapped, and marked for public use and enjoyment.
- Any decision to make currently unauthorized roads and trails a part of the authorized forest transportation system will be made through open and public processes.

- Maintenance or reconstruction of authorized forest roads that could change either levels or types of use will also be made through an open and public process. Forests will monitor off road vehicle use to ensure public safety and prevent environmental degradation.

Accountability

It is important that sound natural resources management is grounded in modern business management practices. I have made the Forest Service's accountability and business management skills a priority. And, we have made progress. I anticipate that we will have our first unqualified audit opinion on our FY 2000 financial statements. A clean audit opinion by itself, however, will not restore the agency's credibility with Congress and the American people. A change in agency culture must occur - a change based on the knowledge that we cannot be effective resource managers if we are not first accountable for the taxpayer's money and for our own actions on the landscape. For example, we are:

- Implementing a simplified budget structure. As required by the Government Performance and Results Act, rather than budget based on the money we spend, the agency has proposed that Congress appropriate funding based on performance.
- Incorporating land health performance measures that link to our strategic plan and budget information.
- Creating clearer and more direct lines of accountability. For the first time in many years all our leadership positions have been filled. We have also established the offices of the Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Financial Officer.
- Implementing new standardized accounting procedures to provide "real-time" financial information, meet federal financial accounting standards, simplify our accounting process, and better allocate resources based on agency priorities.
- The Forest Service recently completed its first real property inventory.
- Standardizing resource inventories to facilitate the collection, interpretation, and sharing of information to promote sound management decisions on the ground.

These reforms demonstrate our commitment to remaining accountable to the American taxpayers for managing their lands and waters.

Welcome to your National Forests

So, I welcome the visitors and you the owners--American citizens--to your National Forests. I invite you and your families to:

- Relax and enjoy one of our 18,000 campgrounds, picnic areas, and visitor facilities;
- Catch dinner from a stretch of more than 200,000 miles of fishable streams;
- Bike, hike, walk or ride any of the 133,000 miles of trail;
- View the spring wild flower and spectacular fall colors along 7,700 miles of scenic byways;
- Experience the thrill of 80 percent of the best elk, mountain goat and, big horn sheep habitat in the lower 48;
- Appreciate the historic significance of 277,000 heritage sites; and
- Marvel at the wonder of 34.5 million acres of wilderness areas.

These lands are your birthright to be used, enjoyed and preserved for future generations. We must manage them wisely.

Conclusion

I'll close with a request. A plea, really. *Engage*. These are *your* lands. The Forest Service is *your* agency. Rarely, if ever before, have we been as enmeshed in so many conservation issues that are of such national and local importance. All the best science, all the political posturing, all the interest group tussles in the world, cannot replace the will of the people. *Engage us*. Make your views known. Help us to ensure that we pass on to our children a richer land legacy than the one we inherited from our forefathers.



United States
Department
of Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington Office

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

File Code: 1300

Date: July 9, 1999

Route To:

Subject: Note from the Chief

To: All Employees

This morning members of the Executive Team and I spent an hour meeting with Secretary Dan Glickman and Deputy Secretary Rominger to discuss issues including: our progress in implementing the Natural Resources Agenda, status of the new planning regulations, progress in achieving financial accountability, civil rights, Congressional relations, and status of the FY 2000 Appropriations Bill. Both the Secretary and Deputy Secretary were very engaged, asked lots of questions, and were very complimentary of Forest Service achievements.

On Wednesday, I met with Undersecretary Lyons, and USDA Civil Rights Director Rosalind Gray for a mid-year review of the Forest Service Civil Rights Performance Plan. We are making significant progress in most areas including: our strategy for resolving Equal Employment Opportunity complaints, ongoing diversity efforts in most areas, and the continued use of early intervention programs. Areas they highlighted as needing improvement include Environmental Justice and the level of minority participation for cooperative agreements and procurement contracts exceeding \$25,000. Environmental Justice ensures that Forest Service programs, policies, and activities affecting human health or the environment do not exclude minorities from participation in or the benefits of programs or activities based on race or economic status.

Last week, Undersecretary Lyons, Oregon Governor, John Kitzhaber, and I joined the employees of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, and others in announcing the National Ecosystem Restoration Demonstration Project in the Blue Mountain's Grand Ronde and John Day watersheds. The objective is to treat large expanses of this 2.5 million acres to restore watershed functions and forest ecosystem health by implementing a wide variety of projects including dispersed recreation site rehabilitation, prescribed fire, thinning, timber harvest, native grass seeding, riparian planning and fencing, road recontouring and obliteration, stream sediment reduction, and wet meadow restoration. These projects and others will result in a significant acceleration in restoring forest and watershed health and providing jobs to local communities. Current estimates are that some 40,000,000 acres of National Forest System lands, mostly in the Intermountain West, are at risk of fire, disease or insects. There is broad agreement that this is an unacceptable situation, a situation that business as usual will not resolve. Thanks to the work of Forest Service employees and our partners this is not a business as usual approach.

While in Oregon I spent time with scientists from the Pacific Northwest Research Station discussing the Coastal Landscape Analysis and Modeling Study and had a field tour of their projects in the Clackamas watershed. I also stopped at the Clackamas District office to visit with



employees. Additionally, I met and spoke with employees in the Regional Office and at the Mt. Hood National Forest Supervisor's Office. While on the Mt. Hood I had the pleasure of presenting commendations to Ray Abreil for "outstanding performance as Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor" and to Tom Ortman upon his retirement for "33 years of exemplary service to the public and for being an ambassador for natural resource stewardship." Tom exemplifies the quality of our dedicated Forest Service workforce and the many accomplishments over the years. I appreciate all of your good work.

/s/ Mike Dombeck

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief



United States
Department
of Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington Office

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

File Code: 1300

Date: May 11, 1999

From: Mike Dombeck

To: All Employees

Subject: Alaska Trip Report

Earlier this month I flew to Alaska to participate in two major events: the dedication of the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center and the International Shorebird Symposium and Festival. The Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center, which is located on the Tongass National Forest in Juneau, is a world class facility projected to host over 250,000 visitors annually. The breathtaking view and tremendous interpretive displays help people understand and appreciate the forests, rivers, and glaciers of our 49th state. I was pleased that Chief Emeritus Max Peterson and former Alaska Regional Foresters John Sandor and Mike Barton, as well as several Forest Service employees and retirees attended the dedication.

My next stop was Cordova, on the Chugach National Forest. Pinchot Professor John Gordon from Yale University and I were keynote speakers at the International Shorebird Symposium and Festival. The 700,000-acre Copper River Delta is the largest and most pristine wetland on the West Coast. It is a critical stopover and nesting area for millions of waterfowl and shorebirds. The Copper River provides spawning and rearing habitat for Copper River red salmon, the most expensive and best tasting salmon on the market. Some of the most important shorebird and wetlands research in the world is being conducted on the Copper River Delta by our own Forest Service scientists and their partners.

While in Alaska, I met with both employees and community leaders and was briefed on a wide variety of issues. Lt. Governor Fran Ulmer reviewed many statewide issues and discussed how we could work together to better assist rural communities in transition. Juneau Mayor Dennis Egan talked about the importance of the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center to the economy of Juneau. The mayor of Cordova, Ed Zeine, spoke of the important role our employees play in that community and talked about the benefits of the rural community assistance program. On the flight to Anchorage with Forest Supervisor Dave Gibbons and others, I viewed the proposed route of the controversial Carbon Mountain Road, the Chugach's land acquisitions from oil spill funds, and spruce bark beetle problems.

Congratulations to Rick Cables who took over as Alaska's Regional Forester on May 10, and thanks to Jim Caplan, Deputy Regional Forester for Natural Resources, for your leadership in the Region. I appreciate the hospitality of both the Alaska Region and Pacific Northwest Research Station employees, and I thank you for your research and good work in maintaining and restoring the **health of our lands and waters**. Have a great week.

/s/Mike Dombeck
MIKE DOMBECK
Chief



5/3/99

Remarks of Mike Dombeck

12th Copper River Delta Conference, Cordova, AK
May 3, 1999

Thank you for very much for asking me to be with you today to celebrate the wonders of the incredible Copper River Delta. You should know that this place is not without its peril for Forest Service Chiefs. None other than Gifford Pinchot was fired for his part in the controversy surrounding the handling of coal claims in the area. Let's hope that I can fare better than my earliest predecessor did in 1910.

I'd like to share three things with you today.

First my appreciation for the significant research contributions that have come from the Copper River Delta.

Second my vision of healthy land and water.

And last, how working together we can accomplish this vision.

The Delta is a special place - in many ways, the lifeblood of the community of Cordova. The Forest Service is proud to have had a part in managing the resources of this area since 1907. The Delta supports a world class commercial fishery, a growing sport fishery, subsistence harvesting, and is intimately integrated into the life-style and community of Cordova and Prince William Sound communities. Did you know that some of the finest restaurants in the lower 48 annually advertise when Copper River red salmon arrive on their menus? Restaurants from Seattle to New York showcase Copper River King Salmon in early spring.

Thanks

The concentrations of shorebirds in the area are truly one of the natural wonders of the world. What is most heartening is to see just how connected the community of Cordova is to the rhythm and hum of the biological panorama all around them.

I would like to begin with a special thanks to conference sponsors and our partners that are making significant contributions to our understanding of the Copper River Delta ecosystem. They are Yale University, Ducks Unlimited, Rutgers University the universities of Idaho, Washington, and Alaska. I would also like to recognize the important partnerships of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Nature Conservancy.

I cannot begin to mention all of the incredible Forest Service employees whose work and research into fish and wildlife habitat relationships enrich our understanding of ecosystems and how they hum and tick.

- We really appreciate work by Mary Anne Bishop of the Pacific Northwest Research Station and Dan Logan, Erin Cooper and Dave Schmid of the Cordova Ranger District who put together this conference. They along with Chris Iverson of the Alaska Regional Office help us to understand the linkages between flyway sites including how many shorebirds and how long they stay at the critical stopover areas.
- Cooperative fisheries research by people such as Dave Schmid (Cordova Ranger District), Ken Hodges (Cordova Ranger District) Gordie Reeves (PNW Corvallis), Mark Wipfli (PNW Juneau)

on Beaver pond productivity and nutrient inputs and processes enhances our understanding of fisheries habitat relationships on the Copper River Delta.

- The ongoing work between Bob Leedy (USFWS), Tom Rothe (ADFG), Dirk Dirkson and Barry Grand (USGS BRD) and Dan Logan (Cordova Ranger District) on developing interagency management plans for the Dusky Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan and other species serves as an example of collaborative research and application of research to management.
- I also would like to mention that Rick Cables, the new Regional Forester will be on the job next week. Rick comes to us from Colorado and brings 23 years of experience at many levels of the Forest Service. I know he will do a great job and encourage you all to visit with him. I'd also like to thank Jim Caplan for the great job he has done for the last year in acting as Regional Forester.

Introduction

What a great treat to be here in Alaska celebrating these incredible shorebirds! Shorebirds are among nature's most accomplished travelers. Thanks to the many Copper River Delta Conferences and Shorebird festivals you've produced, Cordova is proudly known for its shorebirds!

The Copper River Delta is a unique place of marshland; glacier fed rivers, ponds and streams with a tremendous variety of fish and wildlife. The 700-thousand acre Delta provides sanctuary and sometime home to one of the world's greatest concentrations of migratory birds. Many of these birds routinely migrate 22-thousand miles between some of the northernmost and southernmost lands on earth. The migration corridors for some of these species take them from South America to Alaska.

I understand that the Delta is the largest breeding ground in the world for the Dusky Canada Goose and seven percent of the world's Trumpeter Swans. It is also the major stopover for Western Sandpipers, Dunlins that nest in the Arctic wetlands. Did you know that five to seven million migrating shorebirds visit here every year? This wetlands complex is considered one of the most important shorebird habitats in the Western Hemisphere. In order to complete these "Immense Journeys," to use the title of Loren Eiseley's book, it is imperative that they have numerous stopover areas to feed and rest.

This area is also home to a wide variety of gulls, jaegers, terns, owls, hawks, mallards, pintails and our national bird, the Bald Eagle. I always love coming to Alaska to see the majestic Bald Eagle in flight throughout the Tongass and Chugach National Forests. While I didn't catch any Halibut fishing yesterday, I really enjoyed watching these proud birds soaring above us.

I've heard from many of you how important fishing is to your lives, the community and the economy. The area's reputation for abundant fish and wildlife is well known. The Copper River draws some of the first salmon to return each spring.

Lets not forget the abundance of larger wildlife such as moose, brown and black bears, mink, beaver and otter that make this fertile delta their home. People from all over the world travel here to participate in fishing, wildlife viewing and hunting.

Through the many partnerships that have drawn us here we are able to make better management decisions today that can be a model throughout Canada and North America. Partnerships such as Ducks Unlimited have significantly contributed to vegetative mapping through satellite imagery. This has led to vegetative modeling that is linked to the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network.

This research is improving habitat and viable populations of migrating birds from Chile to Oregon to Alaska. **One specific example is the success of the artificial nest islands in the delta.** Duck Unlimited jumpstarted this effort with a quarter million dollars that has resulted in 800 nest islands. We know that Dusky Canada Geese using the nest islands have a survival rate twice that of natural nests. It is through the collaborative efforts of The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The University of Alaska, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and many local residents that efforts like this are a success.

Important research about the Copper River Delta and the fish and wildlife that inhabit it will continue. The Forest Service will work closely in partnership to use scientific research for better management decisions as we focus on the Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda.

Our natural resource agenda focuses on building partnerships to protect and restore our nations watersheds, to sustain our forests, to improve our forest road system, and enhance America's wildland recreation opportunities. You're living next to a good example of one of the largest watersheds in the nation.

About 160 inches of precipitation combined with the glacial runoff provide the lifeblood for the delta. This massive amount of rain and snow helps produce these wetlands. Wetlands are increasingly important throughout the United States.

Unfortunately, more than half of all the previously existing wetlands in the United States are now vanished - lost to ditching, draining, diking, or other forms of development. In some regions more than 90% of wetland habitats are lost.

Forest Service managed lands all across the nation are uniquely positioned to contribute to the conservation and restoration of habitats for shore birds, migratory waterfowl, large ungulates and endangered species.

I would like to share with you my vision to maintain and restore the health of our lands and water that can only happen with your help.

I'm here representing the collective efforts of 30,000 dedicated Forest Service employees and partners as we mutually protect and restore our natural resources through science, stewardship, and public awareness.

As natural resource professionals, we look suspiciously at politics. Yet, this past November's elections brought glad tidings for conservation. Voters in some 125 municipalities and States approved budget initiatives to promote land and water conservation and to acquire open space. Citizens directed a staggering \$5-8 billion of their hard earned dollars be used for State and local conservation efforts.

Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief of the Forest Service said, "we must everywhere always prefer results to routine." Pinchot, along with Aldo Leopold, Bob Marshall, Rachel Carson and others emphasized the importance of helping communities develop a more harmonious relationship with the land and water that sustains us.

We are challenged to measure up to their legacy. We must ensure that we are good stewards of the land and provide the public with the education and tools for healthy public lands. One example is bottled water companies who celebrate the fact that their water comes from National Forests such as

the Cherokee National Forest, in Tennessee or the Tongass National Forest because we provide some of the cleanest and most pure drinking water in the nation. I point this out because it speaks to the fact that the cleanest and largest amount of surface water runoff in the nation comes from forested landscapes. And, the purest of the clean water flows off of national forests.

Jay Cravens, a retired Forest Service employee offered me some advice not so long ago. He said, "Mike, just take care of soil and water and everything else will be OK." That sage counsel guides our approach to watershed management. I thought of Jay's words last summer as I floated down the Potomac River with my daughter one weekend. Not so long ago, rivers such as the Potomac were considered little more than open sewers. By the time my daughter graduated from high school however, we significantly slowed the flow of point source pollutants into the Potomac and hundreds of other major rivers because of the Clean Water Act.

Today some of the finest bass fishing in the east occurs on the Potomac River within view of the Jefferson Memorial. Now, I know that talking about fishing on the Potomac may not get folks here all that excited because of all the fantastic fishing opportunities around here. But I'll have you know that the world record carp was hauled out of the Potomac. In fact, from my office window, you can actually see the spot where they landed the larger than 50 pound monster.

OK. Back to the Forest Service.

The opportunities in the coming months and years to maintain and restore watershed health are downright critical. Within the next five years, over 65% of our forest plans, representing over 150 million acres of land, are scheduled for revision. In keeping with Clean Water Action Plan commitments and consistent with our mandates from the Organic Act of 1897 through the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water acts, watershed health and restoration will be the overriding priority in all future forest plans. I'm proud that the Chugach and Tongass National Forests have some of the healthiest watersheds in the nation.

Our National Forests truly are the headwaters of America, supplying river systems, and recharging aquifers. They contain riparian, wetland, and coastal areas that are essential for the nation's water supply and prosperity. Our forested landscapes contain the coolest and cleanest water in the nation. In addition, our forests serve as reservoirs of biological diversity. For example, 181 of the 327 watersheds identified by The Nature Conservancy as critical for the conservation of bio-diversity are in National Forests.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton announced new initiatives to protect open space, benefit urban forests, and improve the quality of life for the 80% of Americans living in urban and suburban areas. The Forest Service will play an essential role in their accomplishment. We had already begun the focus of these initiatives through our Natural Resource Agenda. We will:

habitat, re-establish forest stand structure, reduce the risk of unnaturally occurring catastrophic fires, and restore ecological integrity.

Research in Alaska has always been important. Ever since the 1964 Alaska earthquake profoundly raised land levels in the Delta by 6-8 feet, a series of aquatic and terrestrial changes were triggered that continue to change the ecosystem. Fish, wildlife, and vegetative communities continue to be significantly affected today as a result of the earthquake. Research can help to understand how such natural and other human-caused disturbances affect ecosystem health.

We will protect the basic soil, water, and biotic resources of our forests and accelerate the restoration of forest and rangeland ecosystem integrity.

A second major focus of the Natural Resource Agenda will continue to be recreation. Increasingly, outdoor recreation is the way society interacts with the natural world. In 1997, national forests accommodated more than 40% of all outdoor recreation use on public lands in the United States. This use is forecast to increase dramatically over the next 50 years.

Our recreation strategy focuses on providing the American people the finest wildland recreation experience in the world. As part of that strategy we are using new technologies to assist in trip planning, expanded interpretive services, and seamless delivery of the myriad wildland recreation opportunities that help families to reconnect with each other while they connect to the land that sustains them. We will strengthen our relationships with communities such as Cordova so that you may more fully reap the economic benefits of tourism and recreation.

Let me leave you with some thoughts about natural resource stewardship as we enter the new millennium:

This nation entered this century with leaders like Gifford Pinchot, Teddy Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold and John Muir. They elevated conservation to a new plateau by establishing national forests and parks and advocating the importance of protecting watersheds and wilderness.

Fifty years later, a war weary nation found jobs, and economic vitality through its forest products. And today, as our prosperous nation grows and matures, our National Forests serve as a place of renewal for people, a sanctuary for conservation of species, a source of water and other products within the ecological limits of the land. The Forest Service has and will continue to adapt our management and stewardship of your public land.

I'm disappointed I cannot be here to kick off the Shorebird Festival. I want to give special thanks to the many partners including volunteers and organizations such as the Cordova Chamber of Commerce, Prince William Sound Science Center, and the community of Cordova for making it possible. These are the folks and organizations that make events such as this where communities can connect with the land so remarkable.

One person that deserves special mention for her years of service in making this festival a reality is Sandy Frost from the Cordova Ranger District. Sandy has been the primary festival organizer almost since its beginning and has done an outstanding job in building community and conservation partnerships and bringing conservation education to thousands of people.

In summary, I'm very proud of the significant research contributions that have and will continue to come from the Copper River Delta.

I hope you share my vision for healthy land and water in America

And last, how working together we can accomplish this vision.

Finally, I close with the well quoted, but not often enough listened to, words of Aldo Leopold. "Examine each [land use] question in terms of what is ethically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends to otherwise." In this the 50th anniversary of Aldo Leopold's seminal work "A Sand County Almanac", let us recommit ourselves to an invigorated national land ethic.

--- END---

Submitted by: Chris Wood

Modified: 5/6/99



United States
Department
of Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington Office

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

File Code: 1300

Date: April 29, 1999

Route To:

From: Mike Dombeck

To: All Employees

I spent this past week in the field in the Eastern Region. I am continually impressed by the good work of Forest Service employees. A day of briefings on the Mark Twain National Forest was topped off by a meeting with employees and an evening cookout at Lane Spring. I want to thank the camera crew and Forest Supervisor Randy Moore and his staff for their help in filming a training video on prescribed fire. The video highlights the role of fire in maintaining watershed function and forest ecosystem health. I was pleased that the Mark Twain met its goal of safely completing over 11,000 acres of prescribed fire this spring.

There were two personal highlights for me while in the Ozarks. One, spending an evening with my first boss, retired District Ranger, Bob Miley. Two, visiting my advisor, mentor and friend from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Dr. George Becker, who is now retired and living in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. He presented me with his most cherished book, *Report on a Game Survey of the North Central States* by Aldo Leopold published in 1931, and autographed by the author.

Next, I traveled to Ohio and the Wayne National Forest. This was my first time ever on the Wayne. The field tour and discussions covered: abandoned mine land reclamation, acid mine drainage, watershed restoration, recreation fee demonstration, roads and trails, forest ecosystem research, and rural economic assistance. We enjoyed a real home cooked lunch and met with employees and community partners. I also presented awards to the Monday Creek Restoration Partnership for their excellent watershed restoration work. These kinds of community partnerships really enable us to make a difference on the land where it really counts. I thank Forest Supervisor Jose Zambrana, his staff, and Elaine Kennedy Sutherland from the Delaware, Ohio, Forestry Sciences Research Lab staff for the hospitality and good work they are doing.

On the eve of our 29th Earth Day celebration, I spoke at a banquet in Canton, Ohio, recognizing 141 Eagle Scouts accompanied by their families. I talked about what we do in the Forest Service, our Natural Resource Agenda and the importance of healthy functioning ecosystems. It was encouraging to see the vigor and enthusiasm of these Boy Scouts, especially after hearing of the tragic events at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado.

I had the honor of spending Friday with Congressman and Mrs. Ralph Regula. We discussed a wide variety of Ohio natural resource issues, the importance of environmental education, and many National issues associated with the Forest Service budget. We also met with the press and I spoke at the Canton Rotary Club luncheon. Mr. Regula is a good friend of the Forest Service and serves as our House Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman. After a busy week, it was good to get back home Friday night.



I thank all Forest Service employees for your dedication and good work and look forward to seeing more of the Forest Service and meeting with community leaders and our partners during future trips.

/s/ Mike Dombeck

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

File Code: 1600

Date: November 2, 1998

Route To:

Subject: Words to Action: Conservation Leadership for the 21st Century

To: All Employees

I am sending each of you a copy of the speech that I delivered at last week's National Leadership Conference entitled: "Words to Action: Conservation Leadership for the 21st Century." Please read it carefully. It is important that we all work together in moving the Forest Service into the 21st Century. I appreciate all your good work and support.

The Conference was attended by about 70 field employees in addition to the usual attendees. I invited field employees to the Conference, because I felt it was important to improve communication and broaden understanding of the Natural Resources Agenda and our strategies to move ahead. I really appreciated their active participation and candid feedback, as well as the examples of on-the-ground work that is moving the Agenda forward.

A highlight of the Conference for me was a campfire under the desert stars on the shore of Bartlett Lake on the Tonto National Forest. The evening ended with a traditional Ponca Tribe ceremony that closed with a touching message that I ask each of you to contemplate often, **"remember you are managing the land for seven generations."**

/s/ Mike Dombeck

MIKE DOMBECK

Chief

Enclosure

Words to Action:
Conservation Leadership for the 21st Century
Remarks of Mike Dombeck
National Leadership Conference
October 27, 1998

We have had a challenging but great year and a half or so. I am excited by prospects for the future. Whether the issues are civil rights, roads, agency accountability, financial management, or below-cost timber sales, we have faced up to the most challenging issues directly and without hesitation.

I am proud of the work we've done.

Today, I want us to step out of our comfort zones, abandon our assumptions and talk about the future and how we get there. More specifically, I want us to discuss the incentives that drive the agency and to determine the steps we can take to ensure that those incentives support our essential mission of maintaining and restoring healthy, diverse, and productive ecosystems for the benefit of present and future generations.

Accomplishments

When I began this job, many of you told me that we needed to regain our status as conservation leaders by articulating a strong natural resource agenda. The second challenge was to motivate the organization to follow this agenda, promote its support, and lead its implementation.

Our conservation leadership over the past year is obvious.

- We articulated a straight forward natural resource agenda that focuses on services and values that the American people need and support. This has helped to mute calls to rewrite our mission and to engage people in more productive dialogue about maintaining and restoring healthy, diverse, and productive ecosystems.
- By laying out aggressive solutions to long-standing issues such as civil rights, financial management, and fiscal accountability, we will be able to direct more energy in a more effective manner to natural resource conservation and restoration.
- By taking on the controversial issue of forest roads, we have helped begin a long overdue dialogue about the future of the forest transportation system. We also, for the first time in many years, did not have a divisive appropriations fight over roads.
- Eliminating purchaser road credits will diminish the divisive subsidy debate and lessen the internal incentive to build new roads in order to pay for maintenance of our existing road system.
- We developed a strategy for delivering State and Private services to expand technical assistance to private woodland owners, and bolster urban forestry.

- We have strengthened leadership in sustainability and advancement of criteria and indicators.
- We increased attention to watershed and forest health problems including insect and disease, fire risk, and invasive species.
- We have increased emphasis on research needs of forest inventory and monitoring.
- Our temporary suspension of road building in roadless area proposal will allow us to waste fewer resources on appeals and litigation and give our field managers a breather, while we develop the scientific and analytical tools to make more informed decisions about road management.
- Our proposal to de-couple 25% payments to states from the collection of timber receipts could lend much needed stability to counties and remove the incentive to harvest trees in order to finance local schools, roads, and other social services.

I am pleased with our progress but we must accelerate the pace. We were able to get this far because we have not shied away from taking on the tough issues. What remains is for us to articulate – both internally and externally – how our policies and practices are changing the agency's emphasis from tracking inputs to producing outcomes on the land.

Our agency priorities, budget procedures, planning processes and accountability measures are opaque and confusing. We must make them transparent – clear for everyone to see and judge.

The complexity of our accounting, budget, and reward systems have led us to become an organization that assigns greatest value to the outputs of forest management. Consequently, most of the debate over the Forest Service focuses on outputs – whether they are associated with roads, timber harvest, mining, grazing, or other traditional forest products.

The appropriation cycle has become a rancorous debate over how much one program should be funded versus another. Yet, few are really focusing on what happens on the land. The debate is presently over the level of inputs and outputs – not outcomes.

Even as society demands clean water, better outdoor recreation opportunities, landowner assistance programs, and new research and technologies on forest inventory, analysis, wood conservation and more efficient wood utilization, we are spending too much time and money in controversy about timber sales in roadless areas.

Is it any wonder people say our mission is muddled, our laws unclear? Our systems defy both the auditor and the average citizen.

Our laws are less the problem than is our own incentive systems that are complex and outdated.

We must change. Consistent with principles of ecosystem management, collaborative stewardship, and social values, we must transform our view of forests as a warehouse of outputs to one that assigns greatest values to the positive outcomes of watershed management and responsible stewardship.

Incentives

I'd like to read you a part of a letter that recently came across my desk.

“It is considered that past experience of the Forest Service with clear cutting in the fir region together with developments... and the findings of the research foresters of the Forest Service fully warrant the consideration of a change in timber sales policy. Clear cutting has always been questionable because of its tremendous losses in forest productivity, partly because of its attendant extreme fire hazard, frequently resulting in reburns and forest devastation, also because of the low degree of timber utilization. It is concluded that clear cutting practices on national forests should be abandoned if possible and systems of selective logging devised and substituted.”

The letter goes on – citing science and promoting more selective logging for the Forest Service. This letter is similar to many I have received over the past year and a half, except in one regard. It was written 64 years ago by C. J. Buck, then the Regional Forester for the Pacific Northwest.

I read that letter to set you in the right frame of mind for this discussion. Had we listened to C.J. Buck's advice so long ago, perhaps we would be in a very different place today. We could have likely avoided the disruption of the owls vs. loggers' era. Agency credibility and trust would be less goals than they would be standard operating procedures.

Let's take a hard look at the fundamental assumptions and incentives that drive our management and see if we cannot improve on them.

Incentives: Merriam-Webster defines “incentive” as, “something that incites, or that has the tendency to incite to determination or action.” What I want us to talk about today are the policies, practices, and incentives that incite us to make the decisions we do.

For the next few minutes, I will focus on the National Forest System. But make no mistake; the lessons cross into Research, Administration, and State and Private. For example, Deputy Chief Phil Janik and his team have worked out an aggressive conservation agenda for State and Private Forestry. Yet, if we cannot change significantly the tenor of the existing debate, our funding needs to implement the State and Private agenda will almost certainly be unmet.

For many years, the Forest Service operated under a basic formula. The more trees we harvested, the more revenue we could bring into the organization, and the more people we could hire to deliver more of the programs that the American people demand. As I intimated earlier, Congress, State and local governments, industry, and the conservation community all responded to the agency within the context of that formula. The result is that today our debates focus on inputs, such as funding levels, and on outputs, such as wood fiber harvested, and animal months grazed.

During the era when we harvested 9-12 billion board feet per year, we could afford to finance the bulk of the organization on the back of the timber program. Timber, through a combination of appropriated money and trust fund revenues, financed much of:

- The forest management program,
- Reforestation,
- Road maintenance and construction,
- Fish and wildlife habitat and watershed improvements and mitigation,
- Recreation development,
- Cultural resource inventories and preservation, and on and on.

Our timber harvest has declined by about 70% of its high in less than a decade and today we are finding it ever more difficult to finance road maintenance, recreation and wildlife projects, overhead, and salaries. And you know as well as I that the harvest is not going to return to its high historic level.

More importantly, we have become reactive, defensive, and in many cases, divided as an organization. Not because we are timber beasts, not because we are not conservationists, but because we know that without a large timber program and our present budget structure, we cannot fund the full multiplicity of uses upon which the American people depend, and which we are so committed to delivering.

Given social values and new information, the pattern is completely unsustainable. We talk and write about ecological sustainability. It is our essence – our reason for being. Yet, our budgets, our performance evaluations, our organizational structure, and our intrinsic incentive systems are based on producing outputs. We need to find a new path, a new organizational direction that is based on outcomes on the landscape as opposed to outputs produced.

Outputs are: board feet of timber; minerals produced and brought to market; livestock animal months grazed; fish produced; recreation visitor days, to name a few. Those are all socially meaningful and economically important. But the values that most citizens appreciate from their national forests are:

- Clean air and water.
- Open space and large unfragmented landscapes.
- Wildness and naturalness.
- Diverse and abundant wildlife, fish and plant habitats.
- Endangered species conservation.
- Leaving choices for future generations.
- Ecologically sustainable development.
- Forests that look like forests.

Some would challenge these values as more akin to the Park Service than the Forest Service mission. Multiple use, the thinking goes, is inconsistent with wilderness, with ecosystem services, with the preservation of 'inconsequential' plant, snails and fishes, or birds.

We must reject that argument with every ounce of professionalism in our marrow. On the eve of the 21st century, our central challenge is to demonstrate, through our management actions, research, and conservation leadership, how society can live in productive harmony with the resources and values that sustain us. This is our land ethic.

With a new State and Private strategy that can deliver conservation benefits to millions of interested land-owners; with the finest natural resource research and technology development organization in the world, no agency is more prepared to meet this challenge than the Forest Service.

Our challenge, plain and simple, is to ensure that the outputs we produce occur within the ecological limits of the land and the value society attributes to public lands.

Ours' is a unique and difficult mission. We need to look for answers, rather than place blame. We need to work in collaboration with states, local and Tribal governments, Congress, local communities, the American people, and all our partners. If we in this room cannot articulate our land ethic and values, deliver solutions and demonstrate our successes on the land, then I fear for the future of this organization.

Opportunities

I want to spend a few minutes talking about how the policies we have already articulated are beginning to reshape our incentive system – from both the natural resources and the business practices side of the organization.

There are numerous ways we can change our incentive system. I'd like to discuss a few.

- First, development of land-based performance measures and their integration into our new streamlined business model.
- Second, the Committee of Scientists recommendations for new planning regulations and more effectively linking our budget and funding priorities to forest plans.
- Third, reform of our trust funds.
- Fourth, accelerating the Forest Management program's emphasis on forest ecosystem stewardship.

Land-based Performance Measures

One of the most important and lasting ways we can change the agency's incentives is through development of land-based performance measures. We need to put in place a system that effectively and efficiently evaluates the health and diversity of the resources entrusted to our care. By being able to point to the positive outcomes of our natural resource management, we will **broaden the support base** for the Forest Service and the work we do.

Trends in these measurements should drive the way we:

- Evaluate employees' performance.
- Develop budget priorities.
- Track accomplishments.
- Communicate with the public.

Our existing budget and tracking systems focus on measuring inputs to the system, such as dollars spent on wildlife or timber management or watershed programs, and outputs such as recreation visitor days or timber offered. It tells us little, however, about whether we are achieving our core mission of caring for the land. With such a system in place, is it any wonder that the congressional appropriation process is consumed with acrimonious debates over spending on timber management versus recreation versus road maintenance versus watershed programs, and so on?

Our system gives Congress and interest groups little incentive to focus on the outcomes of our management, *because we do not measure them in a meaningful way!*

We are on the right path with new proposals to track forest management accomplishments based on land health as opposed to outputs, use of criteria and

indicators, and our draft Government Performance and Results Act strategic plan. Developing and implementing performance measures for land health will allow us to proceed with efforts to dramatically simplify our budget processes and deliver more resources to the ground.

Planning

The Committee of Scientists will issue their final recommendations very soon. Among other issues, they will suggest that we:

- Make maintaining and restoring ecological sustainability the focus of forest planning.
- More effectively link forest planning to budget and funding priorities.
- Practice collaborative stewardship through use of diverse and balanced advisory groups and adaptive management through monitoring.

For years, Forest Service employees and others have said that our management and budget bears little relation to forest plans. We must take this historic opportunity to make forest planning an opportunity to work in a collaborative manner to develop and implement a collective vision for managing healthy watersheds and landscapes. Our planning and budget processes must be simplified. In a very real sense, this is the best venue to demonstrate to the American people and Congress the need for, and benefits of, making investments in the land.

Trust Funds

We cannot hope to change the agency's incentive system without taking a close look at Forest Service trust funds. In the past era of higher timber harvests and with little public opposition, trust funds helped to ensure completion of salvage, wildlife mitigation, and reforestation. As appropriations for timber have declined, however, more and more often we are using trust funds to finance organizational costs.

The Northern Region for example, is funding upwards of 35% of their *entire organization* through K-V, Salvage, Brush Disposal, and other permanent trust funds. I need not tell you that this is completely unsustainable. For example, just this year the House of Representatives passed a measure that would prevent the use of trust funds to fund overhead costs.

The ability to maintain timber revenues on the forest through the use of trust funds lends incentive for managers to choose certain management prescriptions over others. Quite often, the only way our managers can afford to conduct projects for ecological or watershed restoration purposes is through a commercial timber sale or by using trust fund revenues.

What happens when the sale is not profitable or, as the Northern Region and Dale Bosworth are now dealing with, when the trust fund receipts begin to dry up? We need to figure out a way to put more tools in our managers' toolboxes.

The policy question that we need to answer is, would making the use of the big three trust funds, Salvage, K-V, and Brush Disposal, subject to annual congressional appropriations make Congress and the American people more aware of the relative costs and benefits of timber sales on National Forests? Would it not also improve agency accountability by making our processes more open and transparent to congressional and taxpayer scrutiny?

We must build an ironclad case with Congress, the Administration, and the American people to make investments in the land. Investments that may not yield immediate financial gain, but whose dividends in the form of watershed services, healthy landscapes, and ecologically sustainable goods and services yield long-term benefits generation after generation.

Forest Stewardship

The issue of below cost timber sales has plagued the agency for years. We argue that the purpose of timber management is often *not* to return financial benefits to the Treasury, while our critics allege we are subsidizing commercial harvest and calling it stewardship. This debate will continue so long as our primary mechanism for practicing forest management is the commercial timber sale contract.

Many in Congress and the agency have been working on a proposal called ``stewardship contracting' that would pay for forest management activities such as water quality improvements, noxious weed removal, thinning, and prescribed fire through proceeds from commercial timber sales. This is a step in the right direction. It makes clear that there are multiple objectives and purposes for forest management.

Unfortunately, it still requires that commercial timber sales fund needed restoration. We must have additional sources of funds. We must get to the point that our accounting systems and the incentive for restoration need not be commercial timber harvest. For that reason, as part of our 2000 budget, I will propose creation of an appropriation for Forest Stewardship.

We can use this appropriation to pay for the cost of activities that improve the health of the land but that cannot pay for themselves. When commercial timber harvest is needed or desirable, we will continue to use commercial sales to accomplish our objectives.

We must convince Congress and the American people of the imperative of making investments in the land.

Conclusion

These are the sort of ideas and proposals that we, as the senior leaders of a 30,000 person, \$3 billion organization, must address in a creative and direct manner. I understand there are risks associated with some of these ideas. But we cannot stick our heads in the sand and hope these will go away or hope for answers for other quarters. We must lead. Isn't that what conservation leaders do?

The forests and grasslands of the future that I see are:

- Models for ecologically sustainable natural resource management.
- Comprised of healthy functioning watersheds that properly catch, store and release water.
- A source for a wide array of cultural, educational, recreational, and economic opportunities for the American people.
- An internationally known model for demonstrating how mankind can live in productive harmony with the land.
- Productive, healthy, and diverse.

The Forest Service of the future (and we are already there in some cases!) will be:

- A place where employees of all races and backgrounds feel valued and are treated with decency and respect.
- An innovative organization known for its creative thinking, research, and acceptance of new ideas.
- An agency widely known and respected for its conservation agenda and assistance to private landowners.
- An organization known as a model of efficient and effective business management.
- An organization touted by others as the world conservation leaders.
- Thanked by future generations for helping to re-establish a land ethic that reconnects people to the land that sustains us.

As the senior managers of this great organization, our job is to ensure that the incentives that drive all levels and all aspects of our programs are based upon ecological

sustainability. I'm asking for your help and creativity in helping us to develop the policies, hire the creative young people, and implement the management that support our words with on-the-ground actions and results.

Let's get to work!



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

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

File Code: 1600

Date: July 1, 1998

Route To:

Subject: Conservation Leadership

To: All Employees

? Today marks the 100th anniversary of Gifford Pinchot's first day on the job as a Forest Service employee. I took this opportunity to discuss the natural resource agenda and what it means to be a conservation leader with the National Leadership Team. I'd like to share that discussion with you before the holiday weekend celebrating our nation's birthday. As an organization, we pride ourselves for our conservation tradition and expertise. I'd like to get a little beyond the sloganeering and examine what that truly means. As Pinchot said, "we must go vigorously forward, apply what knowledge and common sense we [have] to the task ahead, and everywhere and always prefer results to routine."

To me, a conservation leader is someone who consistently errs on the side of maintaining and restoring healthy and diverse ecosystems even when -- no, especially when -- such decisions are not expedient or politically popular. If we are to redeem our claim to be the world's foremost conservation leader, our job is to maintain and restore ecologically and socially important environmental values. A highly diversified society increasingly demands that our stewardship result in a legacy of healthier landscapes.

For example, our proposed suspension of road construction in roadless areas will help us develop not only a science-based long-term road policy but one that also reflects the values that society places on wild places, old growth, wilderness, and on intact and unfragmented landscapes.

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

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

For example, twenty percent of the National Forest System is wilderness, and in the opinion of many, more should be. Our wilderness portfolio must embody a broader array of lands -- from prairie to old growth. As world leaders in wilderness management, we should be looking to the future to better manage existing, and identify potential new, wilderness and other wild lands.

We have a real opportunity to employ our science and professionalism and lead the debates on use, management, and conservation of natural resources. But we must step out in front of these issues instead of serving as a wrestling mat for interest groups. If we do not become more flexible and adaptable in responding to conservation issues and social demands, we will become less relevant as time passes.

Conservation leadership extends far beyond the National Forest System. I want our Research program to do more to promote and improve conservation and more efficient utilization and recycling of wood fiber. As national wood consumption rates continue to increase, so must our efficiencies.

Many of our State and Private Forestry employees are working hard to ensure that the benefits of public land restoration extend to the more productive habitats on private land. We must do more. We also need to help ensure that as private and state lands help to meet the nation's demand for wood fiber, they do not compromise their own productive capacity.

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

Thanks for your hard work.

/s/ Mike Dombeck

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

MESSAGE SCAN FOR MELISSA E. CARLSON

To comm office

From: Melissa E. Carlson
Acting for: PUBLICATIONS GROUP

Postmark: Aug 06,97 4:23 PM

Delivered: Aug 06,97 4:24 PM

Subject: Forwarded: 6100/1600 Leadership Selections

Comments:

From: Melissa E. Carlson: acting for PUBLICATIONS GROUP

Date: Aug 06,97 4:23 PM

Previous comments:

From: DIRECTOR, PAO:WO

Date: Aug 06,97 2:14 PM

2 page document. No hard copy to follow.

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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

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

File Code: 6100
Route To : 1600

Date: August 6, 1997

Subject: Leadership Selections

To: All Employees

I am extremely pleased to announce today the selection of seven new senior managers to key leadership positions. The selections are:

- Dale Bosworth, Regional Forester, Northern Region
- Elizabeth Estill, Regional Forester, Southern Region
- Sandra Key, Associate Deputy Chief, Programs and Legislation
- Lyle Laverty, Regional Forester, Rocky Mountain Region
- Gloria Manning, Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System
- Hal Salwasser, Station Director, Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station
- Ron Stewart, Deputy Chief, Programs and Legislation

These employees are the cream of the crop when it comes to natural resource management -- highly respected by their peers and beyond reputé professionally. They are problem solvers and coalition builders; leaders who consistently make the tough decisions required to maintain healthy, diverse, and productive lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. These seven people bring a combined 175 years of natural resource management experience to these positions.

Next week at the National Leadership Team meeting, these folks will have an opportunity to help the Forest Service advance our agenda of maintaining and restoring healthy and productive watersheds, promoting ecologically responsible recreation use of national forests and grasslands, and advancing conservation partnerships across the nation.

These are complex jobs and a good leader is only as effective as the people working for them. Although specific starting dates have yet to be finalized, I have every confidence that you will help them with their transition. These

are exceptionally qualified and committed resource professionals. I am honored and humbled to serve with them and with you. They will serve us well and help ensure the Forest Service mission of caring for the land and serving people is successfully carried into the twenty-first century.

/s/Mike Dombeck

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief

United States
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Agriculture

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Contact: Rick Alexander
(202) 205-1134

Forest Service Chief Announces New Leadership

Washington, D.C. (August 6, 1997) -- Chief of the USDA Forest Service, Mike Dombeck, announced today the selection of seven new senior managers. Dombeck selected a new Deputy Chief; two Associate Deputy Chiefs; named Regional Foresters responsible for managing national forests and grasslands in the Forest Service's Northern, Rocky Mountain and Southern Regions; and named a new Station Director in charge of leading forest research at the Pacific Southwest Research Station.

Dombeck told Forest Service employees that "these people are the cream of the crop when it comes to natural resource management -- highly respected by their peers and beyond reputé professionally. They are problem solvers and coalition builders; leaders who consistently make the tough decisions required to maintain healthy, diverse, and productive lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations."

Dombeck named Ron Stewart the Deputy Chief for Programs and Legislation. Stewart is presently serving as the Associate Deputy for Programs and Legislation. Sandra Key and Gloria Manning were named associate deputy chief for Programs and Legislation and National Forest Systems, respectively. Key presently serves as the Forest Supervisor for the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Wyoming, and Manning is the Deputy Regional Forester for Resources in the Forest Service's Southern Region.

Dombeck selected Dale Bosworth as the Regional Forester for the Northern Region; Lyle Laverty as the Regional Forester for the Rocky Mountain Region; and Elizabeth Estill as the Regional Forester for the Southern Region. Bosworth is currently the Regional Forester for the Intermountain Region. Laverty presently serves as the agency's Director of Recreation, Heritage and Wilderness Resources. Estill is currently the Regional Forester for the Rocky Mountain Region. The Intermountain Region includes national forests and grasslands in southern Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and western Wyoming. The Northern Region encompasses Montana, northern Idaho, North Dakota, and northwestern South Dakota. The Rocky Mountain Region includes Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and eastern Wyoming. The Southern Region covers the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia as well as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Hal Salwasser was named the Station Director for the Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station -- responsible for research activities in the states of California and Hawaii as well as Guam, American Samoa and the

former trust territories. Salwasser is presently serving as the Regional Forester for the Northern Region.

The Forest Service is responsible for the management of 191 million acres of publicly-owned forests and grasslands. The Forest Service is also home to the world's pre-eminent natural resource research organization. Additionally, the agency provides conservation assistance through its State and Private Forestry Program to states and a multitude of private landowners.

Dombeck noted that, "these seven people bring over 175 years of natural resource management experience to these key leadership positions. They will serve us well and help ensure the Forest Service mission of caring for the land and serving people is successfully carried into the twenty-first century."

Since becoming Chief of the Forest Service in January, Dombeck has focused the Forest Service on ways to bring people together to define a common vision for healthy, productive, and diverse federal lands. Dombeck said, "these are exceptionally qualified and committed resource professionals. I am humbled and honored to serve with them."

This news release and biographies of the individuals selected are available (at 2 p.m. EST) on the internet at the Forest Service's web page at <http://www.fs.fed.us/whatsnew.htm>.

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MESSAGE SCAN FOR MELISSA E. CARLSON

To news
CC j.ramey

From: Terence Seyden:R08F11A

Postmark: Jul 16,97 8:32 AM

Delivered: Jul 16,97 8:34 AM

Subject: Forwarded: ap 7/13 Both Sides Wary Of New Forest Chief

Comments:

From: Terence Seyden:R08F11A

Date: Jul 16,97 8:32 AM

Previous comments:

From: internet (b) aol.com (b) Terencius:X400

Date: Jul 16,97 6:31 AM

From: C=US/ADMD=ATTMAIL/ORG=ATTMAIL/DD.ID=internet (b) aol.com (b) Terencius/

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Both sides wary of tough-talking new forest chief

After six months, environmentalists, loggers see little action from leader

Scott Sonner/Associated Press

Environmentalists are afraid new Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck won't follow through on his tough talk about reforming U.S. logging policies on national forests.

Timber industry leaders are afraid he will.

"Talk is cheap in this town," said Mike Francis, national forests director for The Wilderness Society.

"He is saying some of the right things. The question is, does he have the strength and the resolve and the real support of the White House to be able to make the changes?"

Dombeck, a fisheries biologist from Wisconsin, took over in January as chief of the politically charged agency that acts as the world's largest land manager, with 191 million acres of national forest.

In his first day on the job, he told about 500 Forest Service workers: "We must maintain healthy, diverse and productive ecosystems. ... We cannot meet the needs of the people if we do not first conserve and restore the health of the land ..."

"Failing this, nothing else we do really matters," he said Jan. 6.

Six months later, Dombeck says he's learned a lot of lessons about the task he faces, and about internal resistance to change.

"I am not one who thinks it is going to be easy," he said in a recent interview. "We certainly have gotten beyond the level of gridlock we had in the 1980s and early 1990s. ... But I'm not enough of a Pollyanna to think there will ever be total agreement where everybody is fat and happy and smiling."

Dombeck succeeded Jack Ward Thomas, who resigned last fall -- partly out of frustration over political pressures within the Clinton administration and on Capitol Hill.

Thomas was the first wildlife biologist to head the agency. Most of his predecessors were career foresters or administrators who emphasized logging over other national forest uses.

Environmentalists cheered Thomas' appointment because of his role on government panels that had warned the northern spotted owl probably would become extinct if logging practices of the 1980s continued.

But the longer Thomas worked for compromises to scale back logging levels, the more alienated he became from the conservation constituency that claimed credit for helping elect President Clinton.

Dombeck has toughened his rhetoric in recent weeks, making more pointed comments about the ecological damage caused by logging on steep slopes and in

fragile watersheds, and emphasizing the need to prevent logging of roadless areas as much as possible.

He told a group of outdoor writers in Florida that timber production will remain an important use of national forests, "but we cannot allow production to diminish the land's productive capacity."

Critics in the environmental community say Dombeck's been all talk and little action. Logging continues in roadless areas and old-growth groves, especially in the Northern Rocky Mountains.

"It is a sharper message but we think it's just talk," said Ron Mitchell, director of the Idaho Sporting Congress in Boise. The group is suing to block logging of a 77,000-acre roadless area of the Payette National Forest.

"I think he is just another Forest Service hack trying to whitewash their image. If he had any good intentions they are going to be consumed by the corrupt agency and lack of commitment by the Clinton administration on the forest issue," Mitchell said.

Dombeck recently told Bill Meadows, president of the Wilderness Society, that "he senses some support in the agency for his efforts to move it back to where it might be considered a world-class conservation agency," Francis said.

"But he also was well aware of the entrenched history he was up against and that resistance would be there," said Francis.

"It is not something that can be done without rocking the boat and we haven't seen the boat rock at all," he said.

Timber industry officials are quietly critical of Dombeck. But they are reluctant to badmouth him publicly, hoping they may still be able to work with him.

On Capitol Hill, Dombeck has come under fire from Western Republicans who want more logging on national forests. He has rejected their calls to rewrite national forest management laws, saying administrative streamlining of environmental reviews and increased emphasis on field work are the key.

Remarks Of Mike Dombeck To Regional Foresters And Directors

April 8, 1997

Introduction

Next week I will celebrate my 100th day on the job. I want to tell you how much I appreciate all of your patience, advice, and encouragement over the past few months. More importantly, I want to say thank you to all of our field employees for their hard work and support.

More and more, I appreciate the scope and breadth of the services and leadership that we provide to the American people. For example, through our leadership on the Santiago Agreement, we are making clear to other nations that we can live in productive harmony with the natural world that sustains us. Indeed, we are the testing-ground for sustainable development. We in this country -- with all of our national wealth, industrial strength, and international trade -- must demonstrate to the rest of the world that economic prosperity and environmental protection can co-exist. To further this perspective, I will lead the U.S. delegation to Turkey next fall for the 12th World Forestry Congress.

The Forests Products Lab in Madison and the Pacific Northwest Research Station are working with the people of southeast Alaska to bring new value-added technologies to the region that will enhance conservation, more efficient wood utilization, and economic opportunities.

We are the leaders in an USDA wide effort to beautify and improve Washington, D.C. This effort will begin in several weeks with the planting of the first of 1000 trees that we intend to plant in the city. After all, how can we in good conscience preach collaborative stewardship and neglect the nation's capitol?

I traveled to Brooklyn, New York a few weeks ago and learned how State and Private Forestry is working with the city of nearby Greenpoint to control the spread the Asian long-horned beetle and to replant the city's urban forest. I learned firsthand just how deeply people who live in urban areas care for the land when an elderly woman asked me how the tree she had planted the day she learned of her son's death in Vietnam, could be replaced. Later that day, a group of Bronx schoolchildren showed me an abandoned lot that bordered their school and the Bronx River -- once the area's *de facto* garbage dump -- that the Urban Resources Partnership helped convert the lot to a beautiful park and environmental education center.

Forest Service Leadership

The tears in the eyes of the mother whose son had died and the smiles on the faces of those school-children made clear to me that from Washington, D.C. to southeast Alaska to Greenpoint, New York, the Forest Service is helping people reconnect to the land that sustains them. Even after just 100 days, I think we are on the right course.

- My first week here, I commissioned four teams to review and make recommendations for improving our relations with the Administration, Congress, external groups, and internal groups. The teams came up with suggestions that are helping to define our agenda and improve internal and external relationships. My suggestion box has been inundated with excellent ideas. Much of what I have to say this evening and later this week are based on the recommendations of these groups.

- We have improved our working relationships with the Office of Management and Budget, the Council of Environmental Quality, the Domestic Policy Council, and others within the Administration.
- We are working in a bipartisan and constructive manner to accelerate the restoration of the health of our National Forests and Grasslands. This is a cooperative effort that we can replicate across the country.
- We are at the table with the White House and helping to chart the course for high profile Administration priorities such as the Summit on Volunteerism and the Lake Tahoe Summit.
- We redefined installation of a new financial reporting system with the cooperation and support of the Department of Agriculture.

These are only several of the countless examples of how the Forest Service cares for the land and serves people. These efforts are not borne of plans, or initiatives, or even legislative mandates. They are made possible by the sweat and labor of our hard-working employees. The most important resource this agency has is its people. If we have the wisdom to honor and appreciate each other's strengths then diversity will become our strength. That is the real message of civil rights. We want to be the employers of choice. We want our people to feel valued. Not only will it make us a more productive and effective organization, it is simply the right thing to do.

So where do we go from here?

In preparing this talk, I asked myself two basic questions.

- Will the role of the Forest Service be the same in the next few decades as it was in the past?
- Second, who will be the support base for the Forest Service in the next few decades and how can we position ourselves to best meet their needs?

Daniel Botkin, author of Our Natural History, tells about the engineer who spent a year of his life building a bridge over the Missouri River and the rest of his career trying to keep the river under the bridge. I recall that story when I think about the challenges we face. I think it sometimes reflects our response to change. We say, "Well, that doesn't really jibe with how it used to be or how I came up through the system." So we ignore -- or lament -- the changes and act surprised when we find our bridges no longer cross our rivers and we find ourselves submerged in controversy.

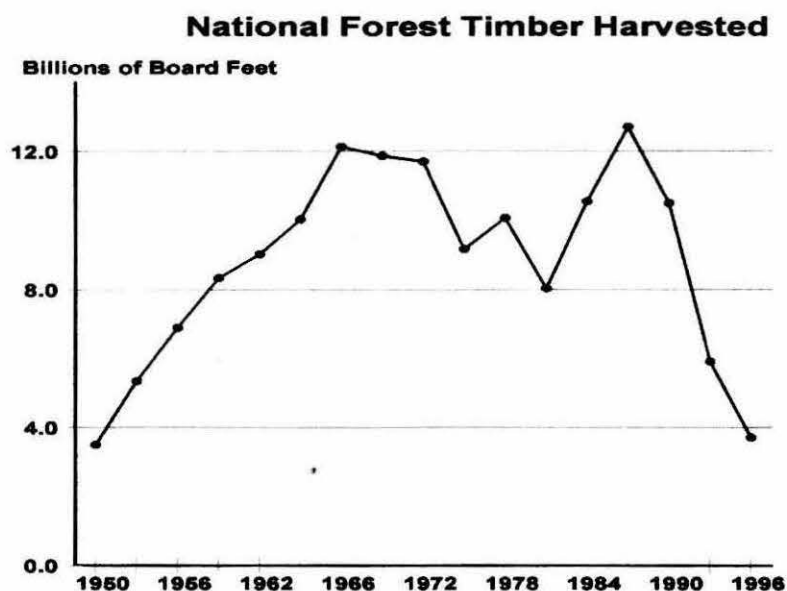
I know that many yearn for the stability and predictability of the "old days." Stability and predictability are fascinating words. We manage natural systems that are inherently unstable and unpredictable, yet seek to impose on them something they cannot be. The strength of this nation is our flexibility and adaptability -- that we are quick to embrace new ideas -- faster in responding to change. Indeed, this is what has made us the world's leaders in technology, innovation, and conservation. The only thing we can count on is that the rate of change will be faster.

Addressing Social and Economic Changes in a Period of Consequences

Winston Churchill said on the eve of World War II, "the era of procrastination, of half measures, of soothing and baffling expedients, of delays, is coming to its close. In its place we are entering a period of consequences." The fact is that we are the senior managers in a very large organization with a complex mission in a complex society. We, you and me, are at the helm of an organization that is undergoing profound -- truly profound -- changes.

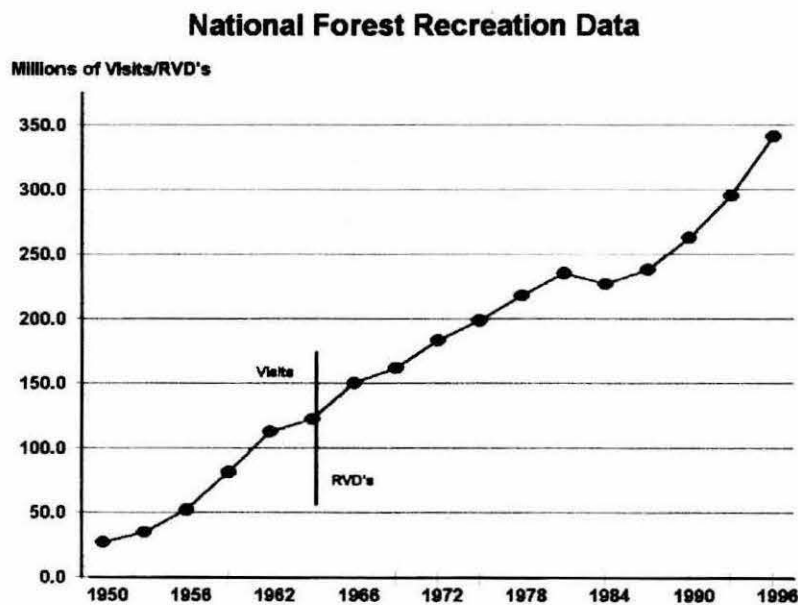
How we respond during this "period of consequences" will determine whether we are what some call a confused bureaucracy with a muddled mission or a superstar agency with an unparalleled commitment to caring for the land and serving people. I know it will be the latter.

I thought of that erstwhile engineer as I examined some recent Forest Service trends.



In the past ten years, timber harvest on federal lands has gone from approximately 11 billion board feet to 4 billion. Federal lands used to supply 25% of the nation's soft wood 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.

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

Jack Ward Thomas once told me a story of how, as a young biologist working for Texas Fish and Game, he became angry at an inaccurate comment made by a reporter about a wildlife program Jack was working on. Jack was infuriated and decided to "learn that reporter a thing or two." On the way to track down the reporter, he stopped by his boss' house and informed him of his plans. His boss sat him down and said:

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

In the front section of my paper on Sunday were stories about: endangered species issues in Riverside, California; potential effects of a mine on the Okefenokee wildlife refuge; and another on potential measures by the United States and Canada to protect endangered species that migrate between the two nations.

I think Jack's old boss would say that conservation -- and conservationists like us -- have become "significant." Seventy-four percent of Americans consider themselves either active environmentalists or sympathetic to environmental concerns. We are in the midst of a profound social change -- a change of values and priorities. Our challenge is not to wistfully stand idle or, like the engineer, to try and get that river back under the bridge. Instead, we need to be leaders in the national dialogue over how to best care for the land and serve people.

Let me talk for a few moments about the northern spotted owl. In so many ways, that issue typifies the sort of challenges we see cropping up in other parts of the country. I don't want to get into the finger-pointing that so characterized that issue. I just want you to think back.

Remember how in the late 1980s, people said that protection of the Northern Spotted Owl under the Endangered Species Act would economically "cripple" the Pacific Northwest?

Well, the opposite occurred. From 1988-1994, the economy of the Pacific Northwest has been remarkably strong and productive. Why? Because businesses and jobs are moving to those parts of the country that are the most desirable places to live.

For example, from 1988-1994:

- Employment in the Pacific Northwest grew 2.4 times faster than the rest of the country;
- Personal income grew 2.2 times faster;
- Average income grew 2.1 times faster; and
- Earnings increased 2.7 times faster than the rest of the United States.

What does this all mean? I think it proves that a healthy environment is a major stimulus for a healthy economy. Population growth and economic expansion are occurring in most non-metropolitan counties of Oregon and Washington. At the same time, many households and families are suffering from the downturn in many traditional industries. We need to be sensitive to those who are affected by social change and economic shifts while actively managing our programs to adapt to these changes.

Changing Priorities

I read in a previous regional program budget recommendation that we need to decrease funding for ecosystem management, heritage programs, wildlife habitat, threatened and endangered species while increasing timber sales, timber roads, forest vegetation, and grazing management. We are often criticized for such proposals because they seemingly value one suite of multiple uses -- commodity production -- over other uses. Now I am not criticizing that Region's proposals because commodity production has often driven our management decisions. To be sure, we also developed world class research capabilities and provided many other multiple use benefits. But, commodities such as timber drove 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.

Our record of commodity production, is not something to be ashamed of; quite the contrary. The country owes us a debt of gratitude for our service. 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.

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 society's needs -- not specific program areas. If we do not, then when specific programs falter -- when society's values shift -- the agency itself suffers.

My challenge to you is to help make watershed health, ecosystem health, the health of the land -- whatever you wish to 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. I stand firmly behind a viable timber industry that depends on federal lands for wood fiber. 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.

Rather than spending our time in pitched battle over individual and controversial timber sales, how can we best leverage our resources to assist in rural economic development, Jobs in the Woods type programs, and so on?

How can we expand the land owner assistance, stewardship, and stewardship incentives program to assist the private landowners who own 70% of the nation's forest land? Private woodland owners, state foresters, private non-industrial woodlot owners -- this is our future support base.

We cannot become conservation leaders if we are not first conservation leaders. How can we more effectively communicate our conservation message to the 80% of Americans who live in urban areas and who increasingly will influence both the ecological health and management priorities of national forests and grasslands. This is our largest and most rapidly growing support base. How can we design internal processes that translate to external actions that best meet their needs?

What I have heard from you and hundreds of other people both within and outside the agency over the past few months is that the health of the land must be the unifying factor that brings people together. We must use all of our available tools to shift our priorities, establish new processes, and create new incentives.

Resource and Management Priorities

All of the goods and services that we provide to the American people are dependent on healthy lands and waters. The health of the land must be our overriding priority! As resource professionals, we must be able to explain to people, the existing condition, desired state, and trend of the following resource priorities.

- water quality and quantity,
- riparian health,
- forest ecosystem health,
- rangeland ecosystem health,
- recreation, and
- partnerships.

In the next few years, we have some unique opportunities to establish processes and incentives that track more closely with maintaining the health, diversity, and productivity of the land. For example, over the next three years, 78 forest plans – plans for fully one half of our forests and grasslands -- will be revised. How can we use this process as a framework for implementing our priorities?

Additionally, we are in the process of drafting a strategic plan for the Forest Service as required by the *Government Performances and Results Act*. Within the broad context of the *Government Performances and Results Act*, we must develop performance measures for Forest Supervisors, Research, State and Private Forestry, and so on, that relate to maintaining healthy ecological systems. This will be the most significant expression of our commitment to the American people.

Consider water. Now this may sound glib, but it is not. "Gravity works cheap and never takes a day off." The end results of most of our management actions are reflected by the health of our rivers, streams, and lakes. I want you to work with your people to determine the appropriate characteristics of healthy aquatic ecosystems and to hold them accountable for their improvement.

For example, on national forests and grasslands:

- Certain *keystone species* of fish, wildlife, and plants can be used as surrogates for general biotic integrity.
- *Properly functioning riparian areas* have a disproportionate value in determining ecosystem health.
- The *health of fire dependent ecosystems*, particularly given public debate and interest, are critically important.
- *Erosion* -- concerns over which contributed to the creation of the eastern national forests and western grasslands -- can reflect the effect of management activities on the land.

The idea here is not to institute a new layer of process and bureaucracy over our management actions. Land-based accountability is *intrinsic* to responsible resource stewardship.

Conclusion

Our challenge is to work with people to implement meaningful strategic national goals and on-the-ground measures that reflect these and other appropriate issues. Once developed, we must then communicate to people their importance and begin to build the public support base, financial systems, budget processes, and management incentives to accomplish these priorities. Then, and only then, can we say with certainty that we are truly caring for the land and serving people.

Title: Mike Dombeck speech to RF&D

Author: (Contact) Alan Polk

Phone: 202.205.1134

Publish_date: 4/15/97

Expires: none

MESSAGE SCAN FOR MELISSA E. CARLSON

To nrcep coordinators

From: Pam Godsey:WO
Postmark: Jan 09,97 12:43 PM

Host: W01C
Delivered: Jan 09,97 12:28 PM

Subject: Forwarded: 1690 Chief's Speech to Employees

Comments:

From: Pam Godsey:WO
Date: Jan 09,97 12:43 PM

Previous comments:

From: Susan Odell:WO
Date: Jan 06,97 3:34 PM

Here is the official version of Mike's speech to the WO employees this afternoon. He left out some of the lists of things - and gave his own touch to the whole of it -- emphasizing that change and the rate of change will increase, but for us to not worry about it -- the same advice was applied to looking at the level of controversy we are involved in -- because it is an indicator of a democracy working when public debate is active. Altho' I would personally have liked to have heard the word "communities" (or seen it in the attached) more, I believe we have a new opening for working with communities on various issues -- and (my plug) the Rural community Assistance effort can be brought forth as methods and relationships to build on - not start from scratch, etc. Take care & have a happy new year!

Previous comments:

From: Patricia Robinson:WO acting for DIRECTOR, CF
Date: Jan 06,97 2:53 PM

This is the other document I was mailing to the staff. Sorry for the duplication of the one on Collaborative Stewardship. ~Pat~

Previous comments:

From: Office of Chief
Date: Jan 06,97 2:39 PM

Please distribute the enclosed document (9 pages) to all employees. This document is NOT being distributed via automail because of a system failure.

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SUSTAINING THE HEALTH OF THE LAND
THROUGH
COLLABORATIVE STEWARDSHIP

Message to all Forest Service employees from
Mike Dombeck
on his first day as Chief, January 6, 1997

As many of you know, I am no stranger to the Forest Service and no stranger to Washington, DC. I have worked at various levels of the Forest Service in Michigan, Wisconsin, California, and Washington, D.C., before going to the Department of the Interior. I am glad to be back.

My Forest Service roots go deeper. I grew up 25 miles from a town of 1,500 people in northern Wisconsin's beautiful lake country, in the Chequamegon National Forest, what the author of Little House on the Prairie, Laura Ingalls Wilder, called the "Big Woods." My early years were spent fishing, hunting, and hiking, with eleven summers spent as a fishing guide. One of my favorite things to do today are walking in the woods or being on the water.

I'd like to talk today about my professional resource philosophy -- **collaborative stewardship**. I'd also like to discuss my expectations and vision for the Forest Service.

First, however, I want to thank Dave Unger for his leadership and assistance over the past few weeks. I also want to thank the Forest Service Transition Team and the many Forest Service employees and retirees who assisted in this transition and in formulating and reviewing the following statements. I have talked with each of the previous Chiefs and want to thank them for their ideas and counsel.

Let me say right up front that I know and respect the knowledge and skill in the ranks of this organization, among the volunteers, and retirees. I can not do this job without your help. At the same time, many of you have told me you expect me to take action where action is needed. I will do my best.

A PROUD TRADITION

I am honored to serve with you, and for the American people, as the 14th Chief of the Forest Service.

Since President Theodore Roosevelt defined conservation as applying "common sense to common problems for the common good," the Forest Service has been blessed by leaders of foresight, conviction, and vision.

I recently read a brief biography of each of the previous Chiefs. I was struck by the fact that the mission of the Forest Service is as relevant today as it was nearly a century ago.

From Gifford Pinchot's simple statement that "without natural resources life itself is impossible."

To John McGuire's assertion that "people need to hear forestry's message -- that sound forestry practices can provide both protection and use."

From Dale Robertson's belief that "we have more knowledge about the management of natural resources than any other organization in the world."

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All the way to Max Peterson's and Jack Ward Thomas' staunch defense of maintaining public forests and rangelands in public hands.

Since its inception, the Forest Service has been remarkably productive, effective, and critically important. Just as examples, the Forest Service has:

- * Worked with states and private land owners to apply needed conservation measures to state and private lands across the nation.
- * Improved watershed health in many areas and restored Dust Bowl era grasslands.
- * Established literally thousands of partnerships to conserve natural resources by improving wildlife and fish habitats, protecting water and air quality, and preventing soil erosion.
- * Met the needs of millions of American families with wood products, forage, minerals, quality recreation experiences on National Forest lands and so forth.
- * Discovered and employed more efficient ways to use and recycle wood and wood fiber.
- * Improved the wildland fire fighter safety record.
- * Established a world renowned research organization.
- * Exchanged valuable forestry knowledge with countries around the world.

Too often, these achievements are forgotten and all of the attention is on the problems of the moment. I have not forgotten your many successes, far too many to mention here. I am proud to serve again with employees such as Bob Nelson, who recently joined Chief Thomas as a recipient of the Wildlife Society's Aldo Leopold Award, the highest award given to a wildlife professional.

I am honored to follow in the footsteps of the many retirees -- people who have spent their lives to protect and restore our natural resource legacy.

I look forward to working with all of the excellent Washington and field employees.

COMMUNICATIONS

We are a better, stronger, and healthier nation due to the work of the Forest Service. In the past, because there were fewer people and demands on the land, we could achieve many of our goals with less conflict. Getting from point A to point B wasn't all that difficult. 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.

There is an ongoing debate in this nation over how national forests and rangelands should be managed. That's just fine. In fact, it is healthy. Debate and information are the essence of democracy. The people we serve, all of the people, are now more fully engaged in defining how to move from point A to point B. Our task is not to dictate the course or the outcome. Rather, we need to be the facilitators, the suppliers of knowledge and expertise, the educators and communicators who help people search for solutions.

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But as the debate swirls, we cannot forget our successes or the essential services that we provide daily to people and communities. An important part of our job is to articulate our successes. The most enduring and powerful maxim of business is that "money flows to things people want." People want their cultural heritage protected; clean air and water; healthy forests and rangelands; good hunting and fishing; sustainable supplies of timber and forage, etc. The one sure way to guarantee that we will have continued downsizing and declining budgets is by not telling people our story.

Explain the services we provide in a manner that everyone can understand and appreciate. Speak clearly and focus on the positive things we do. When we focus too much of our organizational energy merely responding to contentious issues, we lose the vast majority of people who support and benefit from our good work.

Much of our good work in watershed protection, wilderness management, and forest and rangeland management, the Job Corps and other human resource programs are not well-known. We need to communicate our successes. And, consider our state and private forestry, research, and international forestry programs:

- * State and Private Forestry works with tribal governments, local communities, states, and private landowners to protect forests and rangelands from the effects of fire, insects, and disease. They work with local landowners to improve the health of private and tribal lands and watersheds and urban forests.

- * Research provides the scientific and technical underpinnings needed to help assure the health, diversity, and productivity of the land. Science is the foundation of Forest Service management.

- * International Forestry ensures that the knowledge of the world's finest conservation organization is shared with other countries, continents, and peoples; and that we learn from them. The recently signed Santiago Agreement, a product of Forest Service leadership emanating from the UNCED conference in Rio, is a good example of how different nations of people can work to promote sustainable forest resources world wide.

These are critically important functions! Who opposes them? When we don't effectively communicate these and the countless other good things we do, 10% of the audience ends up controlling 90% of the debate. And far too much of our organizational energy and money is spent in adversity and litigation. That must, and will, change. This is not a matter of desire, it is a matter of long term survival.

Our mission is sound -- Caring for the land and serving people. Carrying on with the "Course to the Future" is appropriate. What's changed is how we go about accomplishing it.

As the country grows, its need for timber and water supplies, quality recreation areas, energy and minerals, and healthy fish and wildlife habitats increases. Our task is to responsibly adapt to change in the face of multiple competing interests. More and more, people are realizing that their jobs and professions, the quality of the water they drink and the air they breathe -- the very fabric of their lives -- are dependent on the land that sustains them.

Simply stated, we must maintain, healthy, diverse, and productive ecosystems.

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We cannot meet the needs of the people if we do not first conserve and restore the health of the land.

So our first priority is to protect and restore the health of the land. Failing this, nothing else we do really matters. Let me repeat, our first priority is to protect and restore the health of the land.

Just how do we maintain the health of the land? By working with people who use and care about the land. People are the delivery system for ensuring healthy, diverse, and productive ecosystems. Anglers, loggers, campers, families -- everyone who breathes clean air and drinks clean water -- are our delivery system. Assuring healthy ecosystems begins and ends by working with people on the land. As Gifford Pinchot said, "a public official is there to serve the public, not run them." To successfully adapt to growth and change we need to engage people in dialogue.

My expectation is that everything we do -- every environmental impact statement we write, every timber sale, recreation plan, mining plan, or allotment management plan we approve -- will not compromise the health of the land. I want to make it very clear that no Forest Service Program has dominance over another. Timber is not more important than wildlife and fisheries. Nor is wildlife and fisheries more important than timber or recreation, or cultural resources, and so on.

We will care for the land and serve people by listening to all our constituents and by living within the limits of the land. I call this commitment to healthy ecosystems and working with people on the land "collaborative stewardship."

COLLABORATIVE STEWARDSHIP

We will implement collaborative stewardship through:

- * Working with people on the land.
- * Using partnerships and collaboration.
- * Enhancing conservation education.
- * Using science and technology.
- * Insisting on personal accountability.
- * Putting the right people in the right jobs.
- * Communicating a better understanding of how resource management affects economic prosperity.
- * Fostering a multi-disciplined, multi-cultural organization.
- * Adapting to growth while maintaining sustainability.

The National Forest Management Act foresaw the possibility of forming citizen stewardship councils for national forests. Other agencies already utilize consensus councils that are made up of a balance of commodity interests, environmental interests and the general public. We can do the same thing in the Forest Service. These collaborative councils, although only one of many ways to more fully involve people in Forest Service management, can bring people

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together to define a shared vision for management of natural resources.

By definition, collaborative stewardship entails bringing people together. It does not imply abrogation of leadership or decision making authority. As a former Forest Service employee, Aldo Leopold, once wrote, "the only progress that really counts is that on the landscape of the back forty." Most resource issues today are less dependent on technical matters than they are on social and economic factors. If we are to maintain and conserve the land's health, we must learn to balance local and national needs. We must learn to better work with the people who use and care about the land while serving their evolving needs. We must be catalysts in bringing people together.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Our first priority is to the land and the people who use and care for it. And our responsibility is to deliver. As a step toward clarifying that responsibility, I am going to ensure that every forest supervisor in the nation have new, clearly-defined performance measures in key areas such as the following:

- * Riparian condition and forest health.
- * Water quality.
- * Watershed health and soil stability.
- * Noxious weed management.
- * Management of fire dependent landscapes.
- * Endangered species habitat.

I don't care if these are called working agreements, performance agreements, or whatever. Every forest supervisor, on every forest, will be held accountable for showing an improving trend in appropriate areas. Performance measurements, by definition, will be quantifiable. We will come up with these measures for forests and rangelands within 6 months.

These measures will allow us to track the health of the land and allow the people we serve to hold us accountable.

Every post and level of the Forest Service organization will be accountable to our mission. During this six month period, other performance measures will be developed and used for areas such as:

- * Financial management and accountability.
- * Demonstrated commitment to collaborative stewardship.
- * Customer service.
- * Achieving workforce diversity.
- * Simplification of procedures.
- * Effective collaboration between research and management.

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All Forest Service employees will be evaluated and held accountable for achieving applicable performance measures.

The greatest resource this agency has is its people. More than 30,000 employees and their families live and work in communities, large and small, all across the country. These dedicated employees are the key to making our mission a reality. Such an important resource must be nurtured and protected. I want to make one thing crystal clear, I absolutely will not tolerate discrimination. I am committed to improving workforce diversity, reducing the number of Equal Employment Opportunity complaints, and eliminating their causes in the Forest Service.

We have a constitutional and moral obligation to protect basic civil rights and guarantee equal opportunity. Every Forest Service employee has the right to work in an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. If we all honor and appreciate each other's strengths, then diversity will become our strength.

There are a few qualities I value and think important to an effective organization.

- * Honesty
- * Intelligence and creativity
- * Clarity and simplicity
- * Hard work
- * Loyalty to the mission of the Forest Service

These are the qualities I expect from each of you on a daily basis. They should be your basic operating principles. We have a complex business that need not be made more so. Keep things simple. Write clearly and concisely. No more bureaucrat-ese. Minimize acronyms. If what we say isn't clear to the average citizen, then we are doing something wrong.

All of the benefits of sound forest and range management are easily explained: clean air and water; better recreation opportunities; a sustainable supply of wood and forage; habitat for rare species, vibrant local communities, and so on.

Caring for the land and serving people are what we are all about. All of the world should know. We will be held accountable to this mission. The American people will know they can depend on us if we deliver.

VISION

My vision is to be the very best at what we do. To more effectively care for the land, to more diligently serve people, than any other organization in the world.

When someone in Bend, Oregon, or Ocala, Florida, or at Iowa State, or Cornell -- even China -- asks, which is the premier conservation organization in the world? Or, "what agency works better and costs less to achieve their mission?" The answer they should hear on the street should be the USDA Forest Service. When they ask what is the best forest research organization in the world? The answer should be the USDA Forest Service. Which agency works most effectively

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with states and private landowners and other nations to conserve and restore the health of the land? The answer should be the Forest Service.

Conservation starts and finishes with the health of the land. It begins and ends in the communities in which we live and serve. But effective conservation and the strength and credibility of the Forest Service are weakened by perceptions of bureaucratic infighting, end runs, conflicting agendas, and insufficient attention to basic business areas such as financial controls and communications.

An effective organization is able to solve its own problems. Our conservation efforts are diminished if we cannot.

We must solve our own problems; but we need to reach out to all our partners, to the citizen owners, to local, state, and tribal governments, to sister agencies.

I will strengthen the Chief's office so we can function more effectively. We will focus very clearly on policy matters and effective communication to the people we serve. We will focus on solid working relationships with the Congress and Administration and other agencies we work with. Therefore:

- * I intend to add a counselor to help extend and improve our relations with the Administration and other agencies. Few believe that we are operating as smoothly as we should.

- * In filling the Director of Public Affairs position, I will emphasize the importance of communications -- on speaking clearly to the people we serve; on our successes; on working closely with our sister agencies and partners; and on articulating policy.

- * I will have a Chief of Staff to assure the operation keeps running smoothly, to promote teamwork, to focus on accountability and financial integrity, and to help our leadership team improve the quality of everything we do. I am announcing today that Francis Pandolfi will serve as my Chief of Staff. Mr. Pandolfi comes with very broad experience beyond his academic training including: Chairman of the Recreation Roundtable, Chairman of the National Environmental and Training Foundation, CEO of Times Mirror Magazines, Vice President of CBS, Board member of Trout Unlimited, the National Audubon Society, and the American Museum of Natural History Center for Biodiversity and Conservation. I believe you will enjoy and appreciate Mr. Pandolfi. He has dedicated much of his life to natural resource conservation and education.

I realize that some of this is new; however, the goal is to bolster our effectiveness and stature. I will be seeking assistance of the leadership team to assure our success.

Nothing stimulates an organization like success. Within six months, I want us to have at least three major wins under our belt. These will be marked by a spirit of inclusiveness and openness. They will demonstrate to us, and to the people we serve, that we are the pre-eminent conservation organization in the world. I am thinking of such accomplishments as:

- * Establishing a fund to provide grants to Forest Service units for special resource stewardship projects.

- * Establishing a group of citizen stewardship councils to serve as models of collaborative stewardship.

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* Improving the efficiency of the budget and planning process to allow people to spend more time on resource issues. This is a far greater challenge than most recognize. Our financial and administrative houses must be in order. Anything less diminishes our ability to carry out our mission. This must be fixed!

These are a few of my ideas. I want yours too. Tomorrow I will send a Data General message to all employees asking for specific, practical proposals for accomplishments that we can achieve in the next six months. I firmly believe that the greatest reservoir of practical and innovative ideas rest with the many talented employees across the country.

CONCLUSION

I want to leave you with a few final thoughts.

This country is blessed with having elected people of foresight and wisdom who just a few decades ago gave us a legacy that included the most progressive and effective network of conservation laws in the world. As a result of Congressional foresight and citizen activism:

- * Our air and water are cleaner.
- * Rare species have been brought back from the brink of extinction.
- * People are more active in management and protection of their lands.
- * Recreation opportunities such as hiking, hunting and fishing are better.

We are a better, more secure, and stronger nation because of laws such as the Clean Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Forest Management Act. These laws represent the conservation values of mainstream America. Do not be disturbed by the debate surrounding their execution. This is background noise to a complex society and a healthy, properly functioning democracy.

So where do we go from here? Our task is to help bring people together on the land. That's what collaborative stewardship is all about. Whether we are engineers, support staff, or line officers, we are the educators and communicators, the teachers and technical experts who can bring communities of interests together to help define the policies and practices needed for healthy sustainable forests. In doing so we must streamline our regulations and simplify the way we implement the laws toward the goal of a "government that works better and costs less."

We are the professionals, scientists and managers who can work hand-in-hand with state agencies, tribal governments, regulatory and other federal agencies, conservationists -- all who use and care about public lands and natural resources to assure the most efficient and effective conservation management possible.

Our vision cannot be stated better than in the dedication of Breaking New Ground by Gifford Pinchot published in 1947. "To the men and women of the Forest Service, whose courage, devotion, and intelligence have made it and kept it the best organization in the Government of the United States."

Finally, let me tell you how pleased I am to be here and to serve as your

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Chief. It is an honor and at the same time a heavy responsibility. I can not do the job alone. I'm going to need your help. I am going to give the job my best, my very best. I ask you to do the same. Save time for you family and other pursuits but while here doing the business of the Forest Service, give it your best.

This is a new year, a new Administration, a new Congress. Let's see if we can add some new positive dimensions to our jobs. I challenge each of you to look around in your workplace and your relationships and find some fresh starts...fresh looks...new ways to look at old problems.

We have a lot to be thankful for in this country including the treasure chest of natural resources entrusted to our care. Our task is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the land through collaborative stewardship.

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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

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

File Code: 6180

Date: January 6, 1997

Subject: Collaborative Stewardship

To: All Employees

I am honored to return to the most effective conservation organization in the world, the Forest Service, as the 14th Chief. I am also humbled as I consider the importance of our mission--"Caring for the Land and Serving People."

All across the country, people are realizing that the quality of their lives and the happiness of their families are inextricably linked to the health of the land. As they do, they are increasingly turning to us, the select group of men and women who have committed themselves to sustaining the health, diversity, and productivity of the land. Our challenge as resource managers, scientists, and educators is to bring together diverse groups of people to help define a shared vision for managing healthy ecological systems.

As conservation leaders, we have an obligation to practice collaborative stewardship--to bring people together on the land and to help them learn to live within its limits.

In this time of change and challenge, there is no place I would rather be than working with you, the professional, dedicated members of the Forest Service. I ask for your support and your counsel as together we care for the land and serve people.

It is an essential task, an awesome responsibility, and a noble cause. It's good to be home. Let's have some fun!

/s/ Mike Dombeck

MIKE DOMBECK
Chief



Biography

USDA-FOREST SERVICE



Dr. Michael P. Dombeck

Dr. Michael P. Dombeck became the 14th Chief of the Forest Service on Jan. 6, 1997.

He was born on Sept. 21, 1948 in Stevens Point, Wisc. It was here in northern Wisconsin's lake country that his appreciation for natural resources was cultivated. Dombeck worked as a fishing guide in the region for 11 summers. He earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in biological sciences and education from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point and the University of Minnesota. He earned his doctorate in fisheries biology from Iowa State University and is noted for research contributions on muskies and lake habitat management. In addition, Dr. Dombeck has authored numerous scholarly publications and made frequent national as well as international scientific presentations.

Dr. Dombeck taught biology, chemistry, science, zoology, and fisheries management at public schools and universities. He spent 12 years with the Forest Service primarily in the midwest and western United States. In his last Forest Service post as National Fisheries Program Manager in Washington, D.C., he was recognized for outstanding leadership in developing and implementing fisheries programs and forging partnerships. He also spent a year as a Legislative Fellow working in the United States Senate with responsibility for natural resource and interior appropriations issues.

Dr. Dombeck was named acting director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in February 1994. In that position, he focused on two major objectives: creating a long-term BLM vision to improve the health of the land and reinventing the agency to reduce red tape, streamline functions and improve customer service.

As Forest Service Chief, Dr. Dombeck has focused his efforts on promoting partnerships, collaborative stewardship, accountability, and financial health. Early in 1998, Dr. Dombeck introduced the Forest Service Natural Resource Agenda. This agenda identifies four emphasis areas. They are:

- Watershed Health and Restoration
- Development of a Long-Term Forest Roads Policy
- Sustainable Forest Management
- Recreation

He resides with his wife and daughter in Northern Virginia.

Education

Ph.D. 1984 Fisheries Biology, Iowa State University

M.S. 1977 Zoology, University of Minnesota

Michael P. Dombeck
Biographical Information

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As Acting Director, Dr. Dombeck has overseen BLM's management of 270 million acres of surface land and over 570 million acres of mineral estate. He also has managed a budget of more than \$1 billion and a work force of about 10,000.

He resides with his wife and daughter in Northern Virginia.

Career Summary:

2/3/94 to present - Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management

9/93-2/94 Chief of Staff to Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, Department of Interior, Washington, DC

1/93-9/93 Acting Asst. Sec./Dep. Asst. Sec., Land and Minerals Mgmt., DOI, Washington, DC

1989-1992 Science Advisor and Special Assistant to Director, Bureau of Land Management, Washington, DC

1987-1989 National Fisheries Program Manager, Forest Service, Washington, DC

C O U R T →

[Farewell memo from Dombeck to BLM]

December 20, 1996

To: All Employees
From: Mike Dombeck

A few winters ago, Secretary Babbitt called me to his office and asked if I would serve as the acting Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

I could not have known that this "short term" assignment would last for 35 months and be the highlight of my professional career.

And so it is with mixed emotions that I announce today that effective January 6, 1997, I will leave the Bureau of Land Management to become the Chief of the Forest Service. I am grateful for Secretary Babbitt's and Assistant Secretary Bob Armstrong's confidence in me three years ago and Secretary Glickman's today. I am excited by this new opportunity to spread the message of collaborative stewardship to the millions of Americans who use and care for national forests and grasslands. But mostly, I am humbled when I consider how lucky I've been to be a part of BLM-- a hard working, talented, and tremendously effective conservation organization.

Through political adversity, social change, and economic pressures, our conservation agenda

has been astonishingly ambitious and effective. Consider:

President's forest plan: We are working with the Forest Service to implement a 22 millionacre ecosystem restoration plan in the Pacific Northwest.

PACFISH: We developed management prescriptions that are restoring salmon habitat and watershed health for 7 BLM districts in 4 states and on 15 national forests. The Eastside and Upper Columbia River Basin projects will incorporate these into our land use plans.

Healthy Rangelands Initiative: Over a 10 year period, our new rangeland regulations will restore 100,000 acres of riparian areas; bring 20 million acres of uplands into properly functioning condition; and improve watershed health.

Resource Advisory Councils: We created Resource Advisory Councils across the public lands. These balanced, collaborative citizen councils are the future of conservation.

Ecological standards and grazing guidelines: Within a few months, we will have ecological standards for rangeland health and management guidelines for livestock grazing. These standards and guidelines will provide people with straightforward measures to evaluate the health of 170 million acres of public lands and also measure our effectiveness as land managers.

Fire policy: In 1995, after a deadly fire season, BLM helped lead an interdepartmental fire policy review that reinforced the importance of fire safety and recognized the role of fire in the ecosystem. It was implemented in one of the worst fire years on record and no serious injuries occurred.

These are only a few of your many significant accomplishments. We have been honored by six Hammer Awards from the Vice-President and selected to manage the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

In this country, we are blessed with publicly owned lands that allow us to build homes for families, sustain habitat for rare plant and animal species, extract critical mineral resources, and provide countless recreation opportunities. As you have heard me say many times, regardless of whether we work for the Forest Service, the BLM or Fish and Wildlife Service, the local school district or the chamber of commerce, what matters most is that the land remains healthy.

All across the country, people are realizing that the fabric of their lives, their professions, and the happiness of their families are inextricably linked to the land that sustains them. And as they do, they will increasingly turn to the select group of men and women who have committed themselves a noble goal: maintaining the health, diversity, and productivity of the land.

We live in an era of tremendous change. You are at the vanguard of this change. As resource managers, educators and communicators, your solemn responsibility is to strike a balance so that production from public lands never diminishes their productive capacity. As resource professionals we must continually strive to adapt while never compromising our principles.

Our challenge is to help the many different users of public lands come together to define a shared vision for their long term health.

Thank you for allowing me the honor to serve with and learn from you.

GLICKMAN NAMES CHIEF OF THE USDA FOREST SERVICE

Release No. 0647.96

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GLICKMAN NAMES MICHAEL DOMBECK 14th CHIEF OF THE USDA FOREST SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20, 1996--Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced today the appointment of Michael Dombeck as the new Chief of the Forest Service. Dombeck will leave his post as Acting Director of the Bureau of Land Management to take charge of the Forest Service effective January 6, 1997.

"I have great confidence in the leadership and vision Mike will bring to one of the oldest and best conservation organizations in the world," said Glickman. "Mike is the right leader to continue the Forest Service's rich tradition of conservation leadership, manage the public resource and lead the agency into the next century."

Michael Dombeck has held senior level positions in the Department of Interior for seven years, serving most recently as the Acting Director for that Department's largest public land management agency, the Bureau of Land Management. Previously, Dombeck spent nearly twelve years working with the Forest Service in various posts throughout the country. Dombeck is a Senior Executive Service resource professional with a Ph.D. in Biology, and associated degrees in education and executive management.

"Mike has the professional credentials, management experience, and commitment to the agency needed to guide the Forest Service," said USDA Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment Jim Lyons. "I look forward to working with Mike in promoting the ecosystem management principles and land ethic that are cornerstones of the Administration's natural resources program."

"My first priority as Chief is to build on the rich tradition of working closely with local communities to restore and maintain productive, healthy and diverse ecological systems," Dombeck said. "Effective stewardship begins and ends in the community. As managers of the public trust, our job is to ensure that all who use the land -- be they anglers, timber companies or hikers -- support the land's conservation and restoration."

The Forest Service operates the largest field structure in the federal government, with the exception of the Department of Defense, and manages 191 million acres of forests and grasslands. The agency employs about 37,000 people engaged in research, technical assistance to landowners, and public land management.

Michael Dombeck will succeed the former Chief, Jack Ward Thomas, who retired late last month after 30 years in the Forest Service.

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New Forest Service Chief Outlines Plan To Move Into 21st Century

WASHINGTON (January 6, 1997) -- On his first day as USDA Forest Service chief, Michael Dombeck, today outlined to Agency employees an aggressive plan to enhance public input into future decisions, improve the health of the land, increase employee accountability, and balance the uses of National Forests and grasslands.

In Dombeck's first appearance as the 14th Chief of the Forest Service, he said that through "Collaborative Stewardship" the Agency will be better prepared to enter the 21st Century.

"Caring for the land and serving people are what we are all about. All of the world should know. We will be accountable for accomplishing our mission. The American people must know they can depend on us. My vision is to be the very best at what we do -- to more effectively care for the land and diligently serve the American people, than any other organization in the world," he said.

Dombeck, a PhD Fisheries Biologist, former Forest Service fisheries program leader, and most recently Acting Director of the Bureau of Land Management, was appointed the 14th Forest Service Chief by Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman last month. Dombeck succeeds Jack Ward Thomas, who retired in November. Dombeck's Forest Service experience includes work in Michigan, Wisconsin, California, and Washington D.C. Prior to that, he taught and worked in research, and was a summer fishing guide in Wisconsin's lake country for 11 years.

According to Dombeck, Collaborative Stewardship includes working with people on the land; using partnerships and collaboration; using science and technology; conservation education; insisting on personal accountability; putting the right people in the right jobs; improving the understanding of how resource management affects economic prosperity; fostering a multi-disciplined, multi-cultural organization; and, adapting to growth while maintaining sustainability.

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"Effective conservation begins and ends by working with people on the land. Our challenge as resource professionals is to bring people together to define a shared vision for management of publicly owned resources," he said.

"One of my highest priorities, and one of our most important challenges, will be to achieve a civil rights program that is second to none, and one in which we can all be proud," Dombeck said.

The 48-year-old Dombeck also said the Forest Service will balance its activities so that "no Forest Service Program will have dominance over another. Timber is not more important than minerals, fisheries and wildlife, or recreation. Nor is wildlife and fisheries more important than timber, minerals, recreation, or range management."

In addition, he said the Forest Service will change the performance measures for employees.

"Our first priority is to the land and the people who use and care about it," Dombeck said. "Thus, in six months every forest supervisor in the nation will have new performance measures in key areas, such as: stream-side condition and health, water quality, watershed health, soil stability, noxious weed management, management of fire dependent landscapes, and endangered species habitat management and protection.

"Every forest supervisor, on every forest, will be held accountable for showing an improving trend in each area. These measures will allow us to track the health of the land and allow the people we serve to know that we are accountable for our actions."

He also said all Forest Service employee performance standards will be changed to include improving financial management and accountability; demonstrating commitment to collaborative, community-based stewardship; achieving workforce diversity; customer service; and simplification of procedures.

Dombeck announced the creation of a fund to provide grants to field units for Collaborative Stewardship projects that improve the health of the land. Secondly, he announced his intention to create several diverse and balanced citizen stewardship councils to guide forest management. The new Chief also said he was committed to improving the efficiency of the Forest Service budget and planning processes to allow employees to spend more time on resource issues.

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"Our task is to bring people together on the land," Dombeck said. "That is what collaborative stewardship is all about."

"We are the professionals, educators, communicators, scientists, and managers who can work hand-in-hand with the public, state agencies, tribal governments, regulatory and other federal agencies, and others to assure the most efficient and effective conservation management possible."

"We cannot meet the needs of the people if we do not first protect and restore the health of the land," he said. "So our first priority is to maintain and restore the health of the land and natural resources. Failing this, nothing else really matters."

"It is an essential task, an awesome obligation, and a noble cause," he concluded.

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