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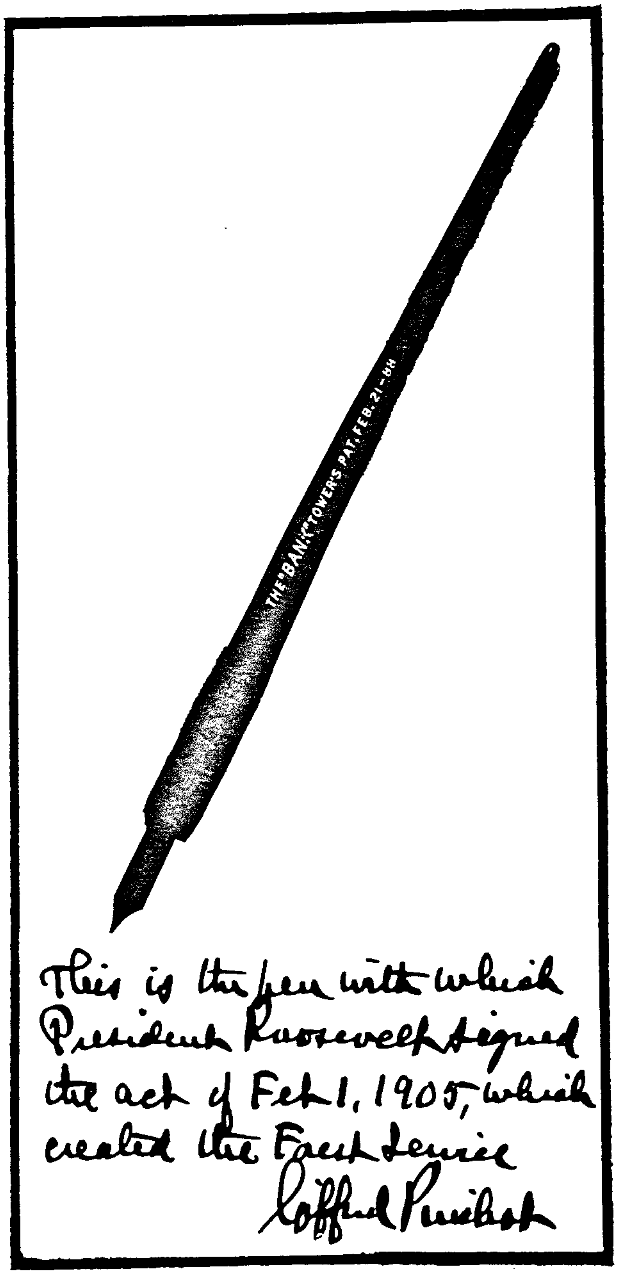
Guide to the Curation of Forest Service Administrative History Artifacts and Records



GUIDE TO THE CURATION OF FOREST SERVICE ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY ARTIFACTS AND RECORDS

BY

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1680 HISTORY

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Introduction: History Program

Concern over preservation of agency history motivated the Forest Service to create the History Section in the Washington, D.C., office in 1971. In its early years the section was located in the Office of Information. In 1974 the program was transferred to Administrative Management where it remained until 1986 when it returned to the Public Affairs Office. In its early period the History Section was dedicated to two tasks: forming a reference library based on salvaged documents, and contracting for oral histories of former prominent employees. In 1976 a professional historian was selected to head the History Section. The new Chief Historian shifted program emphasis away from oral history to stress topical research. The resulting publications vary from specialized reports such as Radio for the Fireline (Gray 1982) to an overview of Forest Service administrative history (Steen 1976). One of the early publications was the award-winning history of fire management: Fire in America (Pyne 1982). The sources of these publications were as varied as their contents. Some were written by the History Section Staff (for example Tweed 1980). One was contributed by a former employee of the Forest Service out of personal interest in the subject (Wiener 1982). Most of the major volumes were written under contract such as U.S. Forest Service Grazing and Rangelands: A History (Rowley 1985). The latest publications are a series of regional histories prepared under contract. (See appendix A for a complete list of publications midwifed by the History Section). The most recent example is The Rise of Multiple-Use Management in the Intermountain West: A History of Region 4 of the Forest Service (1987).

In addition to contracting and editing publications, the History Section Staff perform other duties. Since 1971 the staff has edited "History Line," a newsletter of Agency Cultural Resources Management (CRM) and History Program activities. Copies are distributed internally to employees as well as mailed to interested members of the public. In 1977-78 the History Section assumed one other task that continues on an occasional basis, i.e. acting as a liaison to Grey Towers for the Forest Service. Grey Towers is the former home of Gifford Pinchot (first Chief of the Forest Service in 1905) located in Milford, Pennsylvania, and administered by the Forest Service as a National Historic Landmark.

By 1984 the History Section had evolved into its current direction as described in the Forest Service Manual. The first objective of the program is to provide managers with historical data to ensure informed resource management decisions. The other objective is to (FSM 1680.2): "Provide for the preservation of documents and other materials, including oral histories and Forest Service artifacts of importance to Forest Service history."

These two linked objectives form the basic mission of the Agency History Program. The first goal is writing accounts of past Forest Service activities and policies. The second is the means to that end.

Artifact curation is a subject not touched on formally in Forest Service directives. The absence of a formal policy or handbook regarding the management of historic (or prehistoric) artifacts housed in internal collections is a growing concern of CRM/History personnel. The interest of the WO History Section in this subject gave rise to this guide. The guide is a temporary one for use by History Program personnel (1680). For this reason the guide is limited to information on curation of administrative history associated artifacts and records. However, it does address briefly the larger range of artifacts associated with human land use patterns on National Forest Lands. This is done only for informational purposes as a means of stimulating thinking on curation on all classes of artifacts. Eventually a general system of curation will be established in collaboration with Cultural Resources Management (2360).

Curation is an important concern of the History Program: Original documents are essential in the writing of Forest Service history. Unfortunately in the past there arose a schism between artifact preservation and history. The result is when we think of Cultural Resources Management we tend to equate archeology with prehistory. The separation is encouraged by the agency having split archeology (2360) and forest history (1680) into two programs. The purpose of this guide is to bridge this separation between forest history and CRM.

This guide is intended for use by history coordinators, archeologists, engineers, clerks, Rangers, timber cruisers, etc. All of us are able to help preserve Forest Service history by protecting its tangible evidence. All employees contribute to the historic record in all that we do. The documents we create, the tools that we use, are all important and should not be overlooked, as they form part of the history of management of the National Forests. The decisions we make influence the direction of the agency. This all-purpose guide is to help us identify those items of everyday use that may be of future historical value. Every person makes a contribution to the record of forest history by creating such items and protecting them. It is important to preserve recent artifacts as well as old documents, photographs, etc. If not enough is retained from the past, its history cannot be adequately told. The old dial telephones, climbing spurs, cross-cut saws, government issue compass, individually and collectively tell our story. Likewise, DG messages and the 1988 telephone directory will soon be artifacts. It is regrettable that many of these past items are being lost or discarded. As these symbols disappear, we are losing tangible pieces of our history. If not enough items are retained from the past, we cannot organize a systematic collection nor determine the significance of the items we do have. We now hear scolding from long-term employees that preservation activities are too little, too late, because most artifacts have disappeared. That is why it is important to recognize the historic potential in today's mundane item of everyday use. Collections allow future questions to be answered and interpretative exhibits prepared. This guide will provide a first step in making us aware of what we can do to save the past.

Section 1: SCOPE OF COLLECTIONS STATEMENT

Artifact: a portable object resulting from human activity, usually applied to objects found in or removed from archeological sites, whether historic or prehistoric. National Park Service Museum Guide.

The Museum Act of 1955 gives the Secretary of the Interior specific authority regarding management of museum property in the National Park Service. The National Park Service developed a museum records system to insure accountability of Federal property under their stewardship (National Park Service 1984, 1985). The USDA Forest Service has archeological collections curatorial responsibilities but lacks the museum infrastructure of the National Park Service. The result is that the Agency has no internal museum record system or historic collections management policy. Archeological collections, often resulting from Cultural Resources Management activities, are usually placed in outside repositories. The absence of adequate long-term curatorial capabilities within the Forest Service mandated this arrangement. An anthropological museum affiliated with a state university is often the repository for significant Forest Service collections. This repository may be designated by the state SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office). The Department of the Interior is in the process of establishing definitive rules on curation of federally-owned archeological collections by such outside repositories (Federal Register 1987). The proposed curation regulations, however, "does not address the need for (Federal) agency internal controls over artifacts." (GAO 1987:75). The issue is critical since at the present time no clear policy exists on curation of in-house historic artifacts in the Forest Service. (The same is true of prehistoric artifacts).

Old trail signs, locks, and other objects are Federal property as well as physical reminders of the past. Ideally, every unit as a first step should complete an inventory list of historic artifacts and documents on hand. If this survey reveals that a sufficient number of historically significant artifacts exists on the unit, then a scope of collection statement is required. This document is the basic curatorial planning guide for an agency managing its own collection.

> Collection: A museum collection is an assemblage of objects, works of art, historic documents...collected according to a rational scheme and maintained so that it is preserved, studied, and interpreted for public benefit. National Park Service Museum Guide.

The statement specifies the subject, geography, and period to which the collection must relate and considers the uses to which it will be put. Each scope of collection statement includes a title page and the following six sections: Introduction, Types of Collections, Acquisition, Uses of Collections, Restrictions, and Management Actions. The first two sections detail the purpose of the unit's administrative history collection and describe the types of objects that will be collected.

Forest Service archeological collections (the material remains and associated records) are mainly generated by research authorized under the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.

For example, on a forest where considerable gold mining activity took place in the past the collection statement must address this subject. The geographical boundary is limited to those Ranger Districts where mining was most common. The time period under consideration should be a discrete unit rather than a vague one. If the peak period of mining was 1850 to 1900 then that time frame shapes the collection focus. The proposed use of a collection may vary from District office display to lending it to a local historical society.

The scope of collection document will also address Forest policy concerning the collecting of artifacts by employees. Some Forest Archeologists adhere to a no collection policy. They prefer that sites not be disturbed and artifacts remain in their original context. Often, deliberately or otherwise, employees ignore this edict and fetch interesting objects back to the office for "safekeeping." This practice is especially common in the case of isolated finds such as a single trail sign or "arrowhead." On Forests with an active CRM program items collected in this fashion are eventually brought to the attention of CRM personnel. Thus, by default, as well as design, most Districts and Forests have accumulated stores of historic artifacts. These collections are rather random assortments that include rusted tin cans, broken wooden signs, and rare objects such as Chinese pottery (ca. 1870), or first issue Ranger badges. To illustrate the diversity of Administrative history artifacts found on a Forest on page 8 is a sample of the Siskiyou National Forest (Region 6) Historical Archive collection catalog. Note also the inventory system used to describe and locate each artifact on the list.

Cultural resources management personnel typically have management responsibility for collections. Hence the salary and related expenses required to manage these collections needs to be included by managers planning the CRM budget.

Historic artifacts are collected in the process of performing cultural resource management activities. This collected material must be accessioned and cataloged. Usually the initial documentation of the artifacts is done in the field through use of the cultural site inventory form. Criteria for

Sample page courtesy of Tish Steinfeld, Forest Archeologist.

SK-000-048	Siskiyou Lands Section Photos, 1970s
SK-000-049	Siskiyou NF Map, 1928
SK-000-050	Principles of Organization of Forest Fire Suppression, 1953
SK-000-051	Ground Observor's Guide, 1951
SK-000-052	Planting Projects, Closed Files, 1944
SK-000-053	FS Metal Sign "National Forest Camp Rules"
SK-000-054	Protective Status Atlas for Galice District, 1942
SK-000-055	Uses Files from Siskiyou, 1912-42 (9)
SK-000-056	Oregon Caves Correspondence Files from 1923, 1931 (4)
SK-000-057	Haze Meter, No Date
SK-000-058	Volume II Siskiyou NF, 1978
SK-000-059	Historical Records for Transportation Facilities, 1964
SK-000-060	Roads and Trails File, Williams Creek Road, 1925-29
SK-000-061	Trail Logs, 1963
SK-000-062	Original History of the Siskiyou NF by L. Coopen, 1939
SK-000-063	SHPO Site Maps-Microfilm, 1982
SK-000-064	Forest Service Padlocks (5)
SK-000-065	Blister Rust Information Atlas, 1939, 1941
SK-000-066	Metal Compass, Old Model, No Date
SK-000-067	Metal USFS ID Tag, 1933-35
SK-000-068	The Use Book, 1907
SK-000-069	Chinese Porcelain Fragments, late 1800's
SK-000-070	FS Daily Diaries, 1954-56 (7)
SK-000-071	Square Nails, Post 1830s
SK-000-072	Tobacco Can with Mining Claim Inside, No Date
SK-000-073	Forest Service Key CA, 1946
SK-000-074	Pocket Type First Aid Kit, No Date

determining the inclusion of objects in the permanent historic artifact collection include its research value and interpretative merits. The evaluation of significance of an artifact must be determined by the forest archeologist or historian or designated counterpart.

ACCESSION AND ACQUISITIONS

Two somewhat confusing technical terms are employed by museum curators to define the process of taking possession of objects (NPS Museum Guide):

Accession: a transaction whereby one or more objects is acquired in the same manner from one source at one time for the museum collection. Types of accession include gifts, exchanges, purchases, field collections, loans, and transfers. Careful record should be kept of the category of accession of each object in the collection.

Acquisitions: the act or process of acquiring fee title or interest other than fee title to real property. Also applies to the acquisition of museum property.

The former term refers to the process of taking possession of an artifact, whereas the latter refers to the receipt of legal title. The acquisition of objects requires the use of legal forms transferring ownership when items are donated to the Forest Service by former employees or the public. The use of such forms will help prevent later ownership claims by heirs (sample NPS deed of gift on next page).

The first step in management of collections is the accession form. The majority of Forest Service historic artifacts will be obtained through field collection. Each unit CRM program should already have a standard artifact inventory form used to record all such finds. This form will suffice as an accession form provided a duplicate is filed with the historic catalogue.

The next procedure is cataloging. Cataloging is the process of assigning a unique identifying number to a museum object and recording descriptive and documentary data on the Museum Catalog record. The USDA Forest Service does not have standardized forms for use in accessioning or cataloging historic collections. Those units that ship off collections to permanent repositories

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DEED OF GIFT

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ACCESSION NUMBER

NAME OF DONOR(S)	TELEPHONE NUMBER (Give Area Code)
ADDRESS (Number, Street, City, State and Zip Code)	

Whereas the National Park Service is dedicated to the preservation and protection of objects significant to the interpretation of National Parks throughout the United States,

I/We do hereby unconditionally donate to the National Park Service, for its unrestricted use, the item(s) listed below.

I/We also state that the subject donation is my/our personal property free and clear, to dispose of in any manner which I/we may determine.

I/We also acknowledge actual delivery of the item(s) listed below to the National Park Service.

DONOR(S) SIGNATURE (Please use ball point pen)

SIGNATURE	DATE
SIGNATURE	DATE

DESCRIPTION OF OBJECTS — CONDITION

The National Park Service hereby gratefully acknowledges the receipt of the item(s) listed above

SIGNATURE	DATE
TITLE	
PARK	
ADDRESS	

GIFTS TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS, HOWEVER, IT IS THE DONOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO SECURE APPRAISALS TO SUPPORT DEDUCTIONS. (See IRS Pamphlet 561)

(ACCESSION FOLDER COPY)

Form 10-830 (11-77)

FIGURE 2: DEED OF GIFT (Form 10-830)

use the forms required by that institution. Units that devise their own forms for in-house use must be consistent in their use, unless later replaced by a more advanced version.

PERSONAL COLLECTIONS

Most historic artifacts will enter the unit collection as a result of CRM program activities. One other source is private donations. Potential donors are often local "pothunters" and may even be fellow employees.

De facto personal artifact collections exist in the Forest Service. District employees often become instructed in this tradition by observing the collecting habits of their co-workers. Original ceramic (enamel) trail signs, for example, adorn personal office space of veteran employees. Timber cruising provides many opportunities to find artifacts in remote locations. Even the trash bin on the compound is a source of artifacts as surplus equipment and papers are thrown out over the years. Many of these discards would not have been salvaged if not for the furtive action of nostalgic employees. The practice is now denounced as theft of government property by CRM personnel. But pragmatists take into account its long tradition. The ideal solution is a contract between the archeologist and the District (employee) souvenir hunter. The signed contract recognizes that the artifact is in the possession of the finder but legal ownership resides with the agency. This compromise allows the finder to display the prized discovery until he/she leaves the unit or agency, then the relic(s) is turned over to the CRM personnel for curation. Forced attempts at confiscation will only embitter people and alienate precisely those employees who are often most interested in history. By allowing them to display artifacts they collected at their work station, a positive way is found to enhance their support of the CRM program.

Section 2: ARTIFACT INVENTORY

Artifact collection management requires the maintenance of an archive catalog list. The creation of an inventory list is basic to property management in the agency. Potential donors may hesitate if they perceive that artifacts will end up dumped in a basement locker and be forgotten. In addition, theft is facilitated when no one knows the contents of accumulated collections of historic artifacts and records. The creation of historic theme displays is made more problematic when one must forage through unorganized storage bins. This is one reason why a central store room for housing artifacts is best. A centralized location ensures ease of access and makes artifact curation more manageable. The store room should be locked with a private lock, and if possible, be in a dry, cool location.

Once created the archive catalog list could be placed on the Data General and updated with each acquisition into the collection. The format of the inventory list is a unit decision. Regardless of the system used it should list the following basic data: the artifact inventory number, a written description, the quantity, and the unit location. Each forest should have a master list of District artifact collection inventories. The potential benefit of being able to access forest artifact collection lists agency-wide is that it will enable CRM personnel to compare artifacts for identification purposes, loan artifacts among units for displays, and trade duplicate items.

PHOTOGRAPH CURATION

Historic photographs are of primary value for public interpretation and publication illustrations. Old photographs add a richness to any display of Forest Service history. Enlargements serve as interesting wall attractions in official buildings. Photographs of the construction and original appearance of administrative buildings enable CRM personnel to document the historical significance of current structures.

Every Ranger District and National Forest has caches of old photographs gathering dust in forgotten nooks. The first Chief of the Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot, established the practice of photo-documentation when he required forestry agents to include photographs with field inspection reports. The official Forest Service photograph collections began in 1898 when Pinchot added his own pictures to those from the field. The policy then was for each forest to send the negatives and complete documentation for each image to Washington, D.C. There it was put in a permanent Forest Service photographic collection. This collection grew until it is now the world's largest forestry photographic library.

The Forest Service photograph collection is part of the Special Collections program of the National Agricultural Library (10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, Maryland 20705, Telephone (301) FTS-344-3876). A complete list of photographs is not available for distribution at present. The Fort Collins data base Agricola offers a partial list. A cross-section of 20,000 images are stored on laser disk. Negatives are not loaned but prints may be copied. Negatives of older images are stored in the Still Picture Division Office of the National Archives and Records Administration. Prints may be ordered from the Division.

This photographic tradition resulted in many images. Nowadays, these are often neglected except when they attract the eye of the souvenir hunter. Those employees in the S.O. or District who encounter old (or even recent) photographs or negatives should be aware of their historic value. Curation of historic photographs then begins with the location of individual or grouped images, be they slides, negatives or prints. The size of film is one rough indication of age. Large format cameras (4X5) were used widely until replaced in the 1960s by 35mm cameras. Black and white prints were then eclipsed by color slides as the format of choice.

The Forest Service used a simple number system to catalog images that went into the Washington Office photo collection system. These images are identified by numbers on the lower right corner (up to six digits) of the print. To order copies made of these prints from the National Archives include the catalog number with the request. Images located without this catalog number are ones that exist outside of the WO permanent collection. It will be necessary to assign them a number for placement in a unit catalog, as instructed below.

SAFETY AND NITRATE FILM:

Between 1899 to 1940 almost all film negatives were nitrate based. These negatives are to be treated with caution (Williams 1981). There is conflicting advice on the degree of danger from the film. However, it is a recognized safety hazard. The key to identification is the word "NITRATE" which appears on the border of the negative. The fumes from burning nitrate are potentially harmful. All nitrate negatives are to be handled with rubber gloves. The recommended procedure is to remove the nitrate negatives from the photograph collection, have a copy (plus negative) made and dispose of the original. To store nitrate negatives isolate them in a ventilated container as the film will disintegrate in an airtight cabinet. If stored as suggested nitrate negatives are not as dangerous as may be depicted.

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPH CURATION

The search for important historic photographs should focus on the ones that remain outside the past official (numbered) system. These may be photographs employees neglected to enter into the permanent retention system or ones taken for local use only. Once you locate old photographs (or negatives) first scan carefully for nitrate negatives. Nitrate negatives are to be managed as indicated above. The next step is to place the photographs in a secure location. Do not remove photographs from their holders as yet. Photographs mounted in albums may already be identified with labels or captions placed near the pictures. This accompanying informations must be written down on note cards before the print is removed from the album. Loose photographs should be place in acid-free folders; negatives in acid-free envelopes. These film containers are available at local camera supply stores. Next place them in acid-free document cases and store these in a fireproof cabinet if possible. Otherwise, a metal filing cabinet with a baked enamel finish is suggested. To provide security a locked or limited access file cabinet is best. (One source of acid-free document cases and other archival products is: Pohlig Bros. Inc., Century Division, PO Box 8069, 2419 E. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23223).* Ideally, before being stored all historic photographs and negatives would first be properly catalogued.

CATALOGING

Cataloging is the process of assigning a unique identifying number to an object and recording descriptive and documentary data on a standard form. A catalog serves two functions: property inventory (where it's stored) and identification (what's stored). Ideally, every photograph or negative is assigned a number in the catalog. The number is typed onto a gummed label attached to the individual envelope or folder that holds the print or negative. The same number is placed in the general photographic catalog; along with other

*One other source is the Hollinger Corporation, P.O. Box 8360, Fredricksburg, VA. 22401.

identifying data such as subject of the photograph, date taken, format (size and color) etc. Because this is only a guide and not a manual, no agency-wide standard historic photograph catalog system is proposed. The Forest Service does have a form (page 17) for recording photographs. Those units that opt for computer record storage may want to copy the system used on the Clearwater National Forest (Keating 1986). With the use of the Format Entry System (FES) software the forest stores its historic photograph records on the Data General (DG). The code sheet used to copy data onto FES is displayed on page 18.

Unit development of a historic photograph collection may be a major undertaking, especially if large numbers of photographs exist to catalog. (The Clearwater National Forest has a collection of 10,000). One problem is identification. It may not be possible to obtain data on every photograph (or negative) in the collection. Photographs without identification notes may be shown to long-term employees or retired ones in the hope that they recognize the people or place depicted. When individual descriptions are impossible it may be necessary to assign collective titles to photographs that display similar subjects such as road construction, wildlife, etc. Priority should be given to treating those photographs found in poor condition. The unit's workload may be such that the unit may want to use a volunteer or temporary employee to catalog the material to complete the task as soon as possible.

Each District on a Forest should use the same standardized photo cataloging and numbering system. The Forest Supervisor's Office (S.O.) is the best location for the Forest's permanent historic photograph collection. However, for a number of reasons, it is not always possible for collections to be housed at the Supervisor's Office. If historic photos are retained in the District,

USDA-FOREST SERVICE

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

(See FSM 1643.52)

PHOTOGRAPHER

DATE SUBMITTED

HEADQUARTERS UNIT

LOCATION

INITIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTS AND FORM 1600-1:

☐ WO ☐ RO ☐ DIV. ☐ FOREST ☐ DISTRICT ☐ PHOTOGRAPHER Date ____________

INSTRUCTIONS: Submit to Washington Office in quadruplicate. Permanent numbers will be assigned and the forms will be distributed as follows: (1) Washington Office, (2) RO or Station, (3) Forest or Center and (4) Photographer.

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER		SELECTED FOR W.O. PHOTO LIBRARY	DATE OF EXPOSURE	LOCATION *(State, Forest, District and County)*	CONCISE DESCRIPTION OF VIEW	NEGATIVE *(Show size and BW for black and white or C for color)*
TEMP.	PERMANENT *(To be filled in by the WO)*					
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

1600-1 (8/67)

PRINT #	NEGATIVE #	PRINT SIZE	PRINT TYPE	NEG TYPE	DISTRICT	DESCR	DESCR	DESCR	DESCR	DESCR	DESCR	DATE PHOTO TAKEN	DATE PHOTO RECEIVED	COLLECTION OR PERSON FROM	LOCATION OF PRINT STORAGE	LOCATION OF NEG STORAGE	SITE NUMBER

the Forest Archeologist or CRM coordinator should be sent copies of all inventory records. Two reasons for housing Forest collections at the Supervisor's Office is that centralizing the location ensures greater public access, and it aids collection management by the Forest Archeologist/History Coordinator. This is true of artifacts and records as well as photo collections.

LOAN POLICY

It is best to safeguard the collection by not lending original negatives or prints. Instead, the curator of the collection may have copies of the originals made upon request and at the expense of the recipient.

Section 3: THE PAPER TRAIL: Records Management

Overall responsibility for management of agency records is the task of the Information Management Branch of the WO Information System Staff (DG: INS:W01B). Within Forest Service units the employee responsible for records management is designated the "records coordinator." This duty is usually assigned on an as needed basis to personnel in Administrative Services (or Management Systems) on the Forests and Districts. The duties consist of files maintenance and preparing records for shipment to the regional Federal Records Center. The standard practice is for the Forest (SO) to maintain one central file of unit records. Documents are boxed and shipped from this central file directly to the Records Center. This decentralization complicates records shipments as each Forest in a region participates independently in the task. The overall result is an uneven quality in the status of Forest Service records housed in the Federal Records Centers and regional branches of the National Archives.

The status of Forest Service records management is described in several critical studies (Gray 1981; Conrad 1986; and Dethloff 1985). The recurrent error found was poor documentation of the contents of boxes shipped to the Records Centers. The lack of content identification hinders access by history scholars to documents stored in the Records Centers. It also complicates the task of evaluating the significance of the records for selection for permanent retention in the National Archives. Placing this problem in context requires a brief description of the records management system.

Records are our history. Some of the records you keep may become a permanent part of the records of the government to be preserved at the National Archives. These will help future generations understand how our government works and learn about our lives and values.

How long records are kept depends on their value. Some are destroyed in your office. Others are moved to a Federal Records Center for temporary, low-cost storage. The most important records will be transferred to the National Archives. Together they form a system for storing and processing all governmental agency records which are no longer active or needed. The retention periods are the most important items concerning documents housed in the records centers. The length of retention is determined by the originating agency in consultation with the National Archives. Forest Service records are scheduled to be destroyed (or permanently retained) according to the retention period provided for each file designation by the Records Management Handbook (FSH 6209.11).

The basic idea of the system is that Records Centers will store and destroy temporary records on schedule. The records centers also transfer government records designated as permanent to the National Archives for permanent storage. Records sent to the Records Centers are still under the control of the originating agency. Scholars access records center files by obtaining prior permission from the sending unit (in the case of Forest Service records). At the end of the retention date the records are destroyed unless the sending unit requests otherwise. The Federal Records Centers must notify a unit 90 days in advance when records become eligible for disposal. Section 37 of the Records Management Handbook (Destruction of Records by FRC) notes: "Unit historians shall be consulted to concur with the scheduled destruction of records." Records in the centers can be retained as little as one year or stored up to 75 years.

Originating agencies pack their records into Federal Record Center cardboard boxes of one cubic foot each and ship them to Records Centers accompanied by Form SF-135 (Records Transmittal and Receipt), the primary document identifying the contents of the boxes. Poor documentation of the box contents stymies later accession of material by the regional archives for permanent retention.

History coordinators, or in their absence CRM personnel, should provide consultation to the unit records coordinator. In the inventory phase, the records coordinator needs to purge all files of extraneous material before boxing records for shipment. Blank forms, multicopies of single documents, etc. take up needed space in the repositories. The Records Management Handbook contains file designations for 1680 History Program records. Unit history coordinators should provide assistance in selecting documents in the unit 1680 file for shipment to the Records Center.

SHIPMENT DETAILS

The Forest Service records are the bane of the Federal Records staff due to some unique agency practices. The decentralized nature of the agency results in numerous units sending the Records Centers small volumes of mixed file designations. In a system geared to handle bulk shipments of single file subjects the result is confusion. To cope with the situation the National Archives Records Administration (NARA) provided an exception to their rules. This exception is that NARA agreed to accept boxes from the Forest Service with different file designations provided they have the same disposal date. This action enables units to clear space by sending off bulk records rather than waiting until enough single file records accumulate. Units who take advantage of this opportunity are especially advised to provide adequate content description. The records Management Handbook specifies that a separate accession number is required by NARA for every disposal date listed on the

SF-135. Each unit needs to prepare adequate finding aids for clear identification of documents for retrieval purposes.

Units that lack sufficient records in one file designation to fill a one-cubic-foot box may use another boxing method. The Records Management Handbook (FSH 4/86 AMENDMENT 36 - Section 34.2--2 C) states: "The box may contain up to 5 fiscal years of records for one file designation. Calculate the disposal date by applying the retention period to the folder with the most recent date."

In summary, NARA has three ways that records can be boxed for shipment to the Records Centers: (1) by single file designation; (2) by mixed file designation and; (3) by five fiscal year blocks.

WHY AND WHAT TO SAVE

Forest Service records are potential research sources for scholars interested in the history of the agency. Agency documents based in Records Centers and National Archives branches were used (in part) by the authors of the series of regional histories of the Forest Service contracted by the History Section. Examples include: Mountaineers and Rangers: A History of Federal Forest Management in the Southern Appalachians 1900-81 and The Rise of Multiple-Use Management in the Intermountain West: A History of Region 4 in the Forest Service. Increased retirement is reducing the number of old-timers in the ranks and hence the informal institutional memory of the agency. Regional histories serve to pass the legacy to the new workforce.

Academic interest in the subject of forest history is growing and there is even a journal on the subject. The Journal of Forest History is published by the Forest History Society (701 Vickers Avenue, Durham, North Carolina 27701).

At the Forest level records are used by the Cultural Resources Management program to produce reports, written by employees or contractors, that pertain to specific sites or structures that are physically located on the National Forest (Williams 1986:4). Examples of such reports are:

Beckham (1981) Oregon Central Military Wagon Road
Glover (1984) Logging Railroads of the Lincoln National Forest New Mexico.

The administrative history program reports usually deal with programs and policy changes on a unit. Examples of such Forest level histories include:

Holstine (1987) Forgotten Corner: A History of the Colville National Forest, Washington
Elliott (1977) History of the Niccolet National Forest: 1928-1976.
Smith (1983) History of the Boise National Forest 1905-1976.

Often the prehistory and history of a unit were combined in CRM Overviews published on many National Forests.

UNIT RECORDS

Forest Service Records used in writing unit histories are often found on the unit. These may be records housed in unit archives that were not shipped to the Records Centers. One other source is personal records maintained by employees. Historically-aware employees tend to be collectors. Often retiring or transferring personnel have stashes of documents to donate to the History Program. The History Program (1680) is responsible for stewardship of Forest Service historic records. Current employees, however, are often reluctant to offer salvaged documents out of concern that the papers will not be retained. The absence of a clear and publicized management plan for historic documents lends credence to this fear. The remedy is the development of a management guide for documents.

UNIT HISTORY COLLECTION

FSM 1681 Administrative History provides authority for the maintenance of historical reference collections by local units. The section reads as follows:

> The administrative history file supplements the procedures governing the selection and shipment of records to the Federal Records Centers (FSM 6230), with which it should not interfere. The purpose of the file is to provide offices with historical reference collections so they do not have to recall records from the Federal Records Centers or search in other repositories.

The section continues with direction on the nature and format of this collection:

> An administrative history file shall contain reference material on the history of the office and related matters. Materials for this file should be identified and filed as soon as possible. Important memos, reports, and other documents should be routinely duplicated and copies placed in the file. All material should be organized in broad categories following the Forest Service manual code.

The task of compiling unit historical collections is an ongoing one for CRM specialists or unit history coordinators. Formation of a historical reference collection is a simple task in regard to obvious rare documents. All records over 50 years old are automatically retained. Documents 25 years or old or more are saved except for routine correspondence. New or recent documents are contemporary history records and future sources of information as well. They cannot automatically be thrown away. The key is to select for retention those recent documents that hold potential value for historical research. Consult with local professional historians for information on the type of research documents they seek. To assist in this task of gleaning contemporary records for retention in the unit history reference collection a file guide is listed below.

First a brief discussion on entering personal records into the official records system is presented. De facto personal collections of records exist among employees on Districts and Forests. Some are personal records compiled over an individual's career. Others consist of material salvaged from destruction by historically-minded employees. Still others are documents from programs that were phased-out or dropped from the files when a re-organization of the program took place. These personal collections exist outside of the official records system. The Federal Records Centers are not equipped to accept small shipments of mixed file records. It is feasible, however, to offer them to the Archives. National Archives will accept unscheduled collections that are at least 30 years old and accompanied by a guide to contents. These personal records collections may also be accessed into the unit's own historical collection. History and CRM personnel need to inform all employees of the existence of a program to acquire and maintain records on the unit. Potential donors must be treated as valued contributors to the agency history program. Public recognition will encourage donations. A viable unit history program will ensure that donors feel secure in giving up their personal collection of records.

Section 4: FILE GUIDE

Based on the WO History Program staff's review of the Records Management Handbook, the following files may contain important historical research information. History coordinators should refer to this guide for selecting copies of records to include in the unit's historical reference collection. The list, however, is not all inclusive. Important records may be found in other files. Individual judgement will often be needed.

File Number	Description
1200-2	Special Studies and Reviews
1220-2	Historical Organization News
1240-2	Field Office Locations
1410-1	General Management Reviews
1570-1	Appeals and Litigation Cases
1580	Grants and Agreements
1680-1	Archival History
2	Administrative History
3	Historical Records and Studies
1710-1	Civil Rights Affirmative Action Plans
1750-1	Civil Rights Accomplishment Reports
1910-2-2 to 2-7	(RPA) Resource Planning (Retain important data)
1920-2	National Forest Planning
2-1	National Forest Planning Process
2-2	National Forest Decision Documents
4	Wilderness Designation
6	Wild and Scenic River Designation

8	Special Management Areas
1960-2	(Policy) Case Studies
2210-1	Range Allotment Management Plans
2300-2	Recreation Management (Programs)
2310	Planning and Data Management (Recreation)
2320	Wilderness, Primitive Areas, and Wilderness Study Areas (Reports)
2360	Special Interest Areas (Cultural Resources) Public record publications etc.
2400-3	(Timber Management Studies), Administrative
2420-2	Price, Supply and Demand Trends
2470	Silvicultural Systems and Related Cutting Methods
2510-2	Soil and Water Surveys for National Assessment
2520-6	Riparian Areas
2540-1	Water Rights
2610	Cooperative Relations
2620-2	Studies, Administrative (Wildlife, etc.)
2820	Mineral Leases, Permits, and Licenses
3170	Cooperation (Fire Protection)
3610	Rural Development
3620	Resource Conservation and Development
4080-1	Cooperative Agreements (Research)
4210-1	Program Formulation (Wildlife, Range and Fish)
4310	Program Formulation (Watershed Management)

4910-1	Program Formulation (Forest Recreation and Urban Forestry Research)
5100	Fire Management
5490-2	Reports (Land exchange, rights-of-way)
6550-4-2	Timber Operator Survey

Those responsible for the unit historical records collection are reminded that only duplicates of scheduled official documents are to be retained. The original records are to be shipped to the Federal Records Centers as scheduled in the Records Management Handbook. Later, the original records may be returned to the unit (if requested) by the Records Centers if not designated for permanent retention in the National Archives.

Regardless of where the unit's records are stored it is critical to have an inventory available for retrieval purposes. One suggested model form devised by Jerry Williams for use on the Umpqua National Forest (Region 6) is reproduced on page 30.

Umpqua NF
Inventory Number

Historical Records Inventory

Name: John R. Rogers

Type of Entry: Homestead claim - Squatter

Type of Permit:

Location: T32S, R3W, sec 20, NW corner

Brand:

Acres: 160

Improvements: Log House (16 X 16); porch (10 X 16); woodhouse (13 X 13); storehouse (11 X 13) built of logs and shakes. Woodshed built of poles and shakes.

Photographs:

Maps: 2

Corespondence: 29 pieces, including stapled material: letter from the District Forester, Supervisor, Ranger, claimant, and several depositions. Also a Settler Form (4-512) sent to SGO (GLO) in Portland on April 16, 1909. The Form is notarized

Comments: A squatter w/wife and one child. Established residence on Feb. 27, 1907. House was located on the west side of Snow Creek, but the claim extends to both sides.

File Dates:

Open: April 16, 1909

Closed: Dec. 3, 1915

Federal Records Center Box Number: 95 65-A291 64177

Section 5: ORAL HISTORY

Historical records collections are not limited to paper documents. (Unit records exist also in the form of photographs, maps, floppy disks, and audio or visual tapes). This section of the guide covers the subject of oral history records on the unit.

Management's recognition of the changing work force generated the Heritage Awareness program to perpetuate the "espirit de corps" that has always characterized the Forest Service. This narrative history of the Agency is enriched by the personal reminiscences of some of the first Rangers. Oral histories collected by cultural resources specialists or history contractors are sources of information on past traditions. Exposure to these accounts provides recent employees with a sense of tradition. This is one function of oral histories.

The primary value of oral history is its contribution to scholarly research. Yet, the in-house collecting of oral histories from retired employees (or long term forest users) is a low priority task of the CRM program. The common complaint of CRM specialists is that there is no funding for the activity nor much encouragement. This is unfortunate as documents only tell a limited story and are usually devoid of the gossip, emotion, and private motives of actors in the agency.

Perhaps one explanation for the neglect of oral history is that a well-defined oral history program has not yet been developed for the agency. The following section seeks to improve this situation by providing some basic guidelines for conducting oral history interviews. This discussion will be a general one on the scope of oral history research in the Forest Service. Those readers who seek practical information on procedure are directed to appendix B.

How-to books abound on the techniques for conducting oral histories (Baum 1977; Davis, Back and Cullom 1977). If one is merely interested in obtaining fragments of life histories these guides provide sufficient instruction. Unfortunately this technical approach to oral history often produces little of historic importance beyond one or two amusing ancedotes. Not every potential interviewee is of equal merit as a historical source. This point is of critical importance when oral histories are collected for research purposes.

DIRECTED RESEARCH

In the Washington D.C. Office (WO) History Section oral histories were garnered as abstract research projects. The use of oral history interviews in agency CRM programs tended to be more applied oriented. Oral history was an early part of CRM as a tool for locating significant cultural resources on the forests. Interviews with knowledgeable old timers to learn about the existence of sites and their locations was an early inventory method of the fledgling CRM program. Later, oral history interviews provided critical information needed to document techniques of log cabin construction, etc.

By using oral history interviews as a research tool for obtaining information on administrative history or social history of the Forest Service, historians are conducting directed research as well. From the vantage point of the historian oral histories are primary sources for scholarly histories. The writing of a comprehensive unit histories is not expected of agency employees. However, cultural resources personnel may contribute to future unit histories by conducting taped interviews with retirees, etc. Historians will be able to later extract bits of information from the tapes to include in their reports. While overview unit histories may not be feasible, topical research reports can be done in-house. Select a manageable subject such as wildlife management or recreation history on the District (or forest). Arrange to interview active as well as retired specialists on the subject. The use of a research design prior to the selection of informants increases the usefulness of the oral history conducted. The result will be a document that answers questions rather than just fills tape. Copies of transcripts should be sent to the library of the State Historical Society, local colleges and museums.

Oral history should be a functional part of any Agency History Program. The oral history method is applicable not only to the distant past but also to the recent past, as exemplified by Region Six's Mt. Saint Helens oral history project (Williams and Dodds 1985:2).

Ideally, every retiring employee's last assignment should be to type or tape a summary of her or his Forest Service experience. This Agency work history would describe/explain the changes observed through time by the employee. This is not a new idea as it was a practice in the past, for example the Regional Forester (R-5) directed his staff to do this and the tradition persisted until the mid-1960s. (The task is now done only for top management in the Forest Service). The History Program personnel should coordinate this oral history effort and assist in its completion.

LEGAL ISSUES

To avoid later misunderstandings it is best to use an oral history release form. This is a simple document (refer to appendix B) whereby the interviewee donates to the USDA Forest Service all rights to the tape and transcript. Under this type of agreement no restrictions are placed on access to the recorded information.

The legal guideline on oral history interviews is that the contributions of a participant on official duty in an oral history interview belong to the Federal government; the contributions of a participant who is not an official duty are his or hers, subject to donation to the Federal government. The retired employee usually donates the interview to the agency without restrictions. The first draft of the transcript should be supplied to the subject for review and corrections. Final copies of the transcript should be given to the interviewee as a courtesy.

The issue of confidentiality seldom arises in interviews about the past, but may be a concern in recent histories. It is well to remember that legally interviews with current employees at their work stations are open to public access. While the questions you ask of a retired or off duty employee may be open to the public record, the answers are regarded as the property of the interviewee. No final statement is available on the subject as no test case exists to clarify the issue.

The mechanism for public access to government records is the Freedom of Information Act. The safest policy is to inform potential sources who are concerned about confidentiality of recordings that no ultimate guarantee can be given.

FINAL TASKS

One last task to do is to label each oral history tape prior to storage. The label should be cross-indexed to a master tape archive sheet. Located in Appendix B is a sample form to use for recording this information. The development of a standard tape index is critical in allowing future employees to make sense of the tape collection. Important tapes might otherwise be tossed out in the future due to a lack of time to evaluate their significance.

The importance of making a transcript of taped interviews is that it facilitates distribution of the information. One other reason is the problem of tape deterioration. Store audio tape has a shelflife of 5 years before the quality of the recording begins to fade. Video tape will last a maximum of ten years but should be dubbed sooner for better clarity. Do not store tapes near magnets.

Section 6: PUBLIC INTERPRETATION

Cultural Resources Management duties include public interpretation. Those forests with Visitors Centers have one arena for public display of historic collections. Artifacts help make history tangible and are an effective way to educate the public about the Forest Service. They provide three-dimensional images to public interpretation of Forest Service history. The lobby of the District Ranger station is one viable place to display items. Unit history collections may be gleaned for changing displays of single theme related artifacts. For example, the theme "Early Communication in the Forest Service" can be illustrated with an exhibit of a field telephone, glass or ceramic insulators, phone wire (line), lookout photographs, early maps, etc. The pioneering role of the agency in electronic communication might be the message of such a display of artifacts and texts on the subject: Radio on the Fireline (Gray 1982).

The construction of wood and glass display cases (for floor or wall) is an excellent public education project. When funding is limited the use of volunteer labor is suggested, with the District supplying the materials and plans. Lobby display cases help dispel the waiting room ambience of an office. In addition, the public display of cultural resources helps counter the frequent complaint of local artifact collectors that the agency hoards its collections. One other benefit is that such displays make the public aware of the CRM and History programs. Displays also develop pride in the agency among local employees. They make the public aware of the history of the agency, and its long term involvement and dedication to managing the land and natural resources.

Exhibits may be loaned to local civic organizations or public institutions. Most small town libraries welcome the opportunity to house historical displays. To prevent problems, any agreement to lend displays must include two requirements: that the items are housed in secure locations and the Forest Service be identified as the contributor. Major collections are placed in designated repositories where curation policy is expected to follow set standards. For example, the Rocky Mountain Region (2) utilizes the Grand Encampment museum as a repository for Forest Service artifacts and memorabilia. In Region 3 the designated repository is the Sharlott Hall Museum located in Prescott, Arizona.

RESEARCH

One of the differences between novice collectors and trained archeologists/historians is that the former collects to display and the latter to understand. Cultural resources compliance work often results in studies of sites involving collecting "archeologic" materials. This task is sometimes misunderstood. Not every rusted beer can on the Forest need be collected, catalogued, and preserved. The lack of research designs to guide collecting activities often results in the accumulation of disparate objects. The function of artifact collections--aside from public display--is to serve research aims. The ultimate goal of the scholar is to analyze the object to obtain data for generating and testing models of past human land use patterns. Scientific (historical) value is not strictly dependent on the outward appearance of artifacts. The analysis of tin cans at sites in northern California provides information on consumption patterns and trade networks of 19th century gold miners (Rock 1984). The old boot found in a site stimulates questions regarding the occupation of its previous owner, the time period of its use, etc. Hence what seems like a garbage dump on first appearance (a site consisting of weathered boards, coffee cans, rock mounds, rusty shovel blades, and broken crockery), turns out to be a 1930s depression era mining claim where a man resided to eke out a living. It often requires a literature review, oral history interviews, and artifact analysis to interpret a site. The historical archeologist uses abstract information to explain the significance of the broken pick blade found rusting in a meadow. Some observers can hold such items in their hands and make this imaginative leap, while others require the assistance of interpretative displays.

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY-LOCAL HISTORY

The history program (1680) is viewed as being concerned with administrative history of the Forest Service. Yet, administrative history that ignores the impact of policy (or program) changes on forest users (campers, miners, loggers, hunters, etc.) is incomplete. The notion of separate domains of history for the CRM and History Programs is neither scientific nor practical at the field level. This is especially true for Forests located in areas of continuous habitation by native Americans. Historical archeology is an endeavor that transcends administrative boundaries based on a restricted definition of history.

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS: Maps and Clippings

Unit map files is one source of historical information. Begin by consulting with section heads on map curation policy. Old U.S.G.S. (United State Geological Survey) maps, GLO (General Land Office) maps, Metsker county atlas, are all sources of information on the location of historic trails, lookouts and guard stations, etc. If no clear policy for the conservation of no-longer-needed maps exists then work to devise one. Engineering sections often have flat drawers for map storage. To obtain maps in danger of being discarded, inform department heads that you would like to have review rights prior to the disposal of old maps. Be sure to add maps to the unit historic collections inventory and prepare a map catalog.

Local newspapers often run articles on historical events and peoples in the area. These should be clipped and retained in a file for later reference use. Internal publications are a source of clippings on personnel biographies. Since the History Program functions as the long-term institutional memory of the Forest Service questions on any aspect of past activities are directed to history staffs. One common use of the History Program is to provide biographical work histories of current and former employees. This service is provided to the Public Affairs Office which frequently relies on agency historians for information to be used in publications. The existence of a well stocked and maintained history reference collection on the unit enables the history coordinator to provide timely answers to such requests.

TECHNICAL GUIDES

Beyond some basic instructions limited to a few areas (photographs, records), this guide is not a source of how-to information on artifact preservation or restoration. Those people needing technical instructions are directed to the following sources: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Preservation Assistance Division, Technical Preservation Services, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127. The American Association for State and Local History (172 Second Avenue North, Suite 102, Nashville, Tennessee 37201) is the publisher of a series of "Technical Leaflets" which provide instructions on historical artifact curation.

HISTORY PROGRAM AND CRM

Those employees who take on the job will find that historic collections management in the Forest Service is not a well defined task. By default the mission is usually assigned to CRM personnel on the Districts and Forests. The past preoccupation of the WO History Program with administrative history resulted in a neglect of material relics of the past. Yet, the focus of the Cultural Resources program on non-agency forest users such as loggers, miners, etc. left curation of Forest Service generated relics to the individual discretion of the Forest Archeologist. However, both CRM and History share a joint concern in the preservation of agency-specific artifacts and records. The publication of this guide is testimony to that awareness.

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APPENDIX A

USDA FOREST SERVICE
HISTORY SECTION

PUBLICATIONS LIST

Appendix A

USDA Forest Service history publications listed below are ones that the WO History Section helped create. The majority were written under contracts administered by the History Section. A few were authored by History Section staff members.

The fact that many of the works are out of print is explained in several ways. Those works published by the GPO (Government Printing Office) are issued in a limited edition. Seldom does the GPO print enough copies to merit public sale. Instead, the limited copies are distributed to units in the Forest Service. (The History Section does retain copies for its reference library). In a few instances histories were published by university press under a memorandum of agreement with the Forest Service. Academic press runs tend to be limited as well. The subsequent limited distribution of History Section publications obscures the section's presence in the Forest Service and history community.

<u>Publications</u>

Alexander, Thomas G.
1987 <u>The Rise of Multiple-Use Management in the Intermountain West</u>: A History of Region 4 of the Forest Service. USDA Forest Service. FS-399. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Baker, Robert D., Maxwell, Robert, Treat, Victor, and Henry Dethloff
1988 <u>Timeless Heritage</u>: A History of the Forest Service in the Southwest. USDA Forest Service. FS-409. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

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1981 <u>History of White Pine Blister Rust Control</u>: A Personal Account. USDA Forest Service, 1905-1975. USDA Forest Service. FS-369. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

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1982 <u>Radio for the Fireline</u>: A History of Electronic Communication in the Forest Service, 1905-1975. USDA Forest Service. FS-369. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

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APPENDIX B

USDA FOREST SERVICE
HISTORY PROGRAM

ORAL HISTORY TECHNIQUES

The edited material used in this section is from "Oral History Handbook: For the Pacific Northwest Region USDA Forest Service" (1985) by Gerald Williams and Linda Dodds.

CONTACTING AND IDENTIFYING INTERVIEWEES

There are a number of approaches that can be used to make initial contacts with potential interviewees. Before any contact is undertaken, it is useful to compile a list of possible narrators, keeping in mind the theme and chronology of the project. Decide how each possible informant might contribute to the data base and assess his or her ability to produce substantive recollections. Establish a priority list of narrators, then gather all relevant data about the persons to be interviewed as well as a historical overview of the period under study. Decide whether a letter of introduction or a personal telephone call should be used for the initial contact. A letter might be preferable for someone with a busy schedule, although a telephone call is more direct.

Personal telephone calls or letters are always desirable, rather than contacts from secretaries or receptionists. The initial contact should always identify who you are, the reason for the contact, why the person should assist in the project, and what will be the expected result. Some persons must be persuaded, especially if they are very private or if they are dubious about the project.

Assuming that the introduction went perfectly, the next step is to negotiate the time and place of the interview. Generally, the best time for most interviews seems to be in the afternoon or early evening, but very old interviewees are best interviewed in the morning, because they often tire easily. A formal interview may only take an hour, but informal conversation may extend for several hours. Thus, it is better to allot a full morning, afternoon, or evening to each person to be interviewed thus taking the burden of a set time period away from yourself and the interviewee. "Squeezing" the interview between other appointments generally will not work satisfactorily.

Needless to say, the physical setting of the interview will have an effect on the persons involved and the interaction between them. The work place of the interviewer should be avoided because of interruptions by other people, telephones, and office machines, all of which will appear on the tape of the session. (Therefore, try to avoid any extraneous noise and movement, no matter where the interview occurs). The ideal place for the interview to occur is in the interviewees home, where the person feels most comfortable and access can be had to various papers, photographs, and ephemera. However, there may be instances when the researcher wishes to take the interviewee to a particular field location in order to assist in recalling past events or identifying places.

The researcher should always ask for specific directions to the interviewee's home. You can travel many extra miles and spend many wasted hours looking for the correct place, especially in rural settings. Also, the oral historian should leave a telephone number where he or she can be reached in case the interviewee needs to change the appointment. And, of course, the interviewee will naturally have more confidence in the interviewer who arrives for the appointment on time.

EQUIPMENT

A common question often arises regarding the use of recording equipment. Generally, any high quality cassette tape recorder is acceptable. The reel-to-reel tape recorders which were widely espoused ten years are not as necessary and convenient today. There are still a few "purists" who continue to use the reel-to-reels, but in most instances, the newer battery or standard house-hold current operated cassette tape recorders are just as high in quality, even more reliable, and more compact and portable. House current is preferable, but batteries are a convenient choice for "onsite" recording.

The length and type of the cassette recording tape to be used is important to note. C-30 (30 minutes--15 minutes per side) length tapes are generally too short and require many tape changes to record several hours of conversation. The C-120 tapes are too thin and have a tendency to break or stretch. C-60 tapes are the best to use, with the C-90 tapes a close second. Also, make sure the type of tape is appropriate for the recorder. Do not use the high bias or oxide tapes in ordinary tape recorders. Also, remember that the cheaper tapes will often yield low quality sound reproduction. Try to use tape cases with screw-type construction, as these can be opened for tape repair.

The researcher should not rely on the microphones built into the cassette tape recorders. The clip-on type (called Lavaler) microphones that attach directly on the interviewee will yield the highest reproductive quality. However, certain physical settings and movements by the interviewee, such as walking about the house, will make the use of this type of microphone more difficult. Dual clip-on microphones, one for the interviewer and one for the interviewee, are a possibility. These are used with a simple "Y" connector obtained at a sound supply shop. A hand-held microphone that could be placed between the researcher and the interviewee is another compromise to the problem of reproductive quality. Be sure to check the microphone battery before the interview. People seem to speak more freely when they are not reminded that their words may come back to "haunt" them.

Not long ago a concerned media person lamented the lack of "broadcast quality" recordings made by oral historians. The oral historian should strive to make quality sound recordings that can be utilized for a variety of purposes, including radio, television, movies, and slide tapes, but it is not necessary or desirable to do this for ever interview. In most cases, a typed and edited transcript will be sufficient.

OTHER ITEMS TO BRING TO THE INTERVIEW

In order to lessen the psychological impact of the tape recorder, bring along a number of additional items. The most useful item is a notebook. The notebook, which contains interview questions or topics to cover, can be used in a number of ways, including the taking of notes, noting additional questions in the middle of conversations, noting the tape number of interesting stories, making drawings, and so on. Often, the interviewee will completely ignore the tape recorder and respond to the notes. It also gives the interviewer a chance to ask for the correct spelling of names and places. A word list, compiled during the interview, of all proper names and places is especially helpful for transcription. But most importantly, the researcher has ongoing notes of the interview for ready referral, either during or after the session.

Additional items to bring along to the session are old Forest Service photographs and written records or histories. These materials often aid respondents in adding additional memories to the oral history. This technique can be very useful when trying to identify old photographs and will usually result in the interviewee bringing out his or her own photo albums or collections. You may be able to borrow the photographs or documents of the interviewee and have them duplicated as part of the Forest Service collection.

THE INTERVIEW SITUATION

The most common interview method is simply one-to-one. However, there is a possibility of having more than two active interview participants. This situation will often occur when a husband and wife are both at home for the interview. Usually, the oral historian should request the third person to remain quiet and handle each person separately or in sequence. Again, it depends on the intent of the interview.

The three-person group setting begins to get out of hand quickly with several different conversations going on at once. This makes transcriptions quite difficult, while a group of more than three will make transcribing almost impossible. Before the beginning of a multi-person interview, the oral historian should discuss the interview format and the importance of each interviewee stating his or her own thoughts without interruption.

TAPING THE INTERVIEW

A few notes regarding the recording of the interview are in order. The interviewer should bring twice as many unboxed and ready to record tapes as needed. In advance, the oral historian should have the tape leader on the first tape completed, stating such items as the name and address of the interviewee, telephone number, brief background statement, and the date, time, and place of the interview. Also, the tape leader should include the interviewer's name, address, and organizational unit. After this has been prepared, the researcher should play back the leader to ensure that the equipment is working properly. Multi-tape interviews should be noted with Tape I, Tape II, etc., mentioned on the tape itself and on the outside labels for the completed tape series. It is also desirable to speak on the tape when it is turned over to Side 2.

THE INTERVIEW

Many researchers, initially at least, rely on a written set of "tickler" questions or open-ended question categories (Evans, 1979). After continued oral interviews, the list becomes memorized and will fit into the session as if they were conversational questions. Expanding on the lead given by Charles Morrison (1981), past president of the Oral History Association, the following list summarizes various "dos and don'ts" in the interview setting.

1. Let the person tell his/her own story; do not force an answer or solution.
   a. Do not worry about pauses in the session, as it may take a few moments to recall 50+ years ago.
   b. Do not suggest the answer or conclusion in advance of the response.
   c. Do not give an example, as the person will respond to the example, not the question.

2. Defer sensitive questions, especially concerning personal or family background, until you know the person better.

3. Use neutral and non-prejudicial language.
   a. Depersonalize the questions.
   b. Be aware of certain religious beliefs the person may hold.
   c. Do not use offensive language.
   d. Do not use racial, ethnic, or religious slurs.

4. Do not ask two questions together, as the person will often ignore the first question.

5. Word the questions so that the first part tells the significance of the question, then follow with the question itself.

6. Use the respondent's answer to ask for greater detail and explanation.

a. Keep probing.
b. Ask for reasons and explanations.
c. Do not be satisfied with generalities.
d. Ask "why" questions--both official and personal answers.
e. Do not be bothered by lack of details, they may come later.
f. Ask about what or whom influenced the person.

7. Never argue or interrupt.

8. Ask thought-provoking question.
   a. How have things changed since?
   b. What do you do different today?
   c. If you had it to do all over again, what would you change?

9. Opposite questions are appropriate.
   a. If the answer is about winter, ask what were the differences in summer.
   b. If the answer concerns men, ask about the role of women.

10. Questions should be developed to ask not answer themselves.

11. Quite often the interviewer must indicate that he or she is listening to the narration.
    a. Maintain eye contact.
    b. Use non-verbal signs, such as smiling, nodding the head, etc.
    c. When a response is required, the interviewer may say, "I see," or "that's quite a story," etc.

CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW

Concluding the interview is as important as beginning it. The researcher should let the interviewee down gently as the taping ends. The pressure of examination and recall is lifted; researcher and subject share a sense of accomplishment. This is the time for prudent off-the-record questions, or comments and polite conversation.

The oral historian needs to have an oral history release form signed by both parties (see the attached Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region release form). The interviewee should be informed about the release before the interview and should be asked to sign the release after the interview is completed. Some researchers also have the respondents make an oral release which is on the leader or follower of the taped session. It is also a good idea to have another release form signed after the transcript is prepared and corrected. One signed original release form should remain with the tape, another with the transcript, and still another provided to the interviewee. If duplicate tapes or transcriptions are donated to another repository, a copy of the signed release form should accompany the tape or transcription.

HANDLING THE TAPES

The first item to remember upon leaving the interview session is to conclude the tape with an appropriate ending. The follower should mention additional facts that were not part of the session, such as the length of time that the interview took, characteristics of the respondent, conversations after the recorder was turned off, and so on. Once back at the office, the interview notes should be compiled into a readable form, so that the researcher will know approximately what was said on the tape. Be sure to remove the two safety tabs from the tape cassette. This will prevent accidental erasure. As time allows, the content of the tape should be inventoried; that is, audited and outlined as to the number on the tape where particular comments were made. See the following brief example.

TAPE I

SIDE 1:
000 Begin tape leader.
023 Leader ends, interview begins.
051 Story of the family moving west.
114 How I was hired by the Forest Service
187 The CCC camp ad Diamond Lake.

SIDE 2:
342 The bull and the bear story.
885 End of session.
888 Follower comments.
942 End of tape.

The tapes should be played once a year to prevent long-term magnetic tape storage problems. To prevent de-magnetizing of tapes, they should be stored on wooden shelving away from electric motors. Do not store tapes where they would be exposed to direct sunlight, 80^{o}+ temperatures, or dampness.

TRANSCRIPTS

The tape should be transcribed as soon as possible. This will allow the conversations to be fresh in the memory of both parties. The first draft of the transcript should be edited by the researcher in order to correct any spelling and punctuation errors. Then the transcript should be mailed to the interviewee for review and editing. After the transcript has been returned, a revised copy can be made. This version should then be sent to the respondent, along with two copies of a new release form, one of which should be returned to the oral historian. Upon receipt of the signed release form, the transcript and a copy of the tape and release form should be forwarded to appropriate Forest Service units, historical societies, and state oral history repositories. The narrator should have full understanding of the distribution arrangements.

RETURNING BORROWED DOCUMENTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Any borrowed documents or photographs must be promptly copied and returned to the owner. For materials which have been donated to the Forest Service historical collection, a note or letter should be included noting the donor and the relevant information about the item or items. Historical photographs which will be returned to the owner should be fully described and identified. If any photographs are unidentified, a photocopy should be made of the image and sent to the owner requesting information about the image be written on the photocopy and returned to the researcher. When borrowing images it is a good idea to prepare a receipt.

FOLLOWUP TO THE INTERVIEW

The last formal step relating to the oral history interview should be to sent the respondent a personal letter and/or Forest Service certificate thanking him or her for the contribution to the historical record.

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Consent Form

USDA Forest Service Oral History Program

I (__________________________________) hereby give to the USDA Forest Service
Name (please print)
as a donation, all my rights, title, and interests to the tape and transcripts of the interview listed below, for whatever purposes they deem appropriate.

The provisions of this agreement may be revised by mutual consent of the undersigned parties.

____
Signature(s) of Narrator(s)

____
Address(s) of Narrator(s)

____

____
Signature of USDA FS Representative

____
USDA Forest Service Office

____
Date of Agreement

____
Subject of Tape

Tape Archive Sheet

USDA Forest Service Oral History Program

General Topic: ____________________

Date: __________ Place: __________ Length: __________

PERSONAL DATA

Narrator

Name: __________
Address: __________
Birthplace: __________
Birthdate: __________
Occupation(s): __________

Interviewer

Name: __________
USDA Forest Service Office
and Department: __________

TAPE INDEX: Please list major topics and the times at which they occur on the tape. Spell out names of persons and places mentioned. Use back of sheet if necessary.

TIME ON TAPE	TOPICS

* U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1988 - 516000 / 81056