
USDA Forest Service Briefing Book



January 1996

USDA FOREST SERVICE
BRIEFING BOOK - JANUARY 1996

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program Overview

Our land ethic is to promote the sustainability of ecosystems by ensuring their health, diversity, and productivity. Our ethic includes the active use of ecosystems, through both preservation and manipulation, to gain these benefits--as long as this use does not unduly impact ecosystem sustainability.

Our service ethic is to tell the truth, obey the law, work collaboratively, and use appropriate scientific information in caring for the land and serving people.

We live our ethics through ecosystem management by focusing our priorities through the four elements of our "Ethics and Course to the Future": protect ecosystems, restore deteriorated ecosystems, provide multiple benefits for people within the capabilities of ecosystems, and ensure organizational effectiveness.

Two key principles underlie the Forest Service's organizational structure. The first is decentralization, which keeps the decisions as close to the natural resources and customers as possible. The second principle is independence of the research and management programs of the Forest Service. This ensures research results are as objective as possible. The Forest Service has as a major objective to ensure that research findings are fully considered in the decision process.

The Forest Service is the largest of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies, employing just over 31,000 full-time employees and 17,000 other category employees, for a total of about 38,000 full-time equivalents (FTE's). About 98 percent of the total work force works outside Washington, DC, and about 85 percent works west of the Mississippi River.

The Forest Service has a broad array of programs to achieve its mission, including:

Forest Research (Res): The Forest Service has the largest forestry research organization in the world that provides the scientific foundation for sustainable forest development in the United States and other regions of the world.

State and Private Forestry (S&PF): Assistance, not regulatory control, is provided to State and private landowners. About 59 percent of the Nation's commercial forests are owned and managed by nonindustrial private owners.

National Forests and Grasslands (NFS): The Forest Service manages about 191 million acres of public land, which comprise 8.5 percent of the total land area in the United States. These public lands are some of the Nation's greatest assets and have major economic, environmental, and special significance for all Americans.

International Forestry (IF): The Forest Service has an ongoing program of international forestry assistance and exchange that was expanded in the International Forestry Cooperation Act and 1990 Farm Bill.

Administration (ADM): The Forest Service participates in a number of special human resource programs that employ, train, or educate specific groups of people. Examples include AmeriCorps, Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers, Senior Community Service Employment Program, and Youth Conservation Corps.

Priorities for Deputy Under Secretary Involvement

Many changes have been initiated over the last 2 years to more fully integrate ecosystem management into all Forest Service programs and to implement other administration priorities. The Deputy Under Secretary's Office needs to be involved to complete these actions. Involvement might be in the issuance of regulations, such as the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) regulations; in gaining funding support for the FY 1996 budget, for example for assistance to State and private landowners, and in working with other Departments. Top priorities for Deputy Under Secretary involvement include:

1. Develop and implement the 1995 RPA program.
2. Implement ecosystem management.
3. Improve forest health.
4. Implement the President's Forest Plan.
5. Enhance rangeland management.
6. Implement salvage provisions, Rescissions Act.
7. Facilitate Forest Service reinvention.
8. Support research-based management.
9. Issue new National Forest Management Act planning regulations.
10. Review and revise existing legislative authorities.
11. Support public land and private entrepreneurship.
12. Support Forest Service FY96 and FY97 Budget efforts.
13. Address potential devolution of public lands.
14. Address violence towards Forest Service employees.

Current Issues

The Deputy Under Secretary's Office is likely to have several issues brought to its attention by any number of parties outside of the Department. Given the breadth of Forest Service programs and their wide geographic distribution, these issues could arise from a number of places, especially during these tight budgetary times.

Topics that could be raised include water resource issues in many Western states, mining law reform, ski area permit fees, implementation of the President's Pacific Northwest Forest Plan, wolf reintroduction and other issues related to threatened and endangered species, federal wildland fire policy and programs, Tongass National Forest Land Management Plan, and State and county rights questions that affect the management of Federal land.

USDA FOREST SERVICE OVERVIEW

The phrase "Caring for the Land and Serving People" captures the spirit of the Forest Service mission. The Forest Service mission is to achieve quality land management under sustainable multiple use management concepts to meet the diverse needs of people.

The Forest Service provides leadership in the management, protection, and use of the Nation's forests and rangelands. The Forest Service has embraced ecosystem management as its operating philosophy. The Agency takes an ecological approach to the implementation of multiple use management, providing sustained yields of renewable resources such as water, forage, wildlife, wood, and recreation.

The Forest Service is responsible for the 191-million-acre National Forest System (NFS), with its 156 national forests (NF's) and 20 national grasslands (NG's), in 44 States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. In cooperation with State and local governments, the Agency's S&PF program provides professional and financial assistance to Tribal governments, rural landowners, and communities on forestry and economic development. The International Forestry (IF) program of the Forest Service enables the Agency to share its technical expertise and managerial skills with other nations. The research program of the Forest Service conducts extensive research to enhance and protect productivity on all of America's forests and rangelands, with special attention to long-term natural resource issues having national and international scope.

Forest Service Ethics and Course to the Future

The Forest Service draws passion and commitment in its mission from its land and service ethics.

"Our land ethic is to promote the sustainability of ecosystems by ensuring their health, diversity, and productivity."

Growing understanding of the complexity of ecosystems has expanded thinking on sustainability--from emphasis on sustained product yields to sustaining the ecosystems that provide a variety of benefits.

Through ecosystem sustainability, present and future generations will reap the benefits that healthy, diverse, and productive ecosystems provide. Our ethic includes the active use of ecosystems, through both preservation and manipulation, to gain these benefits--as long as this use does not unduly impact ecosystem sustainability.

"Our service ethic is to tell the truth, obey the law, work collaboratively, and use appropriate scientific information in caring for the land and serving people."

Maintaining public trust requires living our service ethic while balancing responsiveness, representativeness, and efficiency. The Forest Service was created by and for the people. Hence, we communicate with and listen to the

public and their elected representatives. We consistently obey the law and tell the truth. We work collaboratively to integrate science and public participation into management.

We represent society by maintaining a work force that reflects the diversity of the American public, ensuring that this work force includes the professional disciplines required to successfully execute ecosystem management, and expanding our recognized public to include more segments of the population and to consider future generations.

Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles

Our ethics provide the foundation and our mission and guiding principles the framework for our actions. The phrase "Caring for the Land and Serving People" captures the spirit of our mission. We envision the Forest Service as an efficient, productive, multicultural, and multidisciplinary organization that is recognized for national and international leadership in natural resource conservation.

Our Course to the Future

We live our land and service ethics and achieve our mission through the development and practice of ecosystem management. Ecosystem management is the means by which the Forest Service will achieve the goal of sustainability. Simply stated, ecosystem management means the integration of ecological, economic, and social factors to maintain and enhance the quality of the environment to best meet current and future needs.

Our Course to the Future describes the management context and helps focus our priorities on providing sustainable benefits to the American people and to the world. The four elements of our course are:

1. Protect ecosystems.

The Forest Service will work to ensure the health and diversity of ecosystems while meeting people's needs. Special care for fragile or rare ecosystem components will be instituted on NFS lands and encouraged on other lands.

2. Restore deteriorated ecosystems.

The Forest Service will improve deteriorated ecosystems on NFS lands. We will develop scientific understanding and technologies needed for effective restoration. Domestic and international assistance programs will encourage ecosystem restoration. These efforts will improve the likelihood that diversity, long-term sustainability, and future options are maintained.

3. Provide multiple benefits for people within the capabilities of ecosystems.

Within the limitations of maintaining ecosystem health and diversity, forests and rangelands must meet people's needs for uses, values, products, and services. Forest Service programs will focus on providing benefits to people from these lands, emphasizing those that the NF's and NG's have special advantages to provide. We will offer assistance to owners and managers on other forests and rangelands to help them fulfill their objectives in an ecologically sound manner.

4. Ensure organizational effectiveness.

The Forest Service will improve organizational effectiveness by creating and maintaining an atmosphere where people are respected, trusted, and valued, and where expertise and professionalism are rewarded. Our work force will be multicultural and multidisciplinary. Forest Service employees will be empowered to carry out the Agency's mission and will be accountable for achieving negotiated objectives.

Listening to, learning about, and collaborating with the citizens of the United States--the owners of public land--is a continuous process. The Agency will use appropriate scientific information in decision-making processes, and will involve diverse communities of interest in decisions. Partnerships and collaboration with an expanding array of groups will characterize Forest Service operations.

The three primary outcomes of the Forest Service Course to the Future will be healthy ecosystems, vital communities, and an effective, multidisciplinary, multicultural organization.

Long-Term Strategic Plan

The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) of 1974 requires USDA to prepare an assessment of renewable resources on all lands every 10 years. Building upon that base of resource information, a recommended program for Forest Service activities is prepared every 5 years. This program is designed to serve as the long-term national strategic plan for the Forest Service, and guides Forest Service planning and program priorities.

History, Organization, and Authorities

Evolution of Forest Service Programs

The Forest Service has a long tradition of professional land management, research, and professional assistance to others on forestry. Established in the infancy of the conservation movement, it has been led by trained, professional career land managers since its inception.

Legislation in the 1960's and 1970's such as the Wilderness Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) have provided new mandates for management of the NFS, and have created many more avenues for public participation in management decisions.

These new laws reflect increased public interest in the management of NF's. This increased interest has intensified conflict regarding the proper balance of multiple uses and benefits, particularly between people who value amenities and those whose livelihood is dependent on use of NFS commodity resources. The current controversy regarding timber harvest levels and protection of old-growth forests in the Northwest is a good example of this conflict.

Legislation during this period has also given the Forest Service a much broader role in technical and financial assistance for management of State and private forest lands, community forestry, and rural community economic assistance. It has also greatly expanded responsibilities in international forestry.

Organizational Structure

Two key principles underlie the Forest Service's overall organizational structure. The first is decentralization. Agency leaders have always strongly believed that decisions should be made at the lowest possible level, consistent with ensuring effective managerial control and compliance with relevant laws, Executive Orders, and USDA regulations. Local line officers, such as the 590 District Rangers and 122 Forest Supervisors, are delegated broad authority to make decisions on the ground.

The second principle is independence of the Forest Service's research and management programs. This ensures research results that are unbiased and reflect the best science available.

Major Statutory Authorities

Many statutes provide the legislative mandate for Forest Service programs. Most of the statutes fall into one of the three major categories described here. Example statutes are listed for each category.

1. Statutes providing broad authority for Forest Service programs:

The Organic Act of 1897

The Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960

The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974

The National Forest Management Act of 1976

The Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, as amended.

The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978

International Forestry Cooperation Act of 1990

The 1990 Farm Bill

2. Procedural and environmental statutes affecting all federal programs

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

The Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973

The Clean Water Amendments Act of 1972

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977

3. Statutes allocating NFS lands to specific management regimes

The Wilderness Act of 1964

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968

A complete compilation of statutes is found in "The Principal Laws Relating to Forest Service Activities."

Description of Programs

The Forest Service carries out its mission through integrated program areas: research, S&PF, management of the NFS, IF, and management of human resources. Figure 1 shows the overall organization of the Forest Service.

Forest Research

The Forest Service has the largest forestry research organization in the world: seven research stations, the Forest Products Laboratory, and the International Institute of Tropical Forestry, all supported by research laboratories at 77 locations throughout the United States and Puerto Rico). Research serves society by providing the scientific foundation for sustainable forest development in the United States and other regions of the world. It provides information and technology needed to assure the health, diversity, and productivity of the Earth's forest and grassland ecosystems. The program includes cooperative planning and studies with other public research agencies, universities, and private research organizations. It works for and with users, policy makers, natural resource managers, educators, industries, and other producers who represent people and their needs. The map in figure 3 shows the location of Forest Service Research Stations across the Nation.

State and Private Forestry

The Forest Service provides professional and financial assistance to the range of non-Federal forest landowners. Through its nonregulatory and voluntary programs, the Forest Service assists private landowners, communities, State forestry and related agencies, Tribal governments, and other Federal agencies by helping them protect forests and rangelands from fire, insects, and disease; monitor the health of the Nation's forests; and assist others with improving the management of their lands.

About 48 percent of the Nation's forest lands (and 59 percent of commercial forest lands) are owned and managed by 9.9 million nonindustrial private owners. Decisions made by State, local, and Tribal governments and private landowners affect conditions of almost two-thirds of America's forest resource base. Proper management of these lands is essential to maintain long-term wood supply and the economic and environmental well-being of our Nation.

Urban forestry programs are focused on the 70 million acres of urban and community forests in 56,000 of the Nation's communities. S&PF leads an agencywide effort to help States and communities use forests to promote rural economic development and a quality rural environment. Figure 2 shows the location of S&PF offices across the United States.

The Forest Service wildland Fire Protection Program protects life, property, and natural resources on the 191 million acres of National Forest System lands and through fee or reciprocal protection agreements 20 million acres of adjacent State and private lands. This cost effective program is responsive to wildfire presuppression and fuels management activities and is maintained at a level commensurate with the threat to life and property, public values, and management objectives. The presuppression program provides the capability to prevent forest fires and to take prompt, effective initial suppression action on wildfires.

Management of the National Forests and Grasslands

The Forest Service manages about 191 million acres of public land in 44 States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, comprising 8.5 percent of the total land area in the United States. These public lands, known collectively as the National Forest System, encompass 156 National Forests, 20 National Grasslands, and 10 land utilization projects. The natural resources on these lands are some of the Nation's greatest assets and have major economic, environmental, and special significance for all Americans.

International Forestry

Protecting our forest resources both in the United States and internationally, nurturing healthy trading relationships, and investing in the long-term sustainability of forests, hinge on small investments in international cooperation in forestry. The Forest Service is uniquely capable of carrying out an effective international forestry program on behalf of the United States. International Forestry brings Forest Service expertise and the many resources of other USDA agencies to bear on the development of United States positions in forestry, trade, industry, and environmental policy forums. This ensures that the United States positions for international negotiations on forestry matters have the advantage of the best technical input and prevent us from entering into agreements that might be difficult or costly to implement domestically.

Besides advancing domestic technical and research expertise, International Forestry's technical projects build long-range effects that transcend environmental concerns. As collaborative relationships are built around technical areas with partner nations, bilateral dialogue on policy matters evolves in tandem. Overall, no other program is positioned as well as International Forestry to maximize the environmental, economic and social services and values of international cooperation in forestry for the American people.

Administration

Forest Service Administration provides leadership, direction, quality assurance, and customer service in carrying out Agency business and human resource programs. Agency programs and employees are dependent on administrative leadership to provide the basic organizational management infrastructure. Through Administration, the Agency hires, trains, evaluates, and promotes its employees; pays employees and contractors; acquires office space, equipment and supplies, and other materials; and acquires, supports, and maintains basic computer and communication technology. Similarly, Administration's human resource programs such as AmeriCorps, the Job Corps, the Senior Community Service Employment Program, and the volunteer program directly support many activities tied to the Agency's mission.

Programs and Legislation

The Forest Service national headquarters provides essential support to field units in the areas of strategic planning, program and budget development, legislative affairs, and policy analyses. Because most Forest Service employees work outside Washington, DC, providing effective liaison between the field units and the Department of Agriculture, other Departments, the Executive Office of the President, and the Congress is an essential headquarters staff activity.

The 1974 Forest and Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) mandated assessment every 10 years of the Nation's renewable resource situation and development every 5 years of a strategic plan describing Forest Service programs essential to maintain and improve the renewable resource situation. The strategic plan guides annual program and budget development activities, including formulating, presenting, and justifying agency budget requests to the Department, OMB, and the Congress. Program development and budget activities ensure accountability for appropriations through annual reporting of accomplishments. Legislative affairs staff provide liaison with Congressional staff, track progress of pending legislation, analyze legislative proposals, and prepare testimony for Departmental and agency witnesses at hearings. Policy analyses are performed by a resident staff of experts who evaluate program options for the Chief.

Budget

The FY 1996 Conference Level Appropriation amount is \$190.8 million lower than the final FY 1995 budget. All of the appropriation accounts are funded below FY 1995 levels. The largest reductions are in construction and land acquisition. The International Forestry Appropriation account has been eliminated, however, the program will still continue and be funded at a lower level from other benefitting appropriations. The reduction in Forest Research results in a cancellation of some research projects and a need to reduce the number of scientists and other research support personnel. Reductions in the other appropriations accounts result in similar needed actions.

Budget Overview

USDA Forest Service Budget Overview (in Millions of Actual \$)

	FY 1994	FY 1995	FY 1996 5 /
DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS	FINAL	FINAL	Appn Bill
FOREST RESEARCH	193.1	193.5	178.0
STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY	165.3	154.2	136.8
EMERGENCY PEST SUPPRESSION 1/	12.2	14.4	{17.0}
INTERNATIONAL FORESTRY 2/	7.0	5.0	{4.0}
NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM	1,307.9	1,338.1	1,256.2
FIREFIGHTING 3/	564.3	385.6	385.5
CONSTRUCTION 4/	252.8	196.5	163.5
LAND ACQUISITION	64.2	63.9	41.2
OTHER APPROPRIATIONS	<u>6.0</u>	<u>6.1</u>	<u>5.3</u>
TOTAL-DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS	2,572.8	2,357.3	2,166.5

- 1/ FY94-95 reflect amounts used under declared emergencies; FY96 reflects anticipated need to be met from one-time contingency funds.
- 2/ FY94-95 reflect establishment of new Appropriations account; account eliminated in FY96--amount displayed is limitation, to be comprised of funding from other accounts as in FYs prior to FY94.
- 3/ FY95 includes \$200 million for expenses during FY94 fire suppression activities.
- 4/ Includes roads, trails, and facilities.
- 5/ To date, amounts based on Conference Action.

Figure 1

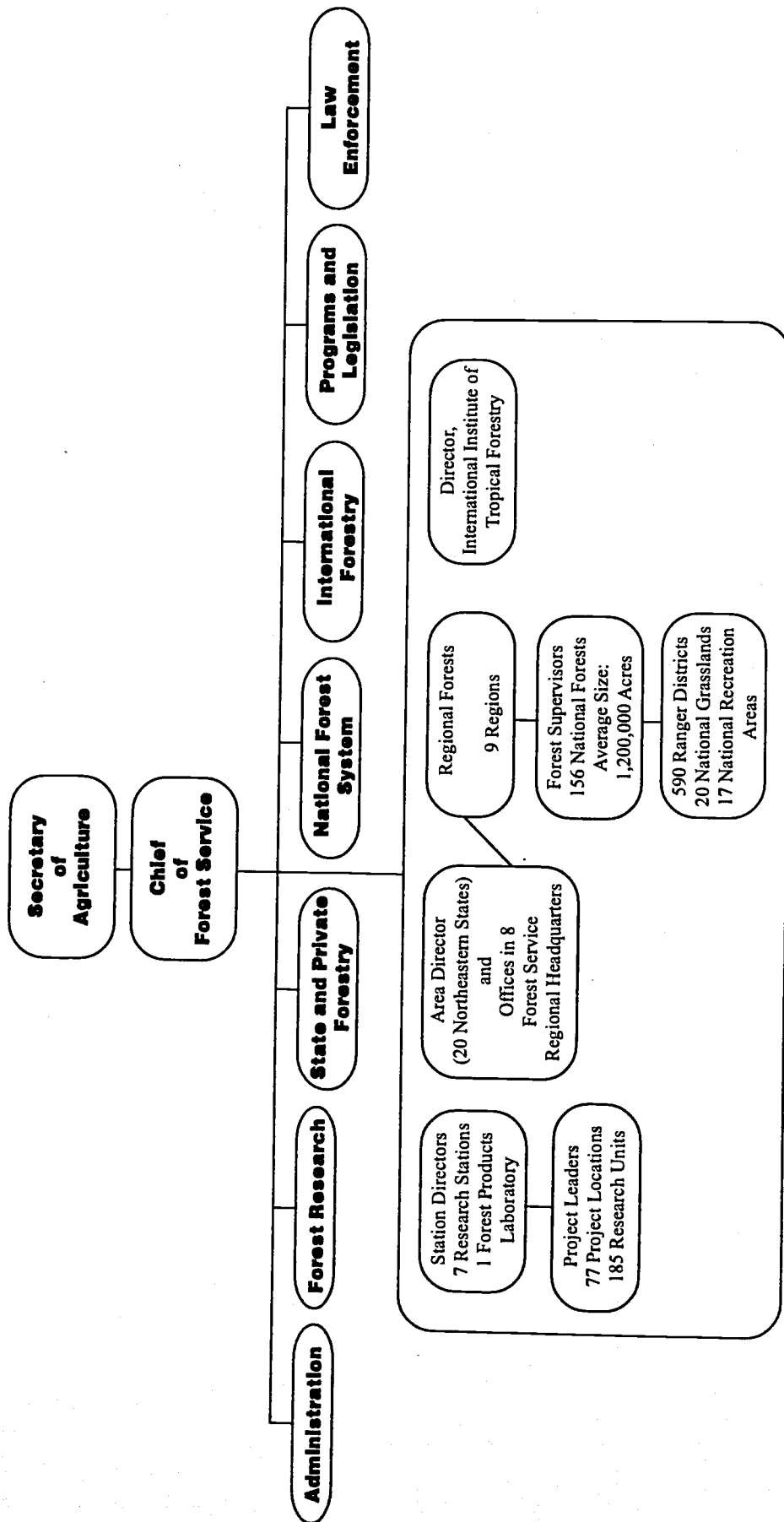
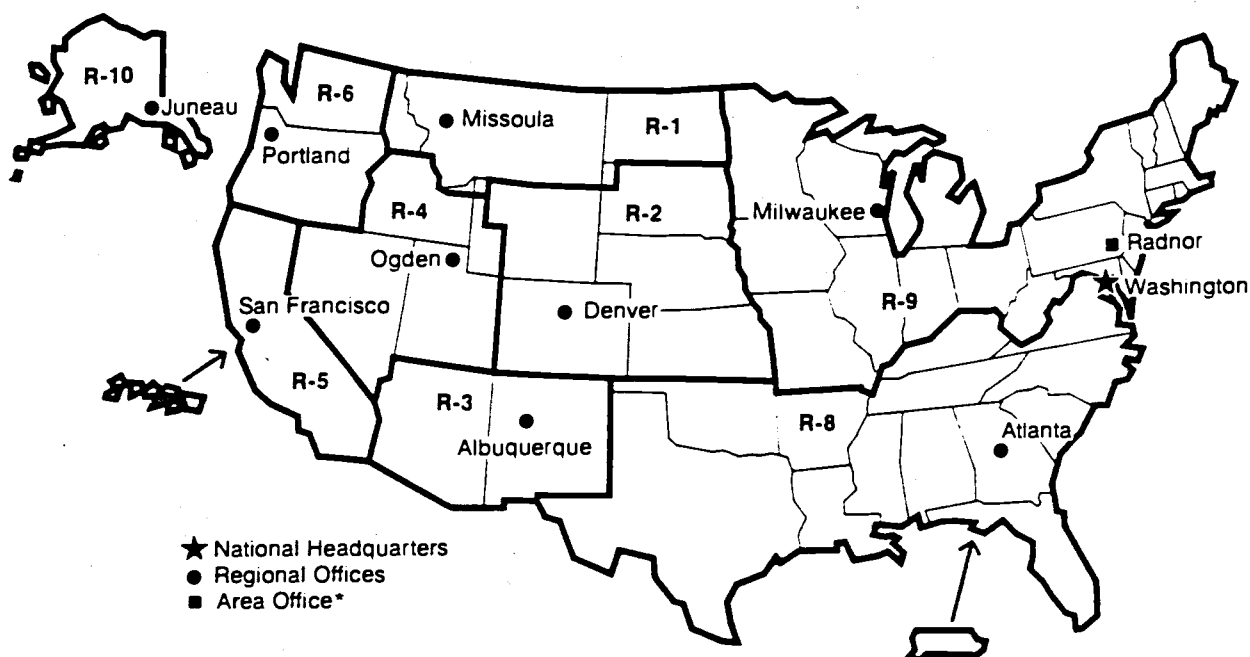


Figure 2

National Forest System Regional Offices State and Private Forestry Area Office*



*In other regions, State and Private Forestry activities are directed from Regional Offices.

● Regional Offices

**Forest Service, USDA
Northern Region (R-1)**
Federal Building
P.O. Box 7669
Missoula, MT 59807
406-329-3511

**Forest Service, USDA
Rocky Mountain Region (R-2)**
740 Simms Street
P.O. Box 25127
Lakewood, CO 80225
303-275-5350

**Forest Service, USDA
Southwestern Region (R-3)**
Federal Building
517 Gold Avenue, S.W.
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-842-3292

**Forest Service, USDA
Intermountain Region (R-4)**
Federal Building
324 25th Street
Ogden, UT 84401
801-625-5350

**Forest Service, USDA
Pacific Southwest Region (R-5)**
630 Sansome Street
San Francisco, CA 94111
415-705-2874

**Forest Service, USDA
Pacific Northwest Region (R-6)**
333 S.W. 1st Avenue
P.O. Box 3623 (97208-3623)
Portland, OR 97204
503-326-2971

**Forest Service, USDA
Southern Region (R-8)**
1720 Peachtree Road, N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30309-2417
404-347-2384

**Forest Service, USDA
Eastern Region (R-9)**
310 West Wisconsin Ave.,
Rm. 500
Milwaukee, WI 53203
414-297-3693

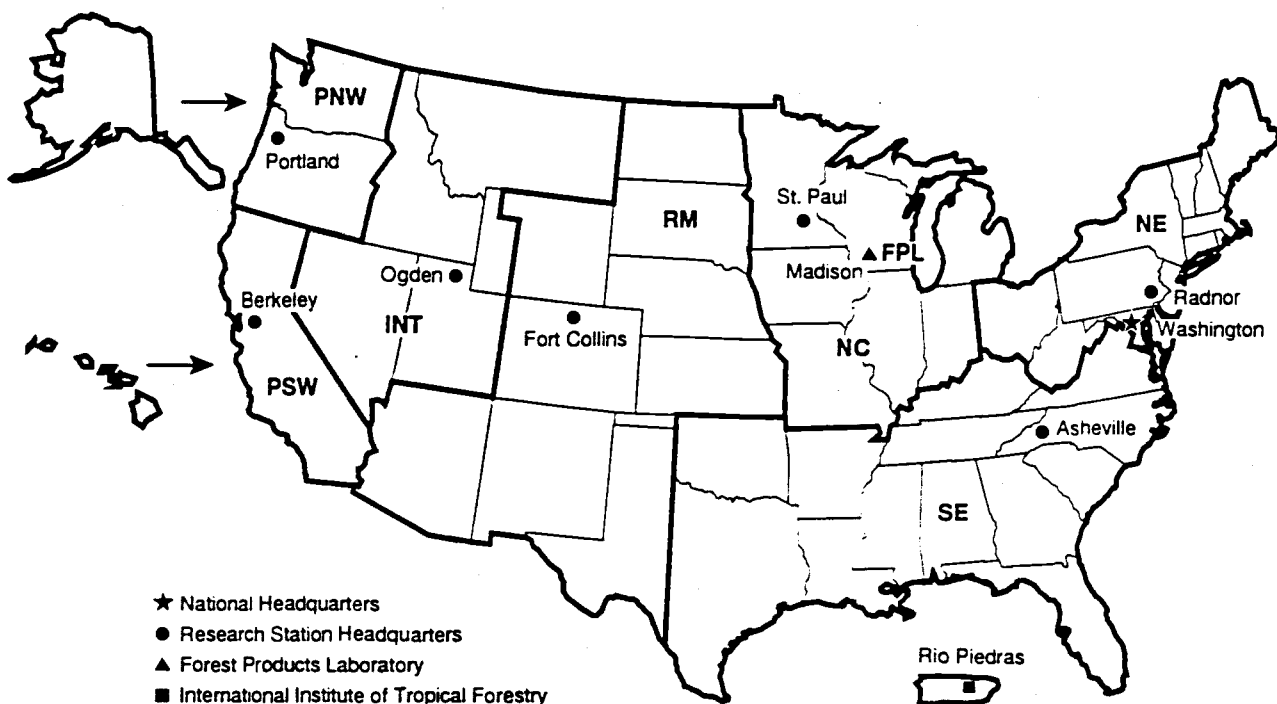
**Forest Service, USDA
Alaska Region (R-10)**
Federal Building
P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802-1628
907-586-8863

■ Area Office

**Forest Service, USDA
Northeastern Area—S&PF**
5 Radnor Corporate Center
100 Matsunford Rd., Suite 200
P.O. Box 6775
Radnor, PA 19087-4585
610-975-4111

Figure 3

Research International Institute of Tropical Forestry



● Research Station Headquarters

Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station (INT)

Federal Building
324 25th Street
Ogden, UT 84401
801-625-5412

North Central Forest Experiment Station (NC)

1992 Falwell Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
612-649-5000

Northeastern Forest Experiment Station (NE)

5 Radnor Corporate Center
100 Matsunard Rd., Suite 200
P.O. Box 6775
Radnor, PA 19087-4585
610-975-4222

Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station (PNW)

333 S.W. 1st Avenue
P.O. Box 3890 (97208-3890)
Portland, OR 97204
503-326-5640

Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station (PSW)

800 Buchanan Street
Albany, CA 94710
P.O. Box 245
Berkeley, CA 94701
510-559-6300

Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station (RM)

240 West Prospect Road
Fort Collins, CO 80526-2098
303-498-1100

Southeastern Forest Experiment Station (SE)

200 Weaver Blvd.
P.O. Box 2680
Asheville, NC 28802
704-257-4390

▲ Forest Products Laboratory (FPL)

One Gifford Pinchot Drive
Madison, WI 53705-2398
608-231-9200

■ International Institute of Tropical Forestry (IITF)

Call Box 25000
UPR Experimental Station
Rio Piedras, PR 00928-2500

★ National Headquarters

Send all mail except Express Mail to this address:

Forest Service—USDA

14th & Independence Ave., S.W.
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090
202-205-1760

Send Express Mail and parcels to:

Chief, Forest Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th & Independence Ave., S.W.
201 14th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250.

1996 PRIORITIES FOR DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY INVOLVEMENT

Many changes have been initiated to more fully integrate ecosystem management into all Forest Service programs and to implement other administration priorities. In many cases, additional steps must be taken over the near term to ensure that these initiatives are fully accomplished. This section describes these priority concerns and identifies specific actions for Secretarial consideration.

Develop and Implement the 1995 RPA Program

Significance: The RPA Program is the strategic plan for future Forest Service programs. A requirement under the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) of 1974, the RPA Program is updated every 5 years.

The Draft 1995 RPA Program is organized around "The Forest Service Ethics and Course to the Future," with substantial attention to future actions needed to protect and restore ecosystems, provide benefits for people, and ensure organizational effectiveness. Forest Service activities are described, as well as anticipated resource conditions, outputs, and program implementation costs. The development of the program is supported by nationwide forest and rangeland assessments, published on a 10-year cycle and updated intermittently, and by information from a number of other sources.

The Draft 1995 RPA Program was released for a 90-day public review and comment period on October 19, 1995. Following revisions of the document in response to public comments, the 1995 RPA Program will provide national program and policy guidance for all Forest Service actions.

Interested Parties: The President, the Congress, other Federal Agencies, States, Tribal governments, foreign governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGO's), private industry, and individuals.

Actions to Date:

Early public and employee involvement was initiated through workshops and nationwide focus group sessions.

Context for the Draft Program was established by the Chief's publication of "The Forest Service Ethics and Course to the Future."

Following prerelease discussions with the Under Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, the Office of General Counsel, the Office of Program and Budget, and the Office of Management and Budget, the Draft 1995 RPA Program was released on October 19, 1995 for a 90-day review and comment period.

The Draft Program was distributed within the Forest Service (2,850 copies) and to private and public individuals and organizations (4,350 copies). In addition, focus group sessions with employees and members of the public were held in Washington, DC; Albuquerque, NM; Sacramento, CA; Missoula, MT; Milwaukee, WI; and Atlanta, GA.

The 90-day review and comment period ended on January 17, 1996. The analysis of the comments will be completed by the beginning of March.

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Review and support of a brief, preliminary report of comments received on the Draft Program that will be prepared for distribution at the Seventh American Forest Congress, convening in Washington, DC, during the week of February 20, 1996.

Support for and collaboration in the development of the Secretary's Recommended 1995 RPA Program and the associated President's Statement of Policy. (As of January 30, 1996, a decision is pending in the Office of the Secretary regarding the expedited development of the Recommended Program and the Statement of Policy by early summer.)

Implement Ecosystem Management

Significance: Ecosystem management means using an ecological approach to achieve the multiple-use management of National Forests and National Grasslands (NFS and NGs). This approach blends the needs of people and environmental values in such a way that NF's and NG's represent diverse, healthy, productive, and sustainable ecosystems. In addition, the principles of ecology and other biological sciences are factored into the technical assistance offered to private landowners. This technical assistance is offered a voluntary basis to landowners so that they may meet their management objectives in an environmentally sound manner.

Monitoring and evaluation are key elements of ecosystem management. Partnerships among Federal Agencies, State and local governments, Tribal entities, and other interested parties are vital to implementation.

Large-scale assessments (e.g., FEMAT, Columbia River Basin assessment, Eastside Study, Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Study, Southern Appalachian Assessment, and Great Lakes Assessment) determine the condition of the Nation's ecosystems and provide the foundation for implementation plans.

An interagency workshop was held in Tucson, AZ from December 4-14, 1995, to address consolidating current understanding of options for implementing ecosystem management on federal lands. Seven federal agencies (FS, NOAA, BLM, FWS, USGS, NBS, NPS) and a wide range of private foundations and national interest groups sponsored the effort.

The objective for the workshop was to develop a framework or reference guide for implementing ecosystem management. The document will be composed from papers on 30 topics. Each topic will be addressed by two papers: one on a synthesis of the current scientific understanding of that topic, and one on the current management experience in implementing field activities related to that topic. Each paper is being developed by a team of scientists and resource managers. A total of about 350 authors from federal, state, private, and University groups are included in the author teams.

Development of drafts and a review process with several stages will take place during 1996. A broad peer review is currently scheduled to begin about July 1. Final drafts are due to the technical editor on October 1, 1996. Final copy will be sent to the publisher by December 31.

Interested Parties: The President, Congress, other Federal Agencies, State governments, user groups, interested organizations, and individuals. Congressional members who have shown a particular interest in this topic

include: Sen. Craig (R-ID), Sen. Daschle (D-SD), Sen. Hatfield (R-OR), Sen. Leahy (D-VT), and Sen. Lugar (R-IN). Congressional House members include Rep. Nethercutt, Jr. (R-WA), Rep. Cooley (R-OR), Rep. Miller (D-CA), Rep. Regular (R-OH), Rep. Vento (D-MN), and Rep. Young (R-AK).

Actions to Date:

Conducted the Interagency Ecosystem Management Workshop in Tucson.

Announced the ecosystem management framework for management.

Adopted an ecological unit framework for classification and mapping.

Conducted numerous experiments, demonstrations, and pilot efforts evaluating practices and activities that support an ecosystem management approach.

Participating in White House Interagency Ecosystem Management Initiative.

Working with Natural Resource Conservation Service to coordinate data systems.

Working to institutionalize ecosystem management through ecological assessments, etc.

Additional Actions For Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Support the concepts of ecosystem management as set forth in the 1995 RPA Program.

Facilitate issuance of the new streamlined NFMA regulations to guide the revision of land and resource management plans for the NF's and NG's.

Support the development of the framework or reference guide for implementing ecosystem management during FY 1996.

Support implementation of the President's plan to restore deteriorated ecosystems, protect threatened and endangered species, and revitalize rural communities in the Pacific Northwest.

Ensure that a strong research program is maintained to provide the scientific foundation needed to implement ecosystem management.

Support establishment of innovative partnerships and collaborative relationships that will facilitate attainment of ecosystem management objectives in mixed-ownership settings.

Improve Forest Health

Significance: The dynamic nature of forested ecosystems, combined with human interactions, provides a vast array of challenges to our goal of maintaining healthy forest ecosystems.

Many forest stands, especially in the West, have the potential for catastrophic fires. While forest health concerns are most apparent in the West, southern pine forests in the East are increasingly susceptible to southern pine beetle. The increasing rate of introduction of foreign forest pests and the continuous

spread of other already introduced pests, such as gypsy moth and hemlock woolly adelgid, affects other forests.

Also of concern is the potential danger to people and property because of new homes that are built among dense forest stands immediately adjacent to national forests without the necessary supporting infrastructure, such as accessibility to emergency vehicles.

Interested Parties: White House, Congress, States, Tribal governments, NGO's, and private industry. Congressional interest is high. Sen. Craig (R-ID) and others are concerned about finding ways to expedite salvage sales to remove dead trees.

Actions to Date:

In 1993, the forest health strategic plan, "Healthy Forests for America's Future," which guides forest health activities, was issued. The plan addresses exotic pests, problems in the urban-wildland interface, prevention, and restoration.

In 1995, major policy hearings on health and productivity of fire adapted forests in the Western United States were held.

In late 1995, the Western Forest Health Initiative (WFHI) was implemented to accelerate actions needed to improve western forest ecosystem health and forest health monitoring. Almost half of the recommended actions in the initiative have been implemented, and work continues on the remainder.

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Help to remove barriers to the timely accomplishment of forest health objectives, such as supporting proposals for change in existing laws or new statutory authority that removes barriers to implement sound forest health actions.

Support funding for forest health contained in the President's FY 1997 Budget.

Maintain a strong research program to provide the scientific knowledge needed to deal effectively with forest health threats.

Implement the President's Forest Plan

Significance: The agency continues to implement the President's Forest Plan for the Pacific Northwest (PNW Plan) in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Park Service (NPS), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The plan encompasses 17 National Forests in three States and BLM lands in Oregon and California. The plan has three major sections: (1) Sustainable forest management; (2) Economic assistance to communities (3) and Interagency coordination.

The PNW Plan provides a comprehensive package of initiatives designed to resolve the impasse between timber harvesting and other commodity production activities on Federal lands in the Pacific Northwest, and to protect non-commodity resources on these same lands. To implement the PNW Plan, the Forest Service emphasizes mandatory actions, including watershed assessments, supporting local economies through maximum feasible timber sales programs,

working on adaptive management areas, and conducting essential planning and monitoring. In particular, high-priority actions such as rural community assistance and ecosystem restoration are emphasized.

The agency support for the PNW Plan effort includes performing watershed analyses, continuing work in adaptive management areas (AMA's), facilitating ecosystem restorations, and implementing the planning and monitoring efforts required by the Plan.

It is currently estimated that, when fully implemented, the President's PNW Forest plan will produce 1.053 billion board feet (bbf) of timber from National Forests and .221 bbf from BLM lands. This figure is slightly lower than original estimates--specific plan revisions in Region 5 indicated those forests could not produce at program levels initially estimated. In 1994, the Chief testified that implementation of the plan would occur over a 4-year period with 40 percent achievement in FY 1994, 60 percent in FY 1995, 80 percent in FY 1996 and 100 percent in FY 1997. The Forest Service produced 64 percent of the plan volume in FY 1995 and is on schedule to produce the 80 percent in FY 1996.

Concerns about the timber sale volume are likely to come from timber industry interests and the Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations. Funding from the President's Forest Plan Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative totalled over 14.6 million dollars for Forest Service watershed restoration "Jobs-in-the-Woods" efforts, of which over 83% of the dollars were directly awarded to contractors and workers in timber dependent communities. As part of the Jobs-in-the-Woods program, displaced timber workers were employed on 300 watershed restoration contracts. This required a Secretarial Waiver to limit advertising of these contracts to the affected communities. A Secretarial Waiver will be again needed in 1996.

Interested Parties: President, Congress, other Federal Agencies, State governments, user groups, interested organizations, and individuals.

Actions to Date:

Issued the Record of Decision for the President's Forest Plan for the Pacific Northwest on April 13, 1994.

Funded over 300 community projects under the Rural Community Assistance Program.

Implemented 10 "Jobs in the Woods" demonstration projects.

Established 13 chartered advisory committees to coordinate implementation of Northwest Forest Plans.

Provided over 490 million board feet of timber from National Forests.

Completed over 100 watershed analyses.

Prepared 7 late-successional reserve assessments.

Streamlined the consultation process required under the Endangered Species Act.

Additional Actions For Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Support continued funding for all elements of the Northwest Forest Plan.

Enhance Rangeland Management

Significance: The USDI Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and USDA Forest Service have introduced proposed rules affecting regulation of livestock grazing on public lands. BLM's regulations, issued as a final rule and implemented in August 1995, closely resemble existing Forest Service CFRs. New Forest Service grazing regulations, which have not been issued as a final rule, improve the process for issuing grazing permits. Over 4,000 grazing permits expire between 1995 and 1997, with over 5,700 grazing allotments needing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses. Progress on a final rule is on hold due to pending legislative proposals.

The 104th Congress has passed legislation, with more pending, affecting range management in the Forest Service. The Rescissions Act, PL 104-19, SEC 504, requires the Forest Service to schedule NEPA analysis for all grazing allotments where such analyses are needed. Until the NEPA analyses are completed, the agency is to issue new grazing permits under the same terms and conditions as those expiring.

The Forest Service completed a management review of the National Grasslands in November, 1995. Findings indicate that organizational changes and development of more specific direction would facilitate management of the National Grasslands. An action plan is currently being developed to address these and other issues.

Pending legislation, known as the Public Rangelands Management Act, would greatly impact the Forest Service range program. Both Senate and House versions require separate regulations for managing National Grasslands, convey possessory interests in range improvements to permittees, and require the Forest Service to develop regulations similar to BLM's "old" regulations allowing sub-leasing, permittee water rights, establishing resource advisory councils and grazing advisory boards and contain other provisions which favor livestock producers over other forest users. The Secretary opposes this legislation.

Interested Parties: Congress, Livestock industry, National Cattlemen's Association, American Farm Bureau, Public Lands Council, environmental groups such as National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, and Natural Resources Defense Council, and sportsman's organizations such as Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and Trout Unlimited.

Actions to Date:

Issued proposed rule on grazing regulations and distributed final environmental impact statement (EIS).

Implemented a strategy to expedite NEPA compliance relative to permit issuance.

Completed workload analysis for dealing with expiring permits and compliance with NEPA and other applicable laws.

Developed 15-year schedule to complete NEPA analysis on all grazing allotments where such analyses are needed.

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Support the funding contained in the FY 1997 budget to ensure compliance with schedule for NEPA analyses and administration of livestock grazing to the needed standard.

Continue to oppose the Public Rangelands Management Act, and similar legislation, which restricts the Agency's ability to manage rangelands and favors livestock production over multiple use.

Completed management review of National Grasslands.

Implement Salvage Provisions, Rescissions Act

Significance: On July 27, 1995 the President signed the Rescissions Act (Public Law 104-19, which contains provisions for an emergency salvage timber sale program as well as for "Option 9" and "318" sales. The salvage provisions of the Act are intended to expedite salvage timber sales in order to achieve, to the maximum extent feasible, a salvage sale volume above the programmed level to reduce the backlogged volume of salvage timber. The authorities provided by P.L. 104-19 are in effect until December 31, 1996. President Clinton directed the Secretaries of Agriculture, the Interior, and Commerce, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the heads of other appropriate agencies to move forward to implement the timber salvage provisions of P.L. 104-19 in an expeditious and environmentally-sound manner, in accordance with the President's Pacific Northwest Forest Plan, other existing forest and land management policies and plans, and existing environmental laws, except those procedural actions expressly prohibited by Public Law 104-19.

Section 318 of the FY 1990 Appropriations Act, set specific timber sale objectives for the Forest Service and the BLM in Oregon and Washington, and prescribed measures for protecting the northern spotted owl and ecologically significant old-growth forests. Section 318 set the timber sale program for the Pacific Northwest Region at 7.7 billion board feet for FY 89-90. During the harvest of these sales, the marbled murrelet, a Pacific coast sea bird that uses coastal old growth Douglas-fir for nesting habitat, was listed under the Endangered Species Act as threatened. This delayed the harvest of some of the section 318 timber sales.

The FY 1995 Rescissions Act ordered the release of all remaining "section 318" timber sales where threatened or endangered birds are not known to nest. The Act requires alternative volume be offered where original sales cannot proceed. Litigation over specific interpretations of the Act is ongoing. District court rulings have been unfavorable to Administration positions and DOJ has appealed to the ninth circuit. While a partial stay was granted by the district court, the ninth circuit has denied an emergency stay request for other sales. This litigation is often a topic of discussion at the weekly Tuesday timber meetings at CEQ.

Interested Parties: President, Congress (especially the committees with oversight responsibilities of the Forest Service), other federal agencies, timber industry, environmental groups, interested organizations, and individuals. Congressional members who have shown a particular interest in this topic include: Sen. Craig (R-ID), Sen. Hatfield (R-OR), Sen. Lugar (R-IN), Sen. Leahy (D-VT), Sen. Stevens (R-AK), Sen. Gorton (R-WA), Sen. Burns (R-MT), Sen. Johnston (D-LA), Sen. Bumpers (D-AR), Sen. Murray (D-WA), Sen.

Cochran (R-MS), Sen. Thomas (R-WY), Cong. Young (R-AK), Cong. Hansen (R-UT), Cong. Doolittle (R-CA), Cong. Pombo (R-CA), Cong. Hayworth (R-AZ), Cong. Cremeans (R-OH), Cong. Cubin (R-WY), Cong. Cooley (R-OR, chairman of Salvage Task Force), Cong. Chenoweth (R-ID, Vice-chair of Salvage Task Force), Cong. Radanovich (R-CA), Cong. Hastings (R-WA), Cong. Metcalf (R-WA), Cong. Longley (R-ME), Cong. Shadegg (R-AZ), Cong. Miller (D-CA), Cong. Vento (D-MN), Cong. Kildee (D-MI), Cong. Williams (D-MT), Cong. Riggs (R-CA), Cong. Herger (R-CA), Cong. Taylor (R-NC), Cong. Furse (D-OR), Cong. Skaggs (D-CO), Cong. Vucanovich (R-NV), Cong. Clinger (R-PA), Cong. Dicks (D-WA).

Actions to Date:

Consistent with the President's direction, an interagency Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on timber salvage was developed.

The purpose of the MOA is to reaffirm the commitment of the signatory agencies to continue their compliance with the requirements of existing environmental law while carrying out the objectives of the timber salvage related activities authorized by P.L. 104-19. In fulfilling this commitment, the parties intend to build upon on-going efforts to streamline procedures for environmental analysis and interagency consultation and cooperation. Interagency collaboration is vital to achieving this purpose.

Secretary Glickman reported to House Speaker Gingrich that he hoped to achieve 4.5 billion board feet (plus or minus 25%). At the end of FY 1995 we were slightly ahead of schedule.

Ten lawsuits have been filed against timber salvage sale actions to date. The courts are following the judicial process as outlined in the Rescission bill.

Pursuant to court orders and section 2001 (k) of the rescissions act, the Forest Service has released 32 (section 318) timber sales (119 mmbf) to date. An additional 72 sales (316 mmbf) are pending resolution of appeals.

Additional Actions For Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Support and protect the legal discretion of the Secretary to make policy and decisions related to timber sales.

Begin to develop a rational approach to the question of alternative volume for section 318 sales that cannot be released pursuant to the Act.

Facilitate Forest Service Reinvention

Significance: For some years the public has been concerned with the growth of the Federal bureaucracy, with perceived inefficiency in the delivery of Government programs, and with burgeoning costs. The current interest in achieving a balanced budget only heightens the importance of these concerns.

In response, the Forest Service has been seeking ways to improve its organizational structure, implement more efficient ways to deliver essential services, and to streamline processes to facilitate implementation of ecosystem management. To meet the goals set forth in the National Performance Review and to align the Forest Service to meet its mission, the planned changes entail

adopting a new work culture that emphasizes increased teamwork, shared leadership, multiculturalism, and continual upgrading of peoples' skills.

Interested Parties: Congress, environmental groups, commodity groups, State and county officials, and Forest Service employees. Congressional interest in this subject peaked with release of the Agency's reinvention proposal. On the Senate side, members who have shown a particular interest in this topic include Sen. Baucus (D-MT), Sen. Burns (R-MT), Sen. Campbell (R-CO), Sen. Craig (R-ID), Sen. Feinstein (D-CA) Sen. Murkowski (R-AK), and Sen. Stevens (R-AK). On the House side, interested members include Rep. Miller (D-CA), Rep. Williams (D-MT), and Rep. Young (R-AK).

Actions to Date:

Completed proposal to "reinvent" the Forest Service along lines that would facilitate implementation of ecosystem management and improve efficiency in delivery of programs. This proposal is described in the 1994 report "Reinvention of the Forest Service: The Changes Begin."

Developed, published, and distributed service-wide customer service standards. The standards are displayed in all Forest Service offices. Implemented a customer comment-card system at all Forest Service locations. Began to conduct targeted surveys of customer attitudes toward Forest Service service delivery.

Completed a reengineering study to recommend changes to greatly improve the efficiency of how the Forest Service applies the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to project decisionmaking.

Initiated a plan to reengineer some administrative processes and implemented a work-environment survey of employees to facilitate continuous improvement of the work environment.

Significantly downsized the Washington Office, field headquarters, and the overall workforce. Consolidated and co-located administrative sites with other Forest Service units and other Federal Agencies.

Developed workforce streamlining plans to meet reduced staffing goals, reduced budgets, and increased employee/supervisor ratios. Developed new organizational structures in 4 Regions and one Research Station.

Developed a plan to implement a telecommuting/alternative workplace policy for the Washington Office.

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Secure support for the Forest Service's reinvention proposals.

Secure Departmental, Administration, and Congressional support for implementing reengineered administrative processes and resource management processes.

Work within the Department and the Administration to ensure that streamlining aggressively reduces administrative and policy layers without reducing program delivery capability.

Secure Departmental support for redesigned performance agreement process for Forest Service senior executives.

Support Research-Based Management

Significance: One of the keys to effectively managing Forest Service and other public lands, as well as the nation's private lands, is strengthening collaboration between scientists and practitioners and better integrating science into management and policy decisions.

Active collaboration between scientists and managers is essential for resolving the complex issues associated with implementing ecosystem management and for maintaining public credibility and professional leadership. Ecosystem management, sustainability, biodiversity, forest health and many other issues require involvement by research scientists to provide the necessary scientific and technical information needed for policymaking and decisionmaking processes at all levels of land management. In addition, Federal courts are demanding that Forest Service decisions be supported by scientifically credible technical information.

Forest Service scientists have been heavily involved in providing the assistance necessary to carry out ecosystem assessments, implement monitoring and inventory, and develop the technology for new management techniques needed to address these complex issues. Recent reductions of the Forest Research budget and the potential for continued reductions is draining the organization of its scientific expertise and the potential to acquire new expertise. For example, the FY 1996 reduction could result in the loss of over 80 scientists. Forest Service cannot continue to lose this scientific strength and remain a conservation leader in the future. It is important to maintain an effective Forest Research organization.

Interested Parties: National Forest System, other Federal land management agencies, private landowners, forest industry, consultants, environmental and conservation groups, and State and local governments.

Actions to Date:

Forest Ecosystem Management and Assessment Team (FEMAT)

Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project (SNEP)

Columbia River Basin Assessment

Pacfish Conservation Strategy for Endangered Pacific Coast Salmon

Interregional Habitat Conservation Assessments (HCA's) for Sensitive Species.

Southern Appalachian Ecosystem Assessment

Tongass National Forest Land Management Plan

Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Environmental Impact Statement

Southern Vegetation Control Environmental Impact Statement

Instream Flows Assessment in Colorado

National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program (NAPAP)

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Support funding for Forest Research programs contained in the President's FY 1996 Budget that address the major concerns of public and private forest and rangeland owners.

Issue New National Forest Management Act Planning Regulations

Significance: The planning regulations at 36 CFR 219 set forth requirements to implement the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA) by planning for National Forest System lands. The existing regulations were adopted on September 30, 1982. The Forest Service has completed the development of the first round of forest plans as required by NFMA. Many of them will soon be scheduled for revision.

Interested Parties: Congressional committees with jurisdiction over Forest Service matters; USDA and other departments and agencies with responsibilities related to those of the Forest Service (USDI, CEQ, EPA, NOAA, NMFS); state, local and tribal governments; environmental groups; industry organizations; forest user groups; academia; and persons who have been active in the forest planning process and the implementation of forest plans.

Actions to Date:

In 1989, the Agency conducted a comprehensive review of its land management planning process, in cooperation with the Conservation Foundation, the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources of Purdue University, and others. This critique involved over 3,500 people, both within and outside the Forest Service. The results of the critique were documented in 1990 in a summary report, "Synthesis of the Critique of Land Management Planning" (Volume 1), and 10 other more detailed reports.

On February 15, 1991, the Forest Service published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPR). The public comment period closed May 15, 1991. Based largely on the findings of the Critique of Land Management Planning, this ANPR included preliminary regulatory text completely revising the existing planning regulations. Over 600 groups and individual submitted written comments. These comments were used in the development of a proposed rule published on April 13, 1995.

The proposed rule to comprehensively revise the planning regulations was published on April 13, 1995, and was designed to achieve four goals: (1) to streamline planning procedures and forest plans; (2) to strengthen relationships with the public and other Federal agencies, State, local, and tribal governments; (3) to incorporate the principles of ecosystem management; and (4) to clarify the Agency's planning and decisionmaking framework. Public briefings on the proposed rule were held in 17 locations around the country on April 24, 1995, and by the end of the public comment period on August 17, 1995, 1,035 public responses were received.

The Forest Service has evaluated the public comments on the proposed rule and has prepared a final rule for publication. Final approval is pending in the Department and the Office of Management and Budget.

Additional Actions For Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Facilitate issuance of the final NFMA planning rule to guide the revision of land and resource management plans for the National Forests and Grasslands.

Review and Revise Existing Legislative Authorities

Significance: Legislation governing the management of NFS lands has increased dramatically both in number and complexity since the 1970's. Some provisions of these laws conflict, or appear to conflict, creating confusion for field managers. One prominent example is the biodiversity conservation standards that are included in the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Another good example is the public participation provisions of NFMA and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The latter has been interpreted to preclude involvement by interest groups and key stakeholders in Federal decision-making efforts, yet the eventual success of many natural resource management efforts is contingent on Government Agencies working together in cooperation with stakeholders.

Secretary Glickman pledged at his confirmation hearing that he would direct the Forest Service to review the legal, regulatory, and policy framework of Forest Service programs to determine where they might conflict so that the Administration could consider proposals for remedies. He directed Under Secretary Lyons to create a task force within the Forest Service to review the agency's underlying statutes and regulations to determine how they relate to each other and where they may conflict. The task force has presented its draft study to the Secretary.

Interested Parties: White House, Congress, Tribal, State, and local governments; environmental groups, commodity interest groups; and Forest Service employees.

Actions to Date:

Initiation of a study to identify areas of conflict in forest management laws and develop possible corrective actions and/or proposed legislation.

Discussion with interagency ESA group.

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Support efforts to identify and resolve conflicts in existing legislative authorities, including proposal of appropriate legislative remedies if needed.

Support Public Land and Private Entrepreneurship

Significance: With a decreasing budget and aging infrastructure, the Forest Service must seek private entrepreneurs along with congressional assistance to meet the public demand for high quality public facilities while protecting the resources. National forest recreation demands are at an all time high; Resources Planning Act research projects a 50-percent increase by 2040. The NFS provides about 43 percent of the recreational use of Federal land.

Recreation on NFS lands includes opportunities to experience diverse recreational activities across the 191-million-acre system and for the operation and maintenance of developed and dispersed recreation facilities and services to support and accommodate these activities. Developed facilities alone include 4,389 campgrounds, over 328 swimming areas, 1,496 picnic grounds, 1,222 boating sites, 277 interpretive sites, fishing sites, winter recreation sites, trailheads, playgrounds and parks, and observation sites with a total capacity of accommodating over 1.8 million people at one time. Of particular concern are sites and facilities near large population centers that receive high levels of use on a year-round basis. Many of the recreation facilities were constructed in the 1930's and 1960's, and about 27 percent are more than 40 years old. In 1994, recreation facilities received over 835 million visits in 1994. The NFS contains over 124,600 miles of trails.

One-third of the ski areas in the United States are wholly or partially located on NFS lands and include most of the major winter sports resorts, which pay over \$15 million in land use fees. A recent GAO audit reflected \$1.2 billion dollars in total retail sales, a significant contribution to local economies, yet local economies and tourism in nearby communities decline as national forest facilities become unusable and are closed. The Forest Service issues and administers permits to private sector recreation entrepreneurs to provide outdoor recreation on NFS lands. These concession operations and facilities include ski areas, organization camps, lodges and resorts, and outfitters and guides.

Forest Service recreation managers are also responsible for wilderness, dispersed recreation, cave management, wild and scenic rivers, scenic byways, interpretive services, tourism, reservations system, and planning to meet NFMA and NEPA guidelines.

Interested Parties: Congress, Reps. Jim Hansen and Ralph Regula; nongovernmental organizations such as American Recreation Coalition, National Recreational Vehicle Association, Good Sam Club, American Association of Retired Persons; User Groups; and individuals.

Actions to date:

Expand use of private capital to construct new or rehabilitate existing Forest Service facilities in often unique recreation settings where much of this country's recreation takes place but for which there are no appropriated funds. The Forest Service contributes by providing land, existing facilities, or infrastructure for the venture in a public land recreation setting, and the entrepreneur modernizes existing facilities to meet health, safety, and accessibility concerns. The private sector has the opportunity to realize a reasonable profit, and the local economy benefits.

Phase out sites that receive lower use, have high costs to operate and maintain, and have negative affects on ecosystems.

Continue to develop a Recreation Site Concessionaire Desk Guide in order to provide for consistent application of law and regulation in the operation and maintenance of recreation facilities, achieve a common understanding of the benefits of the concession program, and internally raise the competence level of personnel administering concession special-use permits. Use of concessionaires reduces the overall level of recreation use collections returned to the U.S. Treasury, yet provides vital unfunded operation and maintenance of the recreation facilities under permit to the

concessionaires.

Seek enhanced fee collection and retention authority for site operation as a legislative solution to assist in addressing the funding shortfall. Use the "demonstration" authorities in the 1996 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill for collecting and retaining recreation use fees in areas not allowed under current Land and Water Conservation Fund Act authorities. The purpose of the demonstration authority is to test many different methods of establishing, collecting, reinvesting recreation use fees and monitoring the public's acceptance of the increased costs. Collection and retention of fees will be a move toward the recovery of recreation use cost.

By 1997 expand recreation reservation system into an interagency reservation system. Currently and for the past several years, the Forest Service has made available to the public a national reservation system for recreation sites. The demand has often exceeded the contractor's ability to process requests for reservations during peak periods of use.

Continue with the linked data systems now in place that give the Agency credible data at both the field and headquarters level. The two systems are infrastructure, a software program designed to store data, and Meaningful Measures, a recreation resources management system that addresses not only the management of facilities and services, but establishes quality management of such facilities.

Increase numbers of cooperative activities by using cost-share agreements, volunteer arrangements, and other transactions with our "partners." More than 8,400 agreements and relationships have been developed providing a variety of services, facilities, and ecosystem investments. Many of these activities have generated over twice the returns for the Federal investment.

Establish guidelines for this broad program area in order to ensure it does not exceed its legal limits and further define its relationship with the National Forest Foundation (NFF).

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Congressional, legislative, and regulatory assistance and support will be sought at times to bring programs into action.

Support Forest Service FY96 and FY97 Budget Efforts

Significance: As of January 27, 1996 the Forest Service is funded under a Continuing Resolution that will be in effect thru March 15, 1996. The level of funding during this period is that identified in the December 12, 1995 Conference Report.

Forest Service appropriations are a part of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation. On December 18, 1995 the President vetoed H.R. 1977, the "Department of Interior and Related Agencies Act." The President stated that, "This Bill was unacceptable because it would unduly restrict our ability to protect America's natural resources and cultural heritage, promote the technology we need for long-term energy conservation and economic growth, and provide adequate health, educational, and other services to Native Americans."

The Administration has particular concerns with language seeking to promote the Tongass National Forest timber program in Alaska and to limit the process to develop a comprehensive plan to protect the Columbia River Basin fish resources. Several concerns, i.e. Log Export and Mt. Graham Red Squirrel, have been expressed about the Congressionally approved Forest Service budget.

The Tongass language prohibits a new plan from going into effect before the end of FY 1997. It seeks to maintain the timber sale level set forth in the 1993 draft. Current planning indicates that the final plan will propose a lower level. The provision also allows sales terminated under long term contract can be resold without additional environmental analysis.

The \$6.5 million budget needed for completion and implementation of the Columbia River Basin comprehensive plan was limited to \$4 million when it came out of Conference. Direction by Congress is that these funds are to be used for completion of the assessment and publication of two (one for area of Eastern Washington and Oregon, and one for lands in Idaho and Montana) Draft Environmental Impact Statements. No Record of Decision (ROD) is to be prepared. The dollars are inadequate and mandated dates cannot be met.

Interested Parties: President, Congress, other Federal Agencies, States, Tribal Governments, foreign governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private industry, and individuals.

Actions to Date:

(FY96 Budget)

Veto of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Act on December 18, 1996.

January 27, 1996 Continuing Resolution signed; providing funding at the Conference Level for the period January 27 to March 15, 1996.

(FY97 Budget)

The President will submit a total FY 1997 budget figure to Congress on February 5, with specific agency budget figures to be transmitted on March 18.

Budget amounts for FY 1997 are anticipated to be at or below the FY 1996 level. "Passback" of the FY 1997 budget amount to the Department will occur the week of February 5. The Forest Service will receive the initial budget amount on February 6 or 7 and must have any appeal back to the Department by COB February 8. The Department appeals are due to OMB on February 9.

Final appeal decisions and final budget figures are to be given to Agencies on February 12. Budget appendix data is required to be submitted to OMB by no later than COB February 20 - at which time agencies will be "locked-out" and unable to make any additional changes.

Forest Service Budget Explanatory Notes must be prepared and presented to Congress by the due date of March 18.

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

February 8 review of the Forest Service Budget Appeal should there be one.

Review and comment on the "Draft" FY 1997 Budget Explanatory Notes prior to finalizing and transmittal to Congress on March 20, 1996.

Address Potential Devolution of Public Lands

Significance: A growing number of citizens and organizations feel public lands could be better managed by private sector or State or local governments. Recently, proposals have surfaced to turn wilderness areas over to The Wilderness Society, sell timber lands to the highest bidder, and turn public land management over to the States. One argument is that the Federal Government can no longer afford to manage these lands, and that the private sector and States can manage them more cost-effectively.

Senators Burns (R-MT) and Craig (R-ID) have sponsored a bill, S. 1151, that calls for the establishment of a National Lands and Resources Management Commission to issue a report that includes, inter alia, a review of the patterns of Federal land ownership and possible transfers of land between government entities and private individuals to improve management of these lands.

Interested Parties: Congress, The Land Trusts, Holders of Authorization for Use and Occupancy of NFS lands, Tribal governments, State government

Actions to Date:

Speeches by Agency Leadership, Discussions with Permittee Organizations.

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

Make Administration Officials aware of the Congressional and interest group activities on this issue.

Address Violence Towards Forest Service Employees

Significance: Since the creation of the Forest Service, there have been challenges to the authority of the Federal government regarding public lands. Ranchers, herders, loggers and others have attempted to influence legislators and agency administrators regarding the lands, and occasionally violence towards government employees has resulted when the administration of the lands have been deemed unsatisfactory to forest users.

Challenges to Federal ownership of public lands by various groups are increasing. Drug production on the National Forest System (NFS) has increased significantly. The NFS contains about 9 percent of the nation's land mass and between 25-43 percent of all cannabis seized has come from that 9 percent of land. Significant public safety issues accompany drug trafficking.

Cases of harassment against Forest Service employees have significantly increased since last year. The number of bomb threats to Forest Service facilities have rapidly increased since the April 19 bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building.

This is of grave concern to the leadership of USDA and the Forest Service.

Interested Parties: White House, Congress, Law Enforcement Agencies, USDA employees

Actions to Date:

- Reorganized Law Enforcement and Investigations to report directly to the Chief.

- Obtained commitment of support from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) for resource crime investigation and threats against employees.

- Developed safety-related training materials for all employees.

Additional Actions for Deputy Under Secretarial Consideration:

- Work with Congress to gain help and understanding of law enforcement issues.

- Help to institute a case tracking system to increase cooperation with state and local authorities and comply with Uniform Crime Reporting requirements.

- Help to increase cooperative relationships with the Department of Justice.

- Reassure employees of Department support and encourage their use of law enforcement services.

CURRENT ISSUES

Seventh American Forest Congress

The Seventh American Forest Congress convenes in Washington, DC, February 20-26, 1996, to develop shared vision, principles, and recommendations for the protection and sustainable management of all of America's forests into the 21st Century. The theme of the Congress is "Many Voices...A Common Vision." Over 120 organizations including the Forest Service are sponsoring this grass-roots Congress, and an estimated 2,000 people are expected to attend. By making use of the Congress' findings in our policies, long-term strategic planning, and activities, USDA and the Forest Service can and help the President fulfill his commitment to achieve sustainable forest management by the year 2000.

1996 Farm Bill

The first session of the 104th Congress did not pass a Farm Bill. The year 1990 was the first time a Forestry Title was part of a Farm Bill. The 1990 Farm Bill Forestry Title established a broad array of permanent authorities, including the Forest Stewardship Program, Stewardship Incentive Program, Forest Legacy Program, and expanded authority for Urban and Community Forestry Assistance. Forestry issues also crossed over into the 1990 Farm Bill Rural Development Title, which created authority to assist National Forest dependent communities.

Water Resources

Judicial decisions remain pending in State courts of eight Western States over tens of thousands of claims to water filed by the U.S. Department of Justice on behalf of Federal land management agencies, including the Forest Service. These claims under either State or Federal laws include both consumptive uses such as drinking water, watering of permitted livestock and wildlife, firefighting, and also in-stream uses such as recreational boating, natural channel maintenance, wilderness, and fish habitat maintenance. Controversy is high over who owns these rights, their dates of priority and proof of first use, and the roles of Federal and State governments in these matters. Related to water right adjudications, determining the appropriate level of environmental protection to be considered in the renewal of the 20-year period special use authorization for water diversions and storage reservoirs located on National Forest System lands continues to be of concern to permit holders and to some Members of Congress. Over 1,000 permits are up for renewal in the next two years.

Timber Sale Program

The amount of timber sold from national forests in FY 1995 has declined to about 2.9 billion board feet, compared with over 10 billion board feet (bbf) through most of the 1980's. Harvest levels, which lag behind year of sale levels by a couple of years, have also fallen to 3.9 bbf, compared with harvests of 11 to 12 bbf in the 1980's. Environmental concerns have increased, challenging both proposed and existing sales and increasing the proposed cancellation or suspension of a large number of sales. The low timber sale level will continue to adversely affect many rural communities.

Tongass Land Management Plan Revision

The Tongass NF is currently working on a third draft forest plan revision and accompanying EIS. A supplement to the draft EIS was released in August 1991, to reflect the then newly passed Tongass Timber Reform Act (TTRA) of 1990. Since that time, additional scientific information has become available, which has resulted in additional alternatives, a third draft forest plan revision and EIS. Tongass NF personnel will be briefing the Secretary, Under Secretary, and Chief during the week of February 19-23. All draft documents will be finalized by February 29 with the draft published by mid-March. Following the required 90-day public comment period, forest personnel will analyze public comments, make any final adjustments to the plan, and publish the final plan and EIS by August, 1996. The single most significant issue is the allowable sale quantity (the maximum timber volume that could be sold over a period of 10 years) and its potential effects on other forest resources. Many residents in Southeast Alaska are dependent on one or more national forest resources for economic or cultural reasons.

Enhance Assistance to Private Forest Landowners

Timber harvest on Federal lands is declining and nonindustrial private forest lands are coming under increasing pressure to provide more of the Nation's wood supply. Forty-two million acres (16 percent) of the Nation's nonindustrial private forest lands are in poor condition because of overharvesting, which has left these lands in a depleted condition. These acres are important environmentally and for future wood supplies and carbon sequestration. To maintain the productivity of these lands and ensure a sustainable domestic supply of timber and wood products, it is important to ensure adequate preharvest planning, reforestation, and the use of multiple-resource stewardship practices by private landowners.

Secretarial Review of the Federal Wildland Fire Policy and Programs

The final report on the Federal Wildland Fire Policy was accepted by the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior on January 20, 1996. In their acceptance letter, the Secretaries directed the Chief, along with the heads of the Interior agencies, to implement the Federal policy. A joint implementation strategy is to be developed by March 1, 1996.

Air Tankers

The Forest Service uses air tankers to fight wildland fires. To defray costs, the Forest Service entered into an Historic Aircraft Exchange program with the air tanker industry. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) determined that the Forest Service lacked authority to enter into this exchange program. The Agency is working with Congress to develop legislation to permit such exchanges.

Ski Area Permit Fees

The Forest Service is reevaluating ski area permit fees to develop a better method for determining the permit fees for ski areas operating on National Forests. The new permit fee system will reflect fair market value and guarantee a fair return to the taxpayer for the use of their public lands. The old process of determining ski area permit fees was vulnerable to procedural and legal challenges. The Congress is also considering legislation that would replace the existing system.

Mining Law Reform

For several years the environmental community has focused major efforts on revision of the U.S. Mining Law of 1872, which gave American citizens and corporations a statutory right to access available public lands for exploration and development of minerals. At issue are access, self-initiation, security of tenure, larger royalty fees to the U.S. Treasury, price for fee title, and environmental standards.

New World Mine

The New World Mine Project is a gold, silver, and copper mine proposed on private and Gallatin National Forest lands north of Cooke City, MT, by Crown Butte Mines, Inc. A team of State and Federal agency specialists and technical consultants, led by the Montana Department of State Lands and the Forest Service, currently are studying the potential impacts of the proposed mine. A draft EIS is expected in early spring. The proposed project is extremely controversial due to its proximity to Yellowstone National Park.

Hazardous Waste Sites

The total liability for cleanup of some 2,500 identified hazardous wastes sites on NFS lands is estimated at \$2.5 billion. This includes the cost of natural resource damage restoration. The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), which governs action at these sites, is up for reauthorization. Issues involve delegation of CERCLA authority to the States; ensuring lands transferred from other Federal agencies, such as Mare Island and Joliet Arsenal) are uncontaminated prior to acceptance; inventorying and evaluating some 25,000 abandoned mine sites; obtaining adequate program funding; pursuing responsible parties to take cleanup action; and establishing our lead agency role on NFS lands.

Financial Integrity

As a result of a FY 1992 Office of Inspector General audit, the Forest Service received unfavorable audit reports on its financial statement. We are continuing to receive unfavorable findings in audit reports related to fiscal and internal control reporting of our financial status and our real property management information system. We are working closely with interested parties such as oversight committees, Department, OMB, and GAO to resolve audit issues.

Status of Audit Implementation

A focus in the financial area will be the Secretary's Report to Congress on the Status of Audit Implementation, which will cover unresolved issues accumulating from prior audits, such as inaccurate obligation reporting, failure to report property values, and losses of revenues and misuse of funds. The Forest Service is working with the Chief Financial Officer to implement the Foundation Financial Information System at the National Finance Center as the major step toward resolving many of the basic deficiencies. This will greatly improve our ability to report FS financial status in an accurate and timely manner.

County Supremacy Movement

Approximately 75 counties in the West, many of which include significant amounts of NFS land, have adopted land use ordinances which purport to restrict Federal land management activities. The number of such laws is growing.

PACFISH-INFISH

PACFISH is interim direction for managing habitat to maintain management options and assist in the recovery of the Pacific salmon and steelhead on Federal lands administered by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management in eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, and portions of northern California. INFISH is interim direction for habitat management to maintain options for inland native fish on national forests in eastern Oregon, eastern Washington, Idaho, western Montana, and portions of Nevada. Both sets of interim direction will be replaced by longer term direction being prepared through two EIS's. Preparation of these EIS's and their use for amending forest plans would have been affected by language in the FY 1996 Interior Appropriations bill if it becomes law. The President vetoed the bill, in part, because of that language.

Columbia River Basin Environmental Impact Statements and Assessment

The two Interior Columbia River Basin project draft EIS's, prepared jointly by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, will be released in May 1996. One draft EIS covers the areas of Oregon and Washington not addressed in the President's Forest Plan for the northern spotted owl; the other draft EIS covers the Snake River Basin portion of the greater Columbia River Basin in Idaho and Montana. The draft EIS's will use data from the Scientific Assessment for Ecosystem Management in the Interior Columbia Basin, a scientific document providing social, economic, and biological data on a basinwide scale. At present it is still uncertain whether the project will go to a final EIS and records of decisions, because agreement has not yet been reached between Congress and the Administration on this issue. Completion of final EIS's may lead to individual Forest Plan amendments of the 17 National Forests included in the geographical area.

Effects of Current Endangered Species Act on Forest Service

The Forest Service provides habitat for over 280 species of plants and animals listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. National Forests and Grasslands are some of the remaining critical pieces in the puzzle of maintaining and managing our heritage of biological diversity. The Forest Service is involved in many issues relating to listed species:

Grizzly Bear. The Forest Service is involved in an extremely successful interagency grizzly bear management program. Problems with certain bears eating cattle and appropriate bear density are being worked out. The Fish and Wildlife Service is completing an environmental impact statement for reintroduction of the grizzly bear in the Bitterroot Mountains in Montana and Wyoming where a partnership of moderate environmental groups and timber interests are supporting unique solutions to returning the grizzly bear to the ecosystem.

Marbled Murrelet. The marbled murrelet is a threatened species of seabird, listed in Oregon, Washington, and California due to the extensive loss of nesting habitat. Logging in both privately owned and Federal old-growth forests is the primary factor for listing this species. Current controversy surrounding the murrelet is over the 318 timber sales, specifically mentioned in the Rescission Act, and the interpretation of the "known to be nesting" phrase used in the law. The recent court ruling interpreting the phrase has been appealed.

California Spotted Owl. The final EIS for the protection of the California spotted owl, a Forest Service sensitive species, is close to completion. The owl's decline is tied to habitat loss from timber harvest and other activities. The decision is expected to be highly controversial and will

probably be litigated due to timber harvest levels.

Mexican Spotted Owl. The final EIS for the Mexican spotted owl is also close to completion. The Mexican spotted owl was listed as a threatened species due to habitat loss from timber harvest. The EIS is closely coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Plan for the Mexican spotted owl. It will probably be litigated due to timber harvest levels, although the reduction is mainly due to other issues.

Red-Cockaded Woodpecker. The prospects for the recovery of the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker look much more promising due to the partnership of Federal management, research and private industry. The EIS is almost complete. Due to changes in timber harvest levels, some controversy is expected.

Wolf Reintroduction

The reintroduction of the gray wolf into Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho is the final step in a long, controversial process. The 12 wolves released on national forest lands may represent the last of the reintroduction effort. These top predators are expected to attract an extra \$23 million per year to communities near Yellowstone according to a Montana economics professor.

Olympic Games

The Forest Service will host venues of the 1996 Summer Olympics and the 2002 Winter Olympics. These are opportunities for visitors to both Olympic Games to visit the national forests and for increased visibility for the Forest Service. The Ocoee River, flowing through the Cherokee National Forest (TN), is the site for whitewater slalom canoeing and kayaking. Together with the State of Tennessee, Tennessee Valley Authority, and others, the whitewater course has been reengineered to accommodate the Olympics event. The Wasatch-Cache National Forest (UT) is the site of the Olympics signature skiing events and will be the backdrop for the Winter Games. The Agency has already begun planning for this opportunity.

Snow Basin Exchange Bill

Both the House and Senate are considering bills that would authorize and direct the Secretary of Agriculture to exchange 1,320 acres of Federal lands within the Cache National Forest in Utah to the Sun Valley Company, the owner of the Snowbasin Ski Resort. This ski resort is the host site for 2002 Winter Olympic Games and the base facilities would be located on forest lands to be acquired by the company in the exchange. The Forest Service has testified that the Administration supports the objectives of the legislation; however, technical amendments addressing concerns with some of the provisions have been offered.

American Indian-Native American Relationships

On April 29, 1994, President Clinton issued a memorandum on Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments. In order to improve implementation of these principles, a final reference, "Forest Service National Resource Book on American Indian and Alaska Native Relations" will be completed in the spring of 1996.

Alaska Subsistence

As a result of rulings by the Alaska Supreme Court (ANILCA, 1989) and in particular the Ninth Circuit Court (Katie-John, 1995), jurisdiction of Federal subsistence management has recently been extended to include all waters in

which the United States has reserved water rights. The Departments of Agriculture and Interior manage fishing and hunting on Federal public lands in Alaska (approximately 200 million acres or 60 percent of the land). The Ninth Circuit decision is being appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. Proposed regulations have been drafted, expected to be published February 1996, generally extending jurisdiction for Federal subsistence hunting and fishing regulation to inland waters within the boundaries of Federal reservations within Alaska, but not to marine waters. The Forest Service budget allocated to the subsistence program has historically averaged about \$1 million annually but as a result of the recent Ninth Circuit Court decision may escalate to more than \$13 million annually.

AmeriCorps

Under the National Community Service Trust Act of 1993, the AmeriCorps program provides opportunities to Americans, 17 years and older, to serve their country by addressing the Nation's critical education, human, public safety, and environmental needs at the community level. The FY 1996 Forest Service planning and budget advice included \$9.4 million program for AmeriCorps. The series of short-term continuing resolutions has prevented startup of the program this year. Program implementation also is dependent on reprogramming approval from the Appropriations Committees.

Forest Service Multicultural Organization

In March, 1991, the Forest Service set forth the Agency's multicultural goals and strategies in a report titled, "Toward A Multicultural Organization." The six focus areas to accomplish the objectives of becoming a multicultural organization are: training and development, work environment, outreach and recruitment, standards of accountability, work and family, and recognition. Implementation of strategies to accomplish these goals is ongoing. The leadership has officially recognized five employee groups (the African American Strategy Group, the Hispanic Employee Association, the Asian/Pacific Islanders Employee Association, the American Indian Council, and Pathfinders for Persons with Disabilities) to help the Agency become a multicultural organization. In December, 1995, two Forest Service employees filed a Title VII Class Action and Individual Employment Discrimination/Civil Rights Complaint against the Secretary of Agriculture. The case was filed in U. S. District Court for the Northern District of California. The Agency is waiting a ruling from the court to determine if the case will receive certification as a class action.

Downsizing

Since our downsizing efforts began in 1992, the Forest Service has reduced its permanent workforce through a combination of employment freezes, separation incentives, early retirement, and an aggressive priority placement program. The number of permanent full-time employees has been cut from over 33,000 in September, 1992 to just under 29,000 in December, 1995. The number of full time equivalent (FTE) years of work expended has been reduced from 43,327 in 1992 to 38,330 in 1995. Because most employees willing to leave voluntarily have been accommodated, continued reductions in the budget indicate that tools such as further buyouts or selective reductions in force may be necessary.

Forest Service Research RIF Authority Request and Location Closures

Under the FY 1996 Conference budget, Forest Research estimated a total of 235 unfunded positions due to a reduction in funding. Through transfers and attrition, Research has reduced this number to 162 unfunded employees.

Unfunded employees must be paid through this fiscal year, causing Research to face additional funding shortages for programs already operating under reduced budgets. Furthermore, Research faces a high probability of additional budget reductions in FY 1997 and more unfunded positions. Minimum estimated time to implement a reduction in force (RIF) is 120 days from the time authority is approved until employee separation. Without RIF authority for FY 1996, the impacts of budget reductions on the productivity and output of the Research organization are accelerated. Thus, it is imperative that RIF authority be granted to Forest Service Research as soon as possible. Six Research lab locations (Illinois, Alaska, Georgia, Oregon, and Mississippi) of 77 will be closed, and 17 Research Work Units of 185 will be terminated due to location closures or mergers of units.

National Forest Foundation

The National Forest Foundation (NFF), established in 1990 as a charitable, nonprofit District of Columbia corporation, encourages and accepts donations and gifts for the benefit of the Forest Service; conducts activities that further the purposes of the National Forest System consistent with forest plans, and provides and encourages educational, technical and other assistance supporting multiple use, research, and cooperative forestry. NFF is dedicated to promoting conservation and the wise use of natural resources throughout the United States and the world community. The Foundation, which has an Executive Director, is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture for terms of 6 years. The Chief of the Forest Service is an ex-officio, nonvoting member of the Board.