

SCOMM

99:25

Alaska State Legislature

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Judiciary Committee

Vice Chairman.
Transportation Committee

Member.
Resources Committee
Western Legislative Forestry Task Force



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Senator Robin L. Taylor

Sponsor Statement

Senate Joint Resolution No. 12

**Before the House Special Committee
on World Trade and State-Federal Relations**

March 21, 1995

Early in December, the U.S. Forest Service announced its Reinvention Plan. A copy of that half-inch thick document is on file in my office, for those who care to indulge in detail. Believe me, the devil is in the detail.

Briefly, this plan would centralize decision making in Washington D.C. Such a policy flies in the face of President Clinton's Executive Order No. 12875, which calls for "enhancing intergovernmental partnerships". It also puts lie to Vice-President Gore's "Report on Reinventing Government", with its stated goals of "empowering state and local governments" and "decentralizing decision-making power".

Under "Reinvention", regional forest supervisors and other front line leaders who now have decision-making authority would be replaced with four people "leadership" teams answerable only to the Chief of the Forest Service and the Secretary of Agriculture.

Gone is any pretense of involving local and state governments in USFS decisions. The plan goes so far as to consolidate the regional offices now located in Alaska and Montana to a central office in Oregon.

District A:

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Sponsor Statement -SJR 12

Page Two

SJR 12 calls for suspension of this plan and true partnership meetings with states, communities, and tribal governments. I have suggested a committee substitute which would add ANSCA corporations to that list. The goal would be the development of a new plan, one that would involve the affected entities up front. The "Reinvention" scheme goes far beyond the relocation of regional offices. If left to stand, it will mean a new era of Forest Service policy dictated from on high, without consulting the very people most impacted by those policies.

JOHN A. SANDOR

P O Box 21135
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1135

PHONE: (907) 586-2497
FAX: (907) 586-2490

January 12, 1995

M.J. (Jean) Hassell
Commissioner
Arizona State Land Department
1616 West Adams, Suite 329
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

FAX: (602) 542-2590

Dear Commissioner Hassell:

Thank you for sending Governor Fife Symington's Arizona Land Policy 2000 draft proposal and related information. The State of Arizona's "reinvention of government" strategy is an excellent proposal to break the gridlock that has paralyzed forest management in virtually all of the western states.

I was surprised to read that this strategy was formally presented to Secretary Babbitt (copy to Secretary Espy) as early as July 14, 1993 - yet this unique and promising strategy is not represented in the U.S. Forest Service's Strategic Plan approved by Secretary Espy last month. In fact, the new Forest Service Strategic Plan actually reduces decentralized decisionmaking in states and communities in favor of centralizing federal decisionmaking with the Chief of the Forest Service and Secretary of Agriculture personnel in Washington, D.C.

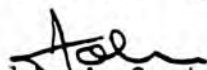
The State of Alaska, Montana and others have protested the approval of this new strategic plan without consultation of the elected leaders of our states. It appears your Governor and the Arizona Congressional Delegation were not informed and involved in the Forest Service's process of developing its new Strategic Plan.

Representatives of the Northern Rocky Mountain Retirees Association and others from Alaska, Idaho, etc. will be meeting in Missoula, Montana to consider a formal response to the new Forest Service Strategic Plan. A draft of a paper to be considered at that meeting is enclosed.

Please note the reference to Governor Symington's proposal in the paper. I believe the Governor's strategy is right on target, so will be recommending to the assembled group that we endorse that and other state/local government steps to bring decisionmaking authority to states and local governments. I hope this reference to the Governor's strategy is acceptable to your state.

Once again, I appreciated receiving this information, and the opportunity to again visit with you on crucial resource management issues that are so important to the people of our states.

Sincerest regards,


John A. Sandor



STATE OF ARIZONA
EXECUTIVE OFFICE

FIFE SYMINGTON
Governor

May 19, 1994

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt
Secretary, Department of the Interior

The Honorable Mike Espy
Secretary, Department of Agriculture

Dear Secretary Babbitt, Secretary Espy:

On Wednesday, May 18, I addressed an assembly of public land "stakeholders" on the topic of creating a vision for public land management in Arizona. By design, this Forum was intended to provide state leaders with an opportunity to formulate a cohesive strategy for addressing land management challenges.

During the course of public discussion over issues, such as Rangeland Reform and Mining Law Reform, I have grown increasingly aware of the structural difficulties that prevent professional land managers from doing their jobs effectively. Some of these impediments are endemic to a democracy. Others, however, are the result of the evolution of the state and federal land agencies and their authorities. This evolution has not resulted in a rational design. In fact, my contention is that this structure is designed for gridlock.

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the speech I delivered on Wednesday, as well as a proposal for correcting these structural deficiencies. As a result of this meeting, I expect some modifications in this proposal may be necessary before it is formally presented to you for review and response. However, I wanted to give you an opportunity to review the initial offering. It occurs to me that this kind of reorganization is consistent in many ways with some of your proposals for the development of state standards and guidelines in the latest version of Rangeland Reform.

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt
The Honorable Mike Espy
May 19, 1994
Page Two

This proposal is not an effort to "take over federal lands", to "gut the Endangered Species Act" or to, in any way, change the legal mandates that govern your operations. It is simply an attempt to bring management decisions out of the Courts and national political arena and back to ground level where it belongs.

My staff and I are prepared to meet with you at any time to address questions or concerns you may have with this proposal. In the near future, it may be valuable for us to sit down together and work through this matter in a very detailed way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fife Symington", followed by a stylized flourish.

Fife Symington
GOVERNOR

FS/jk

Enclosures

LAND POLICY 2000

delivered May 18, 1994

Flagstaff, Arizona

by Governor Fife Symington

I want to start off my remarks today with what may be a controversial statement. Bruce Babbitt is right. We do live in a NEW WEST. Our region has experienced very dramatic changes in our demographics, our culture and our economic base.

Secretary Babbitt thinks that means that there is a new political ethic in the West that supports protection of our natural beauty, and promotion of environmental values. Once again, I think he is right.

As I have traveled this state, I have met the rancher who has changed his grazing methods. He is working to protect riparian areas, to ensure that native grasses thrive, and to prevent his cattle from destroying the forage he needs for the future. He is also teaching others what he knows.

I have met the miner who prefers to live in a small community -- away from the bright and dangerous lights of the city. On weekends he takes the kids fishing in the stream that runs by the mine where he works.

I have met the environmental activist who put aside his preconceptions, and spent some time talking to his opponents. And he discovered that he and the rancher agreed about a lot of things.

And I have met the logger who has worked in Arizona's forests, and who has seen the devastation of the Dude Fire. He is trying to find a way to use timber management as a method to protect the big yellow belly pines and the wildlife. He wants to take out some of the smaller trees that natural fires would have eliminated safely before there got to be too many.

**We are the
ones fighting
for change.
Above all, we
are fighting for
common
ground.**

But Secretary Babbitt thinks these people are fighting to protect the status quo. I know that we are the ones fighting for change. Above all, we are fighting for common ground.

I don't mind a good fight, but I am tired of the way the public lands debate has been carried on.

What I propose that we begin to talk about today is a fundamentally different management structure for public lands in the West. Not an untested, unknown formula, but rather a method for enhancing the ability of individuals and governments to make affirmative decisions to carry out the activities we agree are necessary.

The fundamental test of legitimacy for any government is this: If it cannot function effectively, efficiently and with purpose, then it should not pretend to. It should not hinder the efforts of people to do good works. And today, it is doing just that.

The federal government should not hinder the efforts of people to do good works. And today, it is doing just that.

This is not a matter of doing battle with the federal government. I am not opposed to fighting battles where I believe it is appropriate. Battles can and should be fought when the federal government attempts to take on responsibilities it should not; or when it attempts to prevent states and communities carrying out their legitimate responsibilities and activities.

But my proposal today is not about fighting. It is about ideas. No battle is worth fighting unless you have an idea for a better way.

I believe the federal government does have a legitimate interest in the condition of our lands, and in ensuring its sustainability, and the utilization of these lands for a variety of purposes, including the protection of wildlife populations.

But there is a disconnect today between the federal interest in lands, and their ability to do what is necessary on behalf of those lands. Everyone is frustrated. Wildlife managers, hikers, miners, cattlemen, birders — the sense of helplessness and concern is everywhere.

In 1992, the U.S. Forest Service was described as becoming "a Stalinesque bureaucracy that is contemptuous of fair play and the rule of law in a democracy." That complaint did not come from an out of work logger. It came from the Sierra Club Chair in Montana.

What is the state of public land management in Arizona today? We have a situation where important resource decisions are made outside of Arizona. Often, these are by individuals in regional offices whose interest is uniformity, not diversity. If our lands were uniform, then that structure would be rational.

Between these five agencies, four are managed within distinct jurisdictions. For example, the BLM and the Fish and Wildlife Service operate in the Department of Interior. But the Forest Service is in the Department of Agriculture.

2. The talent in federal and state agencies exists to undertake a change of this magnitude. This proposal requires a change in culture as much as structure. Without the personnel talent, structural change will have little effect.
3. In order to carry out this proposal, we must abide by all existing federal public laws and state statutes that mandate the utilization and protection of this states' natural resources. We are not looking here for an exemption from federal requirements. Instead, we hope to demonstrate that a new structure can more effectively manage these lands within the context of federal and state requirements.
4. The five agencies selected for this proposal have obvious redundancies and duplication. Other agencies may be considered for future inclusion, but these first five are the most logical to start with.
5. By placing the management structure in closer proximity to the residents that live here, we empower Arizonans to have a powerful impact on their own future, and the future of their children. Without this power, we become insulated from the consequences of our own actions.
6. Multiple use lands can and should be managed with an integrated ecosystem focus.
7. The flow of public funds should continue from the existing federal and state fund sources. Revenues from the land should accrue back to the appropriate jurisdiction.
8. By improving management process, and eliminating unnecessary structure, we enhance the availability of resources to perform the functions of management. Our preliminary estimates indicate a savings in personnel costs of ten to fifteen percent. Additional savings would be possible due to the potential consolidation of offices and the reduction of federal positions outside Arizona.

The new Arizona Resource Management Agency would consist of several important functions:

- A central office with zone and field offices throughout the state. I have a map to demonstrate a possible configuration.
- A Natural Resources Advisory Council, consisting of federal, state and public stakeholders to advise the agency director on policy matters.
- A Natural Resources Appeals Commission which would have quasi-judicial responsibilities to review decisions by the agency.

While each of those programs has problems unique to the subject, I am convinced that land management is in dire need of the same state autonomy.

It is a dramatic departure from the way public land management has developed over the last century. The controversies that have sparked the so-called "Sagebrush Rebellion" and the recent debates over mine reform and rangeland reform are symptoms of the underlying problem. The bitter arguments over public land policy are self-perpetuating and self-defeating. The constituency that is damaged directly by this gridlock on the public lands is the public.

I offer this idea as a starting point. Above all, we do need to establish common ground between competing and diverse interests. There is a lot of ground to cover.

The bitter arguments over public land policy are self-perpetuating and self-defeating.

Today, and in the weeks and months to come, your task is to analyze this proposal, and to suggest areas and ideas for its improvement and refinement. All such suggestions will be seriously considered.

If we do live in a New West, why should our institutions of government be restrained by traditional ways of thinking and doing. We need to unchain our citizens from the shackles of bureaucracy, and create a new order where the citizens have a voice, and an opportunity to shape the vision for the land in which they live.

* * * * *

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA

1995 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

B Bill Version: SJR 12

(S) Publish Date: 2/14/95

Revision Date: Original

Dept Affected: Natural Resources

Title: Relating to the United States Department of

BRU: Resource Development

Agriculture, Forest Service;... strategic plan known as "Reinvention..."

Component: Forest Management & Development

Sponsor: Senator(s) Taylor, Pearce

Requestor: _____

Component Serial No. 435

Expenditures/Revenues

(Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99	FY00	FY01
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
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FUND SOURCE

(Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1006 GF/MHTIA						
Other						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY95) cost: \$

None

POSITIONS

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANALYSIS:

(Attach a separate page if necessary)

There is no fiscal impact associated with implementation of this resolution.

Prepared by: Tom Boutin, Director

Phone: 465-3379

Division: Forestry

Date: 9-Feb-95

Approved by Commissioner: [Signature]

Date: 2/9/95

Agency: Natural Resources

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Senator Robin L. Taylor

MEMORANDUM

**TO: Representative Ramona Barnes, Chairman
House WTR Committee**

FROM: Senator Robin L. Taylor R.L.T.

DATE: 3/6/95

REF: Hearing Request - SJR 12

**Please consider this to be my formal request for a hearing on
Senate Joint Resolution 12 at your earliest convenience.**

**The Clinton administration's plan to "re-invent" the U.S. Forest
Services raises basic issues related to the relationship between
the federal government and local entities. The impacts of the
plan extend well beyond the relocation of the regional office in
Juneau.**

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

District A:

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Official Business

Alaska State Legislature

State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Ramona L. Barnes

RE: Summary of CSSJR 12 (RES)

DATE: March 21, 1995

The following is a summary of CSSJR 12, Relating to "Reinvention of the Forest Service".

The resolution would put the Legislature on record in opposition to the "Reinvention of the Forest Service" strategic plan which was approved by former Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy. It asks that imposition of the plan be suspended pending review by Congress and consultation with local governments. It also requests that the Forest Service conduct meetings with states, communities, tribal governments and ANCSA corporations to develop a new plan.

The measure notes that timber commodities are a primary value of forest management and asks that compensation for Forest Service employees be linked to timber production. Finally, the resolution asks for decentralized decision making to allow more effective management of ecosystems.

The committee substitute differs from the original version of the resolution in that it includes ANCSA corporations in the list of entities to be included in meetings with the Forest Service.

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Sponsor Statement -SJR 12
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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

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

Reply to: 1200

Date: December 6, 1994

Subject: Forest Service Reinvention Plan

To: Forest Service Employees

Enclosed is the Summary of our reinvention report approved by Secretary Espy. This report is a strategic plan for creating the Forest Service of the future. It was developed in the spirit of President Clinton's National Performance Review with extensive participation of our employees and members of the public.

We have deliberately taken a comprehensive and thoroughgoing approach because of the extraordinary challenges faced by our Agency over the past several years. Our employees and stakeholders believe significant change in the way we do our business is necessary to enhance the confidence and trust of the people we serve.

We have electronically mailed a copy of the complete report to your unit's mailbox. It should soon be available for your use. Hard copies will be arriving soon to your unit by surface mail.

In January, we will conduct an interactive video conference to answer questions you may have about the report and our implementation strategies. We hope that you will take the opportunity to read the report between now and then. Further details on the conference will be forthcoming.

Reinvention is an evolutionary process that will continue over a prolonged period. As we phase in various aspects of reinvention, we will use every tool at our disposal to minimize impacts on Forest Service people. These tools include buyouts, retraining, retirements, attrition, transfers within and between agencies, and reassignments.

This is an exciting and challenging time for the Forest Service. We know you are already working hard to create the Forest Service of the future. We sincerely thank you for your efforts.

Keep it up!

/s/ Jack Ward Thomas

JACK WARD THOMAS
Chief

Enclosure

Forest Service Reinvention Executive Summary

Introduction

- We believe significant change is needed in the way we do business in order to perform our duties in a manner that enhances the confidence and trust of the public. Because of the extraordinary challenges faced by our Agency over the past several years, we have deliberately taken a comprehensive and thorough approach to Forest Service reinvention. Our goal is to improve customer service and build the public's trust through improved efficiency and demonstrated competence.

Forest Service Reinvention Report

The newly released report, "Reinvention of the Forest Service: The Changes Begin," proposes a description of the Forest Service of the future and ways to bring it into being. The report is a strategic document. It was developed in the spirit of President Clinton's National Performance Review with extensive participation of Forest Service employees and members of the public. It does not attempt to provide solutions to site-specific resource issues. Nor does it, in general, prescribe sizes or structures of organizations below the regional level. Instead the report focuses on the purpose, outcomes, culture, structure, and work for the Agency. However, a number of specific actions have been, are being, and will be taken in support of the concepts described in the report. This summary addresses many of those actions as well as the broader plan for creating the Forest Service of the future.

A number of the changes described in the report are internally focused on improving how Agency employees work with each other. Others describe how we can work better with the people we serve. Employees will notice a dramatic difference in the organization. We hope those outside the Agency who rely on local offices for service will notice an improvement in that service and healthier forests and rangelands.

Following are the key elements of the Forest Service reinvention proposal. Clearly, some of the proposed actions will require close coordination and dialogue amongst the Administration, Congress, and the people we serve. We plan to forward more specific details about these proposals to Congress in January.

Purpose and Outcomes

The purpose of the Forest Service is to promote the sustainability of ecosystems and to provide excellent public service through conservation leadership. Our land ethic is to promote the sustainability of ecosystems by ensuring their health, diversity, and productivity. Our service ethic is to tell the truth, obey the law, work collaboratively, and use appropriate scientific information. The phrase "caring for the land and serving people" captures the Forest Service mission.

It follows that our desired outcomes are sustainable ecosystems and public service. Sustaining ecosystems, because they provide the foundation for all life, is our first priority. Public service, including high-quality customer service, is a partnership with society to meet people's needs for natural resources - uses, values, products, and services - within the bounds of ecosystem management.

Culture

True improvement begins inside an organization, crossing all internal and external boundaries. Internally, the Forest Service will recognize and build upon our multicultural, multidisciplinary composition. We will stress sensitivity to others as a primary feature of our culture. We will work in an innovative, creative, and people-oriented environment, often in teams. Collaborative processes will characterize our internal and external work relationships, and we will emphasize cooperation and reward teams and quality teamwork. Teamwork and shared leadership will be critical as employees help each other to balance career and personal needs. Lifelong learning will be a fundamental component of employee development in the Forest Service of the future.

Externally, we must gain the confidence of the people we serve - the American people. To be successful in our endeavors, we will need continuous guidance from the American public as to what works and what doesn't. We will become active members of the communities in which we live and work. We will also engage in greater levels of intra- and inter-agency cooperation. We must recognize that the Forest Service can learn a great deal from other land managers. We must also be willing and able to work across international boundaries to solve problems efficiently.

Structure, Roles, and Work of the Agency

The structure of the Forest Service will be designed around five broad program areas - National Forest System (NFS), Operations (OPS), Research and Development (R&D), State and Private Forestry (S&PF), and International Forestry (IF) and in the framework of a national office and seven regional offices (see figure 1). Regional offices will be located in Sacramento, CA; Portland, OR; Albuquerque, NM; Ogden, UT; Denver, CO; Milwaukee, WI; and Atlanta, GA. This is a reduction from the former organization of nine National Forest System regions, eight Research stations, and one State and Private Forestry area. Regional boundaries will be realigned to more closely follow natural ecological boundaries with the goal of improved coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and other natural resource agencies resulting in healthier forests and rangelands. Where regional boundaries on state lines would split a NF, that entire forest will be assigned to one region or the other.

The boundaries shown in figure 1 imply several major changes in FS operations:

1. NFS, S&PF, and R&D all have the same regional boundaries. This means that individual Forests, S&PF units, and R&D units would be reorganized to conform to these boundaries.
2. The shifted boundary of the Southeastern Region, formerly the Southern Region, places Virginia in the Eastern Region and the entire states of Texas and Oklahoma in the Southwestern Region.
3. The former Rocky Mountain and Northern Regions, excluding Idaho, are combined into the Northern Plains Region.
4. The Intermountain Regional boundary shifts north and west to encompass the entire State of Idaho and Eastern Oregon and Washington.
5. The Alaska Region and the Pacific Northwest Region are merged.

Within the seven regions, the boundaries of proclaimed NFs and Grasslands will be retained, but they may be grouped into larger administrative units so a single unit may serve parts of several NFs, R&D units, S&PF units, etc., that share a common ecosystem or a common primary management issue. The work among units will be designed for the best ecosystem management and the highest level of public service at the lowest cost.

At the outset, organizational structure below the regional level will be left open to experimentation, learning, and adaptation to local circumstances. Regional leadership teams will work with units at local levels such as NFs, ranger districts, and R&D units to determine where consolidations and collocations are possible. As in the past, decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and based on continued or improved high-quality public service and natural resource management, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. Shared services will also be explored and implemented where feasible across unit boundaries and USDA organizational boundaries and, over time, across other governmental boundaries. Our intention is to continue our basic presence and points of contact at the local level.

To facilitate these changes, we will clarify the roles of each level of the Agency's organization (see figure 2). We will also restructure and streamline the Washington and regional offices to facilitate communications and work across functional boundaries (see figure 3).

In the Forest Service of the future, management will be primarily by teams. Teamwork at all levels will facilitate a streamlined approval process and eliminate excess layers of supervisors. The National Leadership Team will consist of the Chief, Associate Chief, and Deputy Chiefs for NFS, S&PF, OPS, R&D, and IF. Members of Regional Leadership Teams will be the Directors of NFS, S&PF, OPS, and R&D. Although their performance appraisals will emphasize teamwork, Regional Leadership Team members will report directly to the Deputy Chief in their program area.

Many services now delivered by in-house monopolies will be provided through "contracting in" to internal enterprises or teams. Individual units will decide what services they need and are willing to pay for and will contract directly with these enterprises. Contracting in will eliminate unnecessary duplication of skills throughout the Agency, and the option of choosing one

service provider over another will offer a powerful feedback mechanism to service providers. When competition and choice are not options, internal customer satisfaction surveys will be used to gauge the quality of services provided by monopoly enterprises.

Transformation Strategies

The Forest Service is such a large, geographically dispersed, and culturally diverse organization that employees must make an extra effort to be sure the Agency's goals are clear to everyone. To accomplish the objectives of our transformation strategies, we will:

- Ensure that all Forest Service employees understand the Agency's purpose and desired outcomes.
- Examine our current organizational culture to identify those elements that are fundamental to and support, and strengthen our Agency and those that must be eliminated or modified in the future.
- Implement the "Toward a Multicultural Organization" report.
- Provide flexible policies and options on flexitime and flexiplace, dependent care, and travel arrangements.
- Implement newly established standards of customer service that all employees will keep as a pledge to the American people. These standards, created in partnership with our customers, will adapt to the constantly changing needs of our society.
- Use every tool at our disposal to minimize impacts on Forest Service people to achieve desired staffing levels when fewer employees are required.
- Reengineer the Agency's business processes.
- Set standards for and base management decisions on results of monitoring. This will be done with the involvement of our partners.
- Emphasize integrated, cross-disciplinary teams at all levels and branches of the Forest Service organization.
- Seek budget reform and extend greater decisionmaking authority to local units in the development and execution of their budgets, emphasizing integration of budgets across Forest Service programs.
- Establish internal enterprise units to provide for-hire services to an internal market system of competition and choice, keeping needed expertise within the Agency, reducing inefficiency and waste, and eliminating duplication of skills and activities that do not efficiently support Forest Service objectives.
- Strengthen our partnership activities across all organizational, administrative, and functional boundaries.

The vision and transformation strategies contained in this report are the Forest Service's roadmap to the future. With commitment from our employees and support from the people we serve, the Forest Service will be well positioned to be a conservation leader for the 21st century.

Current and Ongoing Actions

Reinvention of the Forest Service is not a destination but a journey; it is an evolutionary process that will continue over a prolonged period. As we phase in various aspects of reinvention, we will use every tool at our disposal to minimize impacts on Forest Service people. These tools include buyouts, retraining, retirements, attrition, transfers within and between agencies, and reassignments.

Many actions consistent with this report have already been taken, while others within our authority will be implemented immediately. We will work closely with Congress on those proposals with which they are particularly concerned. We plan to provide details on these proposals to Congress in January.

Planned Organizational and Operational Changes

Following are key organizational and operational changes that will result from implementation of the proposed Reinvention Plan:

1. Employment in the Washington Office will be reduced by at least 10-20%. Functional staffs will be organized to facilitate interdisciplinary teamwork while retaining technical expertise and points of public contact. (A special team is working now on alternatives for restructuring the staff resources of the national office.) Employees whose work supports field activities will be assigned to appropriate field service locations. The Programs and Legislation Deputy Area will be eliminated and its functions distributed among other program areas. The Chief, Associate Chief, and five Deputy Chiefs will comprise the National Leadership Team to facilitate integration of programs and improve accountability.

Planned completion date for reorganization: September 30, 1995

Planned completion date for personnel reductions: September 30, 1996

2. Regional Offices will be reduced from 9 to 7 with a potential reduction of 300 employees and cost savings of \$17 million.

Planned implementation date: September 30, 1995

Planned completion date: September 30, 1996

3. Research Stations will be reduced from 8 to 7 with expected reduction of 25 employees and cost savings of \$1.5 million.

Planned implementation date: September 30, 1995

Planned completion date: September 30, 1996

4. Revised administrative boundaries will be shared by all Forest Service programs and will be more closely aligned with ecological boundaries. The Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service will establish common administrative boundaries.

Planned implementation date: September 30, 1995

Planned completion date: September 30, 1996

5. Leadership Teams will be established in each Region to facilitate integrated management and develop integrated budgets for the National Forest System, State and Private Forestry, Operations, and Research and Development programs.

Planned implementation date: September 30, 1995

Planned completion date: September 30, 1996

6. Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service Regional Offices will be collocated. The Forest Service will maintain a presence in locations where Regional Offices are closed.

Planned completion date: September 30, 1996

Continuing Actions

We are continuing to move forward with the following actions that support Reinvention:

1. Administrative and Financial Management Consolidation: This USDA initiative will integrate and consolidate the administrative and financial functions of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Forest Service in order to reduce staffing and improve commonality of systems across the Department's Natural Resources and Environment Mission Area. Implementation is scheduled to begin on May 1, 1995.

2. GPRA: The Forest Service requested and was granted pilot status for implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act. Implementation of GPRA is key to improving accountability and reducing duplication in financial and accomplishment reporting. It provides meaningful, useful and reliable annual goals and corporate performance indicators for use in planning, budgeting, monitoring, performance evaluation, and reporting.

3. Budget Reform: We will continue to implement and seek to extend the budget reforms achieved in FY 95, which include: budget structure simplification, integrated funding of projects, and expanded reprogramming authority.

4. Bureau of Land Management and USDA Forest Service Personnel Exchanges: The FS and BLM will work together to promote the exchange of professional and managerial personnel through detail arrangements.

5. Project 615: A contract for information resources technology which will be critical to the Forest Service in addressing complex environmental

problems related to ecosystems management has been awarded. This technology will provide geographic information system capability which is essential for analyzing complex issues relating to management of natural resources.

6. Inventory: We will integrate our resource inventories and carry them out under the leadership of our research branch. We will work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to share information and conduct joint inventories where appropriate.

7. Science/Policy coordination: We will intensify and institutionalize our collaboration between scientists and managers in the decision-making process.

8. International Forestry. We will complete development of a strategic plan for International Cooperation that reflects our vision of conservation leadership, involves the entire Agency, and builds on partnerships with other organizations.

Additional Implementing Actions

The following actions are being taken to implement our Reinvention Plan.

1. Customer Service - Customer service standards that all employees will strive to meet have been established and will be put in place in all offices.

2. Reengineering - A National Reengineering Design Team will be appointed to implement the Reengineering Transformation Strategy contained in our plan. This team will set the agenda and priorities for, and provide oversight to, the critical task of "rethinking and redesigning how we do work in the Forest Service."

3. New Performance Standards - Team work agreements will be established with the National and Regional Leadership Teams to address the outcomes of sustaining ecosystems and high-quality public service. These new straightforward work agreements will improve accountability and serve as models for all supervisors in the Forest Service.

4. Review System and Accountability - The Customer Service Team will redesign the Management Review System to focus on "Conditions of the Land" and "Customer Satisfaction." This redesigned system will be initiated this fiscal year and will be key to accountability for reinvention.

5. Enterprise Fund - We will explore the establishment of an enterprise fund that will provide start-up financing and incentives for innovative ideas such as creating competition for internal services. Funds will be awarded based on competition.

6. Person-in-job - A new position classification process will be established to allow in-place advancement of resource specialists based on growth in capability and expertise. This draws on the principles and

processes used in the classification and advancement of research scientists. Application to other types of specialists will be explored.

Recent Accomplishments

Examples of actions taken during the past two years that support Forest Service reinvention principles include the following:

1. Reduction in Staffing

Since our downsizing efforts began in October 1992, the Agency has reduced its work force by 4,163 permanent positions, from 35,358 to 31,195, (as of August 15, 1994). Adequate staffing will be maintained to assure skills critical to fulfilling the mission are available.

2. Organizational Restructuring

Since January 1993, the Agency has approved eight ranger district consolidations, seven of which have received approvals for office closings. The first four of these, as listed below, have been completed.

Cibola National Forest - Rita Blanca National Grasslands (Texline, TX) Office was closed and consolidated with the Kiowa National Grasslands Office (Clayton, NM).

Plumas National Forest - La Porte Ranger District Office (Challenge, CA) was closed and consolidated with the Oroville Ranger District Office (Oroville, CA).

Plumas National Forest - Greenville Ranger District Office (Greenville, CA) was closed and consolidated with the Quincy Ranger District Office (Blairsden, CA).

Mark Twain National Forest - Willow Springs Ranger District (Willow Springs, MO) was closed and consolidated with the Ava Ranger District Office (Ava, MO).

Plumas National Forest - Milford Ranger District Office (Milford, CA) will close and consolidate with the Beckwourth Ranger District Office (Blairsden, CA).

Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests - Edgefield and Long Cane Ranger Districts were consolidated. The Forest has received approval to close the Edgefield Ranger District Office (Edgefield, SC) and move to Long Cane Ranger District Office (Greenwood, SC). The date of this closing has not been determined.

Kootenai National Forest - The Libby Ranger District Office (Libby, MT) will be closed and consolidated with the Fisher River Ranger District Office (Libby, MT).

Lincoln National Forest - Cloudcroft (Cloudcroft, NM) and Mayhill (Mayhill, NM) Ranger Districts received approval for consolidation. Decisions on office closings are pending.

3. Collaborative Approaches and Sharing Administrative Services

Forest Service units have taken advantage of a number of collaborative opportunities to reduce costs. Examples include:

Region 2 - Streamlined the organization with a focus on the objectives of reinvention and ecosystem management; established shared expertise arrangements with other regions and agencies.

Region 3 - Work force was reduced by 11 percent over the past 3 years; timber and engineering staffs have implemented an aggressive shared services program between forests and regions, resulting in a consolidation of duties with salary and related savings.

Regions 1, 2, 3, and 4 are currently sharing forest management activities such as sales administration, sale contracts, and appraisals.

Region 4's Design Center is currently doing contract facilities design for other regions.

A team for environmental assessment and impact statement preparation is shared among Regions 1, 4, 6, and BLM in four states (Idaho/Montana and Oregon/Washington).

4. Collocation With Other Agencies

Presently, over 60 Forest Service units (about 6 percent), are collocated with other government agencies. Where opportunities exist, we continue to pursue collocation with other agencies as a means of streamlining, sharing resources, and saving rental costs. Examples include:

Region 1 - Beaverhead National Forest shares space with ASCS and SCS. The Jefferson Ranger District and the Deerlodge National Forest (Whitehall, MT) share space with ASCS, SCS, and other government agencies.

Region 3 - In Santa Fe, NM, the National Park Service and the Santa Fe National Forest Supervisor's office are collocated.

The National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, ID, and the Minnesota Interagency Fire Center in Grand Rapids, MN, are outstanding examples of interagency cooperation and collocation. They include the Forest Service, BLM, Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Pacific Southwest Research Station - The Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry (IPIF) in Honolulu, HI, and the Hawaii Department of Forestry and Wildlife are collocated. The Forestry Research Laboratory in Hilo is collocated with the National Park Service office.

5. Technology (Integrated Information Systems)

Major business system technological changes are underway that will produce dramatic efficiencies and better service delivery. Examples include:

Major initiatives to fully automate and integrate Forest Service financial, payroll, and personnel systems internally and with the National Finance Center will provide a seamless automated interface between all functional components. This initiative will eliminate intermediate manual processes and reduce the time required to complete routine business processes.

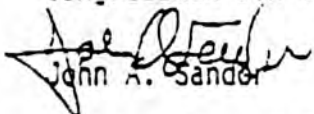
JOHN A. SANDOR

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January 5, 1996
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MEMORANDUM

TO: U.S. Senator Ted Stevens (attention Duane Gibson)
U.S. Senator Frank Murkowski (attention Mike Flanagan)
Congressman Don Young (attention Lloyd Jones)

FROM: 
John A. Sandor

SUBJECT: New U.S. Forest Service Strategic Plan

Enclosed is a paper: "ACTIONS NEEDED TO CORRECT THE SERIOUS FLAWS IN THE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE FOREST SERVICE RECENTLY APPROVED BY USDA SECRETARY ESPY".

This paper was prepared by an ad hoc group of professional resource managers (many retired Forest Service employees) from various parts of the nation who advocate major improvements in the new Strategic Plan for the Forest Service.

We advocate all aspects of this Strategic Plan be put on hold until the new Secretary of Agriculture can review the plan. We also believe the Congress must have oversight of the major changes proposed. It is essential that Governors, State Legislatures and local communities also be partners in the development of any new Strategic Plan for the U.S. Forest Service, which has profound impacts on states and communities who are dependent upon the National Forests. It is imperative that the Forest Service have clearly defined decision-makers within the state who can work with the state, local communities and native corporations/villages, as forest plans are prepared and implemented.

The Northern Rocky Mountain Retirees Association is hosting a meeting on this important issue January 18 in Missoula, Montana. I and others will continue to work closely with this and other regional representatives from different parts of the country. We would like to offer our assistance in providing you and other Members of Congress with whatever information we can to make certain the Strategic Plan finally approved will meet the needs of states and communities dependent on the National Forests.

We are very encouraged by your new leadership roles in Congress.

Thank you.

Enclosure: Paper on the New Forest Service Strategic Plan

cc: Organizations and individuals reviewing the Forest Service Strategic Plan

cc: John Katz, Alaska Governor's Office, Washington, D.C.

PLAN FOR THE FOREST SERVICE RECENTLY APPROVED BY USDA SECRETARY

In various parts of the nation, Forest Service plans and programs have become embroiled in complex appeals and litigation. Forest management activities have been suspended for years. Communities have suffered from the loss of available timber. In some instances, even the harvest of insect, disease infested stands has been stopped, raising the risk of catastrophic fires from the build-up of fuels in unmanaged forests. People within and outside government have recognized the need to deal with these crises situations adversely impacting states and communities.

In a December 5, 1994 memorandum to Forest Service employees, the Chief of the Forest Service reported that "the strategic plan for creating the Forest Service of the future" was approved by Secretary of Agriculture Espy. This strategic plan is described in a paper titled:

"REINVENTION OF THE FOREST SERVICE; The Changes Begin" December 6, 1994

Surprisingly, this far-reaching "strategic plan" was developed without meaningful involvement of key elected leaders including State Governors/Members of the United States Congress or community and tribal government leaders adversely impacted by the consequences and serious problems stemming from the "changes" that have been approved by Secretary of Agriculture Espy shortly before his resignation. In one specific instance, the Governor of one impacted state, formally requested the opportunity to discuss the rumored organizational changes under consideration as early as August 25, 1994, but was denied that opportunity even as this proposal was being prepared for Secretary Espy's approval. 1/

This failure to consult and work closely with state, community and tribal governments is inconsistent with, if not in contradiction of President Clinton's Executive Order No. 12875 "ENHANCING INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS", which was signed by the President on October 26, 1993. 2/

Vice President Gore's "REPORT ON REINVENTING GOVERNMENT" was developed to create "a government that works better and costs less" by "Empowering States and Local Governments" and "Decentralizing Decisionmaking Power". 3/ However, the Forest Service reinvention strategic plan does not empower local governments or include them as true partners. In fact, the strategic plan approved by Secretary Espy eliminates the very foundation of local authority which had the responsibility of working with states, local communities and tribal governments. Regional Foresters, Forest Supervisors and other line officers which were vested with such authorities are being replaced by "leadership teams" of four people. These leadership teams report to counter-part team leaders in Washington, D.C.. Local decisionmaking authorities are thus masked, diffused and withdrawn to Washington, D.C. where only the Chief of the Forest Service and Secretary of Agriculture can truly be held accountable for the policies, decisions and actions of these "leadership teams".

This very fundamental organization change eliminates the local decisionmaking authority and accountability controls that have been in place since the formation of the Forest Service. The USDA Forest Service "THE USE BOOK - Regulations and Instructions for the Use of the National Forest Reserves", issued by the Secretary of Agriculture, July 1, 1906 describes in detail these local responsibility and accountability mechanisms. 4/ Gifford Pinchot's 1914 book, "THE TRAINING OF A FORESTER", described the specific responsibilities of these locally empowered administrators. 5/ The withdrawal and diffusion of local decisionmaking authority is already being implemented in some areas of the nation, which is certain to make Forest Service management less responsive to states, local communities and tribal governments.

The newly defined purpose of the Forest Service to promote the sustainability of ecosystems without specifically retaining the traditional Forest Service objective of promoting community stability has already created serious problems and crises for hundreds of communities dependent upon the National, Forest, State and Private forest ecosystems. Communities and the people who live and depend on the forests are an integral part of ecosystems. The failure to adequately involve states, communities and tribal governments as true partners in the Forest Service Reinvention Project can be expected to create additional crises and problems for communities if the Strategic Plan approved by Secretary Espy is implemented in its present form.

The striking example of the flawed scientific basis for and definition of ecosystems and ecological boundaries is illustrated in the proposed realignment of Forest Service Regional Office boundaries. The Strategic Plan states that "Regional boundaries will be realigned to more closely follow natural, ecological boundaries..." Incredibly, the strategic plan announces the time-table for incorporating Alaska's diverse and unique forest ecosystems under the direction of a Forest Service "leadership team" headquartered in Portland, Oregon! None of Alaska's forest ecosystems are the same as those represented in the Pacific Northwest. As a matter of fact, many of Alaska's boreal forests are more closely related to the ecosystems of the Northern Lake States and adjacent Canadian provinces. Furthermore, the communities and tribal governments in Alaska are also not representative of any communities in the Pacific Northwest.

The history of the United States Forest Service in Alaska outlines the rationale for the establishment of a separate Alaska District (Region) Office in Alaska seventy five years ago in 1919. 6/ Both the ecological and socio-economic basis for that historic decision was apparently overlooked in the Reinvention Project process. Even more troubling, is the fact that Governor Walter J. Hickel's formal August 26, 1994 letter requesting the opportunity to discuss the proposed consolidation of Alaska under the Portland, Oregon office was also ignored. 7/ This oversight of elected leaders in the Reinvention Project was not an isolated example. United States Senator Max Baucus and other elected leaders from the State of Montana were not provided information explaining the rationale for closing the Missoula, Montana Regional Office. 7/

The failure to adequately consult with members of the U.S. Congress and the elected leaders in state governments may be responsible for the strategic plan's lack of consistency with a number of the principal federal laws that were enacted to guide Forest Service activities. As a result, the "strategic plan" for reorganization falls far short of a comprehensive plan for reorganization of the agency. The U.S. Congress has provided direction, through various laws, for the development of a national renewable resource program which "assures that the Nation maintains a natural resource conservation posture that will meet the requirements of our people in perpetuity..." (Reference: National Forest Management Act of 1976, Section 2 (2) (6)) 8/

This new strategic plan, and a number of policy decisions being applied in various parts of the nation, has seemingly turned away from any commitments toward providing a continuous dependable flow of renewable resources to meet the public's needs as directed by the Organic Act, Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960, the NMFA and other Acts of Congress. Under the Forest Service's new direction, the agency is more inclined to present a rather nebulous plan for ecosystem management where resource yields, if any, are simply by products of management with no predictable flows or commitment to supply levels to sustain human life. 8/

If this apparent shift from the objectives outlined in the Forest Service's statutes was purposefully incorporated into the new strategic plan, then the mission of the Forest Service and the purposes of the National Forest needs review and re-examination by the Congress before the agency drifts to its own determination of what is best for the Nation.

What can be the point of a major reorganization of the Forest Service without close direction from the Congress as to mission and purpose for these public lands?

The strategic plan's shift to a centralization of authority, removing the opportunity for meaningful participation in resource management decisions by state and local interests is also not consistent with the agency's statutes, the President's E.O. 12875 or the Secretary of Agriculture's direction to increase the contacts and opportunities for local participation in the agency's activities. The U.S. Congress must surely have the opportunity to determine if such centralization is appropriate for the management of these public lands.

The practicability of implementation of this major reorganization and shift of objectives raises serious doubts as to whether the agency will be effective during the period of reorganization and removal of regional, state and forest-level decision-making authorities and accountability mechanisms. The strategic plan provides no insight as to how such major changes could take place with the "engine still running" to meet the needs of communities and people dependent on the forests. This could result in a protracted period when all available agency energies are directed internally while resource management and production to meet the nation's needs are neglected.

The above are a few examples of the expanding crises and problems stemming from the Forest Service's apparent shift away from its traditional commitment to community stability. The Strategic Plan approved by Secretary Espy will further weaken that commitment. These developments have led to a sharp decline in the morale of professional foresters and other resource managers, technicians and staff who have devoted their lives to the management of forest ecosystems in a true partnership with communities dependent upon the National Forests.

The failure to adequately involve Members of Congress, states, communities and tribal governments in the development of the Reinvention Project's Strategic Plan has led to a loss of trust in the Department of Agriculture's leadership. To help restore this trust, the following action program is suggested.

1. The newly designated Secretary of Agriculture should be asked to review and reconsider the Strategic Plan approved by Secretary Espy last month. The U.S. Congress must have an opportunity to review the plan's conformance to the agency's statutes and other Congressional direction before implementation.
2. The USDA/Forest Service should conduct true partnership meetings with States, communities and tribal governments and jointly develop a new Strategic Plan.
3. The USDA/Forest Service, through this partnership, should identify and implement strategies for "Decentralizing Decisionmaking" and "Empowering States and Local Governments" to more effectively manage forest ecosystems to assure community stability, improved service to the public and a reduction in government costs.

Finally, a Forest Service with state and community-based decisionmaking authority in partnership with empowered state and local governments, will work better and cost much less than that projected in the new Strategic Plan approved by Secretary Espy. Forest management models in various parts of the nation already protect the environment, improve forest health, reduce the risk of catastrophic fires and sustain the communities dependent upon those forests. 9/ The Forest Service must move forward with these objectives, and not be paralyzed by the consequences noted above.

1. Governor Walter J. Hickel's August 26, 1994 letter to Vice President Al Gore opposing the option of merging the Alaska Region of the Forest Service with the Portland, Oregon Regional Office; looks forward to discussing the proposal.
2. President Clinton's Executive Order No. 12875, dated October 26, 1993, entitled "ENHANCING INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS"
3. Vice President Al Gore "THE GORE REPORT ON REINVENTING GOVERNMENT";
page 35: "Empowering State and Local Governments"
page 69: "Decentralizing Decisionmaking Power"
September 7, 1993 Times Books Edition, Random house, Inc. 162pp
4. James Wilson, Secretary of Agriculture, "THE USE BOOK - Regulations and Instructions for the Use National Forest Reserves"
Issued by the Secretary of Agriculture, July 1, 1906
The U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 203pp
5. Gifford Pinchot, "THE TRAINING OF A FORESTER" by the first Chief of the USDA Forest Service; Pages 46-50 describes the responsibilities of the Forest Supervisor and related line positions which are responsible for the "protection, use and care" of the National Forests.
J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and London; 149pp
6. Lawrence W. Rakestraw, "A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE IN ALASKA" - A cooperative publication of the Alaska Historical Commission, Department of Education, State of Alaska; and the Alaska Region, United States Forest Service, Department of Agriculture with the assistance of the Alaska Historical Society. Anchorage, Alaska 1981 221pp
(Chapter 5, pages 83-116 includes a discussion of the establishment of the Alaska District (Region) Office in 1919)
7. U.S. Senator Max Baucus' December 9, 1994 letter to Under Secretary of Agriculture James Lyons noting the unfortunate lack of information provided by the USDA explaining the rationale for the proposed actions. A listing of 18 questions regarding the Reinvention Project was sent to Mr. Lyons.
8. USDA Forest Service Handbook No. 453, "THE PRINCIPAL LAWS RELATING TO FOREST SERVICE ACTIVITIES"
U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 551pp
9. Effective forest management models are available in most regions of the nation. New models are also in development, such as those represented by the Sierra-Nevada Ecosystem Studies and the Plumas-Lassen National Forest management proposal.
- * NOTE: This draft paper (1/6/95) has been prepared by an ad hoc group of professional resource managers and public administrators (mostly retired U.S. Forest Service employees) from various parts of the nation who advocate major improvements in the new Strategic Plan for the Forest Service, approved by USDA Secretary Espy.