



Issues In Focus

Editor's note: Change, at least in last several months, hasn't been exactly "news" to us in the Forest Service. We're all aware, sometimes painfully, that we aren't immune to a changing world. Concepts like **new** forestry, **new** environmental ethics, and **new** perspectives in natural resource management give us good cause for our thought and concern. It's important that we all understand what these concepts mean to us and the future of our agency. The goal of this special insert is to inform you on some of the "new" thinking in the Forest Service. There are no real surprises to be found, only the articulation of things you've perhaps only heard about—it may be that you are already helping with the implementation of some of these ideas. And by no means do I

claim that these articles are representative of the diversity of opinions found in our agency, nor do I pretend that any of the subjects discussed are done justice—there just isn't the room. But if these "bites" of information spur you on to find out more about new forestry, new environmental ethics, or new strategies and to discuss some of these ideas with your co-workers—all the better. Rapid change requires that we keep all communication channels open—and your input is vital. I hope that you may be able to use this insert as a reference of sorts, or to tack it up with comments positive or negative. If not, you know exactly where to file it. Besides, it's only a matter of time when these ideas will be modified or changed . . . it goes with the territory.

What We're Doing . . .

By now, most of us are familiar with Section 318 of the FY 1990 Appropriations Act for the Department of Interior and Related Agencies. It establishes Forest Service measures to minimize the effects of FY 1990 timber harvests on spotted owls and old-growth forests in 13 National Forests in the Pacific Northwest. The Forest Service as well as the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have been asked to provide a monthly report to Congress. The following are excerpts from the first monthly progress report.

Sale Program Status

- Law sets total sale program for Region at 7.7 billion board feet for FY 89-90.
- 2.3 billion board feet has been sold. The remaining volume will be offered by September 30, 1990.
- Current inventories for National Forests in Region 6 indicate there are 4.2 million acres of suitable spotted owl habitat. Of this, 3.3 million acres are outside of reserved areas.

Forest Advisory Boards

- Their purpose is to ensure equal representation of environmental and business interests. Thirty-one represent environmental interests, 31 represent

business concerns, and 29 represent other community interests.

- Advisory boards convene in December, 1989.

Conferencing with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- The Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies to "confer with the Secretary" when proposed actions are "... likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a species proposed to be listed . . ."
- Last summer, the Forest Service initiated conferencing with the Fish and Wildlife Service and will continue to work closely with them in planning FY 1990 timber sales.

Interagency Committee of Scientists

- An August, 1988 interagency agreement establishes a scientific committee to develop a conservation strategy for northern spotted owl management.

Inventory, Monitoring, and Research

- Intensive work is underway to survey areas for spotted owls and to improve habitat inventories. All possible habitats including those in wilderness are being surveyed.

"... 1990 will lead us into the future, through our forest plans, through the congressional oversight of our forest planning process, and through the changes in our management called for in Section 318—such as minimizing fragmentation of old growth and working with advisory boards. I'd like to see us in the forefront, rising to the challenges of change and leading natural resources management into the future. If we can't do it, no one can."

John F. Butruille
Regional Forester

Litigation

Five lawsuits were filed against the Forest Service decision to amend the Pacific Northwest Regional Guide. Their status is summarized below:

Seattle Audubon Society, et al., v. Robertson, et al. (SAS), No. C89-160

Court: Western District of Washington
Status: On November 6 the Court, citing Section 318, lifted its injunction of 163 timber sales and vacated the hearing date. The Court also found the Section to be constitutional. The Court did not dismiss the case.

Washington Contract Loggers Assoc., et al., v. Robertson, et al., No. C89-99

Court: Western District of Washington
Status: Consolidated with SAS
Northwest Forest Resources Council v. Robertson (NFRC), No. 89-136

Court: District of Oregon
Status: Proceedings stayed pending decision in SAS

Western Washington Commercial Forest Action Committee v. Robertson, No. 89-139

Court: District of Oregon
Status: Consolidated with NFRC
Harbor Against Land Takeover, et al., (HALT) v. U.S. Forest Service, et al., and the Wilderness Society, et al., No. C89-1597

Court: Western District of Washington at Tacoma

Status: On November 9 the Court dismissed the case, finding no violation of applicable laws.

National Wildlife Federation v. United States, No. 83-1153

Court: District of Oregon
Status: Some of the fiscal year 1989 timber sales agreed upon under Section 318(f)(1) are in the Mapleton District of the Siuslaw National Forest. The Forest Service has requested that the injunction be modified to permit the sales. The Siuslaw Task Force, a plaintiff in the SAS suit, has asked the court to enjoin the sales.

A Greensheet Interview with Jeff DeBonis

Questions developed by Jill Haney, Deschutes National Forest

What prompted you to write and publish "The Inner Voice," and what do you hope to achieve with it?

ANS: After 11 years of working with the Forest Service, I felt that there was a large number of employees who felt the same way I did, and that we were not being heard by the upper levels of management. What we feel is a need for a new resource ethic, a new vision for the Forest Service, as described in our first issue of **The Inner Voice**. Not many people that I have talked to disagree with the need for change, and the direction that change needs to go. Where I find disagreement is on the **method** we've taken to promote this change, i.e. going public. The bottom line is we feel an urgent need to see faster change than has/will occur by staying strictly internal. There is a tremendous vested interest in the status quo, and the planet doesn't have much time left before the environmental damage occurring world-wide becomes irreversible, if it hasn't already. The issues and problems we are dealing with on our National Forests are a microcosm of the same issues we are dealing with world-wide. As an agency, we have a unique opportunity to forge a new land management ethic for the 21st century that could be an international model of ecological sanity.

How have readers responded to "The Inner Voice?"

ANS: 99% positive. Lots of comments like "It's about time something like this started", or "This organization has given me hope that the Agency can change", or "I wish something like this had occurred 10 years ago". I have received only three or four negative letters, and about that many which are supportive of the idea, but disagree with our external distribution. I have received about 2000 responses from people wanting to be members, about 1500 of those are Forest Service or retired Forest Service. The rest represent BLM, state Fish and Game, concerned citizens and environmental group representatives. No timber industry reps. yet. Our membership list has been growing by about 25 to 50 people per week.

In "The Inner Voice," you speak of being "ecologically right." What do you feel is "ecologically right?"

ANS: could spend a long time on that one, but in a nutshell, it means

taking a more conservative approach to public lands resource management. If we are not sure of the long-term effects of our management, we should back off from cutting or development until we do know, instead of allowing development and cutting to continue while we get the information. As an example, one of the recommendations for management of the spotted owl was to continue gathering research for five more years to be sure we know if they need old growth, but to continue harvesting old growth in the meantime. A conservative approach would dictate that we don't cut additional old growth until we know the answers. As another example, we operate on the premise that harvest and development will continue unless we can

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"prove" that it will be detrimental. The conservative approach would start with the premise that we will not alter natural ecosystems until we can prove that no negative effects will result.

Where do you feel the Forest Service stands on the spotted owl/old growth issue?

ANS: I feel the Agency is much too supportive of continued harvesting of old growth. We should be taking a conservative approach: If we are not sure whether we need 1500 acres per SOHA or 3000 acres per SOHA, we should err on the side of 3000 acres. Once a species is extinct, there is no retrieval. We can always change direction from protection to harvest in the future, but we can't put rebuild an ecosystem, or recreate an extinct species.

What is your definition of "old growth?"

ANS: It's difficult to define complex natural systems with simple descriptions... the definition may change with geographical location and management objectives. From a planner's perspective, for lands intended for management, it's any stand that is older than the planned

rotation age for the area in question. Under our present rotations, old growth is also a non-renewable resource.

What are some of the changes you would like to see within the Forest Service?

ANS: I would like to see some visionary leadership that would move us away from our current emphasis on resource extraction. I would like to see us focus as much importance on meeting the spirit and letter of our resource protection laws, such as NFMA, ESA, etc. in the future as we have on meeting the cut in the past. I want the Forest Service to take advantage of the unique opportunity we have now to become a world leader in wise, visionary, ecologically-based resource management. I want us to become proactive, rather than reactive. We should be setting the agenda for Congress, rather than the other way around. I believe the public is swinging toward greater and greater support for the agenda proposed by the world-wide environmental

community. We have a chance as an agency to capitalize on this, and "lead the wagon", rather than getting run over by it like has been happening recently.

How do you propose the Forest Service, as an agency and as a group of people, makes these changes?

ANS: As an Agency, top management must take the risk to start telling Congress that we simply can't meet the past harvest levels **and** meet the resource protection laws. One or the other must give. It's obvious what we've sacrificed in the past, and the results are increasing negative cumulative effects on the ground and eroding credibility of the Agency internally and externally. We must tell them that we are going to start meeting the true spirit and intent of the resource protection laws. We are going to take our rightful place as the **international** leaders of a new resource ethic for the 21st century. We have the organization, knowledge, and personnel to make this needed shift. And our planet doesn't have much time left. We need to do it now.

Region 6—Changing Times

by J.D. Blackwood

Reforming the Forest Service, "new forestry," new ethics in forestry—all perhaps deserving in their own right, all garnering the public eye, all representing change. We hear more and more about these as public values and workforce needs change. One thing common to all of them is they imply that a static bureaucratic organization needs to be swept into change by new policies, new regulations or even legislation. But what about the quiet changes that are already happening today? We need to look at some things that have shown up outside the spotlight in Region 6 over the last two years.

When draft forest plans were produced many thought these to be the best and most reasonable approaches to managing our diverse National Forests. Many could not conceive of substantial changes between drafts and finals. To our credit as an agency, however, changes are being made. These are based on our developing ability to listen to the public and respond in ways not even considered a few years ago.

We were overwhelmed and surprised with the public responses to the drafts. We also opened up a continuing dialogue with environmental groups, industry, local groups and concerned citizens, and state governments. A quiet evolution has taken place; one undertaken through tedious analysis, evaluation and negotiation. It represents change, however, and these changes are rooted in strong professionalism, hard work and much public support. These are key ingredients for enduring programs. Let's look at some of these.

In draft forest plans, evenaged management was the norm. **Unevenaged management** was used only in special cases for a very small portion of the landscape. What was thought to be necessary to efficiently practice intensive forestry and to maximize ASQ was evenaged management. Clearcutting was the dominant tool. The message from the public was not hard to evaluate. They did not want to see the changes in the forest predicted by heavy reliance on evenaged practices, such as clearcutting. This was a similar message heard in 1976 when NFMA passed. This time, we listened. In finals, eastside forests will be practicing a significant amount of unevenaged management. Westside forests are

looking at expanding the use of it and reducing the impacts of clearcutting. Based on public and agency input, we have strengthened our analysis of **cumulative effects**. In many instances, this has led to changes in scheduling activities and in the intensity of management. Skills learned during forest planning in assessing cumulative effects will be put to use as we implement plans and design projects.

In the past, we recognized the need to protect and manage **old growth** for wildlife, for genetic diversity, for aesthetics, and for recreational

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values. We are now recognizing old growth for its own intrinsic value of just **being** old growth in addition to its other values. We have made giant strides in the last year to improve understanding with industry and environmental groups about just what old growth is and how much of it is really there. We have listened and adapted. This is a necessary foundation for answering the questions of how it will be managed in the future, and how much will be dedicated and protected in its current relative condition.

Partially through legislation, and partially through Forest Service emphasis, a much more thorough evaluation of eligibility and suitability for **Wild and Scenic River** recommendations has come about. The result is that we are making more recommendations in finals than in drafts for Wild, Scenic and Recreation River additions to the national system.

Roads, cover and forage for **big game** have been exhaustively discussed between drafts and finals. Much more consistency in modeling will occur. Along with this, we will be testing several new approaches to modeling and management. The results will be very helpful in updating plans and keeping current with research efforts.

A new approach to **appeals** is evolving. We are learning how to negotiate resolutions and where negotiations

can be successful. In the past, our primary approach was to fight the appeals on paper. This is changing as we formally look at negotiations as an option for all appeals, and try it where there appears to be a chance of success. Already we are enjoying the benefits of improved communication with some of our constituents. We have adopted a policy of keeping forest plans current through the **amendment** process. This is quite different than plans we have worked with in the past that have been more rigid and less credible as time passed. We have always been a "can do" organization. We are evolving into a "**realistic can do**" outfit, as witnessed this summer by our employees, Forest Supervisors and Regional Office staff candidly discussing our capabilities with the media, Congressional representatives and others. This has been difficult at times, but

has gained us credibility. The big challenge now facing us is to implement the forest plans in a truly integrated manner as intended by NFMA. Other Regions have shown leadership in this, and our workforce is ready. It will definitely be more challenging in this Region than others due to our resource base and history, but it is also a great opportunity for us to assert our conservation leadership role.

There are many ranger districts where quiet innovation is changing the way we do business. The workforce is more committed to integrated resource management than ever before. Dealing with issues locally, employees are finding ways of softening impacts of our management activities. Leadership in the Region has been open to this innovation. The climate is right for us to be creative in responding to public needs. Much has gone on in this quiet evolution. We are finally recognizing that most resource issues are as much social issues as they are biological ones, and changing values need to be factored into resolutions. As the more visible initiatives continue, let's not forget that we are a different organization today than we were even two years ago. The changes transpiring are solid, and although they might not be happening as soon as many would like, they **are** taking place.

New Perspectives in Forestry

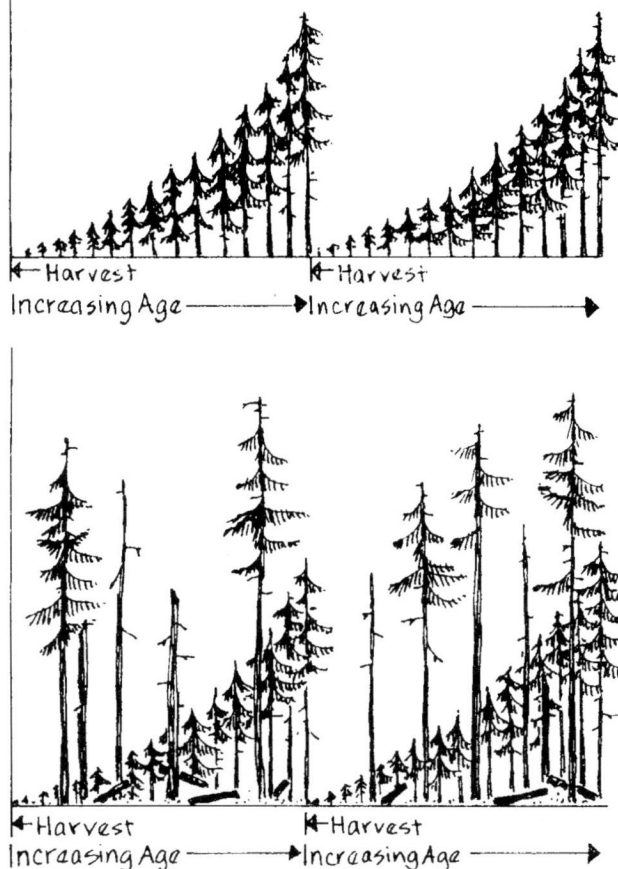
Who, why, what, where and how. As employees we often find ourselves asking these questions as we do our part in managing the National Forests. However, identifying the four "W's" and how isn't easy when new data and concepts are coming in every day. New Forestry is one such concept, and its arrival may be the forest management wave of the future. It's also attracting considerable attention as a viable long-term solution to the region's timber supply woes. This is where we begin to ask some of our questions.

Let's start with the **who**—The principal proponent of the New Forestry concept is PNW Research Ecologist Jerry Franklin. Often quoted in the national and local media, Franklin has devoted 30 years to ecological research for the Forest Service and various Pacific Northwest universities. Franklin is currently Bloedel Professor of Ecosystem Analysis at the University of Washington, Chief Plant Ecologist for the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station, and Bullard Fellow at Harvard University. Franklin advocates a forestry that accommodates two world views: one that provides for commodity, especially wood production, and non-commodity values such as forest wildlife. "We must learn to share the sandbox rather than divide it," he says.

The why: This new approach to forest management goes beyond merely reacting to resource crises and public concerns on how our forest should be managed—though that's part of it. In our region, forest researchers and managers are developing programs for reducing conflicts among competing economic, social, and environmental values. Taking an ecosystem approach, New Forestry is on the middle ground between an emphasis on timber production and preservation. This new approach includes concerns for fish and wildlife and for recreational and aesthetic values.

The what: The basic goals of the New Forestry are to:

Alternatives for Forest Management



- Manage forests to balance values and produce a sustained supply of goods and services.
- Maintain biological diversity (variety of life).

The where: Much of this research has taken place at the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest near the Blue River Ranger District, Willamette National Forest. However, New Forestry techniques are being implemented on "demonstration forests" throughout the region.

The how: Ecological studies on New Forestry started in the early 1960s with a concern on part of H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest group about the effect of timber cutting on floods. This led to studies on energy cycles, water, and nutrient cycles. It became clear in the research that there was a failure to take adequate account of larger organic debris (like standing dead trees—snags) and its effect on forest ecosystems. The Andrews team continued studies on "debris" and its potential role.

In the past, such debris was considered no more than a fire hazard at

harvest sites or was removed from streams and usually burned at considerable expense. Today research has found how valuable woody debris is to water quality and as wildlife habitat. The Andrews group has been instrumental in pointing out the ecological importance of debris at preventing erosion and long-term site productivity. Research also discovered how valuable old growth forests are as "reservoirs of biological diversity."

Ultimately, research has discovered over the past 20 years that forest ecosystems are infinitely more complex and valuable than previously thought. New understanding of this complexity has led to the broader study of the forest from isolated stands to landscapes. Whole groups of stands much like neighborhoods are now better barometers at measuring the health of ecosystems, and new management techniques will reflect this change in perspective—**alongside** traditional forestry techniques.

Some traditional forestry practices have tended to simplify forest structure by not leaving live trees, dead standing trees and downed logs. This simplified structure can result in the loss of biological diversity. It has been shown that alternative techniques will result in managed forests with structural complexity and biological diversity that mimic natural stands.

There is much to be learned about New Forestry techniques, but many believe this is one way to resolve the current timber industry and environmentalist battle over how the National Forests should be managed. An ecosystem-based forestry may provide a common ground between interests with an assurance of healthy and productive forests.

If you wish to know more about New Forestry or have comments, please contact Kent Mays or Connie Harrington, PNW Research Station, P.O. Box 3890, Portland, OR 97208, 503-326-3346. A good discussion of New Forestry appears in the 1989 November/December issue of **American Forests**.