

Chapter 16. The Organizational Structure

The Forest Service is a Federal bureaucracy with operations and offices in almost every State of the Union. It has, almost from the beginning and with unusual consistency, pursued a policy of decentralized administration. The Chief of the Forest Service in Washington, DC, prescribes general policy guidelines and allocates funding to the nine regional offices of the Forest Service, as directed by the Secretary of Agriculture and authorized by the President and the Congress of the United States. The regional forester's office defines and interprets the guidelines as they apply to the region, where policy directives are then issued to the national forests. There, the forest supervisor disseminates those instructions to the staff divisions and ranger districts as might be appropriate.



Figure 58. Office of the Supervisor of the Alamo National Forest, about 1905. (Forest Service Collection, National Agricultural Library)

The development of administrative policies and guidelines themselves are derived from Federal law, and from the reports and information channeled up from the ranger districts through the forest supervisor and the regional forester to the Chief of the Forest Service. The Chief, of course, is responsible to the Secretary of Agriculture and, through that office, to the President and the Congress of the United States. Within the region, planning and management tend to be concentrated at the national forest level. The regional office serves prominently as the agency that collects and disseminates information, coordinates planning and policy formulation, and allocates resources among the national forests. The ranger district is at the end of the administrative hierarchy. In addition to the National Forest System, the Forest Service has a Research Division and the State and Private Forestry Division. Although this is a very loose characterization of the administrative system of the Forest Service, it provides perspective for understanding the administrative structures and systems of the Southwestern Region.

In 1908, about 36 full-time professional staff people administered the regional office and 17 national forests in the Southwestern Region, with a field force of rangers and assistant rangers numbering less than 200. Now there are 109 full-time professional staff people in the regional office and 539 in the field. There were, in 1908, few secretaries, clerical people, or even typewriters in the entire region, and essentially none at the ranger district level.

Line and Functional Authorities

Administrative philosophies, planning procedures and systems, and management concepts, superimposed on the structures established for administration, provide a good overview of how the Forest Service operates. Line and functional authorities are parallel administrative networks that operate under control systems that assign work, delegate authority, and review achievements. Planning has been the primary activity of the functional divisions of the regional organization, which provides the direction for line actions. The administrative skeleton of the region can be fleshed out by reviewing the mechanisms for planning, management, directives, and program evaluation. These mechanisms and the administrative structures began to develop very early and have changed relatively little other than in size and complexity.

When the Forest Service began operation in 1905, Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot and Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson emphasized that conservation and "wise use" would be the guiding principles of the agency. Wilson advised in his famous authorizing letter to Pinchot that these principles could best be applied and pursued "only when the administration of each reserve is left very largely in the hands of the local officers, under the eye of thoroughly trained and competent inspectors."¹ Thus the basic administrative policy of the Forest Service was immediately set in place.

Despite the theory and structure, in reality during the first few years, administrative control did emanate directly from Washington, DC, perhaps necessarily until personnel and management systems could be put in place within the districts (regions). During the first few years of operation, field administrators were brought to Washington for training sessions of 2 or 3 months to learn the business of managing the national forests. This "detail" assignment of administrators to the Chief's Office, in fact, continues today. Finally, on December 1, 1908, Pinchot reaffirmed the policy of decentralization and localized national forest administration.²

Six districts, later renamed regions, were formed at first. Arthur C. Ringland became District Forester of the Southwest Region, and Earle Clapp was named his associate. Ringland recalls that all of the district foresters had studied forestry in school, served as forest assistants, had field experience, and had served as inspectors of the forest reserves.³ In 1908, 15 foresters were assigned to the Southwestern Region, who, said Ringland, "concentrated intensely on carrying out the Pinchot philosophy of service in the public interest."⁴ Ringland observed later that the policy of decentralization was based on Pinchot's temperament that "accepted and applied the dictum that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points."⁵ Pinchot believed that problems from the field could best be solved by administration as close to the source as possible.

Decentralized Administration

Pinchot believed that decentralized administration was wise because it reduced paperwork and left more time for local foresters to work in the field. Ringland recalled that before the institution of decentralized programs in 1908, "the supervisors would have to send reports to Washington that assumed the size of a cowpuncher's bedsheet." It was necessary, he said, that "clear cut channels of direct action and administration be set up from field to office."⁶

By July 1, 1914, the southeastern units, including Arkansas, Florida, and Oklahoma, were separated from the southwestern units of the original district to create new dimensions for District 3, leaving only Arizona and New Mexico, and so essentially establishing the size of Region 3 as it is today. The addition of the grasslands in Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico after World War II completed the region. In 1914, there were 23 personnel at district headquarters in Albuquerque, 34 in the national forest supervisors' offices, 141 year-long rangers (one per ranger district), and 188 short-term guards.⁷ The 1918 *Use Book* described the principal permanent positions of the Forest Service at the national forest and ranger district levels, all of which fell under Civil Service specifications.

Job titles included supervisors, deputy supervisors, forest examiners, rangers, lumbermen, and scalers. Forest supervisors planned the work of the national forest under the direction and supervision of the district foresters. Forest examiners provided technical expertise in areas such as the examination and mapping of forests. They made recommendations on applications for timber purchases and advised on scaling, marking, and forest planting operations. Rangers supervised timber sales, grazing, free and special uses, contracts and permits, protection and improvement plans, and other administrative activities. Lumbermen were required to have much previous experience in woods work and a high degree of proficiency in cruising, logging, and milling. Scalers also needed considerable previous experience in scaling and woods work.⁸ The *Use Book* also established qualifications for forest assistants, forest guards, field assistants, and temporary laborers and clerks, all of whom, unlike the regular staff positions, were exempt from qualifying examinations.⁹

A Businesslike Approach

The essence of Forest Service administration on the regional level has been a businesslike approach to problems, and the solution of those problems on the ground by those who have firsthand contact. In addition, the administrators and workers on the local level have, over the years, displayed a remarkable degree of dedication to their work. They are, commented author George Fitzpatrick, "wedded to their jobs and dedicated to the philosophies of the Forest Service even when they differ personally as to the best ways to carry out the policies of the agency."¹⁰ Dedicated employees and often inspired leadership have combined to make the mission of the Forest Service in the Southwestern Region, on the whole, successful and well-executed, despite the sometimes enormous difficulties created by the region's own unique physical and cultural environment.

Region 3 has been blessed with very strong and dynamic leadership in the Regional Forester's office. Arthur C. Ringland, the first "Regional Forester," set the tone and style of leadership and responsibility for those who followed. Moreover, many of the regional foresters enjoyed unusually long tenure. Only nine people, excluding Arlo Jackson who was named Acting

Regional Forester from January 1 through February 12, 1966, have served as regional foresters since the district was organized in 1908.¹¹ They are:

Arthur C. Ringland	December 1908-April 1916
Paul G. Redington	April 1916-December 1919
Frank C.W. Pooler	January 1920-June 1945
Philip V. Woodhead	July 1945-July 1949
C. Otto Lindh	October 1949-October 1955
Fred H. Kennedy	October 1955-December 1965
William D. Hurst	February 1966-June 1976
Milo Jean Hassell	June 1976-July 1985
Sotero Muniz	July 1985-present

Sotero Muniz, the current regional forester, served under Jean Hassell as deputy for administration in Region 3 from 1980 to 1983. He is a native of Ogden, UT, and an engineering graduate of the University of Utah. His first job with the Forest Service was as a materials engineer in the regional office in Ogden. After duty in Nevada and Washington, DC, he went to San Francisco in 1967 to serve as chief for water developments and sanitation in that regional office. He received an assignment as deputy supervisor of the Sierra National Forest in California in 1969 and became forest supervisor in 1971.¹² His Hispanic and western cultural background and his training in engineering and experiences in water resources in the West and in the region provide him with a strong identification with the Southwest and its unique characteristics.

Regional Forester Must Handle Everything

The tradition is that the regional forester must be everywhere and handle everything. That style of administration, initiated by Ringland, and certainly perpetuated by such administrators as Pooler, Hurst, and Hassell, could only work with the able assistance of strong staff officers. The assistant regional foresters have been invaluable contributors to the successful administration of the region. Many of these, of course, have moved into higher leadership positions. Raymond H. Marsh, for example, was a particularly effective assistant whom E.E. Carter lauded in a 1926 inspection of the region.¹³ For decentralization to work, authority must be vested in the people in charge of local offices. At the national forest level, it is the forest supervisor, and at the ranger district level, it is the forest ranger who exercise authority.

Early rangers were expected to have intimate personal knowledge of their district and to be able to work and survive in the forest alone. They were directed to conduct regular patrols on horseback, protect their district from fire and trespass, mark boundaries, and supervise the use of timber and stone.¹⁴ As time passed, the responsibilities and the instructions to rangers were clarified and broadened. Regular visits with other line and staff personnel were scheduled. One of the earliest such scheduled ranger programs, for example, occurred in October 1912, when all officers and rangers of the Apache, Datil, and Gila National Forests met. Assistant District Forester A.O. Waha discussed "policies pertaining to forest administration," and Datil Supervisor Johnston reviewed the "possibility of increasing efficiency of administration through joint meetings." Another separate rangers' meeting was held for the Pecos, Carson, and Jemez National Forests during the same month where "problems in local administration" was the topic.¹⁵ To be sure, decentralization was not always easy to sustain, and within the region, some thought it could be carried to extremes.

John H. Preston thought in 1921, after an inspection of the region, that in the area of silviculture District 3 was entirely too strongly centralized. Sufficient authority, he said, was not being given to forest supervisors on timber sale matters. He could see no reason, he said, for not giving supervisors on the Tusayan, Coconino, Santa Fe, Carson, and perhaps the Lincoln full authorization to handle timber sales.¹⁶ But Assistant Regional Forester Raymond Marsh responded that "we must not be swept off our feet by Preston's comments on decentralization, which are based on strong personal ideas" and are debatable. If Preston's ideas of decentralization are carried to their logical conclusion, he said, we would end up with 14 different marking policies, systems of brush disposal, and appraisal. "I am in favor of decentralization," he said, "just so far as it can be made efficient."¹⁷

Frequent Inspections

Frequent inspections of ranger districts by forest supervisor staffs established controls over the districts, just as such inspections by the regional office imposed control over the national forest offices. Forest Supervisor W.H. Goddard advised his staff in 1912 that field inspectors should not hesitate to "extend praise for good work and express disapproval in the case of negligence."¹⁸

National forests within the region developed the policy of having annual meetings for the entire work force in order to benefit from each person's experiences and to promote *esprit de corps*.¹⁹ Similarly, forest supervisors met annually in the district (Albuquerque) office, and regional foresters met with personnel from the Washington, DC, headquarters at some centrally located place (often Ogden) once each year.²⁰ In the Southwestern District, these annual meetings with forest supervisors were called *executive sessions*. They often produced real policy changes within the region. For example, in 1921, the executive session criticized the size of the district office staff, and as a result, the staff was reduced the following year.²¹ Since 1908, forest supervisors have had considerable autonomy in line responsibilities, including developing and applying policy, planning, organizing, directing, training, controlling, internal relations, and public relations.²²

At the level of the ranger district, the responsibility for the management of all activities was assigned "clearly and definitely" to one person—the district ranger. "He may delegate some of his authority and related responsibility to his subordinates," but he could not subdivide his district, or delegate responsibility for all activities within a subunit to a subordinate.²³ As the size of ranger districts enlarged, partly because of the automobile, and partly because of real or imagined needs for greater economy and efficiency, the ranger's personal knowledge of the district has declined. As Ed Groesbeck observed, "Years ago the Ranger knew his permittees, where their lands were, and how to speak the permittees' language"; now, he said, some rangers do not even know where their boundaries are, and many are moved around so fast they have no time to become acquainted with their district. All are buried in paperwork.²⁴ But while the modern ranger may differ from his predecessor, the modern ranger tends to be better educated in the technology of his job. He is now more of a business executive with trained specialists to help him do his job, but like his predecessor, he is still an outdoorsman.²⁵

The basic administrative unit is the ranger district, and despite changing times and the greater influx of users, it has been a most efficient unit. It represents the delegation of authority literally to the "tree and grass roots."²⁶ An excellent review of the administrative character of the ranger district and the national forest is contained in the Kirkpatrick-Lott General Integrated Inspection

report of the Gila National Forest in 1954. This analysis is especially helpful in evaluating the organization of the Southwestern Region prior to changes in management and planning resulting from the management acts passed by Congress in 1960 and after. Representative of the other forest units, personnel on the Gila were well-organized and clearly informed of their place and responsibilities in the chain of command.²⁷ Staffing was adequate to provide the required support, but, probably as was true on many other forests, work plans tended to be perfunctory, in good measure because the rangers and personnel knew their jobs without having an elaborate written explanation.

Line and Staff

Within the Forest Service, as within most organizations, the line and staff served separate functions. In line authority, a superior exercised direct authority over a subordinate, whereas a staff relationship is advisory.²⁸ Clare Hendee has described the organizational format of the Forest Service very succinctly in the study entitled *Organization and Management in the Forest Service*. Hendee explained that the Forest Service has adopted a line and functional staff combination as its basic form of organization. The line authority makes decisions, activates overall objectives, policies, plans, and programs, and coordinates the different functional activities. The role of the functional staff is primarily to advise, recommend, observe, and report. Functional staff people derive their authority from the line officer to whom they report.²⁹

Hendee described four principles of Forest Service organization:

1. *Functional segregation principle*-where similar kinds of work are segregated and assigned to a person or group.
2. *Scalar principle*-where the organization acts like a hanging chain, with vertical links where authority flows down and where responsibility flows up.
3. *Decentralization principle*-where responsibility and authority to act are placed at the lowest possible level.
4. *Span-of-control principle*-where the line makes decisions of policy and procedures, but assigns tasks for their application to staff assistants.

In addition, the Forest Service uses a system of fine controls, through audits and inspections. Hendee summarized these as including "assignment of program and work responsibilities; delegation of authorities commensurate with those responsibilities; and a system of checking to determine whether responsibilities are met within the authority delegated."³⁰

Five Types of Inspections

Administrative controls on a ranger district, on a national forest, or in the Southwestern Regional Office are accomplished in a number of ways. Inspections constitute a time-honored method of determining the level of local or regional control of Forest Service policies and practices. There are five types of inspections that examine the performance of the regional forester, forest supervisor or forest ranger; and their line/staff subordinates. These are: (1) the general integrating inspection, looking at all aspects of the land management job; (2) the general functional inspection, evaluating one resource management function; (3) the limited functional inspection, concentrating on one task within a function or an area; (4) the board of review; and (5)

investigations.³¹ Several general integrating and functional inspection reports provide useful examples for developing a critical historical perspective of Forest Service effectiveness in the Southwest.

Personnel management was the subject of a general functional inspection of the Prescott National Forest in 1968. M.D. Ray, the inspector, praised the decentralized nature of the personnel management achieved on the Prescott since the last inspection in 1962. He complimented the delegation of employment authority and the integration of the personnel management concept. A specific example cited was the supervisor's withholding a step increase that had been scheduled for a ranger; upon appeal, the action was upheld. Also noted was the good record on equal employment opportunity and a poor record in the business management section of the supervisor's office.³² The national forests are basically autonomous in some respects, but they must abide by the general principles and procedures outlined by the Washington office. The history of the Southwestern Region and the decentralization in the Forest Service help one understand why the administration of the southwestern national forests has worked well. In the parlance of top professional football team defenses, "It may bend, but it doesn't break." Directives from the top are adapted to local conditions, but the spirit and purpose of the directives are implemented, and all programs are reviewed to be certain that they do accord with the directives issued.

The Forest Service Directives System

The Forest Service's administrative governance has been through its directives system. In 1981, the publication *Organization and Management in the Forest Service* explained that "the directives system is designed to include all laws, regulations, orders, policies, standards, and procedural instructions that govern Forest Service programs and functions." The directives system comprises four major components: (1) the *Forest Service Manual*, (2) the *Forest Service Handbook*, (3) temporary directives, and (4) external directives not incorporated in the Manual or Handbook.³³ The original comprehensive directive, of course, was the *Use Book*, first published in 1905. On August 23, 1905, Thomas M. Meagher, Forest Supervisor for the Santa Catalina and Santa Rita Forest Reserves, in Arizona, mailed a copy of *The Use of the National Forest Reserves* to Charles J. Bush, Forest Guard at Catalina Camp. In the letter, he explained:

Forest officers, therefore, are servants of the people. They obey instructions and enforce regulations without fear or favor, must not allow personal or temporary interests to weigh against the permanent good of the reservations but it is no less their duty to encourage and assist legitimate enterprises. They must answer all inquiries concerning reserve methods fully and cheerfully, and be at least as prompt and courteous in the conduct of reserve business as they would in private business.³⁴

The next day, he wrote to Washington requesting additional copies. The *Use Book* was also supplemented by what were then known as "forest reserve orders."³⁵

The *National Forest Manual* first appeared in 1911. A separate section of the manual, "General Administration and Protection," was issued in 1912. Included was a section on "relations of forest officers to the public," containing much the same language used by Supervisor Meagher to Forest Guard Bush in 1905. The field organization of the Forest Service was outlined and included a recitation of "Duties of Service and District Officers and Supervisors When in the Field:"³⁶

The Southwestern Region has issued, from time to time, documents for regional use, which supplemented material in the *Forest Service Manual*. In April 1916, the District issued a *Silviculture Handbook*. The introduction, above District Forester Arthur C. Ringland's signature, stated that the handbook contained policies and instructions to supplement the *Forest Service Manual*. A more recent supplement, the 1948 *Timber Management Handbook*, contained information on the proper method of managing the region's timber resources. Another supplement, the *Multiple Use Management Guide*, was first issued in 1959, and revised and enlarged in 1967. In 1972, the region's *Guide to Land Use Planning* was issued.³⁷

The functions of the several layers of guides and plans that were formulated to document and set direction for multiple use management of the National Forest System were outlined in the original Multiple Use Management Guide:

At each administrative level, a multiple use analysis of these inventories is made for specific areas of land. Broad policy and guidelines are established for the entire National Forest System. More specific management direction and Coordinating requirements in keeping with the broad policy and guidelines are spelled out in Regional Multiple Use Guides. Local multiple use management decisions are spelled out in Ranger District Multiple Use Plans.³⁸

Instructions or "handbooks" for describing procedures for special types of work are also published. One of these, which pertains to Arizona and New Mexico national forests, is *Field Instructions for Forest Inventory, Rocky Mountain Area*, revised in 1957, with the Intermountain and Rocky Mountain forest and range experiment stations and Forest Service Regions 1 through 4 as participants. State supplement sheets were prepared for the treatment of inventory of national forest lands in these regions.³⁹

Directives generated at the Chief's Office to serve all national forests in the Nation, and at the regional office to serve the national forests in that region, form the basis for standardized procedures. They are the basic management tool for a bureaucratic structure that has become increasingly large and complex over the years.

Planning in the Southwestern Region

Plans for the national forests of the Southwestern Region were developed very early, and planning is a continuing element of good management. Timber management, fire control, and grazing plans date from 1912. Fire control always had been a high-priority item. The Loveridge-Cliff inspection report on the Southwestern Region in 1945 contained a critical evaluation of planning. One of these criticisms concerned the conversion of plans into action. "There continues to be the 'need' . . . for forest officers—from the R.O. Staff down to the individual rangers—to convert plans into active action. This is the most serious weakness in I&E [Information and Education] in R-3," the report stated:⁴⁰

Kirkpatrick and Lott, in their 1954 inspection report of the Gila National Forest, devoted considerable time to the status, quality, and degree of use of the various plans needed or in effect. They stated that the annual plan of work was more visionary than specific and that it should "tie down jobs to be done" and assign clear responsibility to each person. The financial plan was evaluated as workable. Monthly work plans were deemed "perfunctory." The maintenance plan was viewed as very good, having been developed with the rangers and the construction and

maintenance foremen. The general range management plan was expected to be "strengthened, localized, and made more specific." The only watershed improvement or rehabilitation plan in effect was noted to be on the Silver City Watershed, but no critical comment was issued on why others were not available. Timber management plans were viewed as adequate. The inspectors found the fire plans on the Gila "in good shape."⁴¹

The national forests of the Southwestern Region have for decades also employed "action plans" for specific purposes or in a certain aspect of the multiple use management charge on a small area. Examples of these are timber sale plans, road layout plans, permittee range management plans, and controlled burning plans.⁴² In addition, the various divisions in the Southwestern Region also produce annual accomplishment reports and plans, such as the "Watershed Management Planning and Accomplishment Report for Fiscal Year 1976."⁴³ Records of the regional office and of several national forest offices during the 1960's and 1970's include such titles as:

1. Regional Office, Interagency Planning Program, Fiscal Year 1967
2. Apache National Forest, A Plan for Reducing Fuel Accumulation
3. Apache National Forest, Fire Plan, 1969
4. Apache National Forest, Apache Forest Dispatching Plan, 1969
5. Apache National Forest, Apache Aerial Operations Plan, 1969
6. Apache National Forest, Range Restoration Plan
7. Cibola National Forest, Sandia Mountain Hazard Reduction Plan
8. Prescott National Forest, Preattack Planning
9. Santa Fe National Forest, Master Fire Plan, Calendar Year 1968
10. Santa Fe National Forest, Five Year Timber Harvest Plan

Another system of planning by the Forest Service that had great effect on the Southwestern Region, and all the other regions, began early in the 1960's under the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act. "Each forest prepared a multiple-use plan, which provided a general framework within which the plans for specific resources could be coordinated; ranger districts then prepared their own multiple-use plans based on the plan for the forest." In 1971, the Forest Service began to substitute unit plans for the multiple-use plans.⁴⁴

The central authorization for recent planning in the Forest Service has been expressed differently in *Organization and Management in the Forest Service*, published in 1962 and again in 1981. In 1962, the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act had just been passed; in 1981, the Resource Planning Act of 1974 and the National Forest Management Act of 1976 were in force; and in both years, the National Environmental Protection Act was in effect.

As a result of interpretations of Section 6 of the National Forest Management Act, area guides and unit plans have now been replaced by regional and national forest plans. A publication issued by the regional forester in 1980, *Land & Resource Management Planning: Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities, Arizona's National Forests*, outlines the planning process to the general public. It mentions that plans for management of the national forests, "known as Land and Resource Management Plans,... apply to all three levels of the Forest Service: national, regional, and to each National Forest."⁴⁵

Planning Today

Today, planning on the national forests of the Southwest is a major effort, and voluminous documents are produced. The procedure on each national forest calls for a two-step process, with distinct activities for each step:

1. Listing issues, concerns, and opportunities; gathering inventory data on the resources of the national forest; preparing a proposed national forest plan (with alternative choices of action and selection of one of them) and draft environmental impact statement (hereafter called "proposed /draft"); and filing them with the Environmental Protection Agency, to be followed by a period of public input.
2. Integrating public input into the proposed plan; accepting the proposed alternative or choosing another; preparing a final national forest plan and final environmental impact statement (hereafter called "final/final"); and filing them with the Environmental Protection Agency.

The procedure for the proposed /draft step for each national forest in the Southwestern Region is similar to that outlined for the Gila National Forest, where its supervisor, in a letter accompanying the proposed/draft reports issued in mid-1985, stated:

Planning on National Forests is conducted under the authority of the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act of 1960, and the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976. The assessment of environmental consequences of alternatives is prepared in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.⁴⁶

The sequence and timetable for the proposed /draft step of the forest plan for the Cibola National Forest is typical of those of the other national forests in the Southwestern Region.

The Cibola National Forest on August 17, 1984, issued the proposed /draft documents and announced eight "open house" meetings to explain the plan, a final meeting to gather information from the public, and an invitation to respond in writing for those who could not attend the meeting. On July 15, 1985, the Cibola issued the final set of planning documents, a six-part package. Included were:

1. *Environmental Impact Statement for the Cibola National Forest*, 240 pages.
2. *Cibola National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan*, 279 pages.
3. *Public Comments and Forest Service Response to the DEIS, Proposed Cibola National Forest Plan*, 374 pages.
4. *Summary of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Cibola National Forest Plan*, 33 pages.
5. *Record of Decision*, 6 pages.
6. A set of maps.

The cover letter from Forest Supervisor C. Phil Smith explained the role of each of the six parts. The letter also included a statement that the plan provided a "framework for the Forest Service and all interested parties to work together during the next decade."⁴⁷

By September 30, 1984, the Carson, Cibola, Coronado, and Tonto National Forests had drafted forest plan environmental impact statements filed with the Environmental Protection Agency. The planning process for all forests was nearing completion. The fiscal year 1984 annual report of the Forest Service stated that each region, including the Southwestern Region, had completed guides and environmental impact statements required by the National Forest Management Act. The final outcome of this planning process, which produces such detailed, ponderous documents, is still unknown. An article in the December 1985 issue of *Journal of Forestry* shows that not all foresters agree on the practicality of national forest plans with such length and so many alternatives investigated. "Comprehensiveness," one author said, "is a trap.... The current disarray and high cost of National Forest System planning, pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp of the Resource Planning Act's misconceived comprehensiveness, is a tragic illustration."⁴⁸

In Conclusion

Administration under the magnifying glass can be a debilitating experience; over scrutiny and the threat of lawsuits take the joy out of work. This seems to be the case of the Forest Service today, not just in the Chief's Office, but in Albuquerque and even in forest supervisors' offices, or in the rangers' offices in towns such as Alpine, Sedona, Sierra Vista, El Rito, Mountainair, or Coyote. Burnout, disillusionment, or both seem to result in careers being shorter now than in the "old days." More paperwork and less time in the field tend to discourage people who enter the profession of forestry or the other land and resource management professions, because of their altruism, from staying on until they reach normal retirement age. As one staff member of the supervisor's office of an Arizona national forest confided, his best memories in the Southwestern Region were when he could spend an entire day on the New Mexico national forest where he once served without seeing another human being.⁴⁹ The day he said this, he was too busy working on the forest's planning documents to visit but a few minutes!

In the early days of the Forest Service, perhaps too much time was devoted to field endeavors. Now, however, perhaps too much time is devoted to office endeavors. Seeking a happy compromise to the two extremes seems to be advisable. It is unfortunate that the resources to be managed cannot respond. Might they seek more personal care and less tabular treatment in planning documents? Aldo Leopold's phrase "thinking like a mountain" might be a good motto to follow.

Reference Notes

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- ³ Arthur C. Ringland, *Conserving Human and Natural Resources*, an interview conducted by Amelia R. Fry, Edith Mezirow, Fern Ingersoll and Thelma Dreis (Berkeley, CA: Resources for the Future, 1970), pp. 60-61.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 63-173.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 60.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

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- ⁸ *The Use Book: A Manual of Information About the National Forests* (Washington, DC: USDA Forest Service, 1918), pp. 15-17.
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- ¹¹ Edwin A. Tucker, manuscript, "The Forest Service in the Southwest," p.1341.
- ¹² *Southwestern Region News* (August 1985), p.1.
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- ¹⁷ Raymond H. Marsh, Assistant District Forester, "Memorandum for Mr. Pooler," n.p., January 31,1921 (S, Supervision), p. 2, Federal Records Center, Denver, 095-57A0090.
- ¹⁸ W.H. Goddard, Forest Supervisor, "Memorandum Defining the Duties of the Administrative Force of the Datil National Forest While in Field on Inspection Work," n.p.,1912, p. 2 (filed at the Cibola National Forest).
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- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.
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- ⁴⁶ Kenneth C. Scoggin, Forest Supervisor of the Gila National Forest, letter to "Reader," accompanying *Proposed Gila National Forest Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Proposed Gila National Forest Plan* (Silver City, NM: May 24, 1985), p.1.
- ⁴⁷ Lloyd C. Irland, "A Manager's Planning Guide," *Journal of Forestry* 83 (12) (December 1985): inside back cover. The author of this chapter also believes that these plans are too long, include detailed but unnecessary information, and yet they often fail to include necessary information, such as acreage distribution by age class of even-aged stands-the most useful quick guide to an index of past timber management efficiency.
- ⁴⁸ Proposed/Draft, "Cibola National Forest Plan, August 17, 1984, Cibola National Forest, Albuquerque, NM. Frank Pooler was Regional Forester for over 25 years. The next Regional Forester in terms of longevity was Gene Haskell.
- ⁴⁹ An article in *The Courier*, a Prescott, AZ, newspaper, July 2, 1985, stated that Hassell, in a telecommunications note, said, "I have decided to retire from active Forest Service status and join the rolls of those who have preceded me to do something else."