

News Release

USDA Forest Service

*Southern Region
1720 Peachtree Road, NW
Atlanta, GA 30309*



**For Immediate Release
August 9, 2005**

**Contact:
Donna Drelick
(404) 347-7240
Terry Seyden
(828) 257-4202**

NEW FOREST SUPERVISOR NAMED FOR NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH CAROLINA

ATLANTA — A new leader has been tapped to oversee the more than 1.2 million acres of National Forest land in North Carolina, USDA Forest Service officials announced today.

Marisue Hilliard, 25 year veteran of the Forest Service, accepted the position on Tuesday. She is currently a Regional Director in the Rocky Mountain Region based in Denver where she oversees programs of timber, wildlife, fisheries, botany, rangelands, and forest health for a five-state area.

"I am excited and honored by this wonderful opportunity to serve in North Carolina," Hilliard said. "I appreciate the diverse resources of the National Forests throughout the state and am anxious to meet the employees entrusted with their care and the citizens who love and use them."

"Marisue has a wealth of natural resource management experience and is very familiar with issues in the South --- which will enable her to be an immediate leader in North Carolina," stated Gary Pierson, Acting Regional Forester for the 13-state Southern Region based in Atlanta. "We are fortunate that she has accepted this vitally important position."

Hilliard began her career as an intern in the D.C. headquarters of the agency. She has held a number of positions in the South including District Ranger in Alabama, appeals/litigation specialist in the Atlanta Regional Office, and Deputy Forest Supervisor for the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest in Georgia. While working in the South, she led a team to complete assessments of wildlife and forest health for the Southern Appalachian national forests which have been foundational to the revision of their land management plans. Hilliard, a graduate of the University of Georgia, holds a BS in Forestry and Wildlife Management and a MS in Forestry.

The National Forests in North Carolina include the Pisgah National Forest, the Nantahala National Forest, the Uwharrie National Forest and the Croatan National Forest. All totaled, the forests encompass 1, 252,021 acres which includes nine ranger districts and 240 full time employees.

Hilliard replaces former National Forests in North Carolina Forest Supervisor John Ramey, who retired in June after a 37 year career with the Forest Service.

Hilliard and her husband, Bill Cheatum, have three children - Myles, stationed at Tyndall Airforce Base in Panama City, Florida; Wren, a University of Georgia junior; and Tye, who will attend high school in Asheville. The family plans to relocate to Asheville in October.

###