



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
INSTALLATIONS AND ENVIRONMENT
110 ARMY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20310-0110

October 10, 2000

MEMORANDUM THRU ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY
OF THE ARMY ARVEL J. EDENS, JR., LTC, GS, ODECO
DIRECTOR OF THE ARMY STAFF

FOR ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: Army Forest Conservation Policy

Army natural resources are the essential elements of ecosystems that provide realistic, sustainable assets for military missions. These same ecosystems contribute toward regional biodiversity and provide habitat for endangered, threatened and sensitive native plants and animals. The Army is required, by law, to manage natural resources. The Sikes Act direction is to provide for the conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources on military installations without net loss to the capability of lands to support the military mission. Army forests are a renewable natural resource, which help shape the mission landscape, provide rich biological diversity and sequester carbon. Active management is essential to maintain our forests and to take advantage of excess capacity, where appropriate.

Request that your office participate in two efforts to assess the status of Army implementation of forest ecosystem management. One is the Army Environmental Policy Institute Forestry Policy Review; the second is the Army Audit Agency audit of the forestry program. My expectation is that your office will also engage appropriate Army Staff and Major Army Commands in these efforts.

The Army is permitted to sell forest products under 10 USC 2665. The Army continues to make progress in moving toward forest management that engages the principles of ecosystem management while focusing on maintaining the landscape for sustainable military use. Recent guidance issued by your Director of Environmental Programs moves us a step closer to these ideals. We must continue to move toward management of natural resources that emphasize mission requirements and the principles of ecosystem management. Therefore, I am directing the following actions to help guide and stimulate this movement:



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- Continue the evolution from commercial-oriented forest management to ecosystems-oriented forest management giving first priority to mission requirements. Assess the current guidance for forestry programs and report recommendations for improvement by December 4, 2000.
- Include planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis in all timber sale decisions. All forest management must be incorporated into integrated Natural Resources Management Plans where they are required. Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans for installations that plan to harvest timber must have an environmental analysis for compliance with NEPA. The environmental analysis should address the impacts on biological diversity; species listed as endangered, threatened, or proposed under the Endangered Species Act; wetlands; riparian and riparian buffer areas; soils; air; water and other potentially significant issues.
- Maintain monitoring programs. Request you continue to improve the Environmental Compliance Assessment System, Installation Status Report, and Environmental Quality Report to ensure adequate assessment of ecosystem management.
- Assure natural resources professionals are available and as free as possible of commercial influence. Make sure they need not rely exclusively on the economic returns of production to accomplish landscape management, compliance and stewardship. Assist in revising Defense and Army guidance to clarify suitability of natural resources functions for conversion to contract performance.
- Provide flexibility in selling timber. You are hereby authorized to allow installations to sell timber, both large and small sales. If this choice impacts staffing at the Army Corps of Engineers District, the Major Army Command or installation shall provide a minimum of six months advance notice to the District office. Guidance shall be developed to carry out this authorization.
- Reduce incentives to conduct unsustainable forest management. Review Installation forest management programs to identify those that are unsustainable and assure forest stewardship is maintained without pressure to over-harvest.

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- Aggressively engage in the revision of Department of Defense Instruction 4715.3. Work to incorporate the Army policy of forest management emphasis on mission support and ecosystem management.

I encourage your help in getting Army leaders involved to assure our forests, grasslands, wetlands and deserts are managed as national assets fully implementing the principles of ecosystem management, which will also enhance the military mission.



Ray Clark

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army
(Installations and Environment)