

FOREST SERVICE, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY

TERESA HAUGH AND JAMES I. DEUTSCH

When Lezlie Murray was in the fifth grade, she took a class outing to the nearby Gifford Pinchot National Forest in southwestern Washington State. “My best friend’s father was a ranger, and he took our class out into the forest and talked to us about the trees and everything that was a part of that environment. It really stuck with me.” Now an interpretive naturalist and director of the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center at Portage Glacier in Alaska’s Chugach National Forest, Murray has always cherished that early turning point in her life. “Every day I pinch myself when I get up,” she explains. “I’m in the most beautiful place in the world. I’ve done a lot of traveling, so I can say that and really mean it.”

In many ways, Murray’s story is not unusual for those who live and work in the forests, whether public or private, in the United States. Growing up near a forest, or having a relative who has worked outdoors with natural resources, seems to influence one’s choice of career path. Take, for example, Kirby Matthew, a fourth-generation Montanan who grew up near the Trout Creek Ranger Station in Montana’s Kootenai National Forest. His father worked as a logger and then with the Forest Service, so it was natural for Kirby himself to enter the Forest Service, where he has “a history.” He now works for the Forest Service’s Historic Building Preservation Team in Missoula, Montana.

Lezlie Murray leads a group of visitors on a trail to Rainbow Falls in Alaska’s Tongass National Forest.

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KRISTI KANTOLA



OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE

[3 2] The 2005 Smithsonian Folklife Festival program *Forest Service, Culture, and Community* presents occupational traditions from the USDA Forest Service, an organization celebrating its centennial, as well as other forest-dependent traditions from the cultural communities it serves. Approximately 100 participants are on the National Mall to share their skills, experiences, and traditions with members of the public; they include tree pathologists, wildlife biologists, landscape architects, historic horticulturalists, botanists, bird banders, archaeologists, environmental engineers, firefighters, smokejumpers, recreation specialists, backcountry rangers, woodcarvers, basket makers, quilters, instrument makers, musicians, poets, storytellers, and camp cooks.

Forest Service, Culture, and Community builds upon previous Folklife Festival programs that have examined occupational traditions, such as *American Trial Lawyers* in 1986, *White House Workers* in 1992, *Working at the Smithsonian* in 1996, and *Masters of the Building Arts* in 2001. Every occupational group—including cowboys, factory workers, farmers, firefighters, loggers, miners, oil workers, railroaders, security officers, even students and teachers—has its own traditions, which may have a variety of forms.

One such form is the use of a specialized vocabulary. For instance, city doctors may refer to malingering hospital patients as *gomers*, perhaps an acronym for “Get Out of My Emergency Room”; loggers in the Northwest refer to blackberry jam as *bear sign* and hotcakes as *saddle blankets*; and academics refer to their doctoral degree as their *union card*, and books as *tools of the trade*, as if to suggest that their ivory-tower realm has the same rigor and robust organization as the factory floor.

In other cases, occupational traditions take the form of specialized tools, gear, and clothing worn by members of the occupational group; ballads and folk songs, such as “The Jam on Gerry’s Rock,” which tells of a tragic accident that occurred when floating logs jammed on the

Kennebec River in central Maine; pranks and jokes, which are often directed at the newest rookie; stories and personal remembrances of work incidents or characters; and a wide assortment of customs and superstitions. What folklorists at the Smithsonian try to understand, as they identify and ask questions about different occupational traditions, are the skills, specialized knowledge, and codes of behavior that distinguish a particular occupational group and meet its needs as a community.

Another way of looking at occupational culture is to see it as a part of a particular company, agency, or organization. As James Q. Wilson observes, “Every organization has a culture, that is, a persistent, patterned way of thinking about the central tasks of and human relationships within an organization. Culture is to an organization what personality is to an individual. Like human culture generally, it is passed on from one generation to the next. It changes slowly, if at all.” The 100th anniversary of the USDA Forest Service in 2005 provides a splendid opportunity for understanding and appreciating its organizational and occupational cultures.

The occupational culture of the USDA Forest Service is represented by a diverse group of workers.

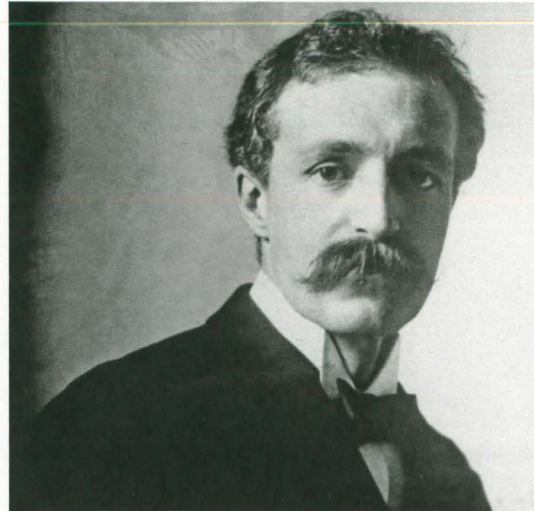


FOREST SERVICE HISTORY

The origins of the Forest Service go back to the mid- to late 19th century, when natural resources were in high demand throughout the country. Homesteaders wanted land, miners wanted minerals, and everyone wanted timber. People often took what they wanted with little regard for the impact on the environment or for the future state of our natural resources. However, in 1891, realizing the need for greater control over our forests, the U.S. Congress passed the Forest Reserve Act, which authorized the President to establish forested public lands in reserves that would be managed by the General Land Office (GLO) in the Department of the Interior.

One of the first employees of the GLO was Gifford Pinchot (1865–1946), a Yale graduate who not only had studied forestry in France and Germany but was also a personal friend of President Theodore Roosevelt. (Pinchot was to become the namesake for the national forest that naturalist Lezlie Murray visited in the 1960s.) Believing that professional foresters in the Department of Agriculture and the forests they cared for should both be part of the same federal agency, Pinchot convinced Roosevelt in 1905 to approve the transfer of the forest reserves from the Department of the Interior's GLO to the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Forestry. As a result of this Transfer Act, 63 million acres of land and 500 employees moved to the USDA, and a corps of trained foresters was assigned the work of conserving America's forests, with Gifford Pinchot as the first Forest Service Chief. On July 1, 1905, the Bureau of Forestry was renamed the Forest Service, because Pinchot believed the new title better reflected the mission of the agency as being one of service.

From 1905 to 1907, in spite of opposition from local governments and the timber industry, Pinchot and Roosevelt added millions of acres to the forest reserves. Congress reacted in 1907 by passing an amendment to the agricultural appropriations bill, taking away from the President the power to create forest reserves and giving it instead to Congress. In



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According to Gifford Pinchot, first Chief of the Forest Service, "Our responsibility to the Nation is to be more than careful stewards of the land; we must be constant catalysts for positive change."

that amendment, *forest reserves* were renamed *national forests*, leaving no doubt that forests were meant to be used and not preserved.

While most of the new national forests were in the West, the passage of the Weeks Act in 1911 allowed for the acquisition of lands in the East to protect the headwaters of navigable streams. With that, the National Forest system became more environmentally diverse. Because Pinchot was convinced that the people who had decision-making powers over forests should live near the lands they managed, the Forest Service set up district offices in California, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah. Forest supervisors and rangers were given a degree of flexibility with their finances, and they became the voice of the Forest Service in the local communities. Later, districts were added for Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, and the Eastern states.

Today, in 2005, the National Forest system includes 155 national forests and 20 national grasslands, and it encompasses 193 million acres of land in 42 states, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. This total acreage (roughly 300,000 square miles) is larger than the entire state of Texas, and comparable in size to the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin combined. With nearly 38,000



employees, the USDA Forest Service is larger than any other land-management agency, including the Bureau of Land Management (roughly 11,000 employees), National Park Service (roughly 20,000 employees), and Fish and Wildlife Service (roughly 9,000 employees), all of which are part of the Department of the Interior.

THE STATUS OF THE NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM TODAY

For the past 100 years, the mission of the Forest Service has often been described in Pinchot's words as conservation *for the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run*. However, the idea of what is the greatest good can change. Accordingly, the Forest Service has had to deal with many strongly held opinions about how national forests should be managed and used. Employing a concept of *multiple use*, and thus differentiating itself from other land management agencies, the Forest Service has tried over the years to accommodate a wide variety of uses for the forests and grasslands it manages: timber, grazing, recreation, wildlife, and watershed protection.

The relative value of extracting resources from national forests often changes with current national events. For instance, after World War II, the demand for wood surged as American GIs returning from the war needed new housing for their families and as the United States was helping to rebuild Japan. As a result, the Forest Service was pressured to exchange older, slow-growing timber stands for younger, faster-growing trees.

Golden Aspen trees in Idaho's Sawtooth National Forest.



A forest ranger in 1910 poses while carrying his heavy equipment load. After passing a written examination, rangers had to endure hardships and perform labor under trying conditions.



In 1919 Helen Dowe was one of the early fire lookouts in Colorado's Pike National Forest, scanning the landscape for smoke and signs of fire below.

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Wood and other forest products are still in demand, and the Forest Service must search for the best ways to balance social, economic, and ecological demands.

The forests have additional value as homes to countless species of fish, birds, other wildlife, and plants, some of which are threatened or endangered. Forest Service employees must look for ways to protect habitat while providing places for the public to view plants and wildlife with minimal environmental impact. Fresh water from national forests and grasslands feeds into hundreds of municipal watersheds across the country, thereby providing clean drinking water to nearly 60 million people. And as the nation becomes increasingly urban, people look to their national forests as places for fun and recreation. They want somewhere they can camp and hike, breathe fresh air, sit under the shade of trees, and listen to birds sing.

ORIGINAL FOREST RANGERS ON THE JOB

As the multiple-use mission of the agency evolved, so did the Forest Service workforce. In the newly minted Forest Service of 1905, all employees were men. Rangers were custodians of the land and proudly donned new uniforms with Forest Service shields, rode on horses, carried guns, and wore hats. They were paid \$60 per month and had to furnish their own equipment and pack animals.

To be hired as a forest ranger, a man had to have both scientific knowledge and practical skills. He had to know about forestry, ranching, livestock, lumbering, mapping, and cabin building. In addition, he had to demonstrate that he could saddle and ride a horse, pack a mule, use a compass, and shoot a rifle. Some applicants were even asked to cook a meal. In 1905, all Forest Service regulations could be contained in a single 142-

page book, which could fit in the ranger's shirt pocket. By contrast, today's Forest Service manuals fill many bookshelves and computer disks.

In the early days, forest rangers and their families lived in isolated places. They went where they were assigned, often on short notice. Their wives cooked, kept watch in fire lookout towers, and took care of any visitors who showed up at the doorstep (the ranger's house was usually the last one at the end of a very long road). Families learned to be self-sufficient, manage without electricity, and enjoy the adventure of living close to the land. Many children grew up believing this way of life was the norm, and learned to love and appreciate the outdoors. The forest ranger by necessity became part of the community where he lived. The ranger developed working relationships with the local ranchers, loggers, hunters, and fishermen. He was responsible for enforcing rules, issuing permits, and maintaining boundaries.

The roles played by these early forest rangers foreshadowed the organizational culture and structure of the agency we see today. In the 21st century, regional foresters, forest supervisors, and district rangers are voices of authority in local communities, and are supported by a diverse workforce of men and women that includes

After a fire in 1936 in Montana's Lolo National Forest, workers re-planted Ponderosa Pine trees in an effort to rehabilitate the forest.



wildlife biologists, fishery biologists, hydrologists, mineral experts, engineers, researchers, ecologists, forest planners, computer programmers, entomologists, firefighters, and other specialists.

FORESTRY—GROWING TREES

Unlike some other natural resources that are used once and then lost, forests are entities that live and breathe, and can be renewed. Forest ecosystems can be maintained through good management, making the best use of scientific research, such as ensuring natural regeneration or planting seedlings to replace the trees that have burned or have been cut.

Professional foresters use many tools in maintaining forest health. For example, they take core samples and count annual rings to help them understand how old a tree is, and to get a glimpse of the tree's life cycle. Foresters study how crowded trees are, how much undergrowth is present, and what kind of wildlife is dependent on the local habitat. As Saul Irvin, a ranger with the Florida Division of Forestry, explains, "We plant trees, we mark trees, we control burn [intentionally setting a fire for prescribed purposes], we do everything it takes to keep the forest growing."

CONTROLLING FIRES

At the beginning of the 20th century, many professional foresters were trained in Europe, which did not prepare them for the monumental fires that used to sweep the North American continent. Early settlers tended to let large fires burn to clear the land for grazing, but, as populations increased, people started looking at the threat of fire in a different way, and the control of fires became a major part of the Forest Service's work.

After a million-acre fire in Washington and Oregon claimed 38 lives in 1902, the Forest Service became more systematic in its approach. It stationed people in lookout towers, hired firefighters, and after World War I hired Army pilots to spot fires from the air. The Civilian Conservation Corps was enlisted



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Fully suited, these smokejumpers in 1952 practice parachute-steering maneuvers while also strengthening their arm and shoulder muscles.

during the 1930s to fight fires throughout the West. In 1940, Rufus Robinson and Earl Cooley became the world's first smokejumpers, parachuting into Idaho's Nez Perce National Forest. Today, airplanes and helicopters drop not only firefighters and equipment on fire lines but also water and fire-retardant chemicals.

Forest Service researchers are very proactive in studying fire and how it affects forests in the long run. They consider whether it is better to stop fires or let them burn and how fire might actually improve wildlife habitat and encourage the growth of new trees. Fire researchers manage forests to make them more resilient to wildfire by removing underbrush and excess trees that literally add fuel to the fire. Sometimes they even use fire as a prescription to restore health to a forest that is overgrown or has the potential to burn out of control.

The history of fire prevention in the Forest Service is as old as the agency. For many employees, their first job was keeping a 360° vigil from a fire lookout tower, often spending their days in solitude. While lookouts do have contact with the outside world, they have had to find ways to fill their time. They might be found playing the guitar, writing a novel, or even riding an exercise bike.

Donna Ashworth of Arizona has spent 26

consecutive seasons on lookout tower duty. Ashworth doesn't feel alone when she is sitting in the lookout tower, however, because she is connected to others via radio. She describes her job poetically: "I never get tired of it. It's always beauty. It's always the drama in the sky.... I live in the air. I can see 60, 80, 100 miles."

Of course, lookouts are only one part of the fire workforce. Others, such as smokejumpers and firefighters, experience fire from a very different perspective. As Kelly Esterbrook, a former smokejumper from Oregon, observes, "You definitely have to like to be physical. You just don't get through the training program if you don't enjoy it. You have to like adventure. It's probably the best job I've ever had."

Firefighters enjoy the challenge and the camaraderie of the work. Linda Wadleigh, a fire ecologist from Flagstaff, Arizona, began as a forester but ended up as a firefighter. Wadleigh recalls, "Here I was a forestry major, and I decided I had a real love for fire. I was raised a forester, but I was baptized in fire." She describes firefighting as compelling. "Being called on a fire is one of the strangest experiences. . . . [The love of firefighting] is a genetic disorder. . . . Once you smell the smoke, it brings out the flaw in your DNA."



A backpacker sets up camp at Buck Creek Pass in the Glacier Peak Wilderness of Washington's Okanogan National Forest. There are more than 450 trails here, and most are not completely snow free until mid-August.

MANAGING RANGELANDS

In addition to protecting forests and fighting fires, the Forest Service also oversees the management of rangelands and grasslands. Ranchers depend on Forest Service grazing permits to provide forage for their cattle and livestock. The Forest Service works to meet the needs of the ranchers, while at the same time insuring that rangelands remain healthy and available to future generations. Ranchers are not the only ones who enjoy what national grasslands provide. Visitors come for hiking, biking, camping, hunting, fishing, and canoeing. The scenic beauty of national grasslands is an inspiration to photog-

raphers, birdwatchers, and Sunday drivers. Wildlife enthusiasts visit to catch a glimpse of whitetail deer, prairie dogs, prairie chickens, grouse, and butterflies. Managers have long realized that the well-being of forests and grasslands depends largely on the health of the soil and the presence of water. To grow plants and trees, they look for ways to maintain healthy soil, match the right species to the soil, and prevent erosion. Especially in more arid areas of the West, the amount of rainfall is vital. Chuck Milner, a range specialist in Oklahoma's Black Kettle Ranger District, notes how "when it rains, everybody looks smart; when it doesn't rain, then you can't do anything right."

PROTECTING WILDLIFE HABITATS

Forest Service wildlife biologists are concerned with careful management and conservation practices, and their efforts have brought species like whitetail deer and wild turkeys back from the brink of extinction. Wildlife biologists also deal with the concept of multiple use, trying to balance public demand for hunting opportunities with the desires of others who prefer to watch or photograph animals in their natural environment.

Wildlife biologists consider it imperative to look at an ecosystem as a whole. Janie Agyagos from the Red Rock Ranger District in Sedona, Arizona, avoids over-specialization. “The beauty of the job is not becoming too focused and honed in on one species, but learning a little bit about everything around you.” The important aspects of her work are “recognizing when there’s a break in the link somewhere, how our activities might be affecting the workings of the system, and how we can change our management to bring those workings back to their proper condition.”

Wildlife biologists work to increase their knowledge of wetland habitats, of the different species that depend on dead and dying trees, of the effects of fire on wildlife habitat, and of the crucial role played by old-growth trees. Biologists use tree thinning and tree planting as ways to increase the food supply for wildlife. They study questions such as how owls depend on old-growth tree species and how migrating salmon are affected by sediment and temperature in streams. Their work is vital because national forests and grasslands provide 80 percent of the habitat for elk, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats in the continental 48 states, as well as 12 million acres of waterfowl habitat, 28 million acres of wild turkey habitat, and habitat for 250 species of Neotropical migratory birds.*

* The Neotropics are the region of the New World that stretches southward from the Tropic of Cancer.

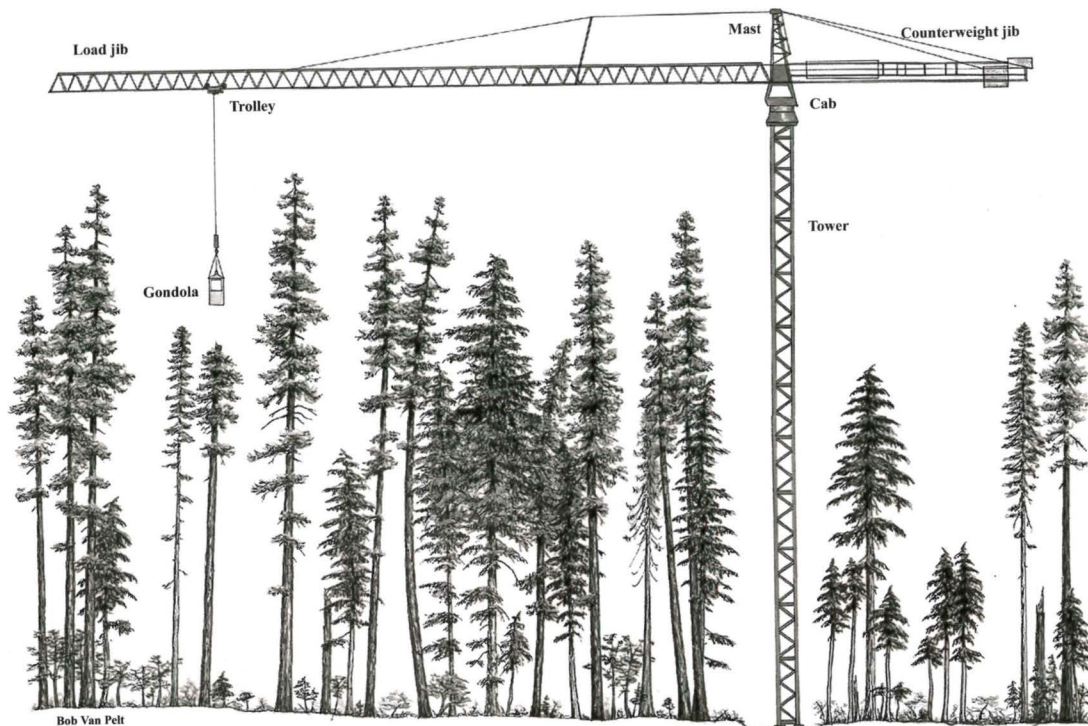
Forest Service researchers work to maintain healthy habitats for both plant and animal species.

“The beauty of the job is not becoming too focused and honed in on one species, but learning a little bit about everything around you.”

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Janie Agyagos





The leafy tops of tall trees in an old-growth forest form a canopy, a nurturing shelter for the life below. Canopy cranes allow scientists to research this hard-to-reach environment. There are currently 10 canopy cranes around the world, but the Wind River Canopy Crane in Washington State is the tallest at 282 feet, and covers six acres under its swing. *Illustration by Bob Van Pelt, courtesy Wind River Canopy Crane Research Facility*

TREE DOCTORS

Many Forest Service scientists are actively involved in research to promote the health of trees and other plants, covering the fields of botany, chemistry, ecology, silviculture, plant and animal interactions, vegetation dynamics, invasive plants, insect population, and molecular genetics. These researchers often act as tree doctors, tackling threats to plants and trees in national forests and grasslands, and employing a variety of tools. Just as your personal physician has to look at your entire body and lifestyle to understand your health problems, tree doctors need to look at the forest as a whole.

For example, the Pacific Northwest Research Station and Gifford Pinchot National Forest work in partnership with the University of Washington to conduct research at the Wind River Canopy Crane. From the gondola of a 250-foot (25-story) crane, employees such as Rick Meinzer and David Shaw conduct experiments in the canopies of trees as tall as 220 feet. They look at the place where the forest is open to the sky, because that's where trees bud and

photosynthesis occurs. Scientists study the effect of lichens and fungi, and measure the effects of pollutants on trees. For Meinzer, the canopy crane provides an opportunity for understanding how plants work. "A lot of people tend to regard plants as inert objects, and they're surprised they have a physiology. But when you really get into it, it's amazing how complex and how integrated plants are. That's what fascinates me."

DEVELOPING FOREST PRODUCTS

Scientific research often contributes to the development of new forest products. The forest product that most often comes to mind is lumber, but there are a number of non-timber forest products as well, which are used by the residents of forest communities. Examples include foods such as mushrooms; medicinal plants such as ginseng and ginkgo; floral products that include moss, vines, ferns, and evergreens; and the wood used in decorations and crafts. In some places, non-timber forest products provide more employment for a local community than timber cutting.

Overgrown, a dense forest can burn like matchsticks in a wildfire, but it can be thinned, and the thinned materials can be used for a variety of products. The Forest Products Laboratory, established in 1910 in Madison, Wisconsin, is the nation's leading wood research institute, studying various aspects of paper making, wood preservation, and recycling. Their research has helped increase the average lumber yield per log from 25 percent to 60 percent, extended the life of railroad ties, and developed protocols for the U.S. Postal Service to make no-lick stamps recyclable.

PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

While many Forest Service researchers are looking to the future, another section of the agency's workforce is actively involved in preserving the past and connecting people's history to the land. As described by the Forest Service's National Heritage Strategy, "Waiting silently in the mountains, canyons, and river valleys of our national forests and grasslands are the remnants of past cultures that confront us and remind us of the centuries-old relationship between people and the land. These heritage resources hold clues to past ecosystems, add richness and depth to our landscapes, provide links to living traditions, and help transform a beautiful walk in the woods into an unforgettable encounter with history."

Empowered by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1996, archaeologists and other heritage specialists locate artifacts and historical sites in order to preserve and protect them from road construction, prescribed burning, and vandalism. Artifacts that are located and protected include pottery, baskets, ancient tools, rock paintings and petroglyphs, and, in some cases, prehistoric dinosaur bones.

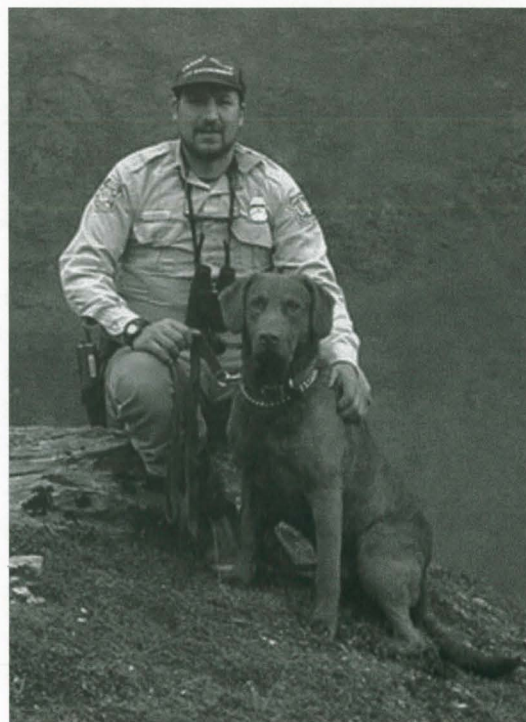
Jeff Bryden and Flash, a Chesapeake Bay Retriever, make a great law enforcement team. Flash is the first dog in the Forest Service trained to detect contraband fish and wildlife, instead of drugs. Flash can also track lost visitors.

ENFORCING THE LAW

The Forest Service Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) staff has the overall job of upholding the laws and regulations that protect natural resources. Law enforcement personnel protect natural resources, people, and property, often working in partnership with local, state, and other federal law enforcement offices. As Berneice Anderson, a Regional Patrol Commander based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, explains, "A lot of people think that everyone who visits the forest is out to have a very good afternoon or weekend, enjoying the natural resources and the scenery. And that's what we hope for, but we also know that at any given time we have to be prepared for the things that are negative." As a result, LEI officers may be called upon to investigate crimes such as timber theft, arson, or the illegal cultivation of marijuana on national forest lands. They also protect archaeological sites, investigate vehicle accidents, provide first aid, educate the public, and assist in search and rescue operations.

The duties of LEI officers can be life threatening. For this reason, Andy Coriell, Patrol Captain on Oregon's Mount Hood

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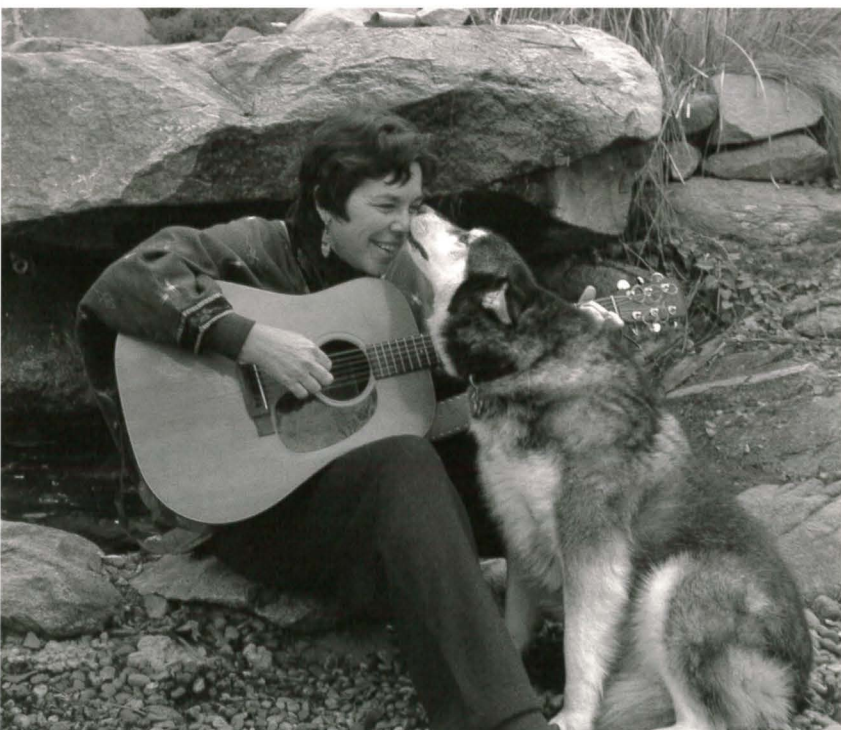


“The essential piece is to capture people’s interest in stories and art, the cultural expressions that come from the heart and the heads of the people.”
Rita Cantú

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National Forest, is glad to have what he describes as superior equipment on the cutting edge of technology. “I don’t go to work ever without a bullet-proof vest on. We carry semi-automatic weapons, handcuffs, pepper spray, baton, radio, and pretty much anything else you can stick on a belt.”

Jeff Bryden, the lead law enforcement officer on Alaska’s Chugach National Forest, finds one of his greatest assets to be his canine (K-9) partner, Flash, a Chesapeake Bay Retriever that has completed rigorous training and wears its own Forest Service badge. Like many employees, Bryden dreamed of working for the Forest Service from a young age. “Pretty much, I’m doing what I planned on doing my entire life. When I was knee high to a gopher, I planned on working in natural resource law enforcement.”



COURTESY RITA CANTU

SEEKING INSPIRATION FROM THE FORESTS

For centuries, artists have been captivated by the beauty of the mountains, lakes, streams, woods, and wildlife found in our forests and grasslands. Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief of the Forest Service, was inspired to the conservation cause through the 19th-century paintings of the Hudson River School that showed scarred mountains in the Northeast devastated by logging and farming.

Jim Denney, District Facilities Manager at the McKenzie River Ranger Station in Oregon’s Willamette National Forest, is a contemporary artist who shares the same spirit as the Hudson River School painters in depicting the changes that have taken place in the landscape. One

Rita Cantú works for the Forest Service as an interpreter and environmental educator, but she is also a storyteller, songwriter, and singer who plays more than a dozen instruments.

interesting historical coincidence, according to Denney, is that “in the mid-19th century, there was a merchant in New York who collected works by the Hudson River painters. One painting called *Hunter Mountain* by Sanford Gifford depicted a clear-cut with a little cabin in the middle of it. The merchant who bought the painting was James Pinchot, and he named his son after that painter—Gifford Pinchot, who became the father of the Forest Service.”

Traditional artists and crafters have long had a close relationship to forests and the materials that they provide. Forest Service archaeologists have discovered baskets made from spruce roots that are as old as the earliest civilizations on the North American continent. Weavers today still make baskets out of roots, vines, and branches.



Working for the Forest Service since 1966, Jim Hammer uses pack animals to haul his equipment as he constructs and preserves trails in Washington's Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests.

Other crafters collect wood, antlers, beeswax, quills, acorns, flowers, twigs, bark, moss, and pine resin to create their arts, crafts, and household objects. Woodworkers use forest products for a variety of items that run the gamut from intricately carved figurines to musical instruments and canoes. For instance, Nathan Jackson, a Tlingit woodcarver from Ketchikan, Alaska, has received the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts for his totem poles, clan crests, masks, canoes, and carved doors, all made within the traditions of the Tlingit people. When he carves something, it is intended to be used, not left on display. For example, "A canoe is just a boat," he explains, "but it gets you to think about what our people used to do, and how they put good material to good use. Then this canoe becomes an extension of our culture."

Forest Service employee Rita Cantú from Arizona works with the Conservation and the Arts program to connect communities to nature through the arts. The program uses artists, dancers, writers, musicians, storytellers, and poets to tell the story of the growth of conservation policy in the United States. "It's not enough just to manage our resources wherever they might be, separate from the communities," Cantú maintains. "The essential

piece is to capture people's interest in stories and art, the cultural expressions that come from the heart and the heads of the people."

COOKING AND CAMPING

Some art is edible, such as pies, jams, and medicine that have been made from wild foods and herbs. From the earliest days of tent camping, cooks have enjoyed making meals on open fires. The love for camp cooking has not disappeared, and the National Museum of Forest Service History recently published a cookbook with traditional Dutch oven recipes that have been used in the field by rangers and fire tower lookouts (see *Suggested Reading*).

Jim Hammer, Trails Coordinator on the Methow Ranger District in Washington State, recalls the typical breakfasts (with distinctive names) that might be eaten by the crew. "If you were with an old packer, like old Bill Imes, you'd have spotted dog [i.e., oatmeal] along with whatever else you had. And with a couple of the old packers, the only variety you'd ever have from bacon, eggs, and hotcakes was eggs, bacon, and hotcakes. If all the animals were in and breakfast was ready, we'd have one old boy that'd holler out, 'The dog's got a spot!' That meant breakfast was ready and you'd better be getting up."

DUTCH OVEN ONE-POT MEAL

Thomas M. Collins of North Ogden,
Utah, retired Forest Service employee

Ingredients

1½ to 2 pounds of small to medium
red potatoes, washed and unpeeled
2 medium heads of cabbage,
cut in wedges
3 onions, quartered
8 ears of sweet corn on the cob,
cleaned and broken in half
2 pounds of smoked kielbasa or other
smoked ring sausage, cut into quarters
1 quart water

Place the potatoes on the bottom of a 12-inch Dutch oven and layer as follows: cabbage, onion, corn, and sausage. Add water and cover tightly to keep in moisture. Cook for about one hour, with 10 to 12 charcoal briquettes on the bottom, replacing charcoal as needed. The smoky juice from the sausage drips down through the other food and gives it a good flavor. Serve from the Dutch oven, or transfer some of the top layers to other containers for easier access to the potatoes on the bottom. Season to taste. Serves 6 to 8.

Thomas Collins explains: I got this recipe from a horse packer in Montana. It is probably derived from the old cream-can dinners that were used by early settlers in New England and the Midwest when feeding large numbers of workers at grain-threshing bees and other work parties. The food was layered in several five-gallon cream cans. With the lids on, they were put on the coals of a wood fire to cook. When serving, the food was generally separated. The cook took the meat out (different kinds of smoked meat could be used), cut it up, and served it so everyone received some meat. This one-pot meal was a natural for Dutch ovens.

Reprinted with permission from *Camp Cooking, 100 Years* by the National Museum of Forest Service History.



Rock climbing, hiking, and rappelling are just a few methods for bringing people closer to nature in the national forests.

PROMOTING RECREATION

Recreation takes many forms. In communities around the nation, families can join in Forest Service programs that teach them not only how to fish, but also how to protect fish habitats, protect water quality, operate a boat safely, and practice the principles of catch and release. Enthusiasts can go hiking, biking, bird watching, horseback riding, hunting, skiing, sledding, ice skating, snowshoeing, snowboarding, rock climbing, canoeing, surfing, diving, swimming, or camping—to name a few. The Forest Service maintains trails that range from short nature hikes for photographers to rugged backcountry trails for backpackers. Many trails are accessible to people with disabilities.

Many people have long recognized the need to leave parts of America undisturbed by humans. The first wilderness areas in the United States were established by the Forest Service in 1920; since then, close to 100 million acres of wilderness have been added to the system. The United States has far more acres of wilderness set aside than any other country in the world, and in 2004 celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

In wilderness areas, visitors are invited to come, but not to remain. Programs such as *Leave No Trace* teach wilderness visitors to pack out their trash, use lightweight stoves instead of making fires, stay on designated trails, control horses, and leave cultural and historical sites alone. The Forest Service has a cadre of employees whose job is to talk about the value of forests, wildlands, and nature. Interpretive naturalists and backcountry rangers are found

in state-of-the-art visitor centers as well as on remote backcountry trails. They share scientific knowledge in ways that people can understand.

Francisco Valenzuela, a recreation planner for the Rocky Mountain Region in Colorado, expresses one of the pleasures of the job: "It's really nice to see people enjoy themselves, going out in nature and getting close to it, appreciating it, moving to help support it—and not necessarily doing damage to it. It's really great to be part of the Forest Service team and help create these things, because I think they're going to be on the land for many centuries to come."

FACING CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

As the current Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth makes clear, the job of facing future challenges is an enormous one (see page 46). But as the Forest Service begins its second century, the participants in *Forest Service, Culture, and Community* demonstrate at the 2005 Smithsonian Folklife Festival that there is already a long tradition of caring for the land, serving the public, and meeting these challenges.

For instance, the Forest Service has an ongoing mission to educate teachers and children, connecting people to the land through conservation education. Such education increases public awareness and understanding of the interrelationships in natural systems. Natural resource professionals teach in classrooms or lead field trips. Similarly, Smokey Bear and Woody Owl have become national symbols in fire-prevention and conservation campaigns.

As this essay has indicated, the men and women who work in our forests and rangelands have very special connections to the land and its natural resources. They understand the science, the history, the technology, the art, and the traditions of forest service, culture, and community. They also recognize the values inherent in the work they do. As environmental psychologist Herbert Schroeder explains, "A tree is a living organism. You can see it grow, and it grows slowly over a period of years. You can develop a bond, a sense of connection over that long period of time. . . . If there's a tree on a person's property, they have contact on a continuing basis. If the tree happens to be one of those planted by your ancestors, that provides a connection with your family. And you also have a connection with the future. You can think about how that tree will be appreciated by your grandchildren or great-grandchildren."

"Our national forests will be here one hundred years from today," adds Joe Meade, supervisor of Alaska's Chugach National Forest. "And as we move into this new century, our national forests are going to be incredibly important. . . . In the Lower 48 [states], because of population growth, the national forests are becoming the place to escape, to recreate, and to get away. The more and more our population grows, with more and more green space lost, the more valued our public lands will be and will continue to be for all time." Following the example set by Gifford Pinchot 100 years ago, these men and women are still seeking to provide "the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run."

The Forest Service has an ongoing mission to educate teachers and children, connecting people to the land through conservation education.

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Smokey Bear has been an important symbol of wildfire prevention since 1944.

FUTURE CONCERNS FOR PUBLIC LANDS

In January 2005, a Forest Service Centennial Congress was held in Washington, D.C., to commemorate 100 years of conservation and to open a dialogue with others about the challenges and opportunities that will face the Forest Service in the next 100 years. At that congress, Chief Dale Bosworth outlined some of the current challenges to conservation:

- ***Dealing with a growing population.*** In the last 100 years, the United States more than tripled its population to 275 million. By the turn of the next century, the U.S. population may reach 571 million.
- [46] ● ***Expressing the changing face of America.*** Although conservation belongs to all citizens, the face of conservation has traditionally been rural and white. As the U.S. population becomes ever more urban and more ethnically diverse, the Forest Service needs to give Americans from every background more opportunities to participate in conservation.
- ✿ ***Supporting our land ethic with a rational consumption ethic.*** The United States is the largest wood-consuming nation on earth, and consumption keeps expanding. At the same time, most Americans don't want any changes in the landscape or any commercial operations on public land. If Americans truly believe in a land ethic, they must also reduce their consumption of natural resources.
- ***Restoring our fire-adapted forests to something more resembling their condition at the time of European settlement.*** Many of the Forest Service's most pressing problems are related to fire and fuels in forested landscapes that, by their very nature, are dynamic. The goal therefore is not to keep landscapes unchanged for all time—which is impossible—but to restore (or at least to account for) the dynamic ecological processes (including fire) through which our forested landscapes evolved.
- ***Responding to the realities of a global economy in a culturally diverse world.*** One of those realities is that invasive species are moving around the world with growing ease. This is a huge threat, not only to native ecosystems, but also to our financial resources.
- ✿ ***Better managing outdoor recreation.*** We are in growing danger of loving our public lands to death. In 2001, there were over 214 million visits to national forests and grasslands. By the end of the 21st century, that number is expected to double. The Forest Service must find a way for visitors to get the high-quality experiences they want without compromising the health of the land or the ability of future visitors to get those same high-quality experiences.
- ***Restoring the health of many watersheds and repairing a deteriorating infrastructure.*** There is a large backlog of watershed restoration projects on national forest lands, as well as thousands of deteriorating culverts to replace, roads to restore, abandoned mines to reclaim, vegetation to treat, and many deferred projects for maintenance and ecological restoration.
- ***Understanding and coping with long-term and large-scale climate changes.*** Climate change at various scales is undeniable, and it has momentous social, economic, and ecological implications. For example, the West is much drier now than 30 years ago.
- ✿ ***Working better together across boundaries on a landscape scale.*** Partnerships and collaboration are absolutely crucial for the Forest Service, particularly for better engaging its various publics in managing national forest land.



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