AN INTERVIEW WITH

WENDY MILNER HERRETT

by

Jacqueline S. Reinier

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Salem, Oregon

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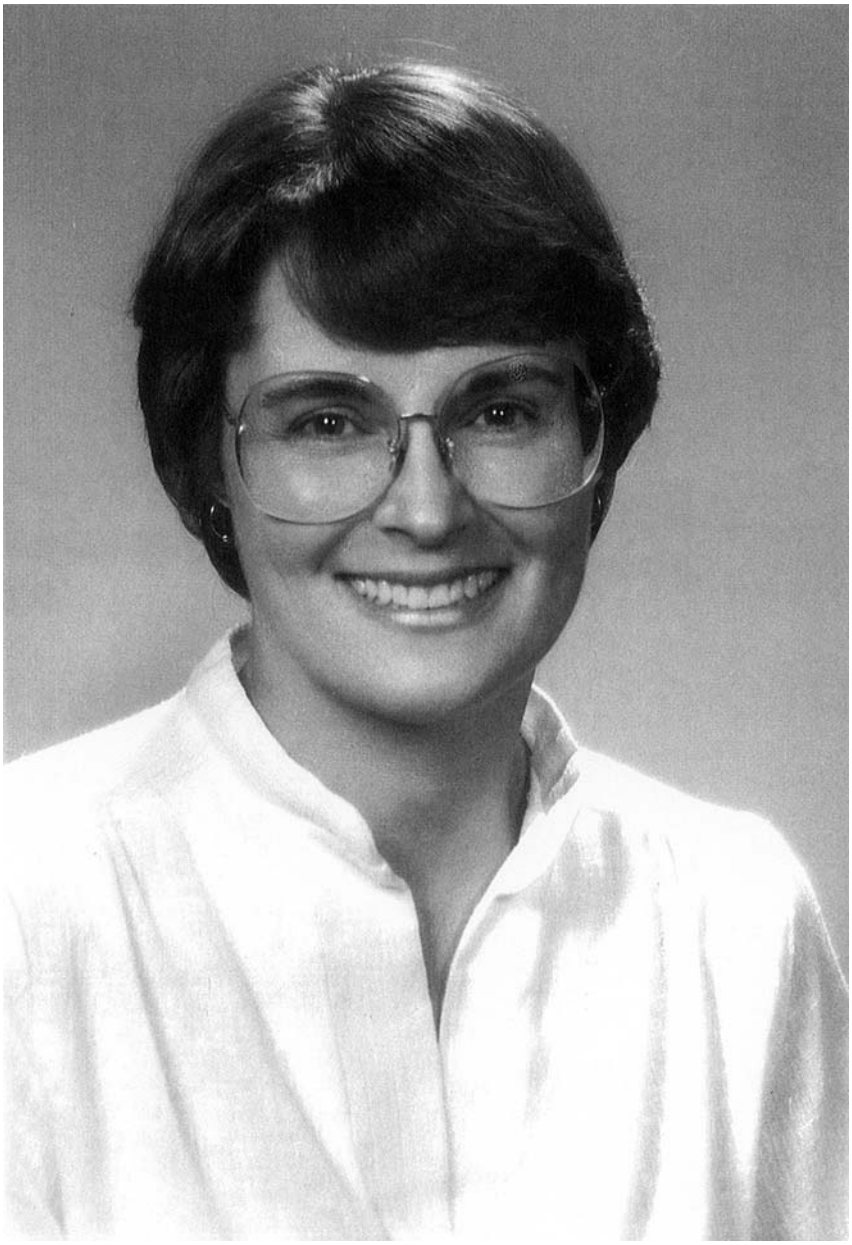

Wendy Milner Herrett

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

Wendy Milner Herrett was interviewed by Jacqueline S. Reinier at Herrett's home in Salem, Oregon on June 13, 14, and 15, 2000. Dr. Reinier is a former history professor and director of the Oral History Program at California State University, Sacramento. She and her students have done previous interviewing of Region 5 USDA Forest Service employees in California. She also has taught Oral History Interviewing in the Capital Campus Public History Program at California State University, Sacramento and at Vista College in Berkeley, California. Prior to the interview she was able to conduct research in materials furnished by Linda Lux, Forest Service Historian for Region 5 and in the library of the Pacific Southwest Regional Office of the USDA Forest Service in Vallejo, California.

In Herrett's comfortable living room in Salem, she and Reinier established an almost immediate rapport. Herrett graciously introduced the interviewer to her community, and the two had dinner together each evening when the interview sessions were completed. Herrett was very forthcoming and candid during her interview, making a genuine effort to assess her own strengths and weaknesses during her Forest Service career. As the first female district ranger in the Forest Service, she has gained important insights into opportunities and difficulties for women working in a large, previously male-dominated federal agency. She has firsthand experience of the change that the Forest Service has undergone in recent years. And she has indeed, throughout her career, been a woman on the cutting edge.

The interview was transcribed by Carol Niehus in Berkeley, California. Reinier edited the transcript, first checking the verbatim manuscript against the original tape recordings, and then editing it for punctuation, paragraphing, and spelling, and verifying proper names. Insertions by the editor are bracketed. The interviewer also prepared the introductory materials and names list.

In October 2000, Herrett was forwarded a copy of the edited transcript for her approval. She made minor changes to the transcript and added a small amount of additional material. This material is also bracketed.

Herrett's personal papers are still in her possession. She generously offered them to Reinier for additional research as the interview proceeded. The original tape recordings of the interview, the draft transcript annotated by Herrett, and additional copies of the final transcript are located at the Forest History Society, Inc., 701 Vickers Avenue, Durham, North Carolina, 27701.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Wendy Milner Herrett was born in Cheyenne, Wyoming in 1945, where her father, Michael M. Milner, was in the Army Air Corps. Shortly after, the family, including her mother, Pauline R. McConaughy Milner, and older sister, Colleen Milner [McCormick], moved to Denver, Colorado where Wendy grew up, attending the Denver public schools. In Colorado she came to love the mountains and natural landscape. She also decided as a child to become an architect, and was the first girl in her high school to take a mechanical drawing class. After the death of her mother when Wendy was thirteen, her father remarried Geraldine F. Carlson Milner, and a half-sister, Michele Milner [Myers], was born. Prior to Wendy's senior year in high school, the family moved to Arlington Heights, Illinois, where she completed her secondary education at Arlington High School, graduating in 1963. That summer she was selected for College Board, and sold back-to-school clothes at Marshall Field's main store in downtown Chicago.

Wendy attended the University of Oregon from 1963 to 1970, where she obtained a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture, combining her interest in architecture with her lifelong love of plant materials. There she learned the value of working as a team with other students in the degree program, who were all male. A few months after her graduation, she was hired by the USDA Forest Service as a landscape architect in the Pacific Northwest Regional Office in Portland, Oregon. At that point Warren Bacon was developing the visual management system, a process for setting visual standards for all national forest system lands, and she was able to work with him. In June, 1971, she moved to a position as landscape architect on the Mt. Hood National Forest, the headquarters of which are also located in Portland. There she was delighted to encounter as many as seven other newly hired women professionals, as well as Jim Overbay on timber staff, who became her mentor throughout her Forest Service career. She continued to enjoy working as a team, was introduced to forest planning, and received her first experience with fighting fires. She also received visibility in implementation of the visual management system.

In 1974 Wendy became forest landscape architect for the Routt National Forest in Region 2. At that point, when the agency was hiring an increasing number of professionals, she was the first landscape architect on that forest. At Steamboat Springs she was approached by Regional Forester Craig Rupp to become a district ranger. Feeling that she needed management experience in order to undertake a line position, in 1976 she moved to the position of resource assistant on the Pactola District, Black Hills National Forest, Region 2. There she supervised staff, managed a budget, and dealt with the public for the first time. She also worked out her own management style, which differed from the traditional more military model of the Forest Service of past years. While in Rapid City, South Dakota, she began dating Tom Herrett, whom she would later marry. At that point Tom was a Forest Service employee on the Pactola District, but later he would be a hydrologist with the United States Geological Survey, a career which meshed well with her own. In 1978 Wendy moved to another district on the same forest, working as resource assistant on the Harney District, Black Hills National Forest.

In 1979 Wendy became the first female district ranger in the Forest Service, when she

was offered that position on Blanco District, White River National Forest, Region 2. In Meeker, Colorado, she found herself in a traditional ranching community in beautiful mountainous scenery at the height of an energy boom for oil shale development. Although under considerable scrutiny as the first female district ranger, she thoroughly enjoyed working with ranchers, and learning to ride the range. She and Tom Herrett were married while she was district ranger. She tried to offer support to other women as they became district rangers, and spoke at various meetings to female Forest Service employees. Without realizing it, she had become a role model.

In 1983 Wendy was offered a Loeb Fellowship to study at the Graduate School of Design, Harvard University. While she was there she took advantage of the opportunity to attend classes in public policy at the Kennedy School of Government. After one semester at Harvard, Wendy took a position as forester on the legislative affairs staff in the Washington D.C. office of the Forest Service. There she worked on such wilderness legislation as the National Wild and Scenic River legislation and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act, as well as various wilderness bills for the eastern United States. She became fascinated with the legislative process and was challenged by working with congressional staff. But she clearly was a candidate for a position as forest supervisor, which very few women had held.

In 1986 she returned to Region 6, where she took a position as deputy forest supervisor on the Mt. Hood National Forest. Delighted to be back where she had begun her career, Wendy threw herself into forest planning and worked closely with Dave Mohla, the forest supervisor. At that point in the late 1980s, while the Dwyer decision on the endangered species, spotted owls, was still pending, Region 6 was still assigned high timber harvest levels, which provided an ample budget. That situation changed, however, by 1990 when Wendy became forest supervisor of the Siuslaw National Forest, Region 6. There she was faced with developing protocol for another endangered species, the marbled murrelet, and in the context of a reduced timber harvest and thus reduced budget, with downsizing staff. While Wendy found it very difficult to reduce staff, she attempted to face the situation with realism.

In 1992 she became director of recreation in the Pacific Northwest Regional Office, where she had begun her career. Again, as a regional director on an all-male management team, she was a woman on the cutting edge. But Wendy had to face the issue of downsizing staff in the regional office as well, and during her tenure recreation was merged with lands and minerals. Ecosystem management was put into place, and the task of planning increased. By 1996, Wendy was ready to retire from the Forest Service. Throughout her career, as the first female district ranger, and continuing in such responsible positions as forest supervisor and regional director, she had not only felt that she represented other women, but also she had opened new paths for them. Since her retirement, Wendy has lived with her husband Tom in Salem, Oregon, continuing her love of plant materials in a variety of private and community projects.

[SESSION I, June 13, 2000]

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

REINIER: Wendy, I understand that you were born in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

HERRETT: That's correct. At Fort Warren Air Base.

REINIER: Oh, your dad [Michael M. Milner] was in the Air Force?

HERRETT: During the war, yes, or the Army Air Corps. He had spent his foreign time in Canada. He was an excellent softball pitcher and the base commander kept him there because he used to help them win. [Laughter]

REINIER: I see. Now in your family did you have one sister, is that right?

HERRETT: I have an older sister, a year and a half older. Her name's Colleen [Milner McCormick]. My mom [Pauline R. McConaughy Milner] died when I was thirteen and Dad remarried, so I have a half-sister, Michele [Milner Myers], who's fifteen years younger. Three girls. And Dad was a very athletic man.

REINIER: Did he want you to be an athlete also?

HERRETT: He called me his "girl." My sister was more athletic and could throw better. When we were kids we had golf clubs, real golf clubs, when we were very tiny. We'd play catch with a softball. But he'd throw hard to Colleen; he'd throw softer to me.
[I was competitive and reasonably athletic in games in school, but this was before girls' sports were part of school athletics].

REINIER: Really. You said in some of the materials that I was able to read that there were important differences between you and your sister. Is that so?

HERRETT: Colleen was always the more up front, confrontive type. She wanted to know "why" on everything, and I kind of sat back and observed more. I think she felt, especially after Mom died, that she had to be the one that's protecting me, although I didn't feel I needed protecting. But if something wasn't going the way we wanted, she'd have to confront Dad, and that didn't work well for her.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: I would more or less stay in my room and be very quiet. So I was considered the good one and Colleen was more, probably, the trouble maker. And today she has auto-immune diseases and has had some major health issues. I'm not sure that it doesn't go back to our different styles. I don't know that I'm mentally healthier than she is. [Laughing] But physical health, I'm in better shape than she is right now. Somehow I think it wasn't a happy childhood for her after Mom died. I'm not sure it was before. Grandma [Selma Wilhelmina Anderson McConaughy] lived with us and Grandma didn't like Colleen. Grandma didn't like Dad. Grandma was beginning not to like me [laughing] as I got older. She said, "Wendy, you used to be so sweet and now you're more like Colleen." I was not as aware of that dynamic as Colleen obviously was. Colleen calls Grandma "my grandma," not hers.

REINIER: That was your mother's mother?

HERRETT: That was my mother's mother who lived with us.

REINIER: All your childhood?

HERRETT: No. From about kindergarten through about eighth grade when Mom died; then she moved out.

REINIER: Tell me about your mother.

HERRETT: Mom was a very bright, independent woman. She grew up in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Her father [James J. McConaughy]was a conductor on the Union Pacific Railroad. Mom was the youngest of six kids. Her sisters and brothers, I think, considered her spoiled, but she had very definite ideas. She was more the outdoor person. She would ride horseback. She was a marksman. She would camp and fish and she was the one that anytime we went out to the mountains for a trip or something, it was Mom that took us. Dad occasionally would go, but it was Mom that was probably behind those trips. She never got to go to college. Her father was one that believed women didn't need college. So it was very important to her that Colleen and I went to college. Mom made that very clear to us. And there were times when I was in college when I thought about dropping out. And maybe if she were alive I might have dropped out because I could talk to her about it, but because she had died, it was just that legacy that I was living with, and so I kept going back and finally finished.

REINIER: Was she a role model for you?

HERRETT: Yes and no. She had constant migraines later. So she didn't deal well with stress. I've had a little bit of that. But she was the one when we built our second house in Denver, she worked with the architect and designed it. She was the one whose role in our house design helped me decide I could be an architect. I wanted to be an architect and at that time in my life nobody said no, women aren't architects. Because Mom had done all the planning with the architect, it seemed logical to me that I could do that.

REINIER: So you started out wanting to be an architect, not necessarily a landscape architect?

HERRETT: That's correct. It wasn't until I was in college that I really discovered landscape architecture, and that it combined the outdoors and things I love that way with planning spaces for people.

REINIER: Did you love the mountains, growing up in the West?

HERRETT: I loved the mountains, but it was a very visual thing rather than going out and camping and being in the mountains. They were my view every day. Our house had a wonderful view of the front range and Mt. Evans, and so I was very aware of the mountains. Back then, Denver had clear air and it was hard not to be aware of the mountains. They were bigger than human beings and I liked that. It was just a large scale and it kind of put us in perspective. I probably realized that later when I consciously think about things like that, than when I was a little girl, but the mountains were always there and a part of what I loved.

REINIER: There was a wonderful story in the materials that you gave me about how in the sandbox you used to make landscapes.

HERRETT: Yeah! There was a garden area in our yard, our first yard in Denver. I don't know if it was really a sandbox or the garden part, but there was a year or so that we didn't have a garden in it and we got to play in it. My sister and I would build cities and we would build rivers, whole river systems, mountain ranges, roads, connect everything, canals. It was just fun to work in that scale and think three-dimensionally and play three-dimensionally. We were little girls and we really didn't have trucks and that bothered us. [Laughing] I was always jealous of my cousin who had trucks, the one boy cousin on Mom’s side who had trucks, and he had electric trains. I would have loved to have had an electric train. But I liked my dolls too.

REINIER: Were you raised with traditional gender roles, do you think? Or were they challenged?

HERRETT: I don't think there was anything that Mom couldn't do, but I think we had some fairly traditional... I don't know that anybody said "Girls don't do this" too often. Mom worked outside the home. Grandma had been a traditional housewife and mother. I think I was aware that boys played ball more and were better at it. I'm trying to think of anything else. I don't think it was extraordinarily non-gender related, non-traditional, but at the same time I think there were some inklings like the fact that Mom didn't go to college because her father thought women shouldn't. She definitely disagreed with that, and so we grew up definitely disagreeing with that sort of thinking. So we had some inklings of a different way. And Dad was... Well, Dad worked. Mom did most of the financial... Paid the bills, that sort of thing, I think. Mom did most of the discipline of the kids. That was fairly traditional. Dad, if we were really bad. But Dad worked full-time and then he officiated high school and college basketball and football games, and so he was gone a lot during those seasons. And then he pitched fast-pitch softball in Denver City League, which was a fairly big league. And he played golf. I don't remember him cleaning house, but he built us a dollhouse, I mean a big one, a play house. It wasn't a dollhouse; it was a playhouse. So he built things. They had one subcontractor [when they built our house], but Dad built the house really. We had tools as little girls. And I love tools to this day; so does Colleen. We'd much rather go in a hardware store than somewhere else probably. I don't know about anything more specific than that.

REINIER: After your dad got out of the service... Or did he stay in the service?

HERRETT: No, he got out of the service. I don't remember him being in the service. He got out right after I was born because I was born in July of 1945. And so right after then, I think, he was out of the service and he went to work in Cheyenne. He went to work for United Airlines and then they transferred him to, I think it was Los Angeles. They got as far as Denver and decided they didn't want to go to L.A. So he quit and went to work for somebody else for awhile, and then he went back to work for United and that's who he worked for most of his life.

REINIER: Was he a pilot?

HERRETT: No. He was a ramp serviceman. Then he was in ground safety work. So he traveled a fair amount, especially for the latter part [of his career], what I can remember growing up. So he was out of town for work and he was out of town for sports. But my friends adored my dad.

REINIER: Why?

HERRETT: He was just a pal. He'd play with them. The little boy across the street came over one day and said, "Can Mike come out and play?" Bobby at that time was six or seven years old. He just related well with kids. He'd fix their toys before he'd fix ours. I don't know that he ever

realized that that's what he was doing, but he was nicer to other kids than we felt he was to us. Because he was gruff to us. He was very much a perfectionist; so was my mom. And so we had to really be good kids and had responsibility very early.

REINIER: Like what kind of responsibility?

HERRETT: How we behaved, and taking care of our things, and looking out for other people in terms of making sure that they had what they needed, that they were comfortable, that we weren't doing something that was bothering them. Dad used to shovel walks; there were several elderly women up the street and he'd go shovel their walks if it snowed or something like that. And so he showed us that there's a helpful type of neighbor you are. And so that type of responsibility we learned. He's a very dynamic person and people relate very well with him. And Mom was also outgoing. They were both very capable, competent people.

REINIER: And now your mom worked, you said?

HERRETT: Um hmm.

REINIER: Did she work part-time or full-time?

HERRETT: I can't remember her going to work until I was about kindergarten or first grade, before Grandma moved in with us. I can remember for lunch going to a neighbor's house when I was in school. So it was sometime right around then she went back to work full-time. I think that was full-time. And then most of the time when I was growing up until she got so sick, my memory is she was working full-time.

REINIER: What did she do?

HERRETT: Clerical work, I think, and then she was a secretary for the head of chemistry and the head of metallurgy of the Denver Research Institute. For awhile there I thought I wanted to be a metallurgist. [Laughing] About the time I was in the sixth grade. That quickly passed. [Laughing] I think I'm a better landscape architect than I ever would have been a metallurgist!

REINIER: So did your grandmother then take care of you or was she at home when you came home from school?

HERRETT: Grandma was, and Grandma helped with the ironing and the washing and all those traditional things and helped relieve some of the burden of Mom. She also did a lot of the cooking. Colleen and I didn't have to cook until Mom died, really, and then when Dad married Jerry [Geraldine F. Carlson Milner]. Jerry didn't like food and she didn't cook very well. And so

[laughing] Colleen ended up taking over the cooking and I still didn't have to cook. So I really didn't do much until I was in college. Colleen did protect me in those ways. We're very close.

REINIER: Then you moved to Illinois for high school; is that right?

HERRETT: For my senior year in high school.

REINIER: Oh, just for your senior year.

HERRETT: So I was in Denver through my junior year. It was in the Denver high school where I still wanted to be an architect, so I took mechanical drawing. I think I was the first woman in the Denver public schools to do that; I don't know. Certainly I was the first in my high school. Of course, I was in a brand new high school, but I wasn't aware that they had allowed that anywhere before.

REINIER: Did anybody discourage you from becoming an architect at that point?

HERRETT: No. The boys teased me, some of them. I was a sophomore when I did this and the big jocks, seniors, one of them leaned over and says [in a low voice], "You want to be an architect Wendy?" I said, “Yes.” I was terribly shy.

REINIER: Were you?

HERRETT: Yes. Sometimes I’m surprised I did some things like breaking out of some molds even though I'm very shy. Anyone would say "Boo" to me, I would have run, I think. My mechanical drawing teacher said there were two ways of going into architecture; there were two types. One was more engineering oriented and one was more design oriented. And he may have urged me on to the design end because it was less math or something. I think it's all the same for a lot of math either way. That may have been gender-based, I don't know. But he never said, "Girls don't do this." I think he was correct in terms of what I really do enjoy more is the design approach. Obviously, the engineering approach also has design. It's just the orientation of the school, I think, is a little bit different. In the Illinois Institute of Technology versus the University of Oregon type of approach, I think. And just the names connote difference to me. I don't know in reality how different; there's probably a lot of similar courses.

REINIER: I want to get into that when we talk about college. But I'm not quite through with high school. And this move to Illinois, was that difficult, to go to Illinois for your senior year?

HERRETT: Actually no, I was ready for a change. I don't know why, but I was ready for a change. My folks moved in the middle of my junior year. They let me stay with a neighbor for most of the semester. I was in Job's Daughters.

REINIER: Yes, and you were...

HERRETT: ...Honored queen.

REINIER: A queen, yes! Wow!

HERRETT: I'm going "Ooooo." But it's the first time you get experience speaking in front of people and organizing things, and so that was good experience. They're nice people.

REINIER: What did you have to do as queen?

HERRETT: Well, you ran the meetings. You organized what you wanted as far as special programs during the term which was, I think six months; I can't remember at this point. You had to memorize a lot of script, and there's a sequence of positions you go through before you're Honored Queen. It was just one of those things girls did back then. Mom had been active and that may have made a difference too. Mom had been active in Job's Daughters when she was growing up. It's a nice organization. You organize your time. You interact with other people. You interact with some adults and you have to speak publicly.

REINIER: Was your father a Mason?

HERRETT: He was.

REINIER: That's how you...

HERRETT: ...Not active, but you have to be related to a Mason to be able to be a Job's Daughter, as I recall. And so I had that credential. I don't remember Dad ever being active in the Masons.

REINIER: But he was a Mason.

HERRETT: Yes. And Mom had gone on to Eastern Star, and I don't remember her ever being active in that either. She may have been; I just didn't notice. Kids don't notice some things like that. So Job's Daughters, I stayed for my term. They let me do that because it actually went through the earlier part of my senior year. During the summer I moved. The Denver public schools were much more [like college]. You had electives you could take. But [Arlington High School was more sequential]. Junior year you had to take these courses; senior year you had to take these courses. Because I'd been in student council in Denver, I hadn't taken an English

credit or something and I wouldn't be able to make it up in Illinois when I got there. So when I got there, I had to go to summer school. The first course they put me in was the textbook I had just finished, and so that didn't make any sense. So the only other course I could take was a writing course. I hate writing! I had to write a theme a day all summer long. It was not my favorite course, but it was probably very good for me.

REINIER: It probably was good for you. That's how you learn to write.

HERRETT: Yeah. I made up my summer school; I met new kids. The kids I met, my impression was, they were not aware of anything bigger than them around. There weren't mountains around that could remind you that you were not the biggest thing in the world. While they were nice kids, their fathers would go in and be bosses to Chicago kids' fathers, is the impression I got. It was not a real elite school like New Trier [High School] or one of those. It was still some snobbishness to it and some, I don't know, feeling that they were better than others maybe. I didn't really like what I got into, but I wasn't disappointed I had moved. I liked the Denver schools better. Oh, they wouldn't let me take mechanical drawing when I got to Illinois.

REINIER: In Arlington Heights?

HERRETT: Right. Because I was in college prep and mechanical drawing wasn't a college prep course. And so there were much more rigid rules for school. Boys couldn't wear Levis. I'm thinking, "What?" I had to fly back periodically for my meetings for Job's Daughters. I think I had two or three meetings. So my folks would put me on the airplane; I'd fly to Denver and go to my meetings. Somebody would meet me there and I'd go to my meeting, and then somebody else would put me on the airplane, I'd fly back to Chicago. So as a senior I was doing my first flights to meetings.

REINIER: That's interesting. That's good experience.

HERRETT: It was. Especially for somebody so shy.

REINIER: But your grades were good, because I saw that you made the National Honor Society.

HERRETT: Yeah. My grades were good. My sister's grades weren't as good, and Dad and Jerry weren't as willing to help her with college, or she felt they weren't. I think they made it fairly clear, and I think her grades weren't as good. She's a night person and she'd stay up all night studying and then she'd be asleep during class. Her high school was very over-crowded, so they had them on split sessions. She'd be there bright and early. I think they've learned a lot now about sleep deprivation with high school kids. So I don't think she was as alert. She's very bright, but if she doesn't agree with something, then she will fight it. And so her grades weren't

as good as mine. I just kind of went with the flow. I remember a lot of teachers who were very supportive of me. And Colleen doesn't have that memory at all. It was more like a combat zone. Well, she wasn't openly hostile. I don't think she was an easy student to have in a class. Then she did end up going to college. When I was ready to go to college, they'd send me just about anywhere I wanted to go. Which kind of amazed me, and Colleen's response was, "More power to you, go for it." But there was some dynamic going on there that because I was the less confrontive child, life was easier for me than it had been for her.

REINIER: Did you try to please people?

HERRETT: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. I'm a pleaser [or want to be viewed as doing the right thing and doing it well]. [Laughing]

REINIER: Tell me about that when you were growing up.

HERRETT: I think I was a little adult by the time I was thirteen. An example. I was afraid to dance. Well, part of it was probably my sister and my best friend [Margo Foster Sanger] had rolled on the floor when I tried to fast dance once, they laughed so hard. And that just humiliated me because I like to do well! Be thought highly of! I was just petrified of dancing at socials in junior high. I liked square dancing because you had rules and you knew where you had to go, but fast dancing and some of those other dances, I didn't have a clue. And I felt I was a klutz. I'm not very musical. And so I would stay where the refreshments were and help serve refreshments. I was the caretaker. [Laughing] It was a safer place for me and part of it was because I was hiding out and part of it was I thought, this was our social, our parents shouldn't have to do this for us. So I had both those things working for me in my mind. And it turned out it was always a safer place for me to be. Chicken that I was. So I was aggressive in some ways and I was really unaggressive in other ways. Strange child. [Laughing]

REINIER: But your mother's death must have upset you.

HERRETT: Oh yes. Mom committed suicide. I was the last person to see her and I had a friend in the next room. She shot herself in my sister's bed. My dad and my sister were in Pueblo for his father's [Philip Milusnic] funeral at the time. My aunt [Mabel McConaughy Crawford] from Cheyenne, Mom's sister, was with us, and she needed to get back to Cheyenne. And I had never heard a gun go off before. So, you know, just the whole incident itself...

REINIER: ...Must be very traumatic.

HERRETT: Yeah. She had tried suicide with pills the spring before. Colleen was the one that had to go with Dad and try and keep Mom awake on the way to the hospital. It was just a miracle at that time there was a kidney dialysis machine at the hospital they took her to. I think

it was about the only one west of the Mississippi at the moment [or so I was told]. And so they saved her and then she was sent to a mental hospital. She was very humiliated. With migraines back in the mid-'50s, if a woman had migraines, it was either... First of all, they did a hysterectomy. And of course that didn't help. But it was those raging hormones. And then they did--I don't know if it was a partial lobotomy or what--they did some brain surgery and that still didn't help. And so then the doctor says, "Well, it's in your head." And I think it just really put her over the edge in terms of people thinking she was crazy. Or maybe even she was thinking she was crazy or something was dreadfully wrong with her. And so that whole experience... Colleen, my sister, is much less trusting of doctors than even I am. In fact, when she started with her disease issue, her doctor went back for the record, Mom's records from the mental hospital and from Mom's doctor.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: Yes. Just to try and see what had happened so he could at least talk Colleen through some of that stuff. That was an experience. Grandma moved out. Grandma was really the person, she's the only one I can remember holding me when I was a little girl. So it was almost more traumatic for me to lose Grandma. But we weren't allowed to grieve. And Dad remarried three months later, which everyone was shocked about, but Colleen and I weren't. Dad didn't know a thing about running a house. I have no idea if anything had gone on prior, but I do know that years before Mom had told Colleen and I--I don't think she said it to Dad--but told us that if anything ever happens to me, I want your dad to marry Jerry. And he did!

REINIER: So Jerry was somebody that you'd known.

HERRETT: Yes. She was secretary to Dad's boss. So he worked with her and Mom knew her that way. She's a very nice person. She's not that old. Well, let's see, she was about thirty, I think, twenty-nine or thirty when they married and Dad was forty-five or something.

REINIER: And you were...

HERRETT: I was thirteen and Colleen was fourteen. Colleen was a sophomore in high school and I was in eighth grade. And so Colleen ended up having to basically take over a lot of running of the house. I wasn't a lot of help, I must admit. I thought I was at the time. I mean I'd help somewhat, but Colleen had the responsibility of the meals and things like that. And so she really

had to grow up that way. We didn't get to cry or grieve. We both, I think, cry silently now. Because we would cry, of course, but we couldn't let anyone hear us. Now I don't know if they had heard us, what the response would have been. At the time, you just have to have a stiff upper lip, but I don't remember them saying things, "You can't talk about your mother, you can't grieve, you can't do these things." But it was just kind of... We'd talk about her to other people.

It was like at home we'd protect them and they supposedly were protecting us, I think. I don't know, it's one of those strange dynamics that happens and of course this was the late ‘50s.

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

REINIER: Wendy, we were talking about your high school career in Arlington Heights. So you graduated in 1963?

HERRETT: Correct.

REINIER: And then that summer you were on the College Board?

HERRETT: The following year. That summer I worked at the Flying Carpet Motor Inn at O'Hare Airport as a waitress. I determined I didn't want to do that for the rest of my life. And then I went to college. I also worked at a coin-op dry cleaner, cleaning out cuffs of pants before they were put in the machines. So I knew I wanted something other than that for a life.

REINIER: What made you choose University of Oregon for college?

HERRETT: It was not very scientific. I was looking for a school of architecture. I knew I didn't want to go to the University of Illinois or Illinois Institute of Technology. I'm not sure why, but I didn't want to go to those places. When I lived in Colorado I had never wanted to go to the University of Colorado, which was where the school of architecture was located. So I thought, well, why would I want to change my mind now? So somehow it was between the University of Arizona or Arizona State [University]--I don't even remember which one had the school of architecture--and then I read, going through the files at school, that the University of Oregon had a school of architecture. Knew nothing about the school! But I had heard Oregon was a beautiful state. United Airlines flew to Eugene, Oregon. I could fly on pass, so that made the difference of going in state and out of state. So I applied to the U of O!

REINIER: And got in.

HERRETT: And got in, fortunately. Once I was in, Jerry asked me if I wanted to go see what this place was like before I was locked in. The poor station manager for United was a friend of Dad's, so he greeted me at the airplane, took me into town. First time I had stayed at a hotel by myself. I had an appointment with the registrar, and he spent several hours with me, showing me the campus, which just amazes me.

REINIER: How nice!

HERRETT: It really was. I mean it was a very generous act for this scared little kid visiting. I'm thinking, well, I'm committed now! They certainly are nice people. I can remember visiting the museum of art at the university and that impressed me. The trees in the whole Willamette Valley and looking at the log rafts in the river and how big the Willamette River was. Of course, when you grow up in Illinois, it's Wilmette, Illinois. I had to relearn to say Willamette out here because they're spelled differently, but it's a common mistake. And so I decided OK, I can do Eugene! I can do the U of O! And so in the fall I came back and started school. Then I was in school for a year and then I stayed out the second year. I was on College Board that summer.

REINIER: We should explain what College Board is.

HERRETT: College Board is [where a department store] hires representatives, young women from different colleges throughout the nation, to sell clothes, back to school clothes. And I worked at Marshall Fields at their main store in downtown Chicago. Just riding the train into town every day and walking across the Chicago River and just seeing downtown Chicago and commuting [was great]. And then being in the store, they gave us a lot of background of what merchandising and marketing are. We got some nice exposure. I decided I didn't like selling clothes. I didn't like selling. [Laughing] I was better at look-ups for other stores.

[Laughter]

REINIER: Did you think you wanted to go into merchandising?

HERRETT: Not really. It just seemed like a summer job that would be OK.

REINIER: Yes, it was an exciting summer job.

HERRETT: And then of course it ended. And then I decided I needed to stay out of school and earn some money so I could go back to school. Then United Airlines let me come on as a file clerk and they were very good to me. I stayed through that year and then the following summer and most of my summers. And I stayed out another semester. They let me work for them, and that worked well for me, too. I was able to go to college with a little bit of a student loan, a little bit of a scholarship and a lot of help from the folks. Looking at costs now compared with college today, I'm sure--inflation--it was large back then but not nearly as large as I think what kids have to pay today.

REINIER: Was that an exciting time at the University of Oregon?

HERRETT: Oh, yes, it was. I was there from essentially 1963 to 1970, so there were all the campus protests and all the things going on in the United States at the time, the beginning of the Vietnam War and the protests for Vietnam and all of those things. It was a very good school to

explore what you wanted to think about things and be exposed to some things. You know, it's a state school. It's not one of those muckity-muck schools, but it was a good place for me to be. I lived off campus except for that first year, so I had an apartment and I preferred that. I wasn't a sorority/fraternity type. Hardly dated. Had lots of brothers. I found landscape architecture at the University of Oregon, which combined my love of outdoors and the design process, designing for people. I found plant materials and just love plant materials. So it opened some new doors for me. I enjoyed my time there immensely.

REINIER: And you said that it had a different kind of a program than, for example, the Illinois Institute of Technology.

HERRETT: What I imagined the Illinois Institute of Technology would be, much more technically oriented, the precision, the engineering of structures. I'm not even sure if design approach, you know, problem solving would be quite the same. It might be. I think it would have been a much more technical approach instead of a design solution, and maybe a much more engineered solution than aesthetic solution. I think you need to have structures that function or designs that function, serve a purpose. There is a design purpose and you solve that with the design you do. But there are more technical ways [or more aesthetic ways]. In one the engineering shows versus the engineering being there but not being the dominant feature in the other. It is maybe just in my naive thinking, what those differences were, but I think there's some reality to it. I think at Illinois Institute you might come out with a degree in engineering, [a Bachelor of Science], versus a Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Landscape Architecture.

REINIER: And you took a number of other courses as well, didn't you, at the University of Oregon?

HERRETT: You were required to.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: I took a music course, History of Music and its Literature. I had to take some math courses, of course. I had to take some P.E. [physical education] courses. I can remember canoeing. [Laughing] Took a Western Civilization type course. I forget what all else, but the

first two years are very much the pre-architecture, pre-landscape architecture. You have some basic design studios and some basic art classes and then you get into the final three years, very much more structures, drawing, architectural drawing, plant materials, surveying. And a lot of design studio. Can't even remember all of them. History of Architecture, History of Landscape Architecture, History of Art. All of those things we had. Plant Composition. Can't even remember a bunch of others, but it's a whole mixture your later three years. Urban Planning type courses are more limited to how much spare time you have, of course. But the first two years you can take whatever you want almost except for some basic design classes for your pre-

architecture, pre-landscape architecture. It's changed some now. After I left school they went to the ecology movement, and I think the strength of the University of Oregon when I was there was they graduated good designers. And I think they lost that for awhile. I think they even lost their accreditation for awhile. One thing I really did appreciate that I think put me in a good place for working in a collaborative situation like a multi-discipline team, was at the University of Oregon your grades in design were not between students. You were compared to your last piece of work.

REINIER: Excellent.

HERRETT: And the critique system. The professors would critique you, but other students could critique you. You'd help each other. Just ask questions because you were all working in the same design studio with your drafting boards. And so it encouraged the discussion and it encouraged give and take and people's opinions. Sometimes they weren't easy to hear. But I think that really, of all the things in school that prepared me for work later, that was one of the best teaching tools I had received. One of the best lessons I had learned.

REINIER: So you really were working more as a team.

HERRETT: You were not alone. Your work was your own, and so you didn't have necessarily a team solution. They're doing more team solutions now, which I think is good. But there was a give and take. You could ask for help and people would give you help. It wasn't necessarily in terms of I want help, but what do you think of this? This is what I'm trying to do. Can you give me some input that might be helpful?

REINIER: Were there professors there that you particularly remember?

HERRETT: Oh yes. There were a number of them, but [Wallace M.] Mac Ruff probably and John Gillham. John Gillham was very straight-laced. He was a very organized man and he was the one when it was finally down to what we called a "terminal project"--and it turned out terminal in a lot of ways--it was the last project. He helped me just sit down and organize my time and say OK, if I'm going to finish at this point I have to be done with this drawing by this date. And then I have to do this drawing, and these are all the steps to get there. And he would

come around and watch, "How's it going?" He called me "Walt" because he had trouble with women in slacks. He laughed about it. But some days he'd call me Wendy; some days he'd call me Walt. But of course you're sitting at a drafting table all day, you wear pants. In college, too, you wear pants. Anyway. And then Mac Ruff was wonderful. He looked like Wild Bill Hickok. He taught Plant Materials and Design and did critiques on designs. He taught, I think, Plant Composition, but he was a practicing landscape architect in town as well. We'd ride our bicycles around town following Mac, learning plant materials. We probably learned about 1400 plants

that year. And he'd go, "Bite it, chew it, taste it." And then he'd look at a plant and he'd go, "Good, good, good, good, good." It was just hysterical. And he was just a wonderful person.

I got engaged to somebody that was teaching at one of the University of Wisconsin schools. It was a school that didn't have landscape architecture, so I thought I'd switch to art education. Then I decided when this person's mother started planning my wedding that no, I don't think this is a good match! Whew! But Mac is the one that tried to talk me to come back into landscape architecture. I wasn't a real confident person and he helped me with my confidence that they would think enough, they would try and have me come back.

REINIER: Yeah. How long were you gone?

HERRETT: Oh, I think I was out a term. Or something, yeah, I was working, earning money. It took me awhile to get through college. Even a five-year degree.

REINIER: Well, not too much longer than the five years.

HERRETT: Mac just... When he was too old to teach--he didn't feel too old to teach--but when he could no longer teach in the system here, he'd spend his sabbaticals going around the world south of the equator looking for hearty eucalyptus and various plant materials. And he loved New Guinea, and so he was teaching in New Guinea for a number of years at the University of New Guinea or whatever it was. And I just heard this fall that he was murdered. He was eighty-something and somebody bludgeoned him to death. And just before he was going to come back to the United States because his health wasn't doing really well.

REINIER: That's terrible!

HERRETT: That's terrible for such a wonderful person.

REINIER: But he was doing what he liked to do.

HERRETT: Oh, yeah.

REINIER: Were there other women in landscape architecture?

HERRETT: There was about one a year. And there were, oh, probably eight to fifteen young men in the group. I often got better grades because the courses that were graded were like structures, the drawing courses, plant materials, plant composition. I did well on grades, reasonably well on grades, relatively speaking, to the rest of them. The classes that you spent the bulk of your time on were design, your design studio, and they excelled in the design studio. I did OK in design studio, but grades weren't a key part of school. But I generally did a little better on the grades than the boys did.

REINIER: Were you accepted as one of the gang?

HERRETT: Yeah.

REINIER: So that wasn't a problem.

HERRETT: No, it didn't seem to be.

REINIER: Were your values influenced by those years at the University of Oregon?

HERRETT: I'm sure there's been a lot of influence. I really loved my independence while I was there. Some of the environmental movement was happening then; the women's movement was beginning. What I saw as important things certainly were influenced by my time there. The Civil Rights Movement. All of those things were, I thought, very, very important to this country and to me personally. I can remember I used to sign my drawings "W. Milner" instead of "Wendy Milner" because I felt that with a woman's name on it, it got more scrutiny, more critical review than people just looking at it with the initial and not knowing. I don't know if that was true, but I felt that way.

REINIER: Did you keep doing that for awhile, even out of school?

HERRETT: No, not once I was out of school. People knew who I was. I was kind of hard to hide! [Laughter] And obviously my instructors knew who I was, but you'd often leave your drawings on a project on the wall for review. The other people could look at it, the architecture students or whatever. And so I just felt that it would have a fairer review that way. I don't know. Once I started work, there weren't too many others around, once I was with the Forest Service.

REINIER: Well, you graduated in 1970. What did you expect to do when you graduated?

HERRETT: [Laughing] I wasn't sure what I was going to do. While I was in school I worked a little bit in private practice, and of course you do the menial things like run the drawings though the print machine, or whatever, back then. And a little bit of drafting. I was concerned that because I was good at plant materials and plant composition, if I went to a big firm, I would get funneled doing that rather than project design. I think that would have varied from place to place, but I decided I wanted to try something different. I might try the federal government and then if I didn't like that, I could always try something else. I could always go back to private practice. Since I wasn't married and I had no particular ties to any location, I had a lot of choices at that point. I looked at the National Park Service and I didn't like how they organized where their landscape architects were. They were in design centers like San Francisco and I think Denver. I don't know if there was a third one. For a project they'd go out and visit the park and then come back and do their designs. I looked at the Forest Service and the landscape architects

were in the supervisor's office on each national forest or most of the national forests. You worked right where your projects were. And that appealed to me. And the Forest Service turned out to be much better for me because I worked with other disciplines and I learned so much from other disciplines in the process and people I like and respect. I had to laugh, the University of Oregon was going through the ecology stage, and yet I knew people who were much stronger ecologists or other disciplines that had gone through the more scientific based study. And so I'm going, "Hmmm, something doesn't compute. I'm glad I get to work with these people that have science base. I wish they understood aesthetics a little better, but we're working on it! We're talking." [Laughter]

REINIER: Now this is after you got to the Forest Service.

HERRETT: That's after I got to the Forest Service. The first forest that had a potential opening was the San Juan Forest in Durango, Colorado [Region 2]. But they didn't have funding until the middle of the year. Region 6 in Portland was willing to hire me in a kind of holding position or training position in the regional office until they had a forest with a vacancy that needed a GS7 landscape architect. And so I just happened to move to Portland at that point. My sister Colleen had moved to Portland about that time. She'd come out to Eugene to be with me for a year when she was going through her divorce and then she had just moved to Portland. I don't know that she was real thrilled that I ended up moving to Portland too, but we didn't live together. [Laughter] So I started in the regional office.

REINIER: What did you expect the Forest Service to be like? Can you go back to your expectation?

HERRETT: Not really. Some of the land management that I'd seen around Eugene had been some very large clearcuts, some streams that were harvested clear down to the stream and didn't look very good. I was thinking at the time it was the Willamette National Forest. Now I don't think it was, looking back. I think it was probably private land. But the mixed ownership, once you're out there it's hard to tell. And so looking back, I'm thinking, OK, maybe I was hyper-critical, but I thought, OK, there's a mission here, there's something I could do. They need some help!

REINIER: Great attitude! [Laughter]

HERRETT: So. And there were some nice people that were willing to put up with me for awhile until I kind of mellowed.

REINIER: Did you know any women in the agency before you took your position?

HERRETT: No. I think I had met one landscape architect, the regional landscape architect [Ron Walters], before I had gone with the Forest Service. Actually, there was one student that

was working on his masters that was a landscape architect on the Willamette. But I really didn't interview him because it wasn't until after I'd really graduated and I though whoa, gee, I have to get a job!

REINIER: And you got it soon. You graduated in June of 1970 and you were working for the Forest Service by October of that year.

HERRETT: Yes.

REINIER: Yes. So that was very soon after your graduation.

HERRETT: My parents thought it wasn't soon enough! And my sister also because they had to kind of tide me over, but that's the way it went.

REINIER: You were working in the recreation department. Is that when you began to work with Warren Bacon?

HERRETT: That's correct.

REINIER: And with the visual management system?

HERRETT: Warren was developing the visual management system. There were some other people that were working on how to include sensitivity to scenery and aesthetics in forest management, and Warren was at the forefront. Warren's like an evangelist. He has a vision and boy! I'd go with him [to give training sessions]. I helped work on some slide programs for him. Later he got so he had like six slide projectors going at once--at least six--but at that time we were at two, one or two. No, I think we were at two, even back then. I'd do the slide projectors for him while he gave his talk. And it was just the very beginning. And then I can remember having to go to my first forest and give his talk. That was very scary! After his zeal, it's hard to

come after him. Fortunately, he didn't give his talk right before me. So they didn't have him to compare me with. But others did.

REINIER: What was the visual management system?

HERRETT: [It was a process for setting visual standards for all national forest system lands. The standards allowed varying degrees of visual change from the existing landscape]. It became a part of the manual. Part of the system is recognizing the most sensitive areas for people. You'd map where people were, and there were, I think, trying to remember back, three classifications. Those that had high use, like a trail or a road or a campground or an overview. Those that had moderate use, and those that had limited [or minimal] use. And then you'd overlay that with areas that had unique scenery, those that were what you expected to see in that

landscape and then those that had minimal variety. They're kind of boring. And there are some landscapes out there that I think we can each bring to mind. [This resulted in a visual standard for all lands]. I tried to meld those, overlay those, so people who were developing other resources on the forest could see where there was the highest level of concern for scenery versus everything being of most concern. It was trying to get it into a method that you didn't put all your eggs in one basket for everything. You weren't fighting for everything; you were fighting for the landscapes that were the most critical, and you were trying to work and spend your time on those with people. OK, you wanted to harvest timber in these areas. This is a way that you might be able to reduce the visual impacts. It was the first time there was some sort of methodology to aesthetics and it's gone on to have a more ecological base more recently.

REINIER: Was it mostly aesthetic?

HERRETT: It was mostly aesthetic, based on a little bit of research, but there wasn't a huge amount of research done [or out there to draw from]. You would spend your time doing things like corridor master plans. Trees don't just stay there and stay healthy all the time along a heavily used highway or scenic highway. So how can you over time get new young growth without making it look terrible in the process? How can you open up vistas to some wonderful distant views that are blocked right now by the foreground trees or shrubs? And so it was trying to do a sequential plan, imagining people moving through the landscape.

REINIER: And your job was to convince managers to accept that way of thinking?

HERRETT: Well, part of it was getting to the point where they understood what the system was, what it might do for them. Because at that point they were becoming more and more under scrutiny and being criticized for the harvest, what timber harvest looked like, especially clearcuts. And how insensitive they were and blah-blah-blah. And so it was a time when the forests were just beginning to really be the showcase for criticism. It was trying to give them a tool. The way we approached it was, here is a tool that can help reduce that impact. Some people viewed it as hiding. But other people just appreciate you haven't screwed up the view that they love and what they expect to see when they go to the forest. And so it was trying to bring people along, to give them a tool, to understand in the process what they were trying to accomplish and the tools that they had to accomplish it with, the limitations, and the possibilities. We did some things with balloon logging and some helicopter logging and some high lead logging systems.

REINIER: Balloon logging. I don't understand what this is.

HERRETT: It's a giant helium balloon. It was like a giant balloon that would lift the logs. It was tied to a cable. It was basically a cable system, but it would lift the logs off the ground and then they'd yard the logs up or down to the landing.

REINIER: So you could log selectively

[End Tape 1, Side B]

Wendy Milner, Speaker on Tour of Pansy Basin, Mt. Hood National Forest, Region 6, National meeting of the Society of American Foresters, Portland, Oregon, 1973. Wendy is speaking about logging systems and the Visual Management System test area.

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

REINIER: At the end of the last tape we were talking about logging systems and the visual management system. I asked you about balloon logging.

HERRETT: Yes. And balloon logging doesn't have a lot of finesse. [You could not selectively log with it]. It's very expensive to set up, so it didn't become a mainstay for logging. But I didn't get into logging systems until I actually got to a forest. Warren Bacon was wonderful to work with. I can still remember one talk that he was to give as part of the timber management meeting in the regional office. Warren and I walked into the room and the room went silent. It became clear they were telling a dirty joke. And I just realized what they were doing, so I turned around and left so they could finish their joke and be comfortable. And afterwards Warren said, "Wendy could probably tell you more than that, so I don't think you need to worry about her." [Laughing] Fortunately, dirty jokes became a thing of the past mostly for Forest Service meetings, especially in Region 6, I think, before some of the other regions. But that was just one of those early things: you just kind of walk into a room and it just goes silent, and I'm going, "Whoa!" [Laughing]

REINIER: Well, that leads into what of course I wanted to ask you and that is, how did you fit into Forest Service culture?

HERRETT: I was a little bit of an oddity. There weren't many women in professional jobs. There were a lot of women working for the Forest Service, but not in the traditional male jobs. Now landscape architecture, I think, is a little bit safer for women to be in than engineering or forestry because there weren't as many of us and we weren't directly competing with the men for certain types of jobs. I don't think they felt as threatened because we weren't competing in the same arena they were in terms of what we had to say. They didn't know what we were about and landscape architects were about. I think women had an easier time as landscape architects than some men did because it was considered almost, you're dealing with aesthetics, that's kind of effeminate. Some of the men landscape architects, I think, had to overcome some of that attitude, where women, you know, obviously you're dealing with aesthetics. It's OK; it's a woman's thing! But dealing in the overall land management, they weren't used to having them in the meetings and the training sessions, giving them training and asking questions on land management or offering opinions.

One of the things while working in the regional office, they were trying to find a forest to place me on, and I began to see what a difference management style and openness to change had to do with what forests I might want to work on. Those that were really tied to timber and only timber became very apparent. Those that were looking at trying to seek other ways of doing

business a little bit, not huge changes, but those forests were more apparent. I began to see that that was a result of some of the leadership on that forest, being the forest supervisor is what I understood most at that time. Also I think it has to do with the staff officers. But predominantly the forest supervisor. The first forest that had a vacancy for a GS7 Landscape Architect was the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. It was one of the forests that timber was king. They sent me out to visit with the recreation staff, the forest landscape architect, and some others on the forest, and then I went back to the regional office. I later heard the forest supervisor didn't want to hire me, and I'm going, "Whew! That's a relief because I don't want to work there!" [Laughing]

REINIER: He didn't want to hire you because you're a woman.

HERRETT: He didn't want to hire me because I was a woman. And years later when I was an EEO counselor on the Mt. Hood and I was called to handle a case on the Gifford Pinchot, I tried to avoid doing that, but the person insisted that I was the counselor that he had to have. One of the instances of not open to women--this happened to be a minority male--was my situation, and so I'm going, "OK, how do I handle this?" So I did talk to the forest supervisor, and I said, “If you had it to do over again, I heard that you didn't want to hire me because I was a woman; was that true?” And he said, "Yes, I had my families to protect." And I'm thinking, "Oh." He says, "We had people camping out in the forests on projects and I just didn't think that was appropriate."

REINIER: As a young, single woman?

HERRETT: As a young, single woman.

REINIER: Camping out with men.

HERRETT: Yeah. And I said, "So would you still feel that way as far as hiring women in field going positions?" And, as I recall, he said yes. So, you know, at least I found out the reason for his thinking.

REINIER: Do you want to say who that was?

HERRETT: No, I really would prefer... It was the forest supervisor at the Gifford Pinchot at the time.

REINIER: You remember that?

HERRETT: Yes. It was Ross Williams. Later on I worked with his sons, and they were just in a whole different place than their dad. One of them said to me, at least his dad saw that he was having trouble with the changes and so he decided that he should retire. That was the

graceful way to do things. He thought he had a lot of grace to do that and I agree. I agree. Ross obviously had a very special career, but times were changing.

REINIER: And the sons did not continue the attitudes of their dad?

HERRETT: Not that I saw or experienced. And I think they're successful managers, both in different types of positions.

REINIER: But that's been a common problem, hasn't it, for women employees in the Forest Service, that people objected to their traveling or camping out with men?

HERRETT: Yeah. And that the wives might be concerned, taking on the decision for the wives and protecting the wives, protecting the men from their wives maybe.

REINIER: And were wives concerned?

HERRETT: I think there were some. I think so. Once I was on the Mt. Hood there were a couple of men who wanted to... As part of a training development program for a woman in the regional office, she needed to go see one of their field sites in the winter. It would have taken snow machining in, I think, and maybe staying over night in one of the cabins. They were concerned that their wives would be concerned. I said, "Well, that could be. How's your relationship with your wife? [Laughing] Is that something this person should have to worry about?" "Well, nooooo." "Is it something that's important for her in her job development?" "Well, yeah." "Can you explain it to your wife that way? And, you know, if it's job needed, job-oriented, and you behave, there shouldn't be a problem." Although, I realize that some wives don't view it that same way. And later on there were lots of situations. It wasn't a problem. There were instances, yes. I think some wives were concerned. I've heard stories that maybe that some of the situation that happened to Mary [J.] Coulombe when she was forest supervisor--I don't know; someone would have to talk with Mary to see her take on the situation she was in there--that there were some wives concerned when she became forest supervisor.

REINIER: Oh, where was she?

HERRETT: She was in California, I think in Quincy. [Plumas National Forest]

REINIER: OK.

HERRETT: There's lots of rumors. I don't know how accurate that is, but that's a possibility. And I'm sure there are other situations with it.

REINIER: So different forests, you think, were more receptive to a woman at that time?

HERRETT: Yes. And as it turned out I ended up going to the Mt. Hood [National Forest], which was right in Portland, which was wonderful because I love Portland. The people there were just wonderful to work with. It was a heavy timber forest, it had a heavy recreation workload, had the Columbia River Gorge, it had Mt. Hood itself. We were doing some cutting edge land management planning. My boss was [Richard] Dick Shaffer and he was very much involved with the planning. He allowed me in my time there to take on one of the planning units and helped me learn through that. He just was wonderful to work with. He had no trouble working with a woman and was not one of those people who while their subordinate often does the work, they take the credit. He was not that type of person at all. In fact, in some cases where he rightfully probably should have given a talk, he allowed me to do it. He's just one of those special people as far as I'm concerned. There were a number of special people on Mt. Hood. When I got there Anne Heisler was a forester on the forest. She had had to put up with, I'm sure, all kinds of guff because she went in as a district type forestry person. I think she had to put up with a pink hard hat and all of those things.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: Yeah. Anne doesn't talk about those things very much, but I know she's been through a lot. So Anne was there and then I got there and then Morley Hoeffer was hired as a civil engineer. Oh, Nancy Meador, who's now Nancy Diaz, was hired as a... I can't remember if Mary Moore, who is Mary Coulombe now, but Mary Moore came on as Public Involvement Specialist, a sociologist, I think. Nancy was a geographer on the planning team. I think there were about seven women professionals on the Mt. Hood out of about seven in the region. [Laughing]

REINIER: My!

HERRETT: And all of that happened within at least probably a one or two year period. We had so much fun. And there were a group of men. It was just a very creative group of people to work with. Wright Mallory was supervisor, old school forest supervisor, but he allowed me to try my wings in so many ways and encouraged that. He did that with all of his people. He felt if he sent good people away he'd get good people back, and so he also wasn't one to hoard employees and try and keep them from moving. So there are a lot of people who have the Mt. Hood in their background in their career, and it was a wonderful time to be there.

Jim Overbay was timber staff. I can remember going back on the Estacada District, which was the heaviest timber district, sitting at lunch under double wide power line clearcut, the big swath through the forest; they'd built one of the power lines, but the second one wasn't built. I guess they were anticipating more power needs. And we're sitting there eating our lunch, and I'm going, "Yuck! Yuck!" Being a brat! And Jim Overbay leans over and he says, "Now Wendy, we went into forestry because we love the forest too." And that was a really important

lesson for me to learn. He did it gently; he did it nicely. He did it with a smile, and in a caring way. But that really pointed out to me, yes, they really do love the forest, too. How they perceive uses is different, and that's how they are. I'm saying they're wrong, and is that right to say?

REINIER: And when you say "they," you're talking about foresters?

HERRETT: Foresters or...

REINIER: ...More traditional foresters...

HERRETT: ...More traditional forestry approach, more traditional management. Which was a lot of roads and a lot of timber harvest. But the old technicians on the forest knew that forest backwards and forwards; they knew their districts. They knew the plants, they knew the neat places, they knew that there were some cultural history places, if there were some artifacts anywhere. They knew because they loved it. Keeping that in mind with the people I worked with, really was an important lesson throughout my career. Also, when you're dealing with outside people who care about the forest, keeping in mind that they care about the forest too. If you start with some common ground that you all love the forest, you do have some common ground. What you do about it is where your differences are.

REINIER: And then how do you work that out?

HERRETT: Sometimes with some skill and sometimes without. Sometimes reaching solutions that are OK and sometimes not. Often not, because the desires are so different. But you can work with people and you can talk with people if you have at least that common understanding of the mutual love of the forest.

REINIER: So that's the bottom line.

HERRETT: That's the bottom line. I don't think Forest Service people are given credit for loving the forest, but they do. They adore the forest. And it's very important to them. So whether it's range land or whatever, they're very knowledgeable, they're very intelligent, they're very caring, and they love the land. And occasionally there was somebody that you just didn't want to deal with, but by and large I have a tremendous amount of respect for the old time forester, the new foresters. They went into forestry in the first place or into one of the outdoor fields because they liked to be outdoors, liked to be in the woods. The new foresters are more urban, are more focused on their own resource. I think they've done some studies with the wildlife biologists in particular, that they have not the allegiance to the forest per se but the allegiance to their resource, and that puts a whole different spin on reaching solutions for a common management. Because that makes it win/lose almost automatically.

REINIER: I see.

HERRETT: People like me, I'm a much more urban person. I wasn't a person that spent time in the woods as a kid. I spent time in the ditch next door to my house, played in the creek and with the cattails and looking at the pheasant and red-wing blackbirds and milkweed and all of that, but I wasn't an outdoor-type kid. I'm more typical probably of the new breed in the Forest Service, even more so now than even when I went in. But I was kind of an odd person out when I went in.

REINIER: When you came in, you came in not only as a woman but also as a professional. It's interesting, this dynamic group of women that you just described...

HERRETT: ...Oh! They were wonderful!...

REINIER: ...Were all professionals, weren't they?

HERRETT: Yeah. Um hmm. And some--sociologist and geographer--weren't in the main line Forest Service positions, professional positions. But Mary went on and got her masters, I think in forestry, so she could compete for district ranger jobs. Nancy got her masters in ecology. Very bright, very wonderful people. And so that time on the Mt. Hood was just a really special time. Wright Mallory called me into his office one day going back to the situation with the Gifford Pinchot. There was an old hotel in downtown Portland called the Hoyt Hotel and had a Barbary Coast bar in it or something. Apparently it had a lot of paraphernalia that they were going to auction, and Wright called me into his office and he said, "Wendy, I think I'm going to go down and bid on the chastity belt at the Barbary Coast." He said, "And then I'll give it to Ross Williams and ask him if he can hire women." [Laughter] These were men who had worked together their whole lives, had very parallel careers, and were as different as night and day in their attitude toward change, I think, and especially women and other resource specialists in the forest.

REINIER: Was it on the Mt. Hood that you began to learn how to work on a team in the Forest Service?

HERRETT: Yes. It was. In the planning jobs and also just on projects. None of the projects were individual. They had other resource specialists, and so even if I was working on a timber sale, I was working usually with the silviculturalists and maybe a logging system specialist. There was probably some input from a biologist, just beginning with the archaeology. There might be a lands specialist involved as far as land lines. Engineers certainly, and then probably some fire folks. Probably fire was still the area where... It wasn't until my later years on the Mt. Hood--I mean not the second time there, but I was on the Mt. Hood a total of about three years

and it was toward the end--that some women were actually on the fire line or a fire crew, beginning to be on fire crews, going through fire training as seasonal employees.

REINIER: It was harder for women to be accepted in fire.

HERRETT: I think so. It was never one of my desires to fight fire, but I was very happy to help in camp in any way I could. I can remember going to a fire. I was with the head of our planning team, John White, and he was an infrared interpreter [for fire assignments]. We were at a planning meeting in Zigzag [District] when he got called, so I got to go with him on the airplane. Well, they did the flying of the fire in the middle of the night, and then he and I interpreted the photos. He interpreted them, showed me what he was doing. Then I helped map them. And then I drove the maps around to where the fire was from the supervisor's office. Well, they confiscated my rig when I was there, and so I'm going, well, I don't want to twiddle my thumbs. So I said, "Is there something I can do to help?" And the plans folks said, "Well, yeah, these maps need to be cut out and base maps made." Well, I can cut and paste; I'm pretty good with that. I majored in that! And so I was doing that. Well, the plans chief came back and said, "What is she doing here?" Didn't want me working there even though I wasn't doing anything as far as the plans; I was just giving them some base maps to do their planning on. So then I went and became a timekeeper. Landscape architects were always timekeepers then. The men, if they went to fire, they were usually timekeepers. That was safe; it was not something that those questionable men couldn't do. [Laughter] So I got to be a timekeeper too for awhile.

REINIER: Were you required to go to a fire? Why were you there?

HERRETT: I was there because I drove the infrared mapping to the fire camp.

REINIER: Oh, I see. You were the driver.

HERRETT: I was the driver. And then they confiscated my rig until the next night. They were going to fly the fire again, or John was going to come back with some additional photos or something. Then, of course, he rescued me and we went and flew another fire in northeastern Oregon.

REINIER: That must have been very exciting!

HERRETT: Oh, it was! I mean, where else do you get to try these things? They do mapping of fires in infrared a whole different way now, but at that time it was a person in an airplane and equipment and trying to determine where the hot spots were on a fire so they could do their plans on how they were going to fight the fire the following morning.

REINIER: And you have to do that at night?

HERRETT: Yeah. You can get the most accurate information then. Anyway. My experience with fire was pretty limited.

REINIER: But women have had a hard time breaking into that field.

HERRETT: Yes. I think so.

REINIER: Why is that? Is it because there's a special guy culture, macho?

HERRETT: It's the macho culture. It's the macho of the macho, I think. It's hard work, it's dirty work, it's really nothing I ever wanted to do. But there are women who do want to do it and do it well. It was, I think, the last hold-out.

REINIER: The most resistant to change.

HERRETT: Yeah. And I can't say that as a woman who's been in the fire program. I think there are a number of women who were in high positions in fire and had worked their way up. They can tell you probably more than I can if they want to. I know when I was back on the Mt. Hood as deputy, we had a hotshot crew, and some of the women told somebody else on the forest that they were having to put up with what would be considered harassment.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: But they didn't want anyone told because the repercussions from the guys would be pretty harsh. Well, of course, as a manager, if I knew something was going on, I had to deal with it. But I also didn't want to put them in an awkward position. So you go through some training in very general terms about what's acceptable behavior and what isn't. Teasing and that type of behavior that they were doing was not acceptable, and if they thought about doing it, they better not. So I know it was still going on when I was deputy and that was ten years ago, a little over ten years ago.

REINIER: That was in the ‘90s?

HERRETT: Late ‘80s.

REINIER: The late ‘80s.

HERRETT: Um hmm. It's still a macho gender thing to a degree.

REINIER: What were your responsibilities on the Mt. Hood? What did you do there?

HERRETT: I was...

REINIER: Your first time.

HERRETT: My first time there I was the second landscape architect on the forest. Dick Shaffer was the forest landscape architect. So I worked on implementing the visual management system. We were the first forest in the nation to totally implement it. We did some sample areas working with a logging system specialist and a silviculturalist trying to see what implications there were on the harvest levels for the timber management plan that we were working on. Tried to pick some kind of sample areas of east side/west side and apply it and see what fall down there would be in the amount of harvest levels. Got to present that to the regional leadership team, which was unheard of. Talk about quaking in my boots, all these forest supervisors.

REINIER: Oh, you were really young too!

HERRETT: Yeah, I was!

REINIER: How old were you when you were doing that?

HERRETT: Well, you know, I got out of college when I was about twenty-six. Twenty-five or twenty-six. So I was probably twenty-six, twenty-seven. Somewhere in there. It looks real young now.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: But I had the energy of youth and the stupidity of youth maybe.

REINIER: And was it Dick Shaffer who let you do that?

HERRETT: Dick Shaffer let me do that and Jim Overbay was with...

REINIER: The forest supervisor.

HERRETT: No, the timber staff on the forest.

REINIER: The timber staff.

HERRETT: And of course Wright Mallory, the forest supervisor, had to let me do that too. I also got to be an EEO counselor. I got to help with civil rights sessions. I got to go to management fundamentals, and I got to help teach a session or two along with all my vast experience. I worked on the preliminary plan for Indian Henry Campground. I did a land classification plan for the Columbia Gorge, which was trying to determine what land ownership pattern the Forest Service should have there.

REINIER: Tell me a little bit more about that.

HERRETT: There's a national program for land classification plans for recreation areas. It's trying to determine what lands should be acquired for federal purposes, for recreation predominantly. And once you have that plan, then you are able to use Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars for acquisition.

REINIER: I see.

HERRETT: And so it's the step to be able to get funding dollars for purchase.

REINIER: I see.

HERRETT: And in some cases you do exchanges too because it makes a lot of sense to clear up awkward boundaries and that sort of thing. So it was a program to try and determine--it was on the Oregon side obviously because Mt. Hood was on the Oregon side of the gorge--just what the land ownership patterns were, what the resources were, what made sense for ownership. It was a stretch for me in terms of what is it they expect and how do I arrive there. So I worked with people in lands a lot in the regional office, my first working in the lands program really. Lands is land exchange, land ownership patterns, the land line locations, all a bunch of stuff with lands.

REINIER: It's good experience.

HERRETT: Yeah. Excellent experience. And some very basic things. What lands do you own?

REINIER: Yeah, exactly.

HERRETT: For the public. I mean, what are in Uncle Sam's ownership. And so I worked on that plan. Writing that was the worst thing. Chuck Irby was a recreation planner on the forest and he helped me finally get past my writer's block. He later became a forest supervisor down in California. So lands program, land management planning. Dick Shaffer let me work on the Mt. Hood Planning Unit, which was really a key planning unit. We had broken the forest up into units to plan for. I worked with districts on timber sales a lot. On implementation of the visual management system. In a lot of cases it was trying to rehab existing block clearcuts, and that's really hard to do to make anything look decent. So I worked on some of that. And later on when I came back to the Hood, some of the same people were still there that I'd worked with before. One of them hauled out some drawings I had done back when and I'm going, "Oh no! You saved that!" Two of them had actually!

REINIER: Really? Great!

HERRETT: Yes. Oooo. Because the tools improved so much with computers. Because we were just doing snapshots and trying to do, OK, at this angle what is this going to look like.

REINIER: Yes. And when did you start getting the computers?

HERRETT: After I left the region.

[Interruption]

HERRETT: I was given some really wonderful opportunities for exposure. As a woman you're very visible anyway, but I worked with some research people and some others even on some projects. The Society of American Foresters had a national convention in Portland...

[End Tape 2, Side A]

[Begin Tape 2, Side B]

REINIER: You were talking, Wendy, about the Portland meeting of the SAF, the Society of American Foresters.

HERRETT: I was given some opportunities to be a speaker at some of the stops on field trips. One of them was Pansy Basin where we were testing logging systems for their capabilities, some of the types of logging we might want to do to meet visual standards. Of course, it was a terrible site for that because we had almost dead hemlock we were working in, and the drainage had been harvested quite heavily before. But I got to make some presentations. And then with the forest silviculturalist and the forest logging system specialist, we had a stop on a major tour--everybody at the convention I think pretty much went through it--on what we might do from logging in a certain landscape we stood in front of. And so later on it turned out when I applied for a job on another forest, somebody had seen me on that, at that time. So it gave me some exposure, some of it positive. There were some people that didn't like what we were saying, but that's OK.

REINIER: And who was responsible for giving you that exposure?

HERRETT: I'm not sure if it was Wright Mallory, Jim Overbay, certainly my boss had to agree to it. And it was just that kind of forest that, OK, we have an opportunity to do this, go do

it. And didn't worry about grade, didn't worry about any of that kind of stuff. For a place, really, to start in your Forest Service career and a time, that was a wonderful place and time. The people that were there just were very special. I came out of there with a tremendous amount of self-confidence and some sense of humor, I think, to work with other people, and some ideas on maybe how you can work with people a little better than other ways. I started to observe styles, interpersonal styles and management styles, and started to learn some of the things that I thought were more important to me.

REINIER: So were you starting to work out your own management style then, or think about it?

HERRETT: I didn't think about it in those terms. I was working on how I work with people and personal skills. And some very basic how you can get more if you work from a basis of respect and valuing what they have to say rather than telling them they're wrong and you're right. If you keep the goal in mind as far as what you want to have happen ultimately and have some patience over time, you'll probably get there a lot easier than if you go in confrontationally. I'm not comfortable with confrontation anyway, and that may be partly what's going on, but I also observed others who do confront all the time and I don't think they're as effective as far as solving the problems. They may feel better about that they came out on top of an interaction, but that's not what we're about. And rarely is it really what we're about.

But I was getting to the point where I needed to make some changes, and so I applied for a job on the Six Rivers [National Forest], naively put in before I went and scooped out the situation. I was offered the job and then decided, Oh! I'd better go down and look! And what I found when I was there [was not good]. One of the rangers there had been timber management assistant on one of the districts, so I could talk with him pretty honestly about what the management climate was like. And talking to the existing landscape architect that was moving on, he was very frustrated. I met the staff officer that I would be working for. And I found the staff officer didn't have much credibility with his peers, and so his programs weren't as valued and he wasn't a good representative for his programs. They weren't sure they wanted a landscape architect, and they sure as heck weren't sure they wanted to deal with visual management, and they sure weren't sure they wanted a woman! And so I thought any one of those I could take on individually, but the whole gamut, it wasn't a place that I saw me being successful in any realm then.

REINIER: That leads to something I wanted to ask you before we went on because, of course, Six Rivers is in Region 5. Was Region 6 a special region in terms of expanding opportunities in the '70s?

HERRETT: I think they moved faster than most other regions. They had more money to do it. They were hiring more. I think there were a number of reasons. But I think also there was more willingness to see that that was part of the change.

REINIER: They had more money because of timber harvesting, is that right?

HERRETT: Yes. Generally. You could say that was where the money was. For a number of years. And other regions are much poorer. Were much poorer and still are probably, than

Region 6. Region 6 has a hard time understanding that, but having worked in Region 2, the Rocky Mountain Region, you know what not having the money is. You go to a district that has every bit as much work to do or potentially to do with about a tenth of the staff. And I think the environmental awareness [in Region 6] was much higher. The forest users expected a lot more data to make decisions [because the region had the money and was collecting it]. I think that's still in a lot of cases true. And so once you start giving that data, it's hard to give less later. I think that's one of the struggles Region 6 is having now that they have less money. You can't do as much detailed study before making a decision. Region 6 had the luxury of having the studies to back up the decisions. I'm not sure the decisions were necessarily that much better, but it's nice to have some documentation. But the public here demands it, too, and in other places they were getting by with very little environmental assessment on some things. I'm going, Whoa! Obviously not watchdogs on that unit! So I think it depended on the public in the area and the Pacific Northwest was kind of a hotbed for that.

Region 5 has that too. Never having worked in Region 5, only having been offered a couple of jobs in Region 5, I can't really say where they were at that time. I do know I wrote a long letter to the regional landscape architect with my rationale why I had, after being offered the job, turned it down. You only do that once. Believe me! But he said, for one visit you sure saw it clearly! Because of the feedback he gave me.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: So each forest there had differences too, and some of them were going great guns and others were not in terms of landscape management.

REINIER: Were you moving on now with the idea of becoming a landscape architect in another forest?

HERRETT: Yes.

REINIER: So you weren't thinking about moving into a management position at this point?

HERRETT: No. I was still enjoying what I was doing and feeling challenged. I put in for a job on the Routt National Forest in Steamboat Springs, [Colorado]. I'd always heard Steamboat was pretty! [Laughter]

REINIER: That was in 1974?

HERRETT: Yes. And was selected for that. My first day on the forest my boss, [John Grover], took me in to meet the forest supervisor and he said, "I wasn't here when they selected you. I wouldn't have selected you. You might have been my second choice." I thought well, you jerk! [Laughing] I'm really happy to be here too!

REINIER: Why? What was his thinking?

HERRETT: I have no idea! That man...

REINIER: Was that because you were a woman?

HERRETT: I have no idea. My boss was so proud of the process they went through. They listed their selection criteria and the different candidates and what we had done, but not by name, just by number. So I wasn't selected because I was a woman; it was my qualifications. They had sent out samples to different people to kind of get their vote, I think, based on what they were seeing on this, and I looked at the one he had given me, and penciled above mine was 36-24-36.

REINIER: Oh, no!!!

HERRETT: I said, "John, look at that!" Clearly the person that had seen that one had seem me somewhere and knew some of the samples [of my work and put the two together].

REINIER: Oh, for heaven's sakes.

HERRETT: And I think I knew who it was, based on that. OK, John, you're trying, your heart's in the right spot, but... Anyway. And then John loved my program.

REINIER: Now John is who?

HERRETT: John Grover was my boss on the Routt.

REINIER: John Grover, OK. And he's your boss on the Routt.

HERRETT: Yeah. He was the recreation staff on the forest.

REINIER: OK.

HERRETT: When I was hired, I was the first landscape architect hired on the forest. They had shared some work from the Medicine Bow [National Forest] landscape architect, who happened to be the senior landscape architect on the Gifford Pinchot when I wasn't selected.

Anyway. But they hired a hydrologist, who started the same day I did, and then shortly after that the forest first soil scientist as well, and all three of us worked for John. Well, he wasn't particularly interested in their programs, but he loved mine. And he could be so gruff, especially if it was working on

budget time because he hated working on budgets. The two guys that were the soil scientist and the hydrologist, they'd go, "Wendy, can you ask John for this?" "Sure!" [Laughter]

REINIER: Were you the only woman there?

HERRETT: Oh, yeah.

REINIER: OK. So now we're getting into a real change.

HERRETT: Yeah. And the first month or two, anytime I went to a district, I had both the forest supervisor and the rec staff going with me.

REINIER: Why?

HERRETT: I think they wanted to see what I was about, what I could do, what the program was because it was new to them. And I don't know, but when I finally got to a district on my own, they said, "Finally they let you go!" "Yeah!!! Tell me about it."

REINIER: So did you feel under scrutiny in a new way on that forest?

HERRETT: In a continuation of a way, but in a new way in terms I was the first that they had had all to their own as the landscape architect. I felt under scrutiny for that. When I was there I helped set up some training for the region on the visual management system, helped train regional trainers. I did some land management planning. I did even some timber sales. Not much timber growing compared to Region 6, but they still did timber sales. There were three districts that liked to have my input and the hydrologist and the soil scientist, and three that didn't particularly. So we spent our time on the ones that primarily wanted our input. And so some of the changes were... It wasn't just me as a woman; it wasn't just me as a landscape architect. Rarely is it clear whether somebody has a problem with me personally, with me as a landscape architect, or me as a woman. Often that's all muddied in there; it's not real clear-cut. Occasionally it's clear-cut.

REINIER: But your male colleagues seem to have been in the same boat.

HERRETT: They were on that one. Yeah. And were presenting new programs and new input that they had to consider in their management decisions, and in the forest planning, unit planning we were doing at that time. I had the cultural resources program on that forest.

REINIER: Tell me about that.

HERRETT: We would contract with I think the state, one of the universities, to do the field investigations for the projects. So I was the one that was kind of the go-through.

REINIER: Mostly archaeology?

HERRETT: Mostly archaeology [and some history] at that point. We had some people that were very sensitive to those things and some that, an old building was an old building. Of course, a lot of the places where we had campgrounds were where there had been Indian settlements [or camps] on passes and that sort of thing. So there was often conflict with recreation. Or if you were to find anything it was in a cut bank in a campground or something like that. Lots of cultural history in that high country. [Another job I had was working] with the ski area training some of their people. I'm not a skier.

REINIER: Which ski area were you working?

HERRETT: Steamboat Springs. They tried to make me a skier! I thought I'd like skiing, but I have this tremendous fear of falling down. But I liked ski area management and high elevation reveg workshops we got to go to. Did some horseback riding on that forest for the first time. That wasn't my real strong suit, but you got to see a lot of country in a little bit shorter time.

REINIER: Were you glad to be back in the Rocky Mountains where you grew up?

HERRETT: Where I grew up. Yeah. But by then I liked green and lush, and the growing season in Steamboat is about twenty-nine days. I got tired of people talking only about hunting during part of the year and the rest of the year it was skiing. Those were the conversations in town. I'm going, "OK." Steamboat wasn't as impressed with itself as Aspen or Vail, so I was lucky I was where I was. It was kind of this is a neat place to be, but we don't have the snob appeal. That's maybe changed now, but at that time it was still a cow town. It was when I was at Steamboat that the regional forester [Craig Rupp] came by to the forest one time, and at a gathering of the employees one evening, Craig came up to me and asked if I'd considered becoming a ranger. I said, "No, haven't. But if I did, I'd certainly need a lot more experience to compete for that than what I have now."

REINIER: So he approached you.

HERRETT: Yeah. And I think he approached any of the women professionals in the region. There weren't very many.

REINIER: Why? Was he particularly interested in promoting a woman?

HERRETT: I think he had a vision of having the first woman ranger in the Forest Service. That he was progressive. And that he was open to that.

REINIER: Was that a feather in his cap?

HERRETT: I think, from his perspective it would be, in his value system. From my perspective he was kind of a crusty old coot, [but he certainly was progressive regarding women going into management]. [Laughter]

REINIER: Was he under pressure by that time to promote women?

HERRETT: No, I don't think so. Certainly not to ranger positions.

REINIER: So that was his idea?

HERRETT: I think it was his idea, his vision.

REINIER: Do you have any idea where that came from?

HERRETT: Hmm um. And I never was able to talk to him, and he's died, so nobody can really talk to him about that. He started working for the Forest Service as, I think, a range conservationist in the Intermountain Region [Region 4], and his vision of becoming a ranger is you do it very quickly. You're on a district just a short time and then they give you the responsibility because there's only a few people on a district there. And, of course, I had Region 6 experience where it's a huge responsibility and lots of information you need to know in how to manage people. I'd never supervised anybody. I had never had to deal with a budget. Everyone did that for me. I said, “Well, I'm not ready. I'm still enjoying what I'm doing, but I'll think about it.” So about three months later the forest supervisor--it was a different forest supervisor by that time--came to me, and he says, "Craig wants to know if you've thought about it." And I said, "Well, a little bit. Give me a little more time, but I really would need more experience to be able to feel like I'm qualified to take on that responsibility."

REINIER: So the desire for more experience came from you?

HERRETT: Yeah. And so three months later there was a job offer on the Black Hills [National Forest] for a resource assistant job.

REINIER: What is a resource assistant?

HERRETT: Usually there's a district ranger and then the primary assistants on a district are sometimes called a resource assistant and the timber management assistant.

REINIER: I see.

HERRETT: Or the range wildlife assistant, depending on where you are in the country.

REINIER: So it's almost like a deputy.

HERRETT: You're running the programs for the ranger, that you have responsibility for. [The position offered was] on the Pactola District. Jim Overbay was then forest supervisor on the Black Hills [National Forest], my old friend. I called him and I said, "Jim! South Dakota!!!" He says, "Now Wendy!" He says, "It really is quite pretty." And Jim, when we were back on the Mt. Hood, there was a bring your daughter to work time then, and he figured she didn't want to see what he did. He sent her out with me for the day, and she ended up being a civil engineer later. [So Jim and I had a mutual respect for each other from the Mt. Hood].

REINIER: Really?

HERRETT: Yeah. But I was honored. He thought enough of me to have his daughter with me.

REINIER: I should say.

HERRETT: But anyway, so Jim keeps coming back into my life at various times in my career. If I have a mentor, he's probably the closest I have to somebody I would consider a mentor.

REINIER: What would make him your mentor?

HERRETT: [Someone with whom you] can discuss some critical moves. Be honest about abilities. Can encourage. Can offer some exposure. Those are the types of things I think mentors do. Give you some honest feedback.

REINIER: You didn't consider Craig Rupp a mentor?

HERRETT: No. No. I had lots of people that were giving me advice or were giving me opportunities. But I didn't really feel the relationship, and I think there has to be a relationship for a mentor.

REINIER: And so from the very beginning at the Mt. Hood he was giving you opportunity.

HERRETT: He was giving me opportunities. He was one that as timber staff on a big, big timber forest, influential, lots of power in that person. I can remember a conversation one time where some environmental groups were really upset about a timber sale in a certain area, and he was having trouble understanding why they were concerned. He took me aside after work one day, just after he had met with these folks, and I had said this is what I think is going on and why, what I think is special and what they're trying to tell you. And he came back the next morning and said, "I thought about what you told me last night. I changed my mind." Here I was a GS7 or GS9 at the time and he didn't care about my grade. He listened. He had enough respect to tell me if what I said influenced him. I have a lot of respect for him because of how he treated me. And he's the same one who said, "Wendy, we're in this too because we love the forest." And so, it's just some important lessons he's taught me or allowed me. The time on the Black Hills, was a big... Because there weren't women resource assistants then either.

REINIER: Yeah. That was a big change for you.

HERRETT: It was a huge change. That was harder than becoming ranger.

REINIER: Why?

HERRETT: Because I had to supervise people for the first time; I had to manage a budget for the first time. I had resources that I knew minimal about. I had recreation, lands, minerals. I didn't know anything about minerals, and minerals is an important resource on the Black Hills at least. You get the old prospectors that you're dealing with.

REINIER: Sure.

HERRETT: I had special uses. Had to recommend decisions to the ranger or to the forest supervisor on those. Had responsibility for complete documents like environmental assessments. Really dealt with the public for the first time there.

REINIER: Was that a different kind of public than the public in Oregon that you talked about previously?

HERRETT: I don't know if I had had a similar type of position if it would be different. The public in Oregon was more user groups that had a vested interest in the forest. On the Black Hills it was more individuals that had land that they wanted to get a road across the forest to or power

lines across. I had a visitor center that was being built by Job Corps at Pactola Lake with no displays. And no budget. But I had to staff it and open it. I met John [R.]McGuire at that dedication. He was chief at that time. [1972-1979] What else? So it was just a whole lot of things and I struggled with that, but I also did some things pretty well. It was at that time that I got the worst performance rating I've ever gotten.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: Yeah. And all the ranger could tell me was, "You're too open and honest with people, [and if you continue to improve at the rate you are, you'll be OK]." That's what I heard, anyway. I think maybe he said some other things but that's what I heard. I'm going, "Huh?" I don't think that's bad; I think that's a virtue that I strive for, [to be open and honest with people].

REINIER: Was that masking something else, do you think?

HERRETT: I have no idea.

REINIER: You don't know.

HERRETT: I think it's beginning to be a rub with my style and what others expect of style.

REINIER: Now that you're becoming a manager?

HERRETT: Yeah.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: And how I approach things.

REINIER: What did he expect that was different from what you were doing?

HERRETT: I'm not sure. That's what was so hard. It was a really hard time on me. And then we got a new forest supervisor and he spent a day with the ranger and I one time.

REINIER: Who was this now?

HERRETT: Jim Mathers. He came as forest supervisor and he was known as kind of a tyrant for a supervisor. He had been there five months. About that time we were told to just put in for all our recreation needs, dollars for facility improvement [and maintenance of facilities]. Not

construction, but whether it be toilets or fire rings or picnic tables and things like that. And so we did that on the district, never thinking we'd get it all. It was toward the end of a fiscal year. The district clerk had kidney stone surgery right at the end. That's chaos time anyway, and she's the one that can do purchase orders. So I think we had gotten $215,000, which was huge money back then to a Region 2 forest, to a district. The rec staff on the forest called and said, "Wendy, we need $8,000 for a cultural study; can we have that back?" I'm going, "Yeah!" Well, apparently that made the forest supervisor mad. I'm a team player. I'm going, “OK, there's a need. We can adjust.” And so I get the summons to meet with the forest supervisor. Fortunately, the rec staff says, "Wendy, I think this is what's going on." Well, Mathers calls me in and he says, "I've been watching you for six months and I don't like what I've seen." I'm going, "Oh!" My thought process was, "Well first off, you've only been here five months and I don't like what I've seen either!"

REINIER: Which you didn't say! [Laughter]

HERRETT: Which I didn't say, but I sure thought. I tried not to cry. The crux of it was he thought I should have better leadership, so he probably would move me to a different district. And by the end of the conversation he says, "Well, I can see by your answers you're not a person that can be led around by her nose." And I thought, "Well, that's a compliment from him." So he did move me to a different district.

REINIER: What do you think was bothering him? What do you think the problem was? You just don't know?

HERRETT: I could not hear if he told me. I could not think fast enough to ask him what precisely. I was just kind of uhhhhh.

REINIER: Yeah. Flabbergasted.

HERRETT: Yeah. I just feel so inadequate when I get into situations like that. I don't do well in conflict situations. And so I'm going, well, that's probably part of it. Things were running smoothly on the district in my programs, reasonably smoothly. We had opened a new part of the camp ground; we had done a lot of things. We had resolved a trespass that had been going on forever, finished out a minerals case. But he moved me to the Harney District, and later I found out from the ranger [Dave Moran] who worked there that Mathers told him, "Get this idea of being a ranger out of her head!"

REINIER: Ohhhhh! So he never supported you?

HERRETT: Well, he didn't support me but his boss did, so that was kind of awkward. I don't think he thought my style would mesh with the leadership that he thought was necessary. His

was a very gruff, confrontive-type approach to leadership: buck stops here-type thing. And I'm a little more laid back than that.

REINIER: Yeah. Yeah.

HERRETT: And I sound more tentative. I'm not necessarily more tentative but I sound more tentative. And so I think those sorts of things were not characteristics he thought were strong ranger potential.
[End Tape 2, Side B]

[Begin Tape 3, Side A]

REINIER: On the Black Hills did you feel that you had professional support that you needed?

HERRETT: There were people in the supervisor's office who were, I think, supportive. There were people in the region that were very supportive. I had some old friends from Region 2 that were wanting me to be successful. I think that there were people that were kind of going, yeah, go for it, landscape architect branching out type of thing. It wasn't necessarily on the personal level, a personal friendship. It was friendship but not real friendship, professional acquaintances that wanted me to be successful. Most people I think, over all, wanted me to be successful. There were some people that I don't think did. Or didn't mesh with what they were seeing that I was like. And, unfortunately, one of those was the forest supervisor on the Black Hills at the time, although through working with him another year and a half I think I got his grudging support and respect. I think he also saw the handwriting what his boss wanted.

REINIER: Which was Craig Rupp.

HERRETT: Yeah, which was Craig Rupp. Jim Mathers... When the ranger I was working for finally--he had been on that district like twelve, fifteen years, I don't know, a long time--he'd moved, and so they actually made me acting ranger for several months. Shock of all shocks.

REINIER: That was on the Pactola District?

HERRETT: No, that was on the Harney District, the time I was on the second district. There was a person who worked for me, Gene Charles, just the salt of the earth, a wonderful person, range tech on the district, and Gene was always the gentleman. We shared a vehicle and in that cold climate, Dodges are hard to start. We had a Dodge Power Wagon and Gene would always get... No matter what time, I'd get there earlier and earlier so I could get the vehicle and start it

and do all of those things for myself to show I was capable. Gene would get there earlier and earlier and have the snow brushed off and [the car] warmed up! [Laughter] Ooookay Gene! That's how you were raised. I mean, he had every amount of respect for me and the decisions I was making and that sort of thing. He had no trouble sharing information and helping me learn and asking advice. He was wonderful that way. So I thought, OK, if you want to start the vehicle and get it cleaned off, thank you!!!

REINIER: [Laughter] Might as well let him do it!

HERRETT: That's right! Ooookay. And then the other person I had working for me was Carl Clemens. Carl was the old traditional tech. I think he had been drill sergeant when he was in the military. Carl and I carpooled from Rapid City. [Laughing] And I like Carl. I really like Carl, but Carl was going for fire fighter retirement. He managed the fire program. There were a young man and a young woman, seasonal, that were living together or dating, and Carl did not believe in that sort of thing. And so he would send the guy on a fire but not her. I had to take him aside and say, "Carl...." He said, [in a low voice] "I'll run this program the way I think it should be!" Mmmmmmmmm. But he was going for fire fighter early retirement because you get more benefits. He had been turned down on his first and so he was doing his appeal. He wasn't much of a writer, which is not a surprise. So I tried to help him with his writing for the appeal, and he was still turned down. It was a real long shot that he would get it. Because you have to be almost entirely fire in your career and he had other things that he was responsible for like recreation. But I think he sort of blamed me for not getting that.

REINIER: Oh!

HERRETT: And he said some fairly hurtful things to me about two people who had worked for me on the Pactola District. Years later I checked with Donny [Keough, who was one of them] if what Carl said was accurate, that the reason that Donny quit was because of me, and Donny says, "No, not at all!"

REINIER: Donny is...

HERRETT: Donny Keough was my primary assistant on Pactola. One day I got a phone call that somebody was blocking the road near Keystone, South Dakota, which is by Mt. Rushmore, a forest road, and using dogs to do it. I decided our seasonal law enforcement technician just wasn't [experienced enough], needed somebody more seasoned, more experienced, so I asked Donny to go. Well, the ranger came tromping in my office, "Donny has more important things to do with his time!" And Donny looked at Denny and said, "Denny, I just don't like the way things are going. I quit." I'm going, [gasps] Hhhhhhaaaa!

REINIER: And he quit?

HERRETT: And he quit.

REINIER: Then and there?

HERRETT: Then and there.

REINIER: My!

HERRETT: He gave us his two weeks notice or whatever. So Carl said Donny quit because of me.

REINIER: And that wasn't the case.

HERRETT: And that wasn't the case. I didn't think it was but I had to confirm with him years later. So Carl retired and I was acting [ranger]. And then I started putting in for ranger jobs in Region 6. I don't know why. There's where my thought process... I'm going, here's Craig Rupp, willing to give me a shot at a wonderful... To be a ranger, the only one in the world willing to do that, and I'm so naive and ungrateful or blind or whatever, that I started putting in for jobs in Region 6 again!

REINIER: Because you wanted to go back to Region 6?

HERRETT: Yeah.

[Interruption]

HERRETT: So I was applying for jobs in Region 6, and Mathers had to write the evaluation, forest supervisor's evaluation. He also had to let Craig know that I was doing this. I applied for one down in the Winema National Forest, which isn't a huge timber forest but it had a timber program. Later on I found out that Mathers said he had trouble supporting me for some of those positions, that I wasn't ready for some of those positions. But he said, "But in order for you to even have a shot at them, I'm going to have to rank you a little higher than I think you deserve at this point." And he did.

REINIER: Oh.

HERRETT: He says, "Because the way they do things in Region 6, you don't have a prayer even." And he says, "I don't think that's right." So I went through the process on the job on the Winema--Mary Albertson gave me this information later--and I was to be certified as one of the candidates. And the regional forester wouldn't let my name go out.

REINIER: Really?

HERRETT: Yes. That's what I'm told.

REINIER: Who was that?

HERRETT: I can't even remember who it was at that time.

REINIER: Uh huh. Because you're a woman?

HERRETT: I can't say that for sure. That's probably part of it, but also because I was a landscape architect. I don't know what all.

REINIER: Uh huh. So they weren't ready to do that.

HERRETT: They weren't ready in Region 6 to do that--on that district. I kept applying. See, I didn't know all that had happened; I just knew I wasn't selected.

REINIER: So you kept applying in Region 6?

HERRETT: Yeah. And I think I applied for the Oregon Dunes NRA ranger job. Mary said I was actually selected for that job, and that the offer was called to Region 2, and that's when they made me the offer at Blanco [Ranger District, White River National Forest].

REINIER: Oh!

HERRETT: I don't know for sure.

REINIER: Did you know that at that time?

HERRETT: No, heavens no. And I may have gone. It was a GS12 versus a GS11 position in Region 2. It was on the Oregon Coast. All these romantic ideas. But I'm really glad I ended up at Blanco instead for other reasons. Those reasons include, if I had gone to the Dunes I would be considered recreation, and I would have been just...

REINIER: You would have been in that slot.

HERRETT: In that slot forever. By going to Blanco, it was just a very rural, heavy range district [much more natural resource, traditional resource based]. The new ranger I was working for by that time said, "Blanco? I can see you on lots of districts but not Blanco!!!" He had worked at Blanco. But that's where they made the offer.

REINIER: Now before we get on to Blanco, which of course is very important because that's where you're the first female district ranger, in Rapid City what did you do about personal support? As a young, single woman, that must have been hard.

HERRETT: It was, because I didn't date [much and I don't make friends] easily. I went out with a couple of people there. [The main thing for social interaction was I ended up sharing my house with a family for awhile]. One of the employees, a seasonal employee, was building a house and his family had to get out of the house they had sold, and thought they'd be in their new house within a month. Well, it turned out to be more like three to six months. I said, "Well, you can live at my house." They're lovely people. But having a family of four live with me for that long!

REINIER: Oh, my!

HERRETT: But they were support to me too. And my sister through all this, over the phone, both my sisters actually, because Michele would come and visit me. She was old enough then and I really enjoyed her visits. And it was about mid-way through that that I met Tom [Herrett], who was going to be, eventually, my husband. He was a seasonal employee in the timber group on the Pactola District. Actually, I met him there. And then he got on permanently with USGS [United States Geological Survey] in Green River, Wyoming, so we were dating across Wyoming. Lovely times. Lovely driving situations!

REINIER: How many miles?

HERRETT: Oh, I don't know, 500 or so. When I moved to Meeker it was only 230 miles and that was so close! But Green River's down in the southwest corner of Wyoming and Black Hills is off to the northeast corner. We just dated a little bit before he left. And so that kind of support. I had some friends. One of the women who interviewed me for the local newspaper became a very good personal friend of mine, she and her husband. I did things with them. My next door neighbor was a retired gentleman who had been a chemist for Dow [Chemical Company]. He didn't tell me but somebody else told me that he was one of the co-developers of Dacron or something. And Lawrence was just the neatest neighbor. Little old doddering man, he'd be shoveling my driveway! I'd go, "Lawrence, I can do it. I'm just too lazy to get up and get going on it!" We'd go to dinner together.

REINIER: That's nice.

HERRETT: It was a nice friendship. And so good old Lawrence was a friend. Those were the things that kind of sustained me. I had lots of company when I was there too. Wherever I

moved the first year I'd get a lot of company because they hadn't seen the place yet. Then once they had seen my... My stepmother would go, "Well, once is enough!" [Laughter] Well thanks!

REINIER: But then you moved to Blanco, which of course was your real pioneering position when you became the first [female] district ranger.

HERRETT: Right. And that's a big time!

REINIER: I was curious about something. There's this candidate list that you're talking about. How do you get on the list? How does that work?

HERRETT: Normally there's a vacancy announcement and you apply. And then, whatever level the position is, personnel at some level goes through based on the criteria and comes up with a highly qualified list of people who have applied, and then sends that to the forest or to the district to make recommendations or selections. In the case of district ranger the forest supervisor makes the choice, but the regional forester has to actually make the offer, I think.

REINIER: And Craig Rupp, of course, wanted to...

HERRETT: Yeah, in fact, I never applied for Blanco. It was a lateral [move, same grade to same grade], and as a lateral they can move you anywhere.

REINIER: I see.

HERRETT: And so, because he had apparently seen that other offer, time was urgent.

REINIER: So they just offered you Blanco?

HERRETT: Um hmm.

REINIER: Because Blanco was available then.

HERRETT: Blanco, I think they made available then.

REINIER: They made it available to offer it to you?

HERRETT: Yeah. I think the...

REINIER: How so?

HERRETT: The existing ranger had applied for another job and so they rushed the decision on that other job, I think, so that one would work. I don't know. Those are things you kind of hear in the background. I don't know if that's true.

REINIER: Well, is that why they placed you on Blanco, which seems an inappropriate place perhaps for you, even though it turned out to be one where you learned a lot.

HERRETT: Well, yeah, uh huh. I think it was what was available at the moment.

REINIER: Yes. And they wanted to make sure that you didn't get a position in Region 6?

HERRETT: But Craig got what he had been trying for and giving me the experience for. And, you know, I can understand that. I was kind of stupid not to see that at the time. Some of the things, you look back and you go, "Oh, how dumb could I be?" Here this man has gone out on a limb to try and work with you in terms of gaining the experiences you say you need, and then you go, "Well, bye! Thanks a lot!"
REINIER: But you still wanted to go back to Oregon.

HERRETT: Yeah. I had had a good experience in Oregon. Not that I was having bad experiences in Region 2, that's not the case necessarily. But the landscapes, I much prefer the lushness of western Oregon to the high deserts of Colorado and South Dakota. Although, they were beautiful landscapes and Blanco [Ranger] District is gorgeous.

REINIER: Well, tell me about Blanco District.

HERRETT: It's a district that has a very large segment of the Flat Tops Wilderness, which was not the first named primitive area, but the first place the Forest Service ever had made a decision not to develop, consciously not develop, a piece of ground at Trapper's Lake. Arthur Carhart was a landscape architect although they didn't have that as a federal series; I think they called them landscape engineers or something. One of the primitive areas in New Mexico became the first primitive area, but Flat Tops was very soon after that.

REINIER: So it would be what we call a wilderness now.

HERRETT: It's a wilderness now. It's been congressionally designated as wilderness. By the time I got to the district it was wilderness, congressionally designated. It's a ranching community. Meeker is a ranching community county seat. It's a very long, narrow county, Rio Blanco County. It's on the White River National Forest and it has the White River of the White River National Forest.

REINIER: I see, that's the Blanco.

HERRETT: Yeah. Rio Blanco! It's a district that has huge mountain parks, open mountain parks, large stands of aspen, gorgeous aspen, the prettiest aspen stands I've ever seen, and then conifer stands. So it's kind of a third, a third, a third. And very heavy grazing--sheep and cattle--around very traditional ranch community. Meeker is a town of about 2000. Heavy hunting use. I think it was the largest transplanted elk herd in the state of Colorado, very good elk habitat. The Peonce Basin was next to the district and the Peonce Basin mule deer herd is, I guess, renowned. And we were summer range for the mule deer herd, kind of transition range a little bit and then summer range. Winter range was down on the land on the ranches. And we had some campgrounds. Our main one at Trapper's Lake, we were lucky to get the roads plowed in, the last drifts, for 4th of July weekend. It was not a long season!

REINIER: So the altitude was very high?

HERRETT: Yes. Meeker itself was at 6,200 feet, so I think the district was 7,000 to about 11,000 feet.

REINIER: Oh, my.

HERRETT: High elevation. Pretty isolated district. A fair amount of roads, but only one paved road part of the way and there were a couple of graveled roads, but mostly just slick mud.

REINIER: What about energy? Was it part of the energy boom?

HERRETT: It was adjacent to the crux of the energy boom. When I became ranger it was at the height of the energy boom for the oil shale development. The CA and CB tracts that were tracts for development, experimental development of oil shale, were in the Peonce Basin, west of the district. Bureau of Land Management land essentially. The town of Meeker, normally about 2000, was at a population of about 3000. Housing was very difficult to find. Places for our seasonals to live were limited. People were camping on the forest or trying to live on the forest to a degree, a little bit, just because there was no place in town for them to live. The climate certainly limited that for major portions of the year, so it was more of a seasonal problem. So we had increased local population. I spent a lot of time dealing with county wide issues. The city had meetings of the different community agencies and the different organizations, just trying to deal with some of the issues related to the human aspects of the development. And so I participated in that. And that was a kind of a non-traditional place for a ranger to be. I got some feedback that way. They didn't expect me to participate that way. I was very comfortable in that arena [and they were glad to have my participation].

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: And the grazing stuff. I enjoyed the range program. I loved working with the ranchers.

REINIER: You did?

HERRETT: They're down home people. Some of them I didn't enjoy, but most of them I did. They had a livelihood that they were trying to sustain. We had a lot of problem allotments, what we called, that had problem spots that needed solutions. Just about every allotment we had on the district had work that needed to be done on it. Tom Evans was forest supervisor when I got there, and word was that he wanted a cowboy ranger. But also word was about three to six months after I was there that he thought it was a really good personnel placement.

REINIER: Good.

HERRETT: And he came and he said, "I'm going to be kind of low key about the first woman thing. Let's get your feet on the ground. You won't see me unless there's problems. Probably not a lot, if you have something you want to talk about, call me." But he had Aspen District and Vail and all of those others. It's a huge forest for ski areas and I didn't see much of Tom. So I took that as a good sign.

REINIER: But there was a lot of attention paid to you as the first female district ranger.

HERRETT: First day I was on the job the National Geographic was there. It wasn't because I was there, but they were doing a feature on the Forest Service and they just happened to be on the White River, just happened to be where the first woman was on her first day of work. If it wasn't snowing it was darn close to it. It was August and very cold. And so I had my wool jacket and, of course, then the uniforms just didn't fit women. I had never gotten to tailoring, so the sleeves were down below the tips of my fingers, the ends, the cuffs of my jacket. I thought, "Oh well." [Laughter]

REINIER: It's warm.

HERRETT: Yeah. And I had to go in uniform, of course. When I was on the Pactola District I always thought, oh, women's uniforms are just awful because they did tucks and no pockets on your shirt. And you were expected to go out and do violation notices at times. That was before the law enforcement days, before you had agents doing those sorts of things. Things you had to write down some notes on. And no pockets except your hip pockets and their pants fit like jodhpurs. I had seam allowances of about an inch and a half--felt awful! [Laughter] They at

least got rid of the darts and got us pockets on the shirts. The uniforms never did fit well. Still to this day I think that's the case.

REINIER: Oh, dear.

HERRETT: Anyway, I had this awkward uniform...

REINIER: When National Geographic was there.

HERRETT: When National Geographic was there. We're looking out over the district, so I'm getting oriented to the district as well. Talking about issues.

REINIER: So were you written up in the...

HERRETT: Nope. Ernie Nunn on the forest, another ranger, got written up because of his work in Minturn, our Vail district, and that was fine with me. I'm going, 'I'd be boring."

REINIER: But there were lots of articles in newspapers about you.

HERRETT: Over time. The first week I was there the television from Denver came up and it felt funny, this whole staged thing. I'm thinking, "Oh, this poor town." And the poor employees had been teased before I got there.

REINIER: Tell me about that.

HERRETT: Well, I think it's just what's a woman ranger going to be like type thing. And they were going, "Well, we'll find out." The employees were good.

REINIER: Were they apprehensive about your coming do you think?

HERRETT: If they were, they didn't let on. No more than you are apprehensive about any new ranger you get. What's this person going to be like? Are they going to be a jerk or are they going to be OK?

REINIER: Who were your employees and how many did you have?

HERRETT: Let's see, I had a range conservationist, my staff primary assistant. Then I had the resource assistant, another primary assistant, and I had a engineering tech that came to work. I had a wildlife biologist trainee that had to serve four districts or something. It was absurd, a trainee that had to be full journeyman level on more than one district. I had a district clerk and had a receptionist. I said a rec tech, I think. And then seasonals. So it was like eight

permanents and then the first summer that I got there there were about twenty-four seasonals. And then several years later we only had enough money for about twelve seasonals, I think.

REINIER: So that you were a supervisor now for the first time?

HERRETT: Well, I supervised people on the Black Hills.

REINIER: Oh, OK.

HERRETT: Actually, the transition to doing that on the Black Hills was harder than the transition to becoming a ranger for me.

REINIER: Because on the Black Hills you'd never done it before?

HERRETT: I had never done it before. At least I brought a little experience when I came to Blanco. I had an employee who worked for me who was a born again Christian. He says, "You know, I don't believe in women working. But you aren't married; I don't know what else you're supposed to do." [Laughter] And his wife worked until she got pregnant. And he was very supportive. One of my employees was a Jehovah's Witness and certainly doesn't believe in women working outside the home. But I worked well with him, I think. I didn't necessarily agree with some of his views on things and vice versa. But rarely did those come up in the work situation. And the district clerk was wonderful to work with. She was one of those salt of the earth, had been there a long time.

REINIER: What was her name?

HERRETT: Pat Jens.

REINIER: Pat Jens.

HERRETT: Yes. Pat was there. And then the receptionist was Peggy Schultz and her sister was married to one of the permittees. One spring we didn't let the sheep on to the allotments when they normally would have gone because the range wasn't ready. And so one of the sheep permittees, a couple of them, came in to see me. One of them was Nick Theos. Nick was in the state legislature and he was also an officer in the National Wool Growers Association. Normally he and Jerry Seeley wouldn't have come in at the same time, but they just happened to be there and so they wanted to talk. And I said, "There's no grass up there! Have you been up there?"

[End Tape 3, Side A]

[Begin Tape 3, Side B]

HERRETT: Nick was running for the legislature again and it was a woman running against him. And he goes, "Well, I'm not going to have to campaign too hard; it's only a woman running against me." And Jerry's mouth kind of drops open. Nick said, "Ran into the woman in Denver who ran against me last time. She was pregnant. I wanted to have my picture taken with her to show what happens to women who run against Nick Theos." And I said, "Oh, Nick, you know, I see things differently than you do." She beat him, by the way!

REINIER: Oh, that's good to know!

HERRETT: Yeah, so that was good. And in the meantime Jerry's kind of sitting there picking up his mouth off the floor. Jerry's wife was out talking to her sister who was our receptionist, right outside the door. Nick's son-in-law comes in the door looking for Nick and they say, "Well, he's with the ranger." Because they were all right where they could hear when I was talking. The guy goes, "The ranger's a woman!!!" [Laughter] And Peggy's sister looks over at him and says, "Yeah, and a damn sight better than the last one!"

REINIER: That's great!
[Interruption]

HERRETT: Reminded me of a situation when I was on the Black Hills. I was acting ranger. Somebody came into the office and wanted to talk to the ranger about something. He was mad about something. And they said, "Well, she's in her office. May I say who's here and we'll take you in to see her." He goes, "A woman??" And he turned around and left. I thought, "OK."

Another time somebody wanted to talk to the man in authority, and I said, "Well, I'm the person in authority if you want to talk to me. I make decisions. If you want to talk to a man I'll get somebody for you to talk with. But if you want the decision maker you've got to talk with me." And he left.

REINIER: He left?

HERRETT: That's your problem, fella. Must not be that bad of a problem.

REINIER: So you've had to deal with the public as the district ranger. That was a big part of your job, wasn't it?

HERRETT: Yeah. And Meeker wasn't as huge as some of the districts. Which was kind of nice in some ways, but in other ways probably one of my strengths was working with the public. But Blanco, the first two years were wonderful.

[End Tape 3, Side B]

Wendy Milner Herrett, District Ranger,
Blanco Ranger District,
White River National Forest, Region 2,
Meeker, Colorado, ca. 1980-82.

Wendy Milner Herrett, District Ranger, Blanco Ranger District, White River National Forest, Meeker, Colorado, 1983. "We set up a hunter entry stop during hunting season to encourage hunters to pack out their trash. We used Smokey to get their attention so they would stop."

[SESSION II, June 14, 2000]

[Begin Tape 4, Side A]

REINIER: Wendy, at the end of the last tape we were talking about your experiences as the first female district ranger in the Blanco Ranger District at the White River National Forest. I wanted to ask you, did you feel like you were under scrutiny all the time?

HERRETT: Yes. [Laughter] And my supervisor, Tom Evans, at the time wanted to make sure I didn't get extra pressure or scrutiny from outside sources or extra attention necessarily. There were people who contacted him, I think, wanting to interview me, do different things like that. And he kind of said no on those sorts of things so I could just go and do my job. But the scrutiny type of thing, the first day one of the range permittees came in. They, of course, knew there was a new ranger and that she was a woman. He was really mad about something--I don't remember what at this time--but he came stomping in, and the ranchers are such gentlemen. If it had been a male ranger he would have been yelling at him, but because it was a woman he just couldn't bring himself to yell. So we got to the talking part a lot faster. I think there were some advantages in being a woman working with men with very traditional values. Also, ranching wives were, I think, very instrumental in the running of the ranches even though they didn't take the forefront. There had to be a lot of mutual respect in how the ranch was operating and running with the wives and the husbands. But it just came home to me that day when he came tromping in my office and he was just beet red almost. I said, "Hello. What's bothering you?" And so he just would talk it out rather than holler at me first. So I think there were some advantages. That was part of the initial scrutiny. Everyone was curious, so people would wander in. And I'm sure my employees got questions about what it was like to work for a woman. They gave me some feedback. "Well, it's like working for anybody!" At least the feedback they gave me was OK. I was sorry they had to go through that extra, but I think they kind of got a kick out of it sometimes, just watching people's reactions.

Another type of scrutiny was from the staff and the forest. And the district is the level where you have the actual day-to-day management on the ground. You have acres assigned to

you that you're responsible for. And then above that on each national forest is a supervisor's office. The supervisor's office has a forest supervisor and primary staff and then a lot of support staff. The support staff can be specialists that you can't afford on each district, but that can be shared among the districts. The staff officer has the primary responsibility for range or recreation or wildlife; sometimes they have more than one resource that they're responsible for. And they keep track of budget and special problems and help you through with advice.

The recreation staff on the forest when I got there was Bob Miller, and he had been ranger before in Meeker. In fact, his wife was from Meeker. He offered to come out and ride

the Flat Tops with me during hunting season. And hunting season was huge. Lots of hunters on the forest and always cold, beginning to get really cold. So Bob scheduled to come out and ride with me for three days. He knew I wasn't a horse person. You can't fake that. And I didn't want to try; you can get in trouble really fast if you do that safety-wise and stupidity-wise, too. So Bob came out and we were scheduled to ride up Marvine Creek the first day. And so we head up the trail and we head up off the trail up onto the Flat Tops themselves, get off the main Marvine trail in a way, and we're riding around and riding around. It's getting to be later and later in the day and he's going, "I know this trail's over here somewhere." "I hope so. It's very late; it's almost dark. We have a long way to go down, I think." I'm very tired of sitting in this saddle. And it's getting very cold by that time of day. We started early in the morning and we finally found the trail just before it got dark, the main Marvine trail, and rode on down. And of course the horses, when they know they're going home, they go pretty fast. But that first day was about twenty-eight miles. And so that was my initiation with Bob.

REINIER: Was he testing you?

HERRETT: Later he told me, after we rode the second day which wasn't nearly so far, but he did some tests then, and then the third day my horse refused to go. He thought it was just me, so he said, "Well, let me ride that horse." He got on that horse and it wouldn't go for him either. It was just tired of riding. And so at the end he says, "Well I'm impressed." I said, "Well, what did you expect, Bob?" But he was helpful. You just go through those sorts of things and you have to have a sense of humor about it or you go crazy. Sometimes it's not fair. I mean, it's extra scrutiny that's not in a nice way. But most people are curious and curiosity's OK. You can deal with that.

REINIER: Did you get tired of being a token woman?

HERRETT: You know, sometimes I think I liked it. And sometimes it got old. Let's just get on with life and get past this gender thing. I like attention; I'm a Leo. [Laughter] Not that I believe in those things. The first day I went riding, the range con[servationist] and I went out to meet with one of the sheep permittees on an allotment. We had to ride to get to where we were going to meet them. It's easier to ride out of our work center than to ride with a horse trailer and

all of that. So we just rode up. Of course, Dan's showing me the way, that was Dan Summers, and we get there and there's the sheep wagon and the herder and then the permittee. I'm going, OK, I've got to get off this horse to go meet this person, shake his hand. And I go to get off the horse and my left foot is stuck in the stirrup. That's an awkward position; you're half off the horse. So I had to get back up and make sure I could get my foot out and get back. You want to make a good impression at least the first time out. He didn't laugh but he was smiling. And I said, "Aaaahhh! It's really nice to meet you." [Laughter] He says, "Let's go have coffee." But

just time after time, those sorts of things. You can only be who you are, and you have to be able to laugh at yourself.

REINIER: You broke your wrist too, didn't you?

HERRETT: Oh yeah. That was the last year I was there. We had a disagreement about whether we should move the allotment fence to the forest boundary with a permittee. They were saying it was too steep. Mainly they didn't want to, I think, because the water was on the national forest, and if they had moved the fence they wouldn't have had access to the water. Water's very precious. There were a number of us riding that day. The other reason I was questioning whether we should make a move, they happened to have, I think, a Caterpillar franchise out of Texas. This is a big ranch and a local manager, but it was money from somewhere else. When they had done fence line on another part of their ranch, it's like they took a D9 and plowed it in, and it was just a horrible scar on the landscape. I was going to ride and kind of see which way it would go. It was the first ride in the spring, so there's lots of gopher holes and the ground's a little rough. And we had been riding; it was just a morning ride, and we rode and looked at it. It wasn't terribly steep at all. But we were coming down just this last stretch. We could see the highway, and my horse's front legs went out from under him. It was steep enough that his head was down and his tail was up. And so then I was forward over his neck; I was vertical, almost felt vertical. The saddle slid forward and so the horse couldn't get up with me there. So I thought, OK, I'll roll off. Well, the roll was perfect; the landing wasn't. I must have put my wrist down, and I'm going, "Oh, this doesn't look right." Son of a gun! We got the horse and saddle righted and we were close enough to the road that we just walked down to the road. We decided OK, don't move the fence, it's OK. That wasn't because it was really steep, [but there would have been a lot of environmental impact for very little gain to the forest]. So I walked down, and one of our crews was going into town, so they took me into town. Got my wrist set at the hospital on my lunch hour and went back to work. Then the ranch manager sent me flowers. I think I'm probably the only ranger at that point that had ever gotten flowers from a grazing permittee! Little tiny bouquet.

REINIER: But you were brave! You went right back to work.

HERRETT: I know! Had to be macho! [Not really. I wasn't badly hurt. Didn't hurt until that night]. Sitting there on the table while they're wrapping it, two ticks jump off me. I went, "OK, it's spring. Springtime in the Rockies." So anyway. Experiences like that. I'm sure any ranger would have some to talk about. The part with my broken wrist was, the chief and a bunch of other people were coming. The deputy chiefs were all having a meeting in Denver.

REINIER: That was [R.] Max Peterson.

HERRETT: That was Max Peterson at the time. [J.] Lamar Beasley was the deputy for legislative affairs. The deputies and some of the associate deputies were at this meeting, and

they were going to have this dinner at Keystone Ranch on the forest. So the forest supervisor wanted all the rangers to be there and kind of host this event. And I'm in my cast still. They're going, "Oh Wendy! Whadya do?" I'm going, "Well, I wish I could say I fell in the shower, but I fell off a horse." And Max says, "Anybody who's been around horses has broken something." And then I'm sitting there between Craig Rupp, who was the regional forester, and somebody else. They serve these huge steaks and no steak knives. It was my right hand, and I couldn't cut my meat. I'm going, "I can't cut my meat!" So any good forest service person has a pocket knife. Two of them got their pocket knives! Let me use that. They didn't cut my meat. They let me cut my meat, but once I had a sharp knife I could do it.

REINIER: Was that Peterson who did that?

HERRETT: It was Craig, I think, and one of the other deputies. On a forest like that you get to meet people; you get a lot of visibility. Some forests get a lot more visibility than others. The Mt. Hood was one like that. People come through and visit all the time. The White River was like that. Not usually Blanco District, but that day I got to go over to the district that had Arapaho Basin and Keystone and Breckenridge and all of those.

REINIER: Why is that? Is it because they're so scenic?

HERRETT: It's some of the political issues are there; they're close to urban centers. The White River wasn't that far from Denver, had a lot of public scrutiny and public use. Mt. Hood is near Portland. If they're going to show an issue that's going on in the region, they don't have all day to do it, or long periods of time to get to some of the forests. So some of the forests get more attention. That can be a pain to always be showing people things. But it also, as far as employee development, lets people meet some people that can make decisions or can remember them for job placement. And so the White River and the Mt. Hood both had advantages that way.

REINIER: Yes, you mentioned visibility on the Mt. Hood also.

HERRETT: And you don't think about things like that too much except when issues come up or when you're wanting to find out about some place, you have a face and a name and they have a face and a name. A lot of times you can contact them and ask questions or whatever. At least you've met them, and people on the more remote forests don't get that advantage. Sometimes they think they're lucky. Sometimes I don't think it works for them if they want to try other jobs. If they want to stay where they are and they're perfectly happy, then that works fine.

REINIER: So that's part of informal networking?

HERRETT: That's informal networking. I became very aware of that through, I think, each of the jobs I've had and people I had met that had moved on to other jobs. Dale Robertson was the deputy supervisor on the Mt. Hood. He came when I was there. Taught him visual management.

REINIER: Did you know him pretty well?

HERRETT: At that point not real well. Just you say hi, he knows who you are and that sort of thing. Well, enough to talk and be friendly and all that, talk about issues if needed. But not a close, personal relationship by any means. But later on he knew who I was when I applied for a job in Washington D.C.

REINIER: And he was in the Washington office then?

HERRETT: Yes. And I think at that point, after the Meeker job, I applied for a job in legislative affairs in the Washington office. He, I think, was associate deputy for programs and legislation at that point. He then went on while I was in that job to associate chief and then later he became chief after I left. Max was still chief when I came back out to the Mt. Hood. And Jim Overbay then came back into the Washington office. After I'd left he came in as deputy for national forest system.

REINIER: Yeah. And he always was important to you.

HERRETT: Yeah.. You meet people and then you meet them different places. Warren Bacon, I worked with him, almost for him, when I first came to the Forest Service. Later on I worked with him when I was a landscape architect on a forest, and later on yet, farther along, I was his boss, before he retired and before I retired. [Richard] Dick Grace was resource assistant on one of the districts on the Mt. Hood, and later on he was deputy director for recreation when I went in as director, so we got to work together again. There are people that keep showing up in your life, and it's really nice in most cases, if you like them. You know, if you don't, well.... But, by and large, I've really enjoyed the people I've worked with. They've been good people, and nice people. Don't always agree with every point of view they have, but that would be boring if you did.

REINIER: When you were the first woman district ranger, did you do things then to help other women advance in the Forest Service?

HERRETT: When I was first ranger I was a little bit isolated. And Tom [Evans] was trying to just let me get my feet on the ground, as I said. And so I don't know that I actively... When other women became rangers, I'd call them and talk and offer any support I could. I thought it was great when I lost track because there were so many.

REINIER: Louise Odegaard said that you called her when she became district ranger on the Tesuque District, Santa Fe National Forest.

HERRETT: Yeah. And Laura Ferguson. There were just a number of women. And so when it got to be about ten or more, I'm going, "This felt pretty good! And I can't even keep track!"

REINIER: Special friends.

HERRETT: Yeah. And then later other regions started to invite me to conferences for women and for Federal Women's Program week and that sort of thing.

REINIER: Yes. In 1982 you participated in the Federal Women's Week at the University of Montana.

HERRETT: Region 1 sponsored that and invited me up to Missoula. That was the first big talk I gave. They had a special feature for about four or five days that week and I was one of the special speakers one day. It was a huge meeting. They had a regional leadership team meeting in Missoula to bring some of the forest supervisors in and give them the opportunity to have lunch and hear this woman ranger.

REINIER: You were the keynote speaker.

HERRETT: I was the keynote speaker at lunch. And I wished they would have served lunch after the talk because then I could have enjoyed it. I was supposed to eat before I spoke. There were two hundred people there and that seemed immense to me. And local television was there. It was kind of scary.

REINIER: But you gave a good talk. I have notes here on your talk and you talked about what a woman ranger ought to be.

HERRETT: I can't even remember all the details, but some of the qualities I think I talked about of having a sense of humor, being open to visibility, making sure you had some visibility. Because everybody does a good job or is expected to do a good job, and that's not always noticed. So if you have an opportunity to be on task groups or anything like that, to show more people your skills, take advantage of that.

REINIER: Expect scrutiny?

HERRETT: Yeah. Yeah.

REINIER: That's another thing you said. Don't have a chip on your shoulder about women's issues.

HERRETT: Yeah.

REINIER: I thought that was interesting.

HERRETT: I've seen some people, some women, who have been so angry at certain responses they get. And I found that if I respond angrily I don't make any headway with that person. If I keep my goal in mind, that I want them to be more open to women's role, women's capabilities, anything like that, that attacking rarely gets you to that goal. So processes, usually humor, can go a long way to getting past that initial confrontation and then gaining some respect. And basically you need respect if you're going to be able to meet that goal. Giving respect usually is how you gain respect. The chip on the shoulder, I think, can be more detrimental, even though at times it feels good to give an angry retort and it's just right there. [Laughing] And some people you never make headway with. But most people if you gave them a chance and gave them some time, they moved toward where I wanted them to be in the goal on women's role on the Forest Service.

REINIER: Another thing you said that I thought was really interesting was to recognize the value of the women in traditional jobs.

HERRETT: Oh, absolutely. The Forest Service would come to a crashing halt without women who are in the clerical positions and administrative positions. I've seen queen bees go in or prima donnas, and I have seen them wiped out by the women who are in the traditional positions.

REINIER: How so? That's interesting.

HERRETT: Just that you don't get your work done, and you have to rely on these people to help you. You have to to get your job done, and if they slow down or do anything like that, or if they aren't happy with you, you don't have a happy workforce. There's a lot of things. In most cases I don't think there was sabotage, but you set yourself up for that. And you aren't better than they are. You just have chosen and have opportunities for a different career than they've had. Their career is meaningful, their career is helpful, and it's what they've chosen. You have to respect that. There again, you're working together, and in order to do that, it has to have

mutual respect and value in what they do. If I didn't have budget help from a district clerk, I would have gone bananas. If I didn't have personnel help from personnel and the district clerk, I would have made stupid errors and it would have reflected on me, not on them.

REINIER: Another thing I think is interesting about this is that you would be the only woman on the management team, wasn't that right? What was that like to be the only woman on a management team?

HERRETT: Interesting! Most of the time it wasn't a real big deal because you had common interests, common issues you were dealing with. But it would frustrate me no end when I would bring up something as a possible solution and they'd just go right past me. And then somebody else would bring it up later and it was a wonderful idea. The other thing that would bother me was, the night before we'd be sitting around after dinner and drinking beer--whatever--talking about the issues that were bugging us and that needed some resolution. And I'd go, "We need to talk about that tomorrow." And tomorrow I'd bring it up and the others would be just totally silent like it was Wendy's problem, not anyone else's or not the forest's problem. The supervisor would say, "Does anybody else have that problem?" And they'd just sit there! Ahhhh!!!! I asked Denny Bschor later, "Denny why..?" That just used to bother me so much. "Why was it you guys couldn't, wouldn't, speak up?" And I forget exactly what he said, but it was that they couldn't. It wasn't safe for them to do it. Well, I don't know if it was safe for me. Women play the game differently. It's like, OK, we have a problem; let's try and solve it. And men have to save face and win in the process. I think that's a sad way to have to go through life, if that's really the dynamic that's going on. Maybe I misunderstood what Denny was getting at.

REINIER: Was it really not safe for them?

HERRETT: I don't know. Obviously they felt it wasn't. And why should they have to bring it up? Wendy was doing the work for them! Good old Wendy! Wendy sounded like a complainer.

REINIER: But would they be disrespected if they were known to have problems? Did they feel that, do you think?

HERRETT: I think they felt that, that they couldn't solve the problems on their own.

REINIER: In a strong and silent way?

HERRETT: Yeah. And I think men in general are expected to fix things. They're brought up as Mr. Fix-its.

REINIER: Yes.

HERRETT: And even with my husband, I'd talk about a problem and he'd go instantly to try and find solutions. And I'm going, "Wait a minute, I don't want solutions. I can figure out the solution. I just need to vent." And we got to a point finally he says, "Oh, you don't want solutions, do you?" I'm going, "Right!" So! [Laughter] But there again, just having that burden of having to fix everything and do it yourself rather than be able to talk about it and find a solution among you. In reality you do talk and find solutions, but I think it's more difficult for men to do that.

REINIER: You talked about sitting around drinking beer. Were you included in male groups?

HERRETT: Oh, yeah. With the ranger group, they were a wonderful group of guys.

REINIER: Really?

HERRETT: Yeah.

REINIER: So you weren't excluded from informal networks?

HERRETT: Huh-uh. Not that I was aware of anyway.

REINIER: That's great.

HERRETT: And I could call them if I had an issue and they would be helpful. Occasionally they'd call me for advice. So it was, I think, a mutual thing.

REINIER: That's great.

HERRETT: So.

REINIER: But now you said the last two years were more difficult than the first two?

HERRETT: Yes.

REINIER: What happened?

HERRETT: Well, my district had a lot of range, a lot of allotments that were considered problem allotments. There were some specific problems, whether it was over-grazing, or over-grazed parts--usually it was parts, it wasn't in general--that needed some resolution. The second two years I got my upgrade; they upgraded the district to a GS12 from a GS11. And so the

primary staff, I thought if my duties were accretion of duty, theirs were and they should be getting their 11's rather than stay as 9's. And so I worked for that and I got both of them upgraded. But about that time we got a new deputy supervisor, and a new forest supervisor, and a new range staff, and a new range conservationist in the supervisor's office. They got in their mind that Dan Summers, who was the range con on my district, was not the best range con. Before he was considered a decent range con and I appreciated his insight. He wasn't sometimes comfortable confronting permittees; he would confront them, but it wasn't a comfortable thing that happened. So, all of a sudden everything we did in range was under scrutiny. It was big test

time for Dan. We were doing a reduction on an allotment, and that's a major step; it doesn't happen all the time.

REINIER: Explain what that is a little bit.

HERRETT: OK. You have a piece of ground that's designated as a range allotment. You have, based on the forage and the terrain and the water available....

[End Tape 4, Side A]

[Begin Tape 4, Side B]

HERRETT: It's basically you have a number of how many head of cattle can graze on your allotment during a specific period of time. Because of problems on the allotment with the forage or lack thereof, we were trying to reduce that number. And that's big time. It becomes very political. You don't undertake it easily. It's the last resort to resolving a problem. And so we were into doing that. It was writing an environmental assessment for this, and it was, Wendy, have Dan write that, don't do much, a big test. And so I got that done. I read it; it seemed OK to me. Turned it into the supervisor's office and we didn't hear anything back. And so I called the range staff and said, "What's the feedback on the environmental assessment?" He says, "We don't give you feedback on things like that." I'm going, "What? Yes, you do. I've been in a supervisor's office. Yes." He said, "Well, you'll have to go to the deputy for that." So I go tromping into the deputy. I'm going, "What's going on?" And he says, "Well, Vic [Weyers] says the wildlife stuff isn't there." And I'm going, "It is there. There's an overlay. Have you read it?" "Well, no." And so, they grudgingly read it and said, "Well, it's OK." But it was just time after time, dumb little things like that, that we could do nothing right. And we tried so hard.

They wanted to fill a vacant allotment. Some years a permittee won't use the allotment and so there are others that could use the extra grazing range and take some of the livestock off one allotment and kind of rest one. While we were way overworked in range, we had, I think, forty-some allotments, we had thirty-some permittees, somehow 90,000 animal months grazing on us in the summer was in my memory. And we had one range conservationist that had responsibility for that and supervising a wildlife biologist and dealing with watershed issues. I mean, it wasn't his whole job. And then he had one seasonal range tech working for him that summer. We were part of the bigger forest and the range and wildlife staff wanted to try and fill vacant allotments. We said, "We'll try and do that." Well, we got nothing but grief for doing that. Even then we couldn't do anything right. And it was like constantly bashing our heads against the wall. All kinds of things. And it just became so frustrating. I'm going, "I don't know what we can do to be viewed as successful." I got a performance element to get along better with Vic. I don't know if Vic got one to get along better with me, but he needed it.

REINIER: Vic... What was his last name?

HERRETT: Weyers. Vic was the range and wildlife staff. And in person, you know, he was personable, but not very helpful.

REINIER: What do you think was going on?

HERRETT: I don't know. I know he was frustrated because recreation was the primary resource on the White River. I wasn't a range conservationist, and he thought very strongly that Blanco should have a range conservationist for a ranger. So he was viewing me as a landscape architect and not having range background. I wasn't sure if there was a gender problem going on; I think there was somewhere. It's never real clear what is really the primary thing going on. What it did was finally eat at my self-confidence so bad that even I wasn't feeling good about what I was doing. But I'm going, "OK, I'm not making progress here. My boss doesn't seem to understand that we're working really hard, and you can't tell me specifics that we're doing really wrong. We're meeting our targets; we're doing all the traditional tests of this. And so it's just a really uncomfortable place to work at this point.

REINIER: This was [Richard] Dick Woodrow.

HERRETT: That's correct.

REINIER: As forest supervisor. Did he feel that you weren't being strict enough with your staff?

HERRETT: He never gave me feedback [in that way or that I remember]. On range, the district ranger had very little authority. On different situations, transferring the permits or something, we'd go, "OK, this is what the rules say. Is there any wiggle room? Because this is what's going to happen if we go out and tell the permittee this." And they're going, "No, there's no wiggle room." And so we would go like good soldiers and say, "This is what has to happen." And the permittee, of course, would go immediately to the supervisor's office, and they'd back down. There was wiggle room. So it was undermining me and the range con with the permittees, which I thought was unacceptable and let them know. Not that it made any difference. The behaviors stayed the same pretty much. But I don't know if Woody thought I wasn't being strong enough with permittees, strong enough with employees.

REINIER: You know, I did have a chance to talk on the phone with Dick Woodrow. One of the things he told me when I asked him what it was like for you as a ranger there, he said he thought you didn't come down hard enough on your staff. What do you think that meant?

HERRETT: Maybe that I wasn't holding them to high enough standards, but we were meeting all our targets. We were having problems with relationships, but that was more, almost internally than it was externally. There was some external. I don't remember him saying that specifically to me; he may have. Maybe I wasn't ready to hear it at that point, but what I could have done differently, I don't... There's a way of beating on people and a way of bringing them along. I don't tend to beat on people. I tend to try and get different outcomes, and sometimes I think that's not.... I think that's maybe a little bit of the issue with Jim Mathers.

REINIER: Is it kind of an issue of management style that's expected of a district ranger?

HERRETT: I think it might be, and my style is not the traditional beat on somebody.

REINIER: But traditionally a very patriarchal style of management, isn't it?

HERRETT: Yeah. And I didn't view myself as the parent. I had power. I expected good performance, and they knew I expected good performance. And by and large, I was getting good performance. Apparently, they didn't agree with that necessarily in our range program. I'd try and sit back and look at, OK, this is the situation. What are we trying to accomplish? How are we doing that? What kind of help do I need? Do I have those people helping me? And I needed the supervisor's office to help. I didn't feel I was getting that. They were the barrier in a lot of cases. They would tell me one thing one time and permittees would get other answers. And so at times I felt like I was being sabotaged. At that time in my career that's the closet I felt to that. I felt like there was nothing I could do to change that situation.

It's at that point that my husband... He worked for USGS. I had gotten married while I was a ranger and he had moved to Meeker. Fortunately, USGS had a position because of the oil shale development, but that was shutting down the latter part of my time in Meeker. The USGS was losing their funding, and so Tom's office told them to start looking for jobs in other locations. To me, you can beat your head against a wall only so long, and if you aren't making progress, then at least you have an option in the Forest Service and that's to move. It may be a lateral. You may not get a promotion, but how long do you stay and bloody your forehead? I was at that point, that I was so frustrated. I didn't know where to go for help because I didn't feel understanding from my boss at that point. I'd talked to Dan Summers and he said, "Well, it's like losing a battle." I'm going, "Yeah, but we're going to lose no matter what we do. We've tried different ways." So, there comes a time when it doesn't make sense to stay. At least you have the option to consider. Eventually he went to a different district. I think he took a downgrade.

REINIER: Dan did?

HERRETT: Yeah, Dan did. I talked later on to his forest supervisor, and that forest had given him a performance award. He said Dan was very emotional when he got it. He says, "I asked him why and he says nobody had ever recognized his work." I'm going, that's really sad because he was a competent person. He wasn't probably the strongest range conservationist in the Forest Service, but technically he had the information and he was able to share that. He was shy a little bit with the permittees, but both of us were lacking confidence by the end of this whole ordeal. He went on. I was able to work it and I ended up with a promotion. I started putting in for jobs. [Tom and I] put together a list with possible co-locations with USGS and Forest Service.

REINIER: You and Tom?

HERRETT: Yeah. And we both talked to our supervisors and said USGS wants to place their people; these are the possibilities. We definitely want to be able to work together, live in the same town if we can, or close enough proximity that we can have a home and work. And so we put together a list of the possibles and started looking for work. At the same time I was nominated for a Loeb fellowship at Harvard University through the Graduate School of Design.

REINIER: You also got the Western Women's Career Excellence Award.

HERRETT: Yeah! Yeah!

REINIER: You were doing great!

HERRETT: According to women! [Laughter] And some men. Most men, I think. I was nominated and actually selected for the Loeb fellowship. I wasn't the first Forest Service employee. In fact, Mike Curran had just been a Loeb fellow, and he was a former district ranger in Region 2. One thing was that if you got that, the Forest Service supported you with salary while you were away for a semester. Woody said he wanted to fill the job after me and I could understand that. And in the meantime I did put in for jobs. Some I wasn't selected, but I was selected for the one in legislative affairs in Washington D.C.

REINIER: That was a very exciting job!

HERRETT: Oh, I loved that job!

REINIER: Yeah. And that was a promotion, wasn't it?

HERRETT: Um hmm. Two steps. It was a GS13/14. By that time Tom's office--my husband--everyone had been placed that were in the professional series except Tom. I think his boss kind of wanted him to stay, but that wasn't an option by that point for me.

REINIER: In Meeker.

HERRETT: In Meeker. The dual career part reared its ugly head then because Tom didn't have another job. I was going to Washington D.C. We were scheduled to go house hunting [while I was at Harvard]. He had no feedback and his boss and his boss's boss had said they would make the contacts. I'm finally going, "Tom, you're going to have to make the contacts." Tom and I view this a little differently, this experience. So he finally scheduled some interviews. We were back for house hunting because it made a huge difference in the Washington D.C. area where you live. He could have gone to three locations back there. They just didn't know the urgency on that end. And so he lateral'd back there. Worked in Maryland, so we lived between Baltimore and Washington D.C., and that worked very well. But there was a while there! [Laughing]

REINIER: Has the Forest Service been helpful to you as a dual career couple in your various moves?

HERRETT: Yes. I've gotten a lot of help. More than some people, I think, although I know I've put in a lot of effort on dual careers [for others]. I've put in a lot of effort on getting people placed on any of the positions when I've known they've wanted to go somewhere or move on in their career if I think they're doing good work. I'll be honest with people when asking about it. But I think a lot of placements take a supervisor's help in making sure the receiving end in potential moves knows about the person so they have a fair shot [at the job]. As more women came into the Forest Service, there were more and more dual Forest Service couples. Originally I think dual career placement was Forest Service-Forest Service, but in reality, there are a lot of dual career couples needing placement and it's not always a Forest Service move.

REINIER: In your case it was two government agencies.

HERRETT: It was two government agencies. When I was back in Washington D.C. the Forest Service and BLM [Bureau of Lands Management] had written an agreement of some sort to help each other as agencies. When Max Peterson wanted to place me as a supervisor or deputy
somewhere, then he approached USGS to do a similar agreement. He says, "And then we'll say and we just happen to have this couple that would..." [Laughing] So not everyone gets the chief helping them on dual career placement, and I'll be the first to admit that.

REINIER: That was when you left Washington.

HERRETT: That's when I left Washington D.C. [I was offered the deputy forest supervisor job on the Mt. Hood]. I had the regional forester and a couple of forest supervisors out here [Region 6] working with USGS for Tom. Kind of pushing USGS. I think they were a little pushy. It worked out. In the end it's worked out very well, but Tom doesn't like to move as much as I do.

REINIER: Has it been difficult for Tom to make the various moves?

HERRETT: Once he's there he's fine. But he's a person who grew up in one house and lived there his whole growing up years. He likes smaller towns. He would have been very happy to stay in Meeker forever. Our house sank in Meeker while we were trying to sell it, but what the heck! [Laughing]

REINIER: Sank?

HERRETT: The neighborhood... Foundations were settling in a number of houses and major big time structural damage.

REINIER: Literally?

HERRETT: Literally sank, and subsidence isn't covered in home owner's insurance.

REINIER: So you lost money on it?

HERRETT: Lost money, yes. And I'm trying to just resolve getting rid of the albatross because then we were in Washington D.C. But Tom doesn't like to move as much, although, he's been really a good... It's an adventure each time and it's been my moves so far. If he wanted to move from Portland, the job he's in now, I'd go with him. He's gone with me. And the last two jobs I had in the Forest Service, he got to stay in Portland. We physically moved to Salem so I could work in Corvallis and he'd go up to Portland every day. And then when I got transferred back to Portland, he didn't want to leave Salem. So we're still in Salem.

REINIER: We should talk a little bit, since we've brought this up, about changing jobs in the Forest Service. Is it beneficial to change jobs as much as you have?

HERRETT: I've enjoyed it. I've learned a lot. The up side is you are in new situations, you meet new people, you have new situations you have to adjust to. Those are usually learning experiences. The down side is you don't learn the national forest to the degree that one of the technicians that usually stays at a location knows that. And so you may not know all the

nuances, but you can't possibly know all that information anyway. I don't disagree with moving. It's very costly though in terms of what it costs an agency to move anyone anymore, so they've slowed down doing that. Plus there are a lot fewer vacancies anymore because we've been in a down-sizing mode. But I think the way the Forest Service used to... It's been a very decentralized decision-making organization. Rangers had more decision-making authority in my experience and what I saw than national park superintendents having. And the way to keep some consistency nationally, the model, I think, that was used was, you would move people so they had more allegiance to the agency than they had to the local constituents and the particular landscape. And so that's, I think, why the moving of the people in the professional series was encouraged.

The technicians stayed, so they were the continuity, much to their dismay at times. Not that they wanted to move, but training new people all the time I'm sure gets to be a pain. But they are the ones that tell you a whole lot about wherever you end up. It's changed now because, number one, there's not enough money to move people as much. Number two, there's a lot of dual careers and it's almost impossible to do a dual career placement any more because there are still surplus lists. And surplus lists come about when you're down-sizing and people's jobs are being eliminated. Their names are put on a surplus list and so they have in many cases a priority to get placed over somebody that's not on a surplus list.

REINIER: I see.

HERRETT: And so it's just much more difficult to move people. And I think there's less push for that although to get a promotion, if you're on a district, the highest you can be as a ranger is a GS13. And so you have to go to a regional office or the Washington office to get a higher grade.

REINIER: And you, by becoming a district ranger, you moved into a line position.

HERRETT: The decision positions, right.

REINIER: If you wanted to be in that line, and the decision-making, you really had to become a district ranger, didn't you?

HERRETT: Oh, yes. The only ones with real decision authority, on paper that you're delegated authority to make a decision, are district rangers, forest supervisors, regional foresters and the chief. Of course, that means some deputy chiefs too or the deputy supervisors functioning, but you get advice from your staff. You'd better use it if you're smart. But the Forest Service is very military and only certain people can make decisions.

REINIER: And that's the line!

HERRETT: That's the line.

REINIER: Tell me about the Loeb fellowship. That was a wonderful opportunity.

HERRETT: It was a wonderful opportunity. I could audit any class at Harvard or MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] with professor approval. I had to participate in some way in the Graduate School of Design in helping in a class or something like that. That was minimal. Really minimal. I took mostly classes in the Kennedy School of Government, also one called Bureaucracy which wasn't in the school of government. I'm not sure which; Harvard's organized in interesting ways. We were considered faculty. I never thought I'd sit at lunch or breakfast at the faculty club at Harvard, but there I was. [Laughing] I took a class from Steven J. Gould, which was fun to do. But I was suffering shell-shock and lack of confidence after coming out of the second two years as ranger, and so it was almost a mental regrouping. It was absolutely essential for that, and I was very lucky that I had that opportunity.

REINIER: It was that hard on you.

HERRETT: It was that hard on me. When I look back, I'm a person who likes to please. I like to do what people want. I don't always do those things. In decisions, I know I can't do those things. It was a hard time that I was coming through. It really kind of shook me to my core, and so I think I came out of it quite a bit depressed. So there were opportunities I missed while I was at Harvard. There were opportunities I took advantage of.

REINIER: What did you learn at Harvard?

HERRETT: What did I learn?

REINIER: What did you get out of it?

HERRETT: I wanted to look at the politics of land management and politics of public administration, which isn't really through the Graduate School of Design! That's why I sat in on classes at the Kennedy School. And they were case studies often, and it was all graduate level students. The professors in most cases would let me sit in the class if I didn't participate in the discussion because they graded their students based on their discussions, their input, in class. So I'd sit there. They were giving case studies like resolving some of the social security problems,

and I can't even remember some of the examples, but they were always public domain type, public administration type things. And I was really frustrated with how naive these students were on how you manage people. Or how you bring about change with people. And then I'd pinch myself and say no, they're still students. But a lot of them had work experience already. There was an arrogance there that I hoped would be mellowed because eventually a lot of them would be political appointees and be my boss maybe. And I wanted them to have a little more

understanding of how people work together and how you bring about change if you have a different goal in mind, how you bring people along. You just don't do an edict. I was pleased to see that the professors would bring that out. And by the end of my semester there I was kind of getting into the swing of school. Oh, I could do this!

REINIER: But one of the fascinating things about your career is that this agency has been undergoing such change. So had you already learned things in the Forest Service about how to bring people along to deal with change?

HERRETT: I don't know if I learned it in the Forest Service. I certainly had lots of opportunities to apply whatever was in my head in that way. Some of it was gut instinct, how I was brought up maybe. Some of it was maybe through courses and through watching other people. I had seen a lot of examples on how to not manage people.

REINIER: A lot of observation?

HERRETT: Yeah. A lot of observation. And by moving too, you could see different things, how different people work. And so you have a lot of people you could observe and things that they did that seem to work well and learn from them. So it was certainly through the Forest Service I had those opportunities. I don't know where your basic instincts come from in terms of how you interact with people, whether you're confrontational, whether you try and bring a team together. Certainly the later model that's using a team, I think, comes fairly naturally to women. Not all of us but some. When I went to school, that was seeking people's input.

REINIER: At the University of Oregon?

HERRETT: At the University of Oregon. I learned that there. So there were a number of places where I had some opportunities to observe and learn. I'm sure there were lots of lessons I didn't learn that I should have. Sometime at Harvard I began to clarify what was going on. And so that time and just sitting back and observing, I think, helped me that way, what were important things in terms of how you work with people.

REINIER: Did the experience at Harvard help get you ready for your work in Washington?

HERRETT: Ummmmm. [Laughter]

HERRETT: I'm not sure I can say directly. I think just looking at a political world. There's politics at every level of any organization, and I was aware of that before I got to Harvard. Watching it in an institution like Harvard, and then the case studies, I think some of it helped me that way. The job in Washington D.C. in legislative affairs, when I left my staff [in Meeker],

one of their going away presents, if you're going into legislative affairs, they give you a red negligee with a Forest Service patch on it. [Laughter] What else could legislative affairs be?

REINIER: That's great! That's hilarious.

HERRETT: I thought it was funny. Some people might have been offended, but I wasn't.

REINIER: That's funny. That's funny.

HERRETT: But the legislative affairs job was basically writing testimony, writing legislative reports.

[End Tape 4, Side B]

Wendy Milner Herrett, Legislative Affairs Staff, Washington Office,
USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C., ca. 1985.

[Begin Tape 5, Side A]

REINIER: Wendy, we were talking at the end of the last tape about your job with legislative affairs staff.

HERRETT: And I was saying that what the people in legislative affairs staff did, they had areas that they were assigned, and any legislation that was proposed, or bills introduced on the hill, you were to track those bills, you were to write the legislative report when congress would ask for the administration's position. If the administration was asked to give testimony, you'd write the testimony, get the clearance through the department and through Office of Management and Budget. You would put the briefing book together for the witness. You would get the witness cleared through the department, whoever that was going to be, and you would brief the witness, prepare the briefing book, get whatever other staff needed to be involved in the Washington office in that preparation of the briefing book and the briefing of the witness, and you would go with them as technical support at the hearings. The other part was, if a congressman or a senator wanted drafting service, they could request that and you would try and draft bills for them. Now some people were a lot better at that. That, I must say, was not my strong suit! I just don't write the way legal documents are written. I can get the essence, but putting it into legal terms.

But that job was fascinating to me. If I had to work in the Washington office it was the job I wanted because it's the job that's unique to Washington D.C. You can't get that experience anywhere else. And so that's the job I wanted in the worst way. I applied for some other jobs in the Washington office, but this was the one I wanted. The intensity of preparing for a hearing, you often don't get clearance of the testimony until the evening before the hearing. I think I would act like I was stressed, but I was enjoying it. But I think my boss thought I was just really stressed, and so he was thinking maybe Wendy's not real smooth at this. When I was eligible for my GS14, I didn't get that as soon as I could. So Mark, I think, [was not satisfied with me].

REINIER: Who was your boss?

HERRETT: Mark [A.] Reimers, the Director of Legislative Affairs. He would sit and think out loud and help you through things. He could just clarify all the points. He was wonderful to work with. I think I baffled him. But he was patient.

REINIER: Why did you baffle him?

HERRETT: Just how I am. I show more emotion than I think men do in those positions. It's always pretty serious. There were some times when people didn't react to me, and it's hard for me to see what was bothering them. Something was, several times in my career. I mean

obviously Jim Mathers and Dick Woodrow... [Laughing] But it's hard when they can't articulate it to me, [at least so I can hear].

REINIER: Were you the only woman once again?

HERRETT: I was the first woman. There was a legislative liaison position, and that was a woman. But the legislative affairs staff, like I had in program areas, I think I was the first woman working in there. I may be wrong. There was a woman before me that had come in through the research end [and spent time before becoming a legislative fellow on staff, very briefly]. But, you know, we weren't that common.

REINIER: There weren't that many.

HERRETT: No! [Laughter] The whole, how the hill worked and how the department, and all those steps you had to go through even to get clearance through the department on either a legislative report or testimony, I find just amazing. I mean it's like twenty-eight approvals you have to get before you can send the administration position. And the other point was often the Forest Service wanted something a little different than the administration did.

REINIER: You were there from 1983 to 1986, so it was the [President Ronald] Reagan administration.

HERRETT: That's correct. Interesting times. And I think it was that administration that for the first time had a political appointee that was assigned to the Forest Service to kind of work in the legislative affairs arena, programs and legislation.

REINIER: Who was that?

HERRETT: I'm trying to think of his name, last name was Martinez, I think. And so you had to keep him informed. He wasn't a person that got in the way really. Some other people might have handled that job differently. I worked on eastern wilderness and it was a huge time for wilderness legislation. Tom [L.] Thompson worked on western wilderness. And those were big wildernesses. I was little wildernesses, but a lot of national forests. And I had National Wild and Scenic River legislation. Often the forest would want designation of the National Wild and Scenic River. They had gone through the studies. The river had been a national study river; they had gone through that, and if the department didn't want to support the designation, the report would just sit there. And if a bill was introduced, the forest just had a horrible time. In fact, one of the persons I worked with in management planning, just... "They can't say that!" You know, if the administration wanted to say no, we do not support this legislation, when the Forest Service was going, yeah we do! But you're part of the administration and going, OK, this is part of the dance. The congressman knows where the Forest Service is; give them some credit. They work

with the people out on the forest. So you don't have to kill yourself in here. The legislative process is a deliberative one. It's normally a slow one. Thank goodness that everything doesn't go through. But sometimes you get really frustrated.

Columbia River Gorge. The Forest Service, I think, was very supportive of a special designation when it was congressionally designated. I had that legislation I was following; the department had some problems with it and the bill was horribly written. It had all kinds of potential for great difficulties in administering that law, if it became law. And so just trying to work through those with committee staff and member staff and forest staff and regional staff and Washington office staff and the department and Office of Management and Budget, which clearly didn't want to do anything at that point that spent money. And just trying to get a position through. I think what we finally came out on that one was, we supported the concept of special designation or special legislation but not in the form it was in.

REINIER: Was that passed then?

HERRETT: It passed.

REINIER: Was that the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act?

HERRETT: Yes.

REINIER: Were you satisfied with that then as it was passed? Was it what you wanted it to be?

HERRETT: Well, it was still very complex and had a whole bunch of potential that the committee staff that it went through on the senate side refused to pass it as it was written. Or to mark it up as written. They needed some changes. So it improved it a little bit. It was [United States] Senator [Daniel] Evans' staff that really was writing all of that legislation. I basically saw the staffer as very arrogant. He was like thirty years old and I thought very arrogant to the assistant secretary of agriculture. I'm going, pipsqueak!

REINIER: What was his name?

HERRETT: [Joe Mentor]. You're the go-between the Forest Service and the member staff. He wanted lots of information from the Forest Service, so I'd take it over to Senator Evans staff , or to his office on the hill. One time Joe was hollering at me in their front office. I forget what I had not done or done too slowly or [he wanted more information]. [Laughing] And so, I went back and got more information. The next day I came back and the receptionist says, "Are you the person Joe was yelling at yesterday in the reception area?" And I said, "Yes." [Laughing] She says, "He got in trouble for doing that in the reception area." And I said, "Oh! It would be OK in the back room, huh?" [Laughing] Oh, all these little things behind the scenes. But it was

a fun job. It was just watching the action and a lot of legislation, a lot of the scenic rivers legislation and a tremendous amount of wilderness legislation went through in that period of time.

REINIER: You worked on the Virginia Wilderness Bill and the Pennsylvania Wilderness Bill; is that right?

HERRETT: And the Wisconsin and the Vermont and the New Hampshire and, let's see, the Louisiana and the Florida.

REINIER: So there were wilderness areas designated in all those states?

HERRETT: There was legislation in all of those and most of them got designated during that period. And in the west there was Oregon wilderness and a Washington wilderness. Idaho never got resolved. California wilderness. Colorado Wilderness Act. There were--I can't remember--some more. Montana. Tom Thompson was monitoring that. We had this master chart he had developed of how many acres, what were the areas, the acreage of each. There was a map of record that you worked with, of course, and with a delegation on preparing the committee staff primarily, and then everyone had to sign off on that. So you knew you had to write boundaries, and that that would be the map of record that everyone agreed on. And so in some of them there were six, ten, twelve areas or more, that were designated in the state. So you had all those maps to make sure you had the right ones, and the testimony often would include questions about each, or some of the particular parts.

REINIER: Was there a lot of pressure from the environmental movement?

HERRETT: The house side had a Democratic majority at that time, so the committee staff was very conservation/environmental oriented. So there was pressure there, and certainly there was a lot of pressure to build the momentum to get that many wilderness bills before congress [and passed]. It was a huge time for that. On the senate side it was harder to get them through. But there was, I think, a realization that some of this is going to happen and so how do we make a bill that we can agree on. And so I think it was just can we resolve this issue once and for all. Well, it's not resolved once and for all, but at least it did a major chunk of stuff. Timber industry was, of course, not supportive to a lot of the areas, or other groups. Just a real variety. But there was a huge push in the early '80s that they were able to get a tremendous amount of legislation through.

REINIER: James Watt was Secretary of the Interior, wasn't he, at that time?

HERRETT: I can't remember if he was there or if he had left by the time I got there. He was a Reagan appointee, as I recall.

REINIER: Yeah, and I would think very much opposed to this kind of thing.

HERRETT: Oh, yeah. From what I read; I never met the man. I got to go to the White House for a bill signing ceremony.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: Yeah. It's a very hot, muggy day in August, and the president was going to sign the Wisconsin and New Hampshire, I believe, Wilderness Acts. The White House staff called for information about these places for the speech, and they wanted to say "pristine." Well, eastern wilderness, all of the national forests in the east are acquired land and often we got them because they had been totally harvested. And so they weren't necessarily what I would consider pristine. They had regrown and were beautiful. We're going, "Pristine may not quite do it, but beautiful, special." [Laughing] Things like that. And so, go over to this bill signing ceremony and he signs these bills and talks about the national parks. There wasn't anybody in the national parks on this.

REINIER: This is President Reagan?

HERRETT: Yeah. And I'm going, "Gosh, his hair is orange!" And the rose garden doesn't have roses!

REINIER: And he talked about the national parks? For these bills?

HERRETT: Yeah. Well, not necessarily for these bills. He signed these bills that were important and then he talked about something that they were going to do for the national parks.

REINIER: Oh, I see. Nothing about the Forest Service.

HERRETT: Yeah! The national forests.

REINIER: Now Max Peterson was still chief then, wasn't he?

HERRETT: That's correct.

REINIER: Yes. But was Dale Robertson there in the Washington office at this point?

HERRETT: Yes. When I first got there I think he was associate deputy for programs and legislation. And then he went as the associate chief, the number two person under the chief. But my whole time there Max was chief. I had met Max on the district. He had come out on the district, had ridden on the Flat Tops. I'd brought him down because he had a meeting to go to in Los Angeles. Showered at my house. I forgot to give him a clean towel. [Laughter] The things

you remember afterwards! Oh Max, in the cupboard in there, there's a clean towel! Oh well! Oh well! Got him to the airplane. A little airplane out of Meeker to fly back to Denver to fly to Los Angeles. So I had met Max on my district, and then at that dinner, the infamous dinner with my broken wrist.

Then worked with him a lot because he was the witness a lot. Dale was the witness on most of the wild and scenic rivers. Dale was really hard to brief because he didn't like to not have all the answers. He was not comfortable saying, "I don't have that information. I will be glad to get it." Max was just very comfortable with that. Dale was not. And I'd go to hearings with Dale and he'd go, "Well, how do you think it went?" "Well, it was OK!" And I got advice from Max on bifocals, what kind to get, [laughing] going to a hearing one day. And I go, "OK. This is interesting!" So. They're both very nice people, and have been very helpful to me in what I've done and what I've wanted to do, and in the jobs I have had. They were very helpful.

One hearing on ski area management or something, anyway, something to do with ski areas and it was a senate hearing. Max was the witness. We had done draft testimony to support and the administration wanted us to not support. Anyway, it was a change from what we had written. Got the change like at 5:00 at night or 6:00 at night, and I had to make the change on the testimony and then make all the copies and get it up to the hill. I got it up to the hill, and the next day at the hearing Max is giving the testimony, and then they interrupt Max because [United States] Senator [William] Proxmire came in. Of course, if the senator comes in, he can give his talk, and the old administration witness has to get down. And about that time Max gestures to me like...

REINIER: Pointing his fingers.

HERRETT: "Come here!" And he showed me one place I had made the change but another I hadn't.

REINIER: Oh!

HERRETT: And so we had supports in one spot and not. Fortunately, it wasn't a huge bill, a significant one. Well, it was significant to the ski industry. And the committee staffer was sitting up front and he was just grinning because he had caught it and I hadn't. Uh oh! So Max was very good about how he presented that to the committee.

REINIER: Somebody asked me to ask you to talk about Tommy Thompson a little bit.

HERRETT: Oh, Tom was my counterpart. Tom was a wonderful person to work with. Tom comes across as very serious, very serious about his career and very serious about his family and very competent. Whatever Tommy takes on he does well. He had worked on the Mt. Hood at

one time. He worked on Willamette. Gone through those when he was a ranger on a huge district on the Willamette [National] Forest.

REINIER: Did you know him back in Region 6?

HERRETT: No, I didn't. I didn't know him until I shared my office with him in Washington D.C. Very analytical person, and I enjoyed working with him. I thought if anyone could be chief, that he had that potential. It hasn't necessarily worked out that way. He went out as a forest supervisor on the Siuslaw [National Forest], and I went out eventually as a deputy on the Mt. Hood. But Tom had a tremendous amount of support, because he was very good, from the people that he worked with, both on the hill and the chief and the muckity mucks in the Washington office.

REINIER: Now I'm just curious. I know that by that time the consent decree in Region 5 had gone into effect. Was that an issue in the Washington office for you at all?

HERRETT: Not for me, although I was given an offer as a forest supervisor on the Inyo [National Forest] while I was back there. Al West, Associate Deputy for Programs and Legislation at that time, called me in and said the Regional Forester Zane Smith was in town and wanted to talk to me about a forest supervisor job in the region. And I said, "When?" And he says, "Now." So I trundled down and he was in the chief's office, and basically he wanted to talk to me about that job. And I'm going, "Well, my husband's not ready to leave yet; I'm sure of that. But also, I'm not sure there's a potential co-location for my husband. Let me look at that. Let me talk to Tom." And so I did. I called Tom and I said, "They want me to go to the Inyo in Bishop, California." And he says, "Well, have a nice time in your new career alone in California." He was not pleased.

REINIER: So he wasn't ready to do that.

HERRETT: He wasn't ready to do that. I said, "Well, at least look it up in the directory if you have an office there or not." And he did that and they didn't. They have a geologic division office but not a water resources, which is what Tom's in. So I went and I think I told Zane and I told the chief that.

REINIER: Zane Gray.

HERRETT: Yeah. Zane Gray Smith. It was Zane Smith.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: Yeah. Said that I appreciated the offer, of course, and the confidence but that it just wasn't going to work in the timing. And Max says, "Is your husband the type that needs a

little time to think about things?" And he says, "Like maybe by the end of the week?" And I said, "I think if we start now for about three years from now maybe, he might be ready."

REINIER: Were you ready to leave Washington yet?

HERRETT: I could have.

REINIER: You could have.

HERRETT: Yeah, I had been there two years by then. Usually don't want to stay too much longer than two years or you end up there a long time. As it was, I was there almost three years. It was about the right time. And then the legislative affairs job and politics on the hill became much uglier. I'm glad I was there when I was.

REINIER: How did it become uglier?

HERRETT: A lot more name-calling, I think. More partisanship.

REINIER: Oh I see, in congress.

HERRETT: In congress itself. The new freshmen came in to change the world and everyone was bad. I mean there was no respect for witnesses necessarily or even the chief of the Forest Service. Before, some of them would very much disagree with what the chief was saying, but they would treat him with respect. And some of that I think had changed. And just the workload. There were just lots of bills, more bills, so people were just kind of going crazy trying to keep up with them. And then a lot more political pressure within the department itself. So I was glad I wasn't there during that. I was there at the end of the golden era, maybe.

REINIER: In 1985, while you were still there, you participated in a symposium in Dallas at the Society of American Foresters. Do you remember that?

HERRETT: Um hmm.

REINIER: What, a panel?

HERRETT: Yeah. There was a keynote speaker and then I was on the first panel. And I looked out in the audience and Sally Fairfax was crying. [Laughing] I'm going, am I seeing this right? Sally's a person who was known to be a pretty strong woman with very strong opinions. She had been part of the organizing committee for this symposium, and later I heard that because it was finally happening, just the release of that happening [brought tears to her eyes. She had experienced a lot of hostility in her career as a forester, I believe].

REINIER: You talked about "What Have We Done"? It was about women in the Forest Service.

HERRETT: Yeah, and how far we had come, and that we had farther to go, of course. SAF, in my view, my experience in SAF... I was a member since I was a ranger, but I wasn't really looked at as a real member. I was on one of the awards committees of national SAF, and my committee recommended that I be the next chair of that committee. Well, instead they gave it to a good ol' boy, former state forester. And so my experience was, they aren't really ready for women who aren't foresters. I'm not sure they were really ready for women although this symposium was to get at trying to recognize those changes and importance of the changes and the openness that SAF was trying to foster. Those changes, to just see what they were and what needed to be done. So it was interesting. It was a huge conference. It was one of the times that I felt like an old lady icon though! And that I had played an important role for some women.

REINIER: You'd become a role model.

HERRETT: Yeah. And I didn't feel that too much while I was ranger, except when I went to Region 1, I got that feeling. And then Region 6 invited me out during that time to a conference, women's conference, and there were women who approached me almost like with reverence. I'm going, "Woooo, I'm just me." And then Region 10 had me come up for a conference and recognized in that region there was a long way to go with some of the attitudes. I don't know if it still is, but at that point there were still some really macho men.

REINIER: Is that Alaska?

HERRETT: That's Alaska. It was those places that I'm going, "Oh. I have played a role for people and I have made a difference."

REINIER: Yes, and you were giving people advice in your talk. You were giving other women advice about what they needed to do in order to get along in the Forest Service.

HERRETT: Yeah. I have my perspective and mine's maybe a little different than some other people. But there were a lot of people that would come through the Washington office, some of them women, and I would talk to both men and women about what I saw as how you move through, your visibility, the importance of different things. I spent time doing that when I was in Washington D.C. too, with Forest Service visitors that came back and tried to just orient them to what was going on in the Washington office because it's kind of a big office and for somebody to

come in from the field it was kind of overwhelming the first time. So I tried to kind of say, OK, this is what we do, some of the other things. These are some of the people that are doing these parts. I almost felt like a hostess. Maybe that's the wrong term, but I would take time to do that when others wouldn't.

The other thing when I was there that I spent some time doing. The secretarial staff was predominantly African American from Washington D.C. They had higher grades than our district clerks in Region 2 at least and most of the other regions. Region 6 had a few higher administrative grades that were predominantly women. The people that came in to the Washington office from the field were very frustrated with those women. Predominantly women. Because you would get just this amount of work and that's how they perceived their job. I type what I need to and whatever. Not everyone was that way, but there was a kind of a division. It was white male versus African American female almost. The women just didn't understand why they were getting reactions like they were. So I'd try and spend time talking about these are the grade structures out in the field. This is what people are used to from those grades and the types of work, the amount of work. So I also suggested and got some field trips going so they could go to the closest national forest, which was the George Washington, so people could actually see what a national forest was.

REINIER: Yeah. Great.

HERRETT: To kind of put it in perspective. And that's part of the outcome too, I think, of the SAF conference. People when they see what their work relates to, I think they can do a better job, or want to do a better job.

REINIER: And feel more a part of the organization.

HERRETT: And feel more a part of the organization. Have some loyalty. Because the loyalty wasn't necessarily there.

[End Tape 5, Side A]

[Begin Tape 5, Side B]

HERRETT: There was one woman that was Mark Reimer's secretary, and she went on to have much more responsible jobs. Brenda Jenkins, she supervised a lot of the other clerical support and she was a secretary. And she was so calm and she was so articulate and she was so shy, but she was just a wonderful person. She's one of the people that I remember so well from Washington D.C. that I admired. And it just really tickled me to see that she went on in much more responsible positions. She almost didn't like to speak up at staff meetings, she was that

shy. But she joined Toastmasters and just... I mean, she could give a speech that was wonderful. And just watching that transformation, I was just in awe.

REINIER: That's great.

HERRETT: And watching her with her kids and the issues of them growing up in Washington D.C., what she was expecting of her son and daughter. She was a neat person. I really admired Brenda. So she's one of my good memories from Washington D.C.

REINIER: Did you like living in Washington D.C.?

HERRETT: I loved living back there. There were too many people. But there was so much to see and do. Unfortunately, Tom and I could never get time off together and so we didn't get to see as much of the East Coast as either of us would have liked. But we lived in Maryland. I think I would have gone crazy living in the Virginia side of D.C. because I felt claustrophobic when I was there. But there was much more rolling hills and farmland in the part where I lived. It was a rolling green. I don't know, in some previous life I probably grew on up a farm back there or something.

REINIER: Beautiful countryside.

HERRETT: I felt very much at home. It was a very soothing landscape, but also reminds me of the Willamette Valley except that they had the hardwood forest and we had the conifers.

REINIER: Anything else about the Washington office?

HERRETT: Oh. There were some situations. One person in the recreation staff had a calendar, pin up calendar basically. And apparently it was signed by the woman. I thought, this is inappropriate. And I did tell him I thought it was inappropriate for a workplace. He didn't give a rip. But then the director of recreation at that time had a big poster that was from Japan and it was a Japanese woman in a bathing suit. And I'm going, "That really isn't appropriate." And I talked to him too. His disappeared.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: Yeah. But he says, "Well, they're recreation posters." And I'm going, "Yeah, but you don't need to have that one. There's lots of recreation posters. Some people are very uncomfortable with that sort of thing and it's sending a message about you."

REINIER: And sexual harassment was beginning to be an issue about then.

HERRETT: So...

REINIER: Were there any sexual harassment issues that you had to deal with?

HERRETT: No, not there, nothing blatant that I can remember anyway [other than the posters].

REINIER: You moved back then to Region 6 as a deputy forest supervisor on the Mt. Hood again. How did you get that job?

HERRETT: They just apparently thought I was a good match. And Dave Mohla was willing to do it, the forest supervisor. And the regional forester was Jim Torrance at the time and he was willing to.

REINIER: You were applying for jobs?

HERRETT: Not really, no.

REINIER: So how did that come about?

HERRETT: I don't know that I applied. It was a lateral, so they could just move me out. I don't remember applying for that one, maybe I did. [I think I did, come to think of it].

REINIER: Were you ready to move then?

HERRETT: I was ready to move and Tom was less ready, but Portland would be OK for him.

REINIER: So he was able to get a job out here.

HERRETT: The regional forester, the forest supervisor on the Gifford Pinchot, because there was a USGS office, a volcanic office in Vancouver, Washington, where the Gifford Pinchot supervisor was located, and the Mt. Hood supervisor, all of those people were making contacts. He ended up in the Portland field office for USGS in water resources. He got a promotion eventually when he was there, and so it's turned out to be a good job for him and he's been happy.

REINIER: And he's stayed in that job.

HERRETT: He stayed. Yeah, he just recently applied and was selected for his boss's job; his boss retired. But he's doing things he likes, in the countryside he likes, and so he's been happy. He hasn't had to move. After the Mt. Hood, I went to the Siuslaw and back to the regional

office. While we moved our house, he didn't have to move his job, and so he's been OK with that.

REINIER: He's had a lot of stability then.

HERRETT: Yeah. I'm not sure he'd view it that way. He has a wife that moves all over the place and likes to move. He's been really terrific.

REINIER: Were you happy to be back on the Mt. Hood?

HERRETT: Oh, yeah. Mt. Hood was a wonderful place, still is. Some of the people I had worked with before, my old boss [Dick Shaffer] was still there. The forest supervisor's secretary was still there, Judy Peterson. And some new staff, new people I got to meet, and they were great to work with. We were doing forest planning at that point. Forest planning was a major issue.

REINIER: A major issue.

HERRETT: Took up lots of time, and of course there's lots of controversy with timber sales as usual.

REINIER: Was ecosystem management being put into place by then?

HERRETT: It wasn't really being called that yet. That came about a little later. Although there were elements of ecosystem planning being done, that wasn't so much the buzz word yet and there wasn't staffing. We had ecologists. We had that staffing. But the Washington office didn't have an ecosystem management staff yet and that sort of thing.

REINIER: But you were planning. Is that the National Forest Management Act?

HERRETT: National Forest Management Act, I think. And Resources Planning Act or RPA. Part of that time we were doing some input to that. But it was mainly the forest planning that was going on. Those forest plans had gone on and on and on and we were trying to finally finish a plan and actually have something that we could manage to. And the difference on those [from what we used to do], we used to do planning units so it would be part of the forest, and at least these were the whole forest. And the ecosystems plans that are coming out more recently are much larger areas than even a national forest.

REINIER: So is that more effective as far as planning goes?

HERRETT: Well, it's harder to get the planning done. I think it's harder for people to relate to as far as the public because a lot of the public relates to specific places. They have favorite

places and that sort of thing. People want watershed health; they want clean water and that sort of thing. But it's really hard to think about a whole region. And so I think that's been some of the issue. It's just so much data. How do you process, and how do you comprehend, and how do you know what difference it makes as far as the ecosystem planning, some of the huge tasks that have been taken on. But forest plans, that was the thing when I was on the Mt. Hood.

REINIER: Did that mean a lot of paperwork?

HERRETT: To the planning staffs and all the people working on it, yes. A lot of documentation, a lot of mapping, a lot of surveys, a lot of information to coalesce, a lot of different resource backgrounds talking about alternatives and implications of different alternatives. And then the writing of those documents. And then with a draft, EIS [Environmental Impact Statement] and draft plan, going to the public and then bringing back and making any changes. And then finally coming out with a plan. And then going through the appeals process. It just goes on and on and on. And then the court case with the Dwyer decision on spotted owls.[1]

REINIER: Yes. Tell me about that because that happened, didn't it, while you were back on the Mt. Hood as deputy supervisor?

HERRETT: The court case was going on. The decision came out about a month after I got to the Siuslaw. And the Siuslaw forest plan came out just before I got to the forest. Within a month the Dwyer decision came out and totally changed some of the outputs. And so it was kind of scrambling. And then marbled murrelets, another kind on the coast range, became a surveying requirement.

REINIER: There were a lot of issues going on in the Pacific Northwest at that time. It was very central, really, as far as the forests were concerned.

HERRETT: Other regions were having some other issues. Colorado had a law suit going on on water rights. But the Pacific Northwest was getting an awful lot of attention because of the huge court cases and the timber stakes. What was at stake in terms of timber and what it was doing to changes to communities. Huge changes as mills were shutting down and a lot of very unhappy people, understandably, when their livelihood disappeared.

1*Seattle Audubon Society, et. al. v. F. Dale Robertson, et. al.* and *Washington Contract Loggers Association, et. al. v. F. Dale Robertson, et. al.*, William L. Dwyer, United States District Judge, Western District of Washington at Seattle, March 7, 1991.

REINIER: Dale Robertson was chief by 1987. Was he promoting that kind of planning and conservation issues?

HERRETT: All of them, I mean all the planning, all through that, Dale had been part of. As far as how you articulated alternatives, which one you selected, the chief wasn't making those decisions, but promoting the planning. Tremendous amount of money was placed toward that nationally, and so it was very much an emphasis. They wanted to get the plans done so we could get on with management.

REINIER: Was this congressional legislation that demanded the planning, or where did the impetus for that come from?

HERRETT: You know, I can't remember at this point. If it was Forest Service feeling a need plus some requirements of law. There were some requirements of law. [The lawsuits were requiring completion of planning with certain types of information. We were not selling much timber without congressional acts, so there was pressure to complete planning there as well].

REINIER: There were some requirements of law.

HERRETT: The National Forest Planning Act.

REINIER: The NFMA.

HERRETT: National Forest Management Act.

REINIER: And that was all the way back from 1976.

HERRETT: And then how we went about it was a lot of Forest Service but some input on survey protocols and that from scientific committee. And they're not rules, they're called something else, that come out of the legislation. And scientific committee had required certain things. And so some of the outline was there and some each region was doing a little bit differently because that's the nature of decentralized organizations. But there was some continuity on a lot of the parts. But the Pacific Northwest plans were huge. Just to document alternatives and compare alternatives and outputs, it was amazing. It's not my favorite thing.

REINIER: So what was your role in the planning process as deputy supervisor?

HERRETT: Well, partly the supervisor and deputy, kind of operated as an alter ego. Dave Mohla was the forest supervisor. Some forest supervisors, the supervisor does this and the deputy's assigned certain tasks, personnel and some other stuff. Dave operated more as an alter

ego, which worked well for me. He and I worked that pretty well. And I knew there were certain things he was more involved with, ski area decisions and that sort of thing. The staff was sometimes confused who they should go to, but they could go to the one that they thought they'd get the better answer. [Laughter]

REINIER: That was smart.

HERRETT: Or somebody'd say, "Oh, Dave needs to be in on that one. And here's how I suggest you might take it to him." By the time Dave and I got there--he came to the forest shortly before I did--the alternatives had been developed. The preferred alternative had been developed, and so it was just continuation of trying to get those cranked out. So we were really trying to force some timeliness to get this thing done. So I think that was kind of our role by that point, let's get this plan out.

REINIER: Were you working with the Portland watershed issues? Was that part of the planning?

HERRETT: Bull Run was...

REINIER: Or was that something else?

HERRETT: That's sort of something else. Portland's watershed is the Bull Run; it's a congressionally designated closed watershed, which is not the norm for public watersheds.

REINIER: What does that mean?

HERRETT: Closed to the public. The public can't go in it. It's a very large area and it's a very emotional thing for Portland. Their drinking water is pure and if the Forest Service screws it up with roads... Even though there's gobs and gobs of data that show that's what's been done, the water quality hadn't changed. It's a very pure watershed. Occasionally there's some sedimentation, but even that you can document to some of the undeveloped areas that it's a landscape, a natural slump or something like that in most cases. There's some dams in there that are the Portland Water Bureau, and so working with them... But that was a huge political issue. The other thing that was going on was, while the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area had been designated, the planning was being done for that on a separate staff, the Columbia Gorge Management Area Staff. But the Mt. Hood still had the day to day responsibility to run the campgrounds and that sort of thing, the Multnomah Falls Lodge, and oversee the special uses.

REINIER: Did that scenic legislation for the Columbia Gorge make that a separate district then or a separate area?

HERRETT: It had a separate boundary, it had separate requirements for planning, it had separate acquisition requirements and processes. So it kind of took it out of the realm of planning from the Mt. Hood plan. But the Mt. Hood had two districts that had staff--one was the Columbia Gorge District and the other was the Hood River District--that had some land parcels that they had been managing all these years. It wasn't until later, just before Dave Mohla retired, that they recommended that everything, the day-to-day operation and the planning, be put together under the Columbia Gorge Scenic Area. And so that took a huge chunk out of the Mt. Hood, an important recreation part of it. Mt. Hood was still a large forest, but the Bull Run Watershed was just adjacent to that. It kind of led to eventually merging some of the districts. So there were Columbia Gorge, Zigzag, Estacada, Clackamas, Bear Springs, Hood River, and Barlow Districts. So there were seven districts on that forest and the job corps center. And now I think they're down to--part of this down-sizing and money--the Zigzag and Columbia Gorge Districts were merged. Estacada and Clackamas were merged. Hood River still stands alone, and Bear Springs and Barlow District were merged. So they're down to a lot fewer districts. That's happened on a number of forests to save overhead costs.

REINIER: So by the late '80s when you were back there, was the down-sizing beginning already?

HERRETT: When I was on the Mt. Hood?

REINIER: Yes.

HERRETT: That really started in earnest with the Dwyer decision.

REINIER: OK. And that was still pending.

HERRETT: That was still pending. There was some anticipation, but there was still high timber harvest levels that were being assigned to the region. So there was still a lot of work and a lot of outputs. We could see down the road there might be something.

REINIER: So it was still a wealthy...

HERRETT: Still had high budgets.

REINIER: High budgets financially.

HERRETT: Um hmm.

REINIER: Yeah, because of the timber harvesting money that was coming in.

HERRETT: Yeah. Partially that, and just relatively speaking, the other budgets were not as high as timber management.

REINIER: Do you want to tell me a little bit about the Dwyer decision?

HERRETT: I can tell you some of the outcome of the Dwyer decision more than I can remember what the decision said. It basically said the Forest Service had to do certain protocols and certain size habitat areas for owls, spotted owls, and which were bigger than the Forest Service had said was the area that would be protected. And so that meant no harvesting those areas. And so that took a huge chunk out of each of the national forests that had western spotted owls from the harvest, basic harvest levels, so that changes your allowable sale quantity, which means you need fewer staff. So that's basically the beginning of downsizing, and less money available because you don't have as high an allowable sale quantity. On the Siuslaw when I got there the forest plan had about 330 million board feet allowable sale quantity; that's how many board feet of trees can be harvested a year. With the Dwyer decision and with the spotted owl, incrementally it kept coming down. I think the forest is at about twenty million, fifteen or twenty million board feet allowable sale quantity now. Huge difference.

REINIER: Huge difference.

HERRETT: To the work force and to the communities that were reliant upon the timber from the national forest. It's been very large changes on the Mt. Baker- Snoqualmie--it's a combination of spotted owls, marbled murrelets--the Olympic National Forest and the Siskiyou [National Forest]. Plus on the other forests it's been primarily the spotted owl, but the coast ones, the marbled murrelet will fly about fifty miles in from the coast and lay its egg on a branch of a tree and then fly back out to the ocean every day. And so those areas were impacting the coastal forests.

REINIER: And when did that decision come down?

HERRETT: A little bit later. That was happening while I was on the Siuslaw also.

REINIER: Before we go into your job as a forest supervisor, as a deputy forest supervisor were you being groomed to become a forest supervisor?

HERRETT: That's the expectation. For any deputy, it is a training position besides being a working position, of course. The forests that have deputy supervisors usually have very heavy workloads. Sometimes the forest supervisor takes all of the external and dealing with the public and internal stuff is left to the deputy, the day-to-day operations of the forest. It depends on how the supervisor wants to break it up. I was very lucky to work with Dave, from my perspective, because he allowed me a whole array of things to work on. He didn't narrow down what my job was and he allowed me to see a lot of what he was doing. In fact, we talked a tremendous

amount as far day-to-day, what's going on in your day, what's going on in your day, what do we need to do from here, that sort of thing.

REINIER: Was fish production an issue too then?

HERRETT: Fisheries management was big and it's become even bigger. Just the water quality and the fishery, fisheries management. Fish biologists, we had a number of them on the Mt. Hood. One of the fish bios who was there, not the forest fisheries biologist but one of the assistants, is now the regional forester in Portland for the Pacific Northwest Region. Some of the people who used to work for me! Gone on to big positions!

REINIER: I see!

HERRETT: The fisheries biologists spent some time just making sure I knew what the important things were with their program and how it influenced the rest of it, and what some of the opportunities were and what some of the problems were, of course. Course every staff area does that to make them get their share or more than their share of money. It's never enough.

REINIER: Another thing you did while you were still the deputy forest supervisor on the Mt. Hood, in 1989 you participated in the Strength Through Diversity Conference. Do you remember that?

HERRETT: Yeah! [Laughing] Yeah, there were several of those. They all come together. There was one for fire management in Denver. I think the one you're referring to was in Region 6 in Portland.

REINIER: Yeah. Actually it was in Portland. What was the purpose of those?

HERRETT: It was really promoting diversity in the workforce, and more than the workforce, also in contracts that we did, just the value in diversity, the importance of that our constituents were diverse and we needed to reflect that. So we could be more understanding of our publics and more understanding of employees that we had.

REINIER: Sensitivity.

HERRETT: Sensitivity, although a long time ago Region 6 had been doing sensitivity training. But it was just making sure we were focused on it, that that was something that was important for the region and that you continued to have that in the forefront of hiring and training opportunities and making sure that people had opportunities.

REINIER: How did you get your position as forest supervisor?

HERRETT: I applied for that one.

REINIER: You applied for that one? Siuslaw. Was that a forest you particularly wanted to work on?

HERRETT: It was one I wouldn't have to move for. I would have been happy with the Gifford Pinchot, I would have been happy with the Mt. Hood, I would have been happy with the Willamette, but I thought that one was a long shot because it's such a huge forest. The Siuslaw was one. I didn't know a whole lot about the Siuslaw. I had participated on a general management review for the region when I was a deputy on the Mt. Hood, so I had gotten to see some of the districts and met some of the people and had a little bit of understanding of some of the issues that were going on.

REINIER: So you applied for those jobs then as they came up, as they became available.

HERRETT: Um hmm. I was acting supervisor on the Gifford Pinchot for about a month while Bob Williams, who was forest supervisor, was on a training program. And so I had had that experience. And then I think the Siuslaw was the first one of those that really came up. Now Dave was retiring about the time I put in for the Siuslaw, but they didn't often at that time, they have since then, promote a deputy in place. It's happened a lot more recently. But I thought that was a long shot that I would get the Mt. Hood, and so I was willing to put in for the Siuslaw. One of my friends that worked for us on the Mt. Hood was a personnel officer on the Siuslaw, and she called me. She says, "Tommy's gotten this job as deputy regional forester"--Tom Thompson--"in Region 2. It's commutable."

REINIER: He had been the supervisor on the Siuslaw?

HERRETT: Yes. And Linda Goodman was personnel officer at that time.

REINIER: Someone else you knew.

HERRETT: Yeah. She had worked with us on the Mt. Hood in personnel and gotten personnel officer on the Siuslaw. And so she says, "It's commutable, Wendy." So I did put in for it. Then she left for another forest, and then she came back as administrative officer while I was there.

REINIER: You weren't the first woman forest supervisor, but you were one of the first, weren't you?

HERRETT: I was the first in this region. I certainly wasn't nationally. Geri Bergen was, of course, the first woman forest supervisor in California. She was the first woman deputy forest supervisor before that and that was before... She became deputy before I became a ranger.

REINIER: Oh, I see.

HERRETT: But she hadn't gone through the ranger. She hadn't gone through the district slots. She had a different way, and I think probably a tougher way, to go because she didn't have that district experience.

REINIER: Why did you think that was tougher?

HERRETT: Because I think you're suspect if they don't think you understand what the real issues are or what they go through on a district. Not ever having worked at a supervisor's office or on a district before, I think she was suspect in a lot of people's eyes. Her learning curve, I think, would have had to be really tough.

REINIER: She had to learn a lot, yeah.

HERRETT: Yeah, she did. So I'm glad I went about it a little differently and was allowed the opportunities to do it differently.

REINIER: But you really went up through the steps.

HERRETT: I did the more traditional, other than I didn't start on a district. I went back to a district after being in the supervisor's office. I just happened to have a little time in the regional office, but from then on I went more traditional. I did the Washington office and back out.

REINIER: Was it hard to go back and forth to the different levels? Like from the regional to the district, to the Washington and back to the regional?

HERRETT: Well, let's see. The district and the Washington office is an interesting change, but there were a number of us that were back there direct from ranger jobs. We thought we could make a difference! What real life was like in the woods! Wrong! [Laughter] Naive about power. But by the time you do them, I don't remember it being that hard except going to the district from being a landscape architect when I came as resource assistant. But other than that, it really wasn't. Different jobs have different expectations.

REINIER: Tell me about the Siuslaw. How would you characterize that forest?

HERRETT: Siuslaw is a relatively, acreage-wise, small forest, about 640,000 acres. The coast range really grows trees rapidly.

[End Tape 5, Side B]

Wendy Milner Herrett, Deputy Forest Supervisor, Mt. Hood National Forest, Gresham, Oregon, Ca. 1988.
This photos was used on the cover of *Women in Natural Resources*, Vol. 10, #1 (March, 1989).

[Begin Tape 6, Side A]

REINIER: Wendy, at the end of the last tape you were telling me a little bit about the Siuslaw.

HERRETT: OK. The Siuslaw is a coast range forest. Acreage-wise it's smaller than a lot of the national forests. The Mt. Hood, for example, is 1.2 million acres and Siuslaw is about half that. Very productive in terms of growing trees. Heavily harvested area. Coast range has a lot of interspersed private land, large tracks of private land that are very heavily harvested. Very steep country. The forest emphasis was in my view timber harvest with some wildlife issues, watershed issues, definitely water quality, water quality [and fisheries] concerns. But it also had the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area, which was kind of a unique congressionally designated area. Had sand dunes and some of the special issues that are going on at the Oregon Dunes. And had a Job Corps center as well.

REINIER: Oh good, we should talk about that.

HERRETT: Yeah. So three forests I'd been on had Job Corps centers, and that was a unique and special program within the Forest Service. There are Job Corps centers outside the Forest Service but...

REINIER: Tell me a little bit about the Job Corps center since you brought that up.

HERRETT: Job Corps is a program, training and development program for young people, I think from sixteen to twenty-one. It's an age group that's quite diverse; the youngest and the oldest are really hard to deal with at the same time. But it gives them vocational training and often a general education degree. It's kids that often have had for some reason trouble in regular schooling, are bored. In some cases there are kids that are given an alternative to go to Job Corps or go to jail, but not as much as you'd think. It's just kids that are looking for a different way of finding a vocation and finishing an education. Some of the Job Corps centers now, I think, are offering high school degrees, real high school degrees. So it's vocational. It's social, giving kids social skills, how to deal with anger, how to interact with authority. It's a separate campus almost. Well, it is, a separate location, to go and live there. They have different components that they are monitored on, and they're there anywhere from probably a year to maybe two years.

REINIER: And do they do jobs on the forest then?

HERRETT: A little bit. It's more like some of the programs might be auto mechanics, masonry programs. So it's teaching them, like the Siuslaw is construction skills, some of the union apprentice programs. There's some that have welding.

REINIER: Buildings like campgrounds or something on the forest?

HERRETT: No, not really. Because you usually didn't have money to build those. And you had to have those kids busy all the time. So it was often just in some of the communities and work that they worked on. Occasionally something on the forest. Some of the programs just weren't things we used on the forest necessarily, but the people were national forest staff. It's a whole different realm.

REINIER: Yes.

HERRETT: There are culinary arts and learn to be a cook.

REINIER: Oh, I should say, that is a very different aspect.

HERRETT: It's a whole different aspect that most people don't even think about. Now, instead of a forest supervisor supervising the Job Corps center director, they've changed that to one person nationally overseeing all of the Job Corps centers. And I think that's kind of a loss to the forest, but I think Job Corps may see it as a boon to themselves.

REINIER: But when you were there...

HERRETT: When I was there...

REINIER: It was under your supervision.

HERRETT: That's correct.

REINIER: Um hmm. So the forest supervisor is the general manager of the forest, is that right?

HERRETT: Has the responsibility for all the things that happen on that forest. And you're given targets in some cases and in other places the public's coming to you. You oversee the planning, the actual implementation, and making sure that if something goes wrong--if there's a landslide or a road goes out or something--you deal with that, you're responsive in a timely manner.

REINIER: Well, you're the boss now. How were you received as the forest supervisor?

HERRETT: Generally pretty well, I think. Over time, there were two staff officers that somehow I didn't mesh well with. And my first deputy, I'd asked him if he had an issue with me, to tell me in private, let's talk it out. And first time my boss, deputy regional forester, came to the forest for a management team meeting, leadership team meeting, he made it clear that he disagreed with me on something. I didn't appreciate that.

REINIER: While your boss was there?

HERRETT: Yeah. Yeah. In front of the team and also in front of my boss. And I talked to him about it later.

REINIER: Did that do any good?

HERRETT: Ummm. He didn't do it again. He had been on the forest before I got there, and felt some ownership on some things that I didn't feel quite the ownership. I was more willing to look at some changes, and of course that's hard. And so he disagreed with me. I can understand disagreeing; I just don't agree with how he went about it. The Dwyer decision was just the month after I got there, and so we could see the handwriting on the wall that the forest plan that we were finally going to be able to implement, we couldn't implement as written necessarily. Most of it we could, except for the allowable sale quantity. That would be different, and where we could harvest would be different. And so trying to do those adjustments, the analysis and giving feedback to different people that were looking at the big impact regionally and nationally, and just a lot of responses to different data requests. The Mapleton District had been under a court order not to harvest for a number of years, and they were finally coming out of that. So they anticipated being a timber district again, and all of a sudden it didn't look like that was going to happen. And the frustration.

Also the issue of pesticide. There was a lawsuit on use of pesticides in clearcuts and that started on the Siuslaw before I was there. The people were still in the community that had started that lawsuit. It became larger than Siuslaw; it became region wide and I think it went down into California as well. But limitation on use of herbicides. And on a coast range with lots of brush, herbicides were used to eliminate brush so the trees could grow. So harvest methods and all those things, the replanting and how you tend to trees was a lot different too. And so all of those things were there. The Siuslaw had a huge--I won't say huge--but it had not contracted out its road maintenance like some forests did because they were very concerned with the amount of rain that can happen on the coast range. If a road went out they wanted to be able to respond instantly and have the equipment and have the personnel that could go deal with it. And if you have a contractor they may or may not be able to get to you. Fisheries was a major component of the forest as well. Probably fisheries and timber and then recreation on the Oregon Dunes.

It's a complex forest. It's an edge. It's a really transition in terms of physically you're going from the ocean to a mountain range and then back to the valley. And so some of the habitat needs are unique to those that need that edge, those species that need that edge. So that becomes

clearer and clearer with the marbled murrelet and trying to develop protocols. The marbled murrelet flies at fifty-sixty miles an hour. The spotted owl you could go out and call, do an owl call and you could get a response. So you could find out if you had the critters on the forest in certain locations, in proposed timber sale areas. You could go out and call it and follow the protocol and know whether or not you had owls.

REINIER: And so people did that?

HERRETT: Yeah. People did that. That one was fairly straightforward. It was intensive, but the marbled murrelet, you had to be there at dawn. We had to test people for hearing. Because you had to hear them fly over, the wings. And the forests were so dense that they didn't build nests. They laid an egg on a moss-covered branch.

REINIER: One egg, you said earlier.

HERRETT: I think one egg. And they'd come and go to tend the egg. And they had to go back to the ocean to feed. They're little robin-sized birds.

REINIER: Do they have long bills?

HERRETT: No.

REINIER: But they fed on the ocean.

HERRETT: They fed on the ocean. Not a long one like I think you're thinking of. Kind of robin-sized birds.

REINIER: And endangered.

HERRETT: Yeah. Or threatened. It was listed while I was on the forest. And so that meant developing a protocol because there wasn't a national protocol. We weren't the only ones trying to do that. There was some research effort. The research people didn't necessarily agree. You had to have this survey, but trying to make sure you did the survey in the right way, but people weren't sure what the right way was necessarily or some disagreed...

REINIER: Did you have a team then that that was their job, to do that survey?

HERRETT: We contracted to have the surveys done through Oregon State University. Or a woman who partially worked for Oregon State and somebody else. The forest supervisor to the south of the Siuslaw had feedback from another researcher that this person wasn't right in her protocol or something. He also got feedback that we had not gone through proper contracting procedure. So instead of calling me and saying hey, these are concerns I have, what's going on, he calls the Washington office or something and they almost stop our survey, our contract. And we had gone through proper procedures.

REINIER: So he's working around you also!

HERRETT: Yeah! I thought, you jerk! So I called him. I said, "What are you doing? At least you could have the courtesy to call me!" Because it would have meant we couldn't meet our timber sale targets because we couldn't get the surveys done if they stopped the contract. [Laughing] The whole thing! It all worked out, but the process... He was a supervisor that I thought shot from the hip a lot. He'd joust with windmills at times. I liked the person, but his style just drives me nuts at times.

REINIER: Do you want to say who he is?

HERRETT: Ummm. Not really!

REINIER: OK.

HERRETT: He knows who he is! [Laughter] Anyway. So, you know, getting those contracts and being timely with them. It was really tight time frames to get surveys done and do all the things you had to to sell your targets in a given year anyway. And then each step that was added and timeliness. We met our targets. We were, I think, the only forest that did. Did we get credit? Nooooo.

REINIER: Now the targets are set up in your plan. Or where do they come from?

HERRETT: Targets are a combination of what's in the plan, but that was being changed, so that they're modified and agreed to with the Washington office and the regional office [and through congressional appropriations]. The region gets a timber sale target, and then each forest gets a share and funding to go with that. Never enough, of course. Never enough funding. More than enough target.

REINIER: Who did you have on your staff ? Working with different issues. Like you had a timber person and...

HERRETT: I had a timber staff and I had an engineering staff. I had a recreation staff. I had an administrative officer. I had a wildlife staff. Who else did I have? Planning staff. I think that was it. And later we consolidated those down to four staff officers instead of six. And I think they may have consolidated further since I left. It turned out by the time you map the areas on the forest that had already been harvested that weren't ready for harvest again (they were available eventually). And then you mapped the spotted owl habitat areas. And then you do an overlay of the marbled murrelet areas, probable nesting areas and the chunk of ground that comes out because of that. That leaves very little big trees that are available for current harvest. It was becoming clearer and clearer that that was going to be smaller and smaller. The road budget one year was cut from two million [dollars] to one million in one year on the forest. I ended up doing a reduction in force.

REINIER: It was cut because the money was not coming in from timber harvests?

HERRETT: Yes.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: And we weren't developing new roads, so it was a combination. When you're logging, you collect money for maintenance of roads because they're using those roads and that's part of the contract. So we weren't getting that additional money. And we also were getting less because we had lower targets. Our road maintenance budget was cut in half in one year and almost all of that money was in equipment and people. Those are wage grade employees so you can't slip them into other jobs that are GS employees, general schedule employees, and most of the forest employees are GS employees. Wage grade makes higher money in most cases. If you see it's just a short-term thing, you can try and put them on details and that sort of thing and keep them employed. But I didn't see that it was going to get better in the long range. And so I thought the only tool I have to really be able to reduce that work force is a reduction in force. And I tried to move them to other forests that had some wage grade and other things. Of course, we tried to place people, but you have to move fairly fast because half a year's gone, and if you spent it all in the first half, they still need to be paid and the money's gone. Legally you can't do that. So we had to move relatively fast

So I was the only one in the region that did, I think, a reduction in force [RIF]. Some other forests started the process and didn't do it. Ultimately, it's a complex process. It's not inexpensive, unfortunately, but bump and retreat and a whole bunch of things. The person you think that may go out the door often isn't the one. But we placed one of the people as a cook at Job Corps because those were wage grade employees, and so I was willing to do that. I can't remember if it was about eight people actually lost their jobs ultimately.

REINIER: So you had to let people go.

HERRETT: I had to let people go.

REINIER: Was there a lot of distress about that?

HERRETT: One of the personnelists in the regional office called me the "grim riffer." [Laughing] To this day. I went to the regional office a little while ago--I don't usually go back but I did--and he called me that again. "Well, if it isn't the grim riffer."

REINIER: Because you were letting people go.

HERRETT: Yeah. And I used RIF, and that's rarely been done, reduction in force. But in the meantime, the rest of the forest, I went out and gave what I called my "gloom and doom" talk. I thought one of the primary responsibilities I had was to get the employees on the forest beyond denial that this was happening. Siuslaw had a lot of employees that had been there a very long time. They didn't move as much as people that I was used to on the Mt. Hood, or some of the other forests. They got to the Siuslaw; they stayed. And so there was a lot of people that were really tied to the communities and families had been there forever. They didn't have experience in moving. It was very terrifying to them. So I went out; I took the maps because I'm a visual person so maybe that's why it means more than just words. I would show them the maps. And I'd do it in small groups on each district. So in some cases I'd do three and four talks in a day at each district, and say, "I don't know the absolute outcome, but this is where we're going and this is why we're going there. As a result we won't have the same budget and we won't have the same workforce. And so you've got to look at moving to another location in the Forest Service, or looking for work outside the Forest Service if living in the community is more important to you. You have some responsibilities. It's not ones you want to face up to probably, but you need to get going on this. It's happening. I can't protect you. I can do certain things. If there's a forest you're thinking about, we might be able to arrange a detail so you can go and actually see what it's like. We can do some things like that, but I can't say that the same thing won't happen on that forest once you get there, that you won't have to move again. Life is not going to be the same in the Forest Service as you've known it. And certainly the Siuslaw's programs are going to be very different."

The forest is down to somewhere 15-20 million, maybe board foot allowable sale quantity from 330 million. The work force--I forget how many we had--300 and some employees. I bet it's down way under 200 employees. And it's not the only forest that's gone through that. Consolidated districts again.

REINIER: Well, that must have been hard to do.

HERRETT: I didn't realize... I have great empathy for people and I care about my employees; I really did care about them. And I hated to put them through that. But I felt very strongly I had the responsibility to lay out reality to them, what I saw as reality, because they had some things

that they had to do. But when I did that we had five districts, and a Job Corps center. I wanted Job Corps center to know what was happening because they might be the recipient of some employees. And so I did it to all of them. One night I woke up about one o'clock; about that time I was really frustrated with a couple of staff officers that I didn't feel I was getting cooperation

from and were being pretty cruel to some other of the staff at meetings. So I was frustrated there, and I wasn't able to seem to be making progress. I was reverting back to my retreat mode, similar to what I felt the second two years at Meeker. My sister lost her job at that point because of her ill health. And then having given those doom and gloom talks. I woke up one morning about 1:00 and I couldn't stop crying for about twelve hours. I just had to release all of that in some way. And of course, crying, when I get mad I cry; when I get sad I cry.

REINIER: Yeah. Lot of pressure.

HERRETT: Yeah, so a lot of pressure. Other forests got recognition for reducing their workforce. My boss didn't give me any credit for that. I heard him give positive strokes to somebody, to another forest supervisor, but not to me.

REINIER: The regional forester?

HERRETT: Regional forester. Every time you do a down-size you have to figure out what staff levels you need and how you're going to organize that staff. When we did that, finally the big money positions are the staff positions. And so rather than doing it just to all the lower grades, I felt we had to do some in the supervisor's office. And so involved the forest staff, the leadership team, in making those recommendations and figuring out how we were going to do it. Well, these two staff officers, they were brilliant; they're brilliant men. Very dedicated Forest Service employees. But they could be very cruel to other people. They'd just say things to them, in front of the world, and just very hurtful things. And to them it was no big deal, but to the recipient it was just like cut them off at the knees. I would try and put that feedback to them and say that's not acceptable. But at other times they could be very helpful in finding solutions. This one case, they were the ones that finally came up and said, "How about we organize this way?" And so we did. I went ahead and said, "OK. We've been putting everyone else on surplus, we're going to have to do that with the staff as well. We can't wait for attrition." Well, most of the forests didn't put their staff on surplus. But I thought it was fair; I have a strong sense of fairness. I didn't want to do it, but it was...

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REINIER: You've come a long way from the person who was trying to please everybody.

HERRETT: I think that's why I get so emotional, or get such knots inside me because there's still that element of me wanting to please, but there's also the person who says OK, I've got to do this. I have a strong side and I have this other side and they sometimes conflict. And so that kind of eats at my self-confidence, but at the same time I have very strong convictions that if there's something I have to do, I have to do it. Ended up, one of these staff officers ended up on the surplus list. Two of them went to my boss.

REINIER: Oh, to the regional forester to complain.

HERRETT: Yeah. And so the deputy regional forester came down and listened to them. But then my boss came down and he says, "What's going on?"

REINIER: Who was your boss?

HERRETT: John Butruille at that time.

REINIER: OK.

HERRETT: And John came down and I was very emotional at this point. I was very angry, and I said, "I'm going to cry; I've got to tell you I'm going to cry. It's because I'm angry." And I don't think he heard that; it was because I was weak, I think. I said, "This is what's going on; this is the type of behavior." He says, "Well, I never hear from this forest." I said, "Well, isn't that good? That means I'm doing things OK. You don't have to deal with problems and issues here; this is the first one you've had to be involved in." "Hmmmm."

REINIER: He didn't accept that?

HERRETT: I don't think he accepted that real well. It meant I wasn't doing anything, I think. That is kind of the feeling I got, how he perceived it. And I was doing lots of things and doing some tough things and not getting any recognition. Maybe I wasn't going about getting support in the way I needed to, but I was working with the regional staff; I just wasn't calling John personally on those things. I was using regional staff all the time. Which was my understanding of how it was supposed to work. I still think it's the way it's supposed to work. Shouldn't have to involve the regional forester on those things.

REINIER: Um hmm.

HERRETT: But anyway. So ultimately, a couple months later John retired and John [E.] Lowe, new regional forester, called me--maybe he was still deputy regional forester--and offered me the staff director job for recreation. Part of me said that was a job I had always wanted, but part of me said they're taking me out because they don't think I'm doing a good job. And so I had really mixed feelings. And I was angry and I was hurt because I thought I had been doing,

in most cases, I had been meeting my targets, I had been doing all these things. We had been working together pretty much. We had worked well with the regional office. One of the criticisms I had of one of the staff was, he didn't like to work with the regional office, and that's one of the things I wanted to work on, that relationship. It was just, "Well, we don't have to; we can do what we want." No. We aren't in this Forest Service alone. What we do impacts other forests and we need their support in what we're going through. And so we at least need to keep them informed and get feedback from them if they see any pitfalls. And I still believe that. That's the way to go. But this person didn't; at least that's how he came across. The other person, they were working on the recreation focus for the forest, recreation emphasis. And I said, "Well, bring it to me before you go to the RO." Well, he never did. I said, "Didn't you forget a step?" He wouldn't even come into my office. I began to see the pattern. Very bright man.

REINIER: But the pattern was they were going around you.

HERRETT: That one was. The other one would come in my office and talk. He had to talk to me; he just didn't respect how I went about things.

REINIER: Well, what did you think was going on?

HERRETT: I don't know. That's the other thing; I still don't know. And I'd talk to the deputy, and he was having some similar problems with how they were behaving. Some of the other staff felt cut off, or some of the rangers, because when you get chopped off, cruel things said, the way they said them.

[End Tape 6, Side A]

[Begin Tape 6, Side B]

HERRETT: I didn't think it was conducive to being a team, and either we operated as a team or we didn't. I could be autocratic. That's not my general style. I don't come across necessarily as decisive as some. I make decisions and I act on them. But I don't do it in the same way as some people do, and I think they were uncomfortable with that. I think style was part of it.

REINIER: Your managerial style?

HERRETT: My managerial style. I don't know what they thought on my intelligence.

REINIER: Was it that your managerial style was different from the traditional Forest Service style?

HERRETT: It was different from what they valued. I don't know if it was different from the traditional. I think mine is a little bit [different]. But I think the new managers are more like me. One of these two staff officers quit the Forest Service and I think is very happy and doing very

well in a different job. He was bright, bright as can be. And I talked to some other people who had worked with him in other locations and said they had run-ins with the same person [for the same reasons].

REINIER: So those people had not necessarily been on the forest for a long time.

HERRETT: They had been.

REINIER: They had been.

HERRETT: Yeah. [The people I talked with] had worked with him way back in their career--one of them--way back in his career and different region. I think they were so used to being so bright and in many ways it resulted in them being so sure of themselves that they couldn't see that maybe they weren't right in some things or their way wasn't right.

REINIER: Now were these men?

HERRETT: They were men.

REINIER: And do you think it was that they were just not able to accept a woman in this managerial position?

HERRETT: I think it was they couldn't accept my style. I don't know about the gender part. I don't know exactly. I'm sure they have a much different perspective than I do on what was going on and what was bugging them about me. The thing is I don't dislike them. I was angry at them, but I could appreciate...

REINIER: Were they professionals or what was their background?

HERRETT: Oh, yeah. One was a hydrologist; one was a forester by training. And brought a lot of knowledge and skill. But one of them would almost mope for awhile and we'd go, "Can you join us in the meeting, please?" I mean he was there, but he wasn't. And then the other one, when he was there, at times could just kchhhhhhhhh.

REINIER: So did that go on the whole time you were there, really?

HERRETT: It got worse toward the end. I wasn't alone in feeling that they were not doing what they needed to. My deputy felt the same way.

REINIER: Who was your deputy?

HERRETT: Jim Furnish at that point.

REINIER: OK.

HERRETT: I had a very diverse team. I had an Asian ranger. My Job Corps center director was in a wheelchair from Lyme disease. We put wheelchair lifts in a rig so when we did things as a management team, he could go with us. And I had a couple of women rangers. Woman staff officer. Native American staff officer. It was an interesting team. We had potential there. The personalities sometimes got in the way.

REINIER: Was that aggravated by the down-sizing, do you think?

HERRETT: I think, oh, definitely. The down-sizing and just the changes. This one person had worked his heart on that forest plan and then to no avail basically. I don't know, on the other person, what that was. But I could see all of those things were working... People, when they're in down-sizing mode, aren't on their best behavior.

REINIER: I'm sure, yeah.

HERRETT: And that happened in the regional office, the interaction with some of the other directors and how they approached that versus how I approached it. And so I'm sure that was a major part.

REINIER: Was morale pretty low in the Forest Service at that point?

HERRETT: Well, yeah, when you keep adding to surplus lists every three months! Six months. And you're trying to place people and you don't have money for them. That's the biggest thing on your plate that you're dealing with while you're expected to do as much work.

REINIER: And was that pretty general? Was that pretty much all through the agency at that point?

HERRETT: Certainly through the western part of the region and it's now expanded to the rest of the region, but to the Cascades west, yes. I wasn't alone in going through this on the forest. Every forest supervisor had to deal with it in major ways. And continually. And then when I got to the regional office, of course, the forests thought the regional office was taking too much money and wasn't taking their fair share of the down-sizing. And blah-blah-blah. It's always, "Well, we're taking more than our share than this other forest and they aren't doing their share and it's not fair." You become like children. Nyah-nyah-nyah!

REINIER: And that's when Dale Robertson was chief, right?

HERRETT: Yes.

REINIER: And did he play any role in that?

HERRETT: I think it was probably very hard on Dale because I think in his past his father had been laid off--this is a story I heard, I don't know--and he was very sensitive to communities and change and people being laid off. He had no control over it. I mean, it was outside his control. But anywhere he could soften the blow to the timber-dependent communities, he tried. And I think that's why he got a bum rap for being timber oriented. But I think it was because he was oriented to families. His dad had lost a job when Dale was growing up or something. And so Dale knew first hand how that hurts. I think it would be interesting to read the history that's been done on Dale. I understand they just finished one on him. The other regions were going after Region 6 dollars. Of course, the whole budget, total budget was going down in the Forest Service and other federal agencies, but then there was a big rush to reallocate dollars to the other poor regions. So regions were fighting more than ever too. So everything was a scramble. The best behavior is not during those times. You see the less than perfect sides of people.

REINIER: Oh, I should say. Yeah. Wendy, do you think some of these difficulties that you experienced as a forest supervisor have to do with men who just really can't deal with a woman in a position of authority?

HERRETT: I don't know that I can say that is what happened. It may be part of it. It may not be all of it, but it may have been a factor. What hurt me the most, I think, is in those times I didn't feel like I had supervisors that could understand that that may be going on. And so I had nobody I could go to and talk to that could even comprehend that that was a possibility. Or what it was like or what the dynamics might be. And so, put it that it was my problem, not necessarily the other person's.

REINIER: So you didn't feel that you had support when you were going through this.

HERRETT: No, I didn't. I had some individuals that worked for me and some other people that knew some of the players and said, "Yeah, I think that's going on." But I didn't feel that it would be seen by some of the key people that I worked for. And I didn't feel like it happened when I was on the White River either. I had one deputy supervisor that maybe had some inkling and I could talk to him a little bit. I could at least vent my frustration to him. And that he might comprehend that it wasn't all me and acknowledge that.

REINIER: So being a woman on the cutting edge has many times been a very painful place to be.

HERRETT: It's a painful place to be. You don't realize how hard it is being on the cutting edge until you step back every once in awhile and go, jeez, I've been through a lot. Other people aren't going through this. They don't have to put up with this. When I was on the Siuslaw, I had one of the deputy chiefs out and we had been to a couple of the districts, had just spent part of the day on the Oregon Dunes NRA and we were driving back to Corvallis. And I said, "I get so tired at times; I feel like I have to interpret every thing I say when I'm talking with men." I said, "It's so different when I talk with women; they understand." And he says, "Well, I say when in Rome, do as the Romans do." And I said, "But, if over half the population is women, why do I have to do all the translating all the time? Why is it my responsibility and not the men's part of the time." He says, "Oh. My wife and I have had talks like this." And she's a professional working for some type federal agency, I think back in D.C. Tiring, yeah, yeah. It's very tiring.

REINIER: So nobody was really making an effort to recognize the fact that your style had a lot to do with your being a woman?

HERRETT: Yeah. I don't think so. I think some of the employees appreciated my style, some of the lower level employees and some of the higher level employees. I know they did. But there were some key ones that I don't think could see it was style, and it came across that they thought it was ability instead of style.

REINIER: What are the issues of style, really, that we're talking about?

HERRETT: How you portray decisions, how you arrive at decisions, how you include people in reaching a decision. I think sometimes time you take to make a decision. Just how you interact with people.

REINIER: And how did you go about it?

HERRETT: I would include more people. I would get information. I would not do edicts probably as much as some people would be more comfortable. I would simply say, well, this is the way we need to go. Or let's as a team figure it out, in some cases. If the team comes to the solution and it's something I can live with, it's going to be implemented. If it's doing the right thing for resources. Or employees. Let's do it that way because it's going to have more people implementing it. Really, really implementing it. Than to say this is what we're going to do and this is how we're going to do it. I tend to say, "This is what we do, figure out how we're going to do it. And don't surprise me. [Laughing] And if you need support or you need something, then we talk about it." But it's not the general giving the edict.

REINIER: Which is the traditional Forest Service style.

HERRETT: More so. But not entirely. I think all through time there have been supervisors that have been different from that. Maybe they weren't appreciated either. Employees probably, a lot of employees probably appreciated them. I don't think it's good to chop somebody off in front of other people, to be harshly critical in front of other people. All the management training I had says you don't do that; you take them aside and tell them what they're doing is bugging the hell out of you and that you want them to change.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: And some people just think, well, you just tell them, in whatever situation you're in. If that's coming down hard, I don't come down hard like that. I'm not comfortable with conflict, so it's hard for me even when I take them aside to say, "This is what's going on." I do it. I did it. "This is the behavior I'm seeing. This is what it does to me. This is how it makes me feel. This is how I see other people reacting to it when you do it to them. It's not acceptable. You've got to change doing that. And not do it to people like that anymore. If you have input, we appreciate your input. But it's how you give that input that I want you to change." That's almost precisely what I told some of those people.

REINIER: Uh huh.

HERRETT: I think in some cases I got feedback that my willingness to value some of the technicians, my sense of fairness was really appreciated in down-sizing. That I did some tough things that people didn't want to have happen, but I did it in a fair way. That means I did it to all levels.

REINIER: You certainly were making tough decisions.

HERRETT: Oh, yeah. All the time.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: It wasn't like I wasn't making decisions. And that's the other thing. I think some people thought, well, maybe she's not making any decisions. Well, jeez... Is the forest meeting its target; is it doing all these things? I'm not hearing conflict from down there. They must not be doing anything. Well, no, they're doing things and they're doing it pretty well. Jeez! Then when you cry, you're weak. But I was so frustrated.

REINIER: So when did you cry?

HERRETT: When John Butruille came down to talk to me, to see what was going on. I told him that when I'm angry is when I cry and I'm angry, so I'm going to cry probably before we're through today.

REINIER: And you think it worked against you to cry.

HERRETT: Yeah. I've been in meetings where men have cried to me. Because they're hurting or they're working through something. And I've been glad that I could be there, and that they could do that with me. I didn't think less of them for it; I probably thought more of them for it. And they were tough men.

REINIER: How do you know that it didn't benefit you to cry in front of them?

HERRETT: Because they moved me within two months.

REINIER: And you think that was why?

HERRETT: I think it was that I wasn't a strong supervisor.

REINIER: And so how did this...

HERRETT: They needed different leadership on the forest is the feeling I got. They never said that.

REINIER: How did the move happen?

HERRETT: Ummm. The deputy regional forester who supervised the director of recreation called and said, "Lyle Laverty's going to the Washington office as director of recreation; we'd like you to take that job. We think it's a good match for you, your skills." I mean, it was a nice way out if I had to. So I'm not absolutely sure, but I think there's some underlying part of it.

REINIER: It wasn't just an opportunity? And it was a move up, wasn't it?

HERRETT: It was a lateral.

REINIER: It was lateral.

HERRETT: Yeah.

REINIER: Uh huh.

HERRETT: And it was a nice job. Certainly. I'd come full circle, the regional office in recreation where I started as a trainee and then coming back as director. And it's a job originally that I thought, well, that might be a good job some day. So mixed feelings. I could never know for sure if it was because they thought I wasn't doing my job or because it was an opportunity

and they thought I had skills. But there's that nagging part, underlying, that I think it was that they weren't happy with my leadership.

REINIER: And is recreation more of a niche for women?

HERRETT: No.

REINIER: No.

HERRETT: No, because it had always been men's. There was one other woman who was a director of recreation in Alaska at this time, but she had been, I think, the first person to do that job.

REINIER: And I saw the chart when you were the director of recreation and you were the only woman director, all male directors.

HERRETT: There was a woman director that they brought in for public affairs. They bought in a woman in one of the administrative groups. Now there are more. We had a deputy regional forester who was a woman.

REINIER: But at that time for you to be recreation director was cutting edge, wasn't it?

HERRETT: And in this region the staff directors that have the most power, the one that's called natural resources that has timber, wildlife, fish, soils, watershed, hydrology, that's the super director. And recreation. Planning and engineering. Those are the power directors. Others are more the administrative directors. Oh, and fire.

REINIER: So you were a power director?

HERRETT: Yeah, I was a power director. In my estimation.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: But I mean just looking at how the interactions went and where funding was. The human resources director and the administrative directors played key roles. From the forest standpoint, the ones that get their attention the most are the power directors.

REINIER: And recreation certainly...

HERRETT: They were looking to recreation as their salvation when timber dropped. And while Lyle was there, rec budgets they thought were going up. And as soon as I got there, rec budgets plummeted. And that happened nationally too, but other regions were... I couldn't

make the point for Region 6 effectively apparently, that our budget didn't need to go down as drastically as it was. And of course, some of the supervisors blamed me on that. But I think

anybody who had been director in Region 6 at that time couldn't have made that point because nationally they didn't want to hear it.

REINIER: So when you got back to the regional office you're still dealing with the down-sizing.

HERRETT: Oh, definitely. Yeah.

REINIER: That's what's going on in Region 6.

HERRETT: Yes. I got there, and some people that had just been put on the surplus list said they got their notification instead of in person, on a Data General message, a computer message. I'm going, "What?" I don't know if that's true; I never talked to Lyle about that. But it's a horrible way to let somebody know. And then all we did from then on seemed to be down-sizing.

REINIER: How do you select somebody to be on the surplus list?

HERRETT: Oh! You involve your employees as far as what workload they perceive, how you organize, or can re-organize to get work done, anticipated budgets. How would you go about doing this? Of course, nobody wants to lose their own job, but you try and look so they're not just looking at their own little domain. But then ultimately you have to make the decision. And just say, "OK, this is the way we're going to do the trails, and we aren't going to keep this trails position. We've been training the forest for several years; they should be able to take some of that now. We can't afford that [and the forests need the money]." So that's one of the positions. Doesn't mean that's the person necessarily.

In the regional office it translates more directly to that also being the person. We have the luxury of having two people and while we were spending a lot of time with forests, trying to clean up after them in some cases, or help them in certain areas, we can't afford any longer to have two people. We have to have one person. And it's subjective. You try and do it as logically as you can and with the best information. The power plays that I saw were among the directors. By this time Dick Grace had retired. I had a woman who was a deputy and we saw it, OK, the regional office has to get smaller. The regional forester has said that. How we go about that, the directors have been instructed to figure that out. [Judith] Judy [Levin] and I saw it as, OK, the regional office has a problem. We have to take our fair share. Well, I could say that the director of engineering said the regional office has a problem, but I'm not going to make it be mine. I'm going to keep... All my people are important. Well, all my people were important

too. It's a win or lose from how some of the other staff directors were working versus, we all have to go about this together. We're all going to hurt. I go back to the little I remember of Carol Gilligan's {In a Different Voice} and how little boys, there's the rules and you either win or lose. And little girls, if somebody's unhappy, they change the rules.

REINIER: Yes.

[Interruption]

HERRETT: I think women try and find solutions that work for most people, and men it's win or lose. I think that's an element of style differences, too, that men just couldn't comprehend that about me. Or why I did things the way... Why would you do that?

REINIER: You're trying to make it "win win" in some kind of a way?

HERRETT: Well, or that we all share the pain, that this has to be a solution. It's all of our problem and we all have to work for solutions. It's not a win or lose. We're all losing. And it's just how can we not make somebody hurt so much more than somebody else. We all have staff members that are very important. We wouldn't have them here and doing work if they were twiddling their thumbs or weren't doing something that we thought was important for the region. We've all got to give up something. And the forest may think great, I get more money, but they'll ultimately see, yeah, I missed that. There's nobody to help me and bail me out with critical information. The forest has less experience going on because they were getting rid of people too. And so you were losing critical skills in the region. Critical knowledge base. It's really sad. And yeah, doesn't make sense for every forest to have one if you can have one person in one location and share, but the forests don't want to see that. And so, maybe you can zone them out in some forest and share somewhere, doesn't necessarily have to be in the regional office. But where does it make sense to keep those skills? And what skills do we need to keep?

REINIER: Yes.

HERRETT: And of course there were as many opinions about that as there were people. And when you added forest supervisors to that array, and they had gone through such pain in down-sizing. The regional office starts later. My perspective was they didn't take as much of a hit when I was on the forest. As a director I was going, "You guys, it's just beginning for us. We haven't taken the hit the forests have. I have a lot of sympathy for them and don't think that it's gotta stay the same here. Yeah, the Washington office is concerned about skills drain, but what are we going to do about it? You can't have your cake and eat it too when you don't have the money and they're giving you limitations on the number of employees you can have."

REINIER: So what did people do when they got put on the surplus lists and there weren't other places they could move to?

HERRETT: Well...
REINIER: Or were there?

HERRETT: Because there wasn't a reduction in force, in some cases they were detailed into a different vacant position for awhile or on special task forces. Or else you just kept them on that job and kept nudging them to apply for jobs at other locations. There were some rules that were developed if they were offered jobs somewhere else. Other forests had to look at your person. I can't remember if it was given priority, but if they matched or were even close to a match, I think they had to be given priority. I can't remember all the specifics at this point. And then if your person turned it down, I think they eventually developed rules they could only turn down so many. And then they were out. So. Of course, you're working with the union through all of this.

REINIER: What union are you in? [National Federation of Federal Employees]

HERRETT: Oh, gosh, I forget which one.

REINIER: So the union was negotiating about all this also?

HERRETT: Processes mostly. Yeah. And the feedback I got from the union was, at least I was a director that they could see my thought process, the rationale for how I had developed my surplus list and how it was put into place where they couldn't see that necessarily with some of the other directors. So I took that as a compliment. You disagree, of course. And they would review each position, but they could see that I wasn't doing it willingly, that Judy and I weren't.

REINIER: Now who's Judy?

HERRETT: Judy was the deputy director of recreation.

REINIER: And her last name is...

HERRETT: Levin. By this time also the director of lands had retired and they had merged lands and minerals with recreation.

REINIER: Yes, I understand that, yes.

HERRETT: That was an interesting merge. Well, actually, lands, minerals and rec folks in some of the areas had worked pretty closely together because of wilderness issues. Or a lot of the land acquisition was done because of recreation opportunities. But in my perception, the people who were going to lands and minerals and the land line program were much more process [and

detail] people. The laws are much more precise and the regulations you go through. The recreation thinkers are kind of all over the place!
[End Tape 6, Side B]
[SESSION III, June 15, 2000]

[Begin Tape 7, Side A]

REINIER: Wendy, at the end of the last tape we were talking about your position becoming also lands and minerals as well as recreation.

HERRETT: Another result of down-sizing. I don't remember exactly what we were saying on the previous tape, but the types of programs--lands, minerals, and land lines--which were in the lands director's bailiwick, merging with recreation was a hard one. We were on the same floor but separated, and there was no way to merge us physically. The people that go into lands and minerals, I think, are more linear thinkers. There's process and they appreciate that. They're detail people. They love that kind of work, and the ones who were working in the regional office were very good at that. The recreation staff are more, I don't know if I want to say visionary, but it's less process. It's more dealing with people and some of the planning aspects. A little bit of interpretation of rules and regs in planning and on special areas, but it's dealing with some of the archaeology, the recreation, wilderness, congressionally designated areas, interpretation. It's a whole different realm, and people who are drawn to those, I think their brains work a little bit differently. The two staffs had worked very well in the past. In a lot of areas there's overlap in terms of problems in wilderness with some mining issues. A lot of the land acquisition program and land exchange program has a recreation purpose, and so there had been a lot of interaction and a lot of mutual respect. But trying to bring those folks together as a team and sit through each other's issues. There just wasn't the interest in staff meetings like, "Well, why do I have to sit through that?" "Well, we're all one staff, and if we're going to try and function as a staff, we have to do that." It was an interesting time.

Also, the lands and minerals folks felt kind of abandoned by the previous director. Just the fact that by him retiring it presented an opportunity to downsize, and of course they took it. [Laughing] The powers that be took it. And so they felt that they had lost some visibility and some power. It just was a hard time for the lands and minerals staff in particular. Recreation just kind of went on their way like they always had. I don't know that they were all that sensitive to the needs of what was going on with the lands and minerals folks. Excellent people on both sides of the staff areas.

REINIER: Did you feel prepared for that because of your experience as a district ranger?

HERRETT: As a district ranger, as a resource assistant, I had done some land classification plans which are lands issues. I'd done a little bit of minerals. I didn't have nearly the depth of

what was needed, but I had at least an overall understanding and an interest and I valued those programs. I don't know that they felt it necessarily, but I did. I was glad to have those programs. They're fun programs. They're tough programs. They're not easy ones. People have to be very, very good at what they do and they were.

REINIER: So you had experts in the areas.

HERRETT: I had excellent staff. When it came to down-sizing again and the staff was merged, it was very difficult to say where those cuts would come, recreation versus lands and minerals. The problem with recreation is everyone thinks they can do it. The forest supervisors thought they had plenty of expertise, but it was not our experience. And a lot of technical cases that they did got into a lot of trouble. We did a lot of clean up in some areas. They did have some expertise though. And the thing with the lands is it takes so much precise knowledge that the supervisors were much more supportive of keeping lands people. But when you downsize on a staff, if we hadn't been merged, lands and minerals would have had to take cuts. Minerals the same way as lands, the expertise wasn't as strong on the forests. Recreation looked like more fair game, but everybody would have had to take the cuts if we had remained separate staffs. By going together then, some thought I should just really decimate the rec side and leave the lands and minerals. I didn't feel that was quite appropriate because I knew there was technical expertise on the recreation side that the forests didn't have and the Washington office didn't have anymore. We were supplying national leadership in several programs with some of the people we had in special uses and wild, scenic rivers in particular. And so it became kind of a bone of contention. It's always, even within a staff that's doing similar things, everyone thinks that their job is more important than somebody else's. And so down-sizing continued and it made it even more difficult in merging the staffs.

REINIER: Did you have to let some people go?

HERRETT: Had to put some more people on surplus lists. Yes. I saw no end in sight of that. And a lot of animosity from a few of the forest supervisors. There was a lot of anger toward the regional office from forest supervisors, just this big monolith they thought.

REINIER: About down-sizing.

HERRETT: About not having taken their fair share. The hurt was so great on the forests. But the hurt was in the regional office as well. Toward the latter part I was in the regional office, we had had significant hurt there as well. There hadn't been the same degree of hurt when I first got there, but later on there had been. You get to a point where you say, "OK, where do we need technical--I mean really technical--expertise." We had experts. Where is it anymore? How can we share it with other regions if that's what we have to do. What's the workload? A lot of the experts in the Washington office were retiring. They weren't refilling those because they were downsizing too. So just a lot of knowledge and skills had gone out the door. So where do you

keep some of that? And not throw out the baby with the bath water. But there was a lot of anger because their budgets were going down. Recreation budgets had had a glimmer of hope that they were going up, and about the time I got there, that was dashed, not because of me. Nationally, that's what was happening. It was like, well, if you were doing your job you could protect those dollars better. And then within the region, you'd give my forest more because I have the biggest rec program. Well, yes and no. [Laughing] It became quite interesting with interactions with certain forest supervisors.

REINIER: To pursue my own interest, what did you do in cultural resources?

HERRETT: The program was implementing the Antiquities Act and the Historic Preservation Act and training, making sure the training was there for the archaeologists in the field on each forest and in many cases on districts. Technical advice as we approached cases with some tribal issues. Documentation, working with the state historic preservation office because they had to buy off on our reports, on our surveys. Just making sure that we were working in tandem.

REINIER: Did you have historians on the forests?

HERRETT: No, not really. More than likely it was somebody with an archaeology degree that also handled history. We had a historian in the regional office, but she wasn't doing that aspect as much anymore. But she was there and was used in many cases as a technical person by other regions as well. She was available for details and for special trips to help advise, and we used her that way too.

REINIER: When you were there the [President William Jefferson] Clinton administration came in. Actually, just as you became recreation director in November of 1992, you were dealing with the Clinton administration. Tell me about the impact of the Clinton administration on your work.

HERRETT: On my work, I didn't see it as much as changes that were made. Emphasis on wildlife and fisheries began to be even more clear. And then the changes in personnel in the Forest Service and the way about naming chiefs, removal of chiefs and of deputy chiefs. This was the first time the Forest Service kind of got a house cleaning in a political way. Before the staffing had all come in from the Forest Service, had not been political appointees, the chief had

not been. It was the first time we got in essence a political appointee. Even though Jack Ward Thomas was a Forest Service employee, he was not senior executive service, and you had to have that background normally to be the chief and do some things like that. And so they had to name him in a different way. There was a lot of anger and hostility about that change, that politicizing the agency. The backlash on the hill was pretty strong, at least from the western contingent in particular, I think, the ones that were very pro-timber.

Dale [Robertson] and Jim Overbay, it reminds me of some of the stuff that was going on when I was deputy forest supervisor, in fact, in forest planning when we were trying to apply the new forest plan, potential new forest plan, and some of the alternatives, for example, develop a sales program, a timber sale program within the area meeting the standards and guidelines of each plan. We were finding it was very difficult to find the timber to the degree the model was saying the timber should be there. That was consistently happening across the country, I think. There was a lot of frustration that the computer model may say it's there, but in reality when you go to apply it on the ground, we can't meet those numbers. We were very apprehensive with that.

REINIER: Of timber harvests?

HERRETT: Of too high a level of timber harvest.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: That it's just not there if we meet these other standards, and we think it's important to meet these other standards. We don't think they're frivolous. In some cases it's through law we have to meet these. In other cases it's because we think it's good land management.

REINIER: And the forest plan, was that instigated by Dale Robertson?

HERRETT: Well, he was all part of that. I don't remember... Forest planning was going on when Max was there too. Forest planning was going on forever. [Laughter]
It just grew and grew and grew and became more broad scale and broader and broader and became ecosystem management. And so it just became huge. But, incrementally, it was getting bigger. They had two national meetings of forest supervisors. I wasn't a supervisor during either one of them, but the second one, my supervisor couldn't go or didn't want to go. He had a nice excuse with a subpoena for a lawsuit. So I went in his place. And forest supes were really upset about this timber issue and too high a timber harvest level coming out of the plans to really do the land management that they thought was important. And they had an opportunity at that meeting to tell Dale and Jim, Overbay and Robertson, what their concerns were. And they didn't do it! I think one supervisor stood up and kind of... It was an opportunity of fireside chat sort of thing. And nobody backed him. A few, yeah, yeah, but it was really [watered down. They weren't willing to share their fears, anger, and concerns]. And then we got this lecture on go out and get these plans done and do your job type thing as I recall.

And that night I was just furious that nobody had spoken up. I didn't really, but I really felt I was there not as a full supervisor. I was angry because these guys had an opportunity and

they didn't take it. I was furious at them. I was furious at Jim and Dale for not reading between the lines and trying to bring it out more, instead coming back with kind of a hard response. I think that's partly why they came across as really pro-timber. I know Jim had other resource values at heart because I grew up knowing him in the Forest Service. And Dale too, actually.

The following morning I was still stewing. I was angry and I must have been saying something to one of the facilitators for the meeting at breakfast, and I said, "Why didn't they tell him?" I rant and rave at times. Dale walks by, and I can't even remember who the facilitator was, it was somebody I knew though, and he says, "Dale, Wendy has something she wants to tell you." So I was the one that ended up saying, "Dale, I really have a concern and these other guys do too; I don't know why they didn't say it. But the harvest levels seem way too high when we try and actually apply what we're saying we're going to apply to the ground." I don't remember any details and I don't even remember his response. I felt better that I said it, but I also felt like I'd been set up. And it reminded me of when I had been ranger when the guys would complain but they wouldn't say anything to the boss, that dynamic.

REINIER: Because they felt there was too much risk?

HERRETT: Oh, yeah, and I think in reality, there was some risk. But they weren't paid the big bucks to not face up to tough things. They faced up to tough things all the time. Why they couldn't do it to the boss, I don't know.

REINIER: That's really interesting.

HERRETT: That's a dynamic I don't understand. I do and I don't.

REINIER: So as a woman you were really caught in that because...

HERRETT: It was just foreign to the way I was used to. If you have a problem, you discuss it. You talk about things and you don't think about risk. Maybe you should think about risk.

REINIER: But could you get away with it better than they could, culturally?

HERRETT: Culturally, maybe a little bit. I don't know. There was risk to me saying those things, I'm sure. I think because Dale knew me, I didn't feel that it was a real risk. And because Jim knew me. I didn't mind letting them know I was angry. Because I had a personal relationship with both of them after working on the Mt. Hood and in the Washington office and on the Black Hills. So I had a long history with both of those. Some of the forest supervisors certainly didn't have that. But some did! And I thought, you jerks!

REINIER: Why were they setting such high levels for timber harvest? Was there political pressure on them?

HERRETT: Well, there was always political pressure. These high levels were still lower than where we had been, and so it was still a drop. There was tremendous political concern from the hill, especially on the Republican side, to not lower timber harvests. Any politicians that had timber industry in their state, didn't want it dropped because it was their communities, their constituents that were harmed. The urban folks didn't have that, but the ones that had real constituents that were the small timber industry towns--Alaska, Idaho and Oregon, Washington, parts of California. The city representatives had not much at stake with the constituents, but the others did. The forest plan levels were coming down pretty drastically anyway, and what we were telling them was they had to come down lower if we were going to do these other things. And we wanted to do these other things.

REINIER: Like what other things?

HERRETT: More protection for fisheries, more protection for wildlife, some more recreation related things, just watershed protection, ecosystem issues. They seemed to make sense and have value in our view of resource management and stewardship. But it was hard because then Dale and Jim had to be the ones that would take that message to a higher level. And at first within the Bush administration, they didn't want to hear it, of course. I think Dale and Jim got a bum rap that they were only timber.

REINIER: From within the Forest Service.

HERRETT: And externally.

REINIER: OK.

HERRETT: Because there were points where they could not come out and really pit resources against each other and say, OK, now recreation's going to be king or fisheries is going to be king. The way Dale did it was to get more attention on those programs and therefore more political pressure coming from other places for those programs through a couple of initiatives that were, I think, his initiation.

REINIER: Which ones?

HERRETT: Recreation and fisheries. There were two initiatives that came out nationally with partnerships in those program areas. That, I think, is Dale's way, and Jim's way of trying to get greater emphasis on those programs while walking that tightrope. So I think there was a lot more sensitivity than they were given credit for. It was a way that would have taken more time. The Clinton administration came in and said, "You're out of there, you're timber, we're going to

bring in somebody that has this greater vision of ecosystem." And they brought in Jack Ward Thomas. Jack didn't have management experience. Jack is a visionary. Jack is very charismatic and he's a nice man.

REINIER: I would like to hear more about Jack Ward Thomas, but first, how did they get rid of Dale Robertson? How did that happen?

HERRETT: I don't know exactly the details, but basically they were moved to department positions, I think. There was kind of a housecleaning one night.

REINIER: One night?

HERRETT: Well, sort of. That's kind of in my memory. I forget the details; I'm sure they don't! But even though some forest supervisors were pretty upset with Jim and Dale...

REINIER: Was Jim deputy chief?

HERRETT: He was deputy of national forest systems, and that's the deputy that really manages the national forests, has oversight of the national forests, versus the research branch, or the state and private branch, or the programs and legislation. Or the administrative. What most people think of the Forest Service is the national forests themselves. There's all these other realms of national forest management that aren't tied to the national forests directly. So Jim was the one on the national forest systems. Let's see, where was I going with that?

REINIER: We were just talking about how they were moved out. Did you want to say more about that?

HERRETT: There was a point I wanted to make. I may think of it later.

REINIER: It will come to you. Tell me about Jack Ward Thomas. Had you known him in Region 6?

HERRETT: Yes. Jack had been involved with the president's forest plan and the spotted owl management plan, I think. I forget the correct names. My, how your mind blocks things out once you retire. You don't have to think about them anymore! [Laughter] But Jack had been involved in the Pacific Northwest. He had been a researcher, an elk researcher on the Starkey Experiment Station over in La Grande, Oregon. He was pretty well known for some of the research. And so some of us had met him on visiting that site.

REINIER: He has a lot of publications.

HERRETT: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah, he's a good researcher. He was in charge of the team on the spotted owl, trying to get some science base--I can't remember if it was before or after the Dwyer decision--as far as size of spotted owl habitat areas and the distribution and that sort of thing. And so he brought a team of experts together and it was a world class team. And then the president's forest plan was a world class team. Jack was part of that. He had the charisma too. He's a wonderful storyteller. If you're around him enough, you hear the same stories over and over. And he also has an ego as big as all outdoors. But somehow he can get by with that. I've seen other researchers kind of bristle because Jack gets attention more than they might. And Jack got the attention and got to be chief.

REINIER: Was he resented by the Forest Service for the way he came in as chief?

HERRETT: I don't think he personally was resented. I think the process, there was a lot of resentment, but I don't think they blamed him. I think they blamed the administration. It was a hard pill to swallow. Most other agencies, land management agencies, already had political chiefs or political heads. Park service is a political appointee. I think BLM [Bureau of Lands Management] is also. So this was the last realm of a professional group, so to speak. Some people felt by having a political appointee we'd be more effective with the administration and others felt we lost a lot. And I think that those conclusions still are out.

REINIER: And he hadn't come up through the chain of command.

HERRETT: No. He headed the research station that he was at, so he had that kind of supervisory skill. But he hadn't come up in the traditional way. He's not the first research person that had been chief. I think [John R.] Maguire had been research background.

REINIER: Yes, he was at Berkeley for awhile. At the [Pacific Southwest Forest and Range] Experiment Station.

HERRETT: Yeah. Some people thought Jack was the first in research. He wasn't. And Max Peterson had never worked on the district. He had been a regional engineer and had come in. So, there's precedent for not going the traditional way to be chief, but they were all long term Forest Service employees. Jack was that as well, but in the meantime some new processes like senior executive service had come in. That's a process you go through to become certified basically, that you're management potential and you're executive potential. Jack hadn't gone through that. And that was big. That's government wide; it's not just Forest Service. At least it's department wide. It may be bigger than that. I think this came in under the [President Jimmy] Carter administration. The theory was that any senior executive could take on any agency; they could be very interchangeable and implement good management.

REINIER: Well, how did things change? Or did you notice that things changed when he became chief?

HERRETT: In my program areas, all I knew was our budgets were going down. Our budgets in lands and minerals were never great, and recreation, while it had had a glimmer and had gone up a little bit, was now going back down. I don't think that was the result of Jack. I think that was a result of a lot of other things going on, just the national budget issues, a much bigger ball game than just our program areas. The style of management changed as far as the day-to-day operations came through much more the deputy for national forest systems. Jack was more than a figurehead, but more the political point man for the agency. Gray [F.] Reynolds was in there. I think he became deputy for national forest systems and then he was ousted. I can't remember that sequence. Maybe Jim had already retired. When the big axe came down, it was Gray and Dale. It all gets muddied in the...

[End Tape 7, Side A]

[Begin Tape 7, Side B]

HERRETT: We were still struggling with lawsuits. The real change came with adding ecosystem management and trying to figure out what that meant and what that was and how that differed from what we were doing.

REINIER: Tell me more about that. That's really interesting.

HERRETT: It was the new "in" term. Ecosystem is more the interaction and understanding the interaction, that you can't isolate one resource. We had known that before, but all the science based information, we were gaining more and more information. Some of the difference I see is that some people want a lot of research and absolute answers before a decision's reached. Reality on the ground a lot of times is there's no way you're going to have all the answers on all the interactions that are happening in the space. Some people's solution is stay out. There's a lot of pressure nationally to almost preserve and just stay out, that nobody should go in there because

you might disturb something. And then there's more a pragmatic, well, people are part of the ecosystem even though some people don't like that because people disturb a lot more than some of the other species. The scale changed yet again as far as what is a reasonable size of area to look at to understand interactions that are happening. When I first started with the Forest Service, it was unit plans, which is pretty much a drainage, sub-drainage in some cases. I

hesitate to give acreage, but six to fifteen thousand acres. Then forest planning came to be. Well, those are artificial boundaries even though in forest planning you coordinate it with what was going on with your adjoining forests. And then it had to be bigger than that looking at all the spotted owl needs within their habitats. To understand ecosystems and interactions, there just was a larger and larger look at things, which is, I think, a lot more difficult for the general public to understand and therefore support. I'm not saying it's the wrong way to go, but it's more difficult to bring the public along in a planning mode anyway, and then when you're doing it on the scale of Eastern Oregon, Northern Idaho, Montana, Western Montana...

REINIER: An ecosystem is that large?

HERRETT: It can be that large. Or the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem. They're huge. They can be that huge. But where do you draw that line?

REINIER: All the rivers, for example, that drain into the area...

HERRETT: It could be defined that way. There's some social parameters too, as far as areas that kind of blend together, but it's more physical based. It's not just rivers though because rivers clearly went beyond there, but what might have influence on this piece of ground. It's hard to explain. At least, I have a horrible time, and I know I'm not the only person that has a horrible time, that says, OK, we made this decision and this is a good decision. [Laughing] While looking at many more parameters than we had was important, it's also harder to do and it's harder to figure out. There's not hard science in a lot of it, and yet there's a real push for hard science. We have no absolute answers. And land management is much a social thing as well as a physical thing. And so adding that social component, people relate to places. They don't relate to ecosystems so much. I like to camp there, or that's the view I like. Or this is where I want to harvest these trees. Or this is where I fish. And so it's trying to blend those and bring people along because people are part of the planning process.

REINIER: So you're making the regulation about one place based on this huge area.

HERRETT: The decision on the huge area will influence what can be done at that one place. And trying to see the rhyme or reason in that for somebody who doesn't give a rip about the huge place is...

REINIER: Why can't I fish in this river?

HERRETT: Yeah, is hard to portray. And then to do the surveys and the research necessary to even give you the basic data to use to even come up with some sort of rational decision. It's a huge and costly process. The national forests plans are probably the largest land use planning

effort in the world anyway, and that was even before ecosystem management. But the way we were going about it, we were missing some key components, especially wildlife habitat. There were needs to change, but how do you do it? I'm glad I wasn't planning staff director. [Laughing]

REINIER: So the planning task just increased enormously.

HERRETT: Enormously.

REINIER: Seems like it increased enormously all the way through your career.

HERRETT: Um hmm. And the people that it took, the expertise, the type of skills, and the money off the top to support it, because that's money off the top, meant less for the day-to-day operation or having those skills at your location for doing your day-to-day needs. And so there's a rub.

REINIER: Is there resentment about the planning?

HERRETT: There's some, yeah. It also gave us an opportunity to place some people from our surplus lists when they put these big planning teams together, had people on details for parts of it. I'm going, whew! But then two years down the road those people were needing placement again. And they were people with high skills. To me, it's sort of a dilemma. It's not an easy thing to try and implement, and to bring the public along, to bring the employees along. While I think the need for more integrated land management was felt deeply by the employees and probably by a great many in the public, how you go about it seems to be where the rub is. And there's always potential for lawsuits, so we were spending a lot more time on lawsuits too.

REINIER: So you have your social and your legal aspects as well as your physical aspects.

HERRETT: Your physical aspects, right.

REINIER: Yes. That's very interesting. It gets very complicated, doesn't it?

HERRETT: It does, yeah. And some people thrive in conflict and others don't. And Forest Service folks, a lot of people back when, went into forestry or went into something in the woods because they liked to be alone in the woods. Really, land management is a very public thing, very interactive with the public. So sometimes the people that originally were really strong in the physical and getting out in the woods and that sort of thing, if they were put into management positions, had a big struggle. People going into land management careers today are more urban, aren't going into forestry or wildlife because they were fisherman or hunters or liked to walk in the woods so much. They come from a more preservation bent. I like the woods. I do like to hike in the woods, but I like to look at it. I don't want to see anything that's

ugly. I want it to be pristine; I don't want others to be there. I'll be glad to be there; I want to hike it. And so you're getting people with a far different background and perspective on what they expect the woods to be going into management now. And it may be easier on them emotionally than the group of managers that were in place in the '70s, '80s.

REINIER: Is public relations more of the job than it used to be?

HERRETT: Oh, you deal with the public all the time. Whether it's with county commissioners, or groups that are focused around certain issues, it's a given that you're dealing with public groups.

REINIER: So those skills are important in Forest Service managerial positions.

HERRETT: Right. You have to be comfortable with people. And one of my flat sides, I'm comfortable with people, but I'm not comfortable with conflicts so much. And so I'd always have tummy churning. I'm not sure there's anyone who doesn't...

REINIER: ...Yeah, I'm not sure that's...

HERRETT: ...Have that to a degree anyway...

REINIER: ...Unusual!

HERRETT: So, you do those things with greater or less degree of comfort.

REINIER: But it's hard on you.

HERRETT: It's hard. Yeah. It's a tough job to be a ranger or forest supervisor or regional forester. Certainly, chief. Those are not fun jobs.

REINIER: Well, speaking of chief, we haven't said anything about Mike Dombeck.

HERRETT: And he came after I left.

REINIER: OK! [Laughter]

HERRETT: I had met him once, I think. But that's about it.

REINIER: So do you want to comment on him at all?

HERRETT: No. Because I don't have really very much information, so I don't think that's appropriate.

REINIER: Was there anything else you wanted to say about your position as recreation and then also lands and minerals director?

HERRETT: It was interesting, the dynamic on approach to down-sizing in the regional office among directors.

REINIER: Yes.

HERRETT: For some of the directors it was, if I don't protect all of my people in all the positions, that's a loss, and I'm in here to win. Dick Grace had worked for me as deputy when I first went in, and then when Dick retired, Judy Levin came in. Judy and I, our approach was kind of, OK, the regional office has a problem. We have to downsize; we have to take a share of that. None of us have skills that weren't important or we wouldn't have those positions, but we're all going to have to give up something. How do we do it in a fair away? And that's the difference again of fairness versus win and lose. How do you go about that? It was almost like for my employees, maybe it was a disadvantage having me as a director because I was looking for fairness and decent decisions, and some of the other directors were there for winning, which meant keeping all of their employees. And so, that dynamic in how men approach problem-solving as win-lose--and that's my perception of how many men do it--instead of finding some solution that...

REINIER: There's almost an athletic model there.

HERRETT: Yeah. But I think little boys are brought up that way. I don't think it serves them very well in this world.

REINIER: Somebody wins and somebody loses.

HERRETT: Yeah. And I don't know that it has to be that way. And I think little girls are brought up differently.

REINIER: But you have so many classes in things like conflict resolution. That doesn't do good, or people don't take them?

HERRETT: No, they take them. And I think they help. But when it comes right down to it, if there's something that's near and dear to your heart, it's win or lose. Like down-sizing is near and dear to your heart for your programs. If you care about your programs at all, it's win or lose.

REINIER: So if somebody wins then he keeps his people, but that means...

HERRETT: ...Somebody else...

REINIER: ...Somebody else's people have to go.

HERRETT: That's right. But he doesn't care because his have been protected.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: So that was an interesting dynamic of just my observation of style differences.

REINIER: You were the only woman director.

HERRETT: When I first went in I may have been. There was a woman director of public affairs. At least, most of the time I was there. And a woman director in one of the administrative fields. So there were other women directors, but they weren't in the natural resource parts. They weren't the director of natural resources, the director of planning, the director of aviation and fire management, the power directors. And they were at a disadvantage, too, in my view.

REINIER: Do you think women...

HERRETT: Their programs too. The administrative end or public affairs, it's harder to say these skills are doing this for you. Anyone can do public affairs. Well, wrong. Not well!

REINIER: So in this case, the problem with being a woman was it was harder to keep your people?

HERRETT: It was, I think, harder to keep our people. We probably stressed a lot more. I don't think it was easy on anybody, but the outcome, I think, we stressed a lot more. I think in a lot of cases we maybe were better at telling our people when they were put on the list. I got feedback that way. The union was more comfortable that I could explain the process I used to them, to choose positions to be eliminated, and therefore some surplus list was a result of a position on elimination. They didn't like it, of course. I could at least explain it, and they also saw that I cared. A lot of good that does. Actually, working with the union was important. You had only so much energy to go around, and if you had to spend a lot of time on that conflict as well with each staff, that's just one more place to burn energy on a thing that was not real pleasant to deal with anyway. Bringing people along and trying to get them placed then, I think some directors spent more time at that than others. And just sitting and listening. We got training on how give the news to people. They brought people in to help us do that.

REINIER: Was that helpful?

HERRETT: Yeah. Yeah. I don't know that I learned anything new. I think it was ways I would have done it, but I'm not sure that was the case for some others. They had us do some role playing.

REINIER: To be the one who got the news?

HERRETT: To give the news. In front of all our peers. They brought some actors in and we had to give them the news that it was their job. Why she selected me to be one of them to give this person the news in front of my peers... I'm going, "Not me, not me!" But I was selected and the feedback I got was I had done it very well. Even in play-acting it's tummy-turning. But I maybe had more experience than some of the supes or some of the other directors. I don't know. I felt very strongly about caring for those employees too. You can't help it. You turn somebody's life upside down. I had some employees that normally had been just so on top of everything. This whole process was so demoralizing that they were not functioning in the same way they had before.

REINIER: Really.

HERRETT: Yeah. And it was so sad to see them. They were worried about not so much their own position as other people who worked for them. Really sad to see.

REINIER: So did down-sizing pretty much consume the agency during that period?

HERRETT: Well, down-sizing was there among all the other things going on. Responding to lawsuits, responding to huge planning efforts. We still had plans to do for congressionally designated areas. We still had appeals on those and a lot of political backlash in some cases. We still had issues on particular wildernesses with mining proposals. Life continued on.

REINIER: You had a lot to do!

HERRETT: Oh, everyone had a lot to do. Nothing had changed about lots to do. It's just you added this element of, oh, and by the way you don't have any money and you've got to down-size. If you could see a light at the end of the tunnel that things were going to at least level out, I probably might not have retired early. But I didn't see it ending and my soul had just been

sapped. I was becoming crabby, and I had always said I wanted to go out gracefully before I became one of those crabs. And so, fortunately, there was an opportunity to retire early, and I did that for my own mental health.

REINIER: A financial opportunity?

HERRETT: Well, no, I didn't take the buy-out, unfortunately! It was just I had an opportunity. I took a cut in retirement pay, of course. There were buy-outs on all the years around me, but not the one time I did it. There comes a time when, OK, for mental health, am I having fun what I'm doing? Not anymore. Am I being as effective as I might be? Well, maybe not. Am I being nice to people that I'm working with? Not that that's a real criteria, but in times like down-sizing, you have to be not a crab all the time for the sake of morale and for your employees. Then I'm going, "Wooo, I don't know if I'd want to be around me!" [Laughing] I think maybe it's time! And so I did. I don't regret it.

REINIER: You don't?

HERRETT: No, huh-uh. I look at the paper and there's something about the Forest Service and I start to read and I'm going, "I don't have to worry about this!" [Laughter] "Gee, I'm glad I don't have to worry about this!"

REINIER: So you're glad you retired.

HERRETT: Yeah, I'm very happy with that decision. I was just tired. Being on the cutting edge my whole career, you don't realize how draining that is until you get out of it. You don't realize, just day-to-day interactions as a woman in an agency that wasn't traditionally made up of women, how much harder it is to work at communication and being understood and not being misunderstood. I would get with a group of women and we'd just talk and it was like they understood! I'm going, "Oh! Yeah, it has been hard!" I was tired at the same time of all of that, and there was always that scrutiny. There was always that feeling, if I fail, it's not just for Wendy, I fail for women in the Forest Service. There are people who are always waiting for you to fail. I think you have to do very, very well. My concern the two times that were primary in my mind, the second two years at Blanco and then when I was on the Siuslaw, was that I was being viewed as incompetent and that therefore women are incompetent. There was that. There's also when you're going through that, you know people have a flat side. Some people are allowed to have that flat side, others aren't.

REINIER: You think women aren't?

HERRETT: I think women and minorities are allowed less of that. Those flat sides are magnified.

REINIER: What do you mean by flat side?

HERRETT: Something that they don't do as well or a weakness in their style or just anything that's not a perfect supervisor, for forest supervisor, for example.

REINIER: So individual differences are less tolerated?

HERRETT: That's correct. And strengths I don't think are as recognized.

REINIER: As strengths.

HERRETT: As strengths. And sometimes what I view as a strength is much different than what some men view as strengths. And I think some of that was happening with how I was being viewed. Some of it, I was always worried, am I screwing up? I don't think I am, but am I? And then going into the self-doubt mode. And then once you lose your self-confidence, then you start, as I said before, behaving in ways or doing things that I'm going, "Oh, I don't like that." And so, making choices to change, either to move or to retire or that there's time. I don't have to do it all for all women. Fortunately, there are a lot more women in the Forest Service now.

REINIER: But, of course, what you've done has really opened the opportunities for them. That's what Mary Albertson said.

HERRETT: Well, I like to think that! I went through this hell for something! But I also want to make it clear, I had a wonderful career, and I had wonderful opportunities. People, by and large, were great, and they wanted me to succeed. There were some that didn't. And sometimes those incidents overpower, but by and large, I can't complain at all about the wonderful people I worked with, the wonderful publics I got to work with, the gorgeous lands I got to see and work with, and just watching how congress works, or doesn't! [Laughing] Just all of those and being part of that and the opportunity to be on the cutting edge. That was an honor. It was a burden, but it was an honor.

REINIER: Well, yeah.

HERRETT: And so I got some opportunities and some attention and some help and some not help. So it was all mixed in. Overall, I don't regret at all what I've done and how I've done it. I'm too tired to go do it again, but I think anyone who is retired is too tired to go and do it again.

REINIER: You don't have to go do it again.

HERRETT: That's right.

REINIER: Yeah. I was going to ask you some rather general questions about women if I may.

HERRETT: Sure.

REINIER: OK. I was going to ask you this although a lot of these we've already talked about a lot. I was going to ask you if you felt discriminated against as a woman. So what I really should ask, is there anything else about that that you'd like to say?

HERRETT: No, I think I've said a lot about that. I think some other people have probably had even more blatant things and more hostile situations than I had. And I think in some cases it's still happening. I think there are some women who now are coming in and saying, "Well, there's no discrimination." Well, I don't think that's true. I don't think that's accurate, and I think they just haven't seen it. And they also haven't seen how far we've come. Part of that makes me angry. Open your eyes! And part of me says, "Well, great. I'm glad they feel that way. I'm glad they aren't having to deal with the stuff."

REINIER: There was one thing I wanted to just kind of bring out. That is, the timing when you entered the Forest Service was really quite magnificent because you came in as a young professional when opportunities for women were beginning to expand. In that historical sense, the timing was good for you. Do you think that you were pushed ahead more quickly because you were a woman?

HERRETT: I think the opportunity that Craig Rupp wanted, as a ranger. I'm not sure I ever would have really taken that step. I might have just gotten tired of doing what I was doing over and over again and looked for opportunity in some other organization or in private practice. I think that was a nudge. Well, it was a push.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: And so...

REINIER: An opportunity, certainly.

HERRETT: Certainly. Yeah. I think all along because I was one that was ready for the next step, there were people who were wanting me to take that next step. Like the job on the Inyo [National Forest] potentially, the chief wanting me to do that. They had needs of course, in Region 5 with the consent decree and all those issues. But I think I was also viewed as relatively safe. I was a party-line person. I'm a loyal Forest Service employee, and I wasn't just ranting and raving women's issues. So I think I was a fairly safe person for people to make that initial step. And accepted more easily than some might be.

REINIER: Do you think of yourself as a feminist?

HERRETT: Yes.

REINIER: Yes, OK.

HERRETT: Absolutely. Absolutely.

REINIER: No question there. No question there. Yeah. But did you always feel that you had to prove yourself along the way?

HERRETT: Yes. Always. But some of that was my parents are both perfectionists and so I got some of that, even if I had been a boy maybe I would have felt I still had to be very successful, had to prove myself. But I think also I felt that I always was under scrutiny. I always had to be very good.

REINIER: Even better than the men?

HERRETT: In some cases even better than the men. Certainly even better in all areas. I couldn't have a flat side, and I do have flat sides.

[End Tape 7, Side B]

Geri Bergen Larson, Charles “Chip” Cartwright, and Wendy Milner Herrett.

[Begin Tape 8, Side A]

REINIER: Wendy, we've talked about this previously, but I wanted to ask you more about things that you did to keep in touch with other women and to help other women advance in their careers.

HERRETT: When I was a ranger in particular, as other women became rangers I would call them just to say, I'm here, if you just need to chat. I may understand some of the things you're going through. I may not. But at least I'm a shoulder if you need it. I'm just offering my friendship and welcome to a tough position. But a fun one. And I felt good when I could no longer could keep track. I think I've said that before. If people asked if they could call or have somebody they knew call me, I was more than open to that. At a lot of these conferences there were women, women's conferences...

REINIER: There were a lot of those, weren't there?

HERRETT: Yeah. And I participated in a lot of those and talked with a lot of women in that process. Part of what I did when I was in the Washington office was talking with women that were coming in from the field to assignments in the Washington office, brief things or just brief visits, talking with them on career, or importance of networking, or some opportunities for visibility, or people that they might want to talk with that I knew that might be helpful with information or even visibility opportunities. So it's just being there for other people and then also having them there for you. After some of the others were in their position, some of them were struggling too as far as some things happening with them. I think of Louise Odegaard; they basically eliminated her district.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: Yeah.

REINIER: Was that part of down-sizing?

HERRETT: It was part of efficiency, I think, so it was earlier than most down-sizing, but it was a budget idea. I don't know what all else was going on.

REINIER: Was it partly an attack on her?

HERRETT: I don't know. But she felt very vulnerable at that point, I think, and so she just needed a shoulder. And so we talked a little bit. I don't remember details and I wouldn't probably share them anyway. She's a neat person. Has a wonderful sense of humor. We'd all talk about other women we were talking with as far as getting to know some people that were

coming up in the organization. Some women have said to me later that I made a difference in little ways that I never knew about for them to have opportunities.

REINIER: Like what?

HERRETT: I can't remember details. I just remember a few people saying some things. Whether it's talks I had given and others had listened and that made a difference to them being selected. Somebody had heard something I'd said.

REINIER: You had some very nice talks in which you gave women tips on setting goals and being visible, for example.

HERRETT: And networking.

REINIER: And networking, yes.

HERRETT: And valuing other women and valuing men actually. I'm trying to think of other ways of networking. A lot of those talks were part of that. And talks weren't easy for me to do. I write reasonably well. I don't like doing that necessarily, and so those were struggles for me.

REINIER: I loved looking at your notes because you wrote your talks out in longhand.

HERRETT: Some of them I did. [Laughter]

REINIER: I can see you sitting there writing.

HERRETT: Typing wasn't my thing. Of course, at Meeker we had a typewriter, I think, but that was before computers and we were at the end of the line.

REINIER: You could almost see your thinking process.

HERRETT: I'd scribble them out.

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: Some of those things. Amazing.

REINIER: You were also an EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] officer. We didn't really talk about that.

HERRETT: Yeah. An EEO counselor early in my career. Wright Mallory, the supervisor of the Mt. Hood gave me that opportunity. I felt strongly about civil rights. There weren't people that were very understanding in a lot of cases. Even the counselors, other counselors that I saw, management had picked because they were safe, I think. A lot of the people that weren't strong advocates, and while you have to be very fair when you're investigating or doing the initial--that's changed since then--the initial look at an EEO complaint, you have to be fair to everybody. But at the same time you have to not think that it couldn't have happened. You can't enter that situation thinking it couldn't have happened because you will miss asking questions that need to be asked. From that standpoint I was glad to have that opportunity.

Later on when I was in Meeker I was chair of the service-wide civil rights committee. I became Region 2's representative to the service-wide civil rights committee. That was a group that was put together to try and advise the chief and come up with issues that were service-wide in nature and make recommendations for solutions. While I was in that, I was elected chair of that. It was a committee that was kind of hard to get all the representatives to do the homework before they came to really find out what's going on that's bothering people. And then also some frustration with the civil rights staff in the Washington office. It was their job to take what we had done and then present it to the chief. While I was there I took it to the chief directly, and that has, I think, continued to this day. By the time it got to the chief before it was kind of mushed around enough that the feeling was out of it. I think if the chairperson presents it, there's more opportunity to see and hear the feeling. I think that's necessary for some of the compassion component and understanding component to kick in rather than just on a purely intellectual level.

REINIER: There are several things that we really haven't touched on, and one is the technical women. We've talked about clerical women and professional women, but we haven't talked much about the technical women or the women who were doing the less professional jobs in the Forest Service. Like the fire fighters and the women on the ground.

HERRETT: Oh, OK. Occasionally there were and now there are women who are hired on just to do fire fighting, seasonals. But most of the folks that go to fire anymore have a real job otherwise and just have special training for fire situations and then are on teams to be dispatched. Women in fire is a whole different realm because fire fighting was and is still a very macho, you're fighting a war type approach to life. It's very hard work; it's dirty work. If you're on the line, building line. There's a camaraderie that develops on teams and on crews that it's a potentially ripe place for harassment and for initiation rites type thing. To this day I think there are still incidents that are happening. Those women had to be very strong, both physically and emotionally, to take on entering that realm.

REINIER: Is it different...

HERRETT: When I went into the Forest Service women didn't participate in fire hardly at all. [Laughing] And landscape architects hardly did. They got to be timekeepers. That was safe!

REINIER: Is there a difference or any conflict between professional women who really come in with more education and women who don't have that educational background?

HERRETT: I think that's between individual personalities more. I don't know that there is necessarily the snob appeal. A lot of the seasonals that come on the Forest Service are people who are going to school, and so they're on their way to doing something else whether it be in a natural resource field or in some other whole realm. They just like working in the woods and it's a good summer job. I think there's a class thing not necessarily between women that are in the professional series and women who are in the clerical or the technical end, but there's this whole aura of professional versus other classifications that has a snob appeal. It has the potential to be viewed as a hierarchy of importance. I'm more important than you are because I'm in a professional series. And that's always been there. It hasn't necessarily been because they're women. I think there are Queen Bee women. What I mean by a Queen Bee woman is who doesn't give credit to other women, and doesn't value other women who are struggling, and wants all the attention herself. There are those I think in any organization and potentially in a lot of situations. That happens also within just clerical itself. There's a hierarchy of who's more important than others [or thinks they are]. I don't know that that's necessarily anything that's been increased because women have gone into professional series.

REINIER: There already was a hierarchy.

HERRETT: There already was a hierarchy. If anything, it may be some of the biggest supporters have been from those other fields of women advancing. That's where I felt a lot of my support.

REINIER: From those women.

HERRETT: From those women. From just the fact that they could come in and talk to me, which they never would talk to a forest supervisor before. The fact that they would run into me in the restroom. My first week on the Siuslaw, a woman came in, she says, "Oh wow! I've never seen a forest supervisor in the restroom before!" Well, probably that's good! [Laughter]

REINIER: That's great.

HERRETT: I think they felt that they could talk with me. I don't know if it is with other women but I hope so, that I cared about their families, I cared about what they were doing on their job. I cared about their development in what they wanted to do. I cared about helping them look at different opportunities. And they could talk to me about some of those things. I think I developed that relationship a lot more broadly than maybe a man in my position would do. So I feel good about that. I think I did have some influence on how women viewed what their careers could be. Or their job that they were doing, how important it was.

REINIER: And isn't it true that there are more temporary jobs now than there were? That it's harder for some of those women to become permanent employees?

HERRETT: It's almost impossible to get a permanent job right now because of the continued down-sizing. There are still vacancies that happen. People still retire and there's not somebody out there that fits those skills, so there's still some opportunities. That may be more so still in the clerical end of things, the technical end. It's always been hard to move from seasonal to permanent unless you have a degree, and even with a degree it was very hard.

My husband has a degree in forestry with a hydrology background. When he graduated from the University of Minnesota, I think there were like five thousand people trying to get about twenty vacancies in entry-level forestry jobs. And so he ended up going into a hydrology realm rather than a forestry realm. It's worked out well for him, fortunately. But I think there are certain fields that have growth potential. I think fisheries, biology and wildlife biology because of the laws there are going to be some opportunities. Not as many as people out there going into those maybe, but there's still going to be some opportunities. Hydrology has some watershed issues. Eventually forestry because old people are going to retire and it's still out there. I think some of the different, more specialized ecology studies, that sort of thing.

REINIER: We talked before about the fact that you were surprised when you found out that you were a role model.

HERRETT: I hadn't really thought about it too much. I had just been doing the job I was assigned. I did like being first. I have some pride; I have some ego! Probably more than some. And I did want to make a difference. But I hadn't had any feedback, and so the degree of it, when it came... I can remember coming to Region 6. They had invited me out for a conference, and women came up to me almost like I was... They were afraid to touch me almost. They were in awe. And I'm going, "Whoa!" [Laughing] I'm not that important! [Laughter]

REINIER: I'm just me!

HERRETT: Yeah! And I'm going, "Whoa." That degree of almost hero worship, and I didn't feel like a hero. Yeah, that was a surprise to me.

REINIER: Were there other women who were role models for you?

HERRETT: Trying to think. Not that had gone through positions ahead of me, necessarily. There are other women I greatly admire and respect how they do their jobs and what they do.

REINIER: Who are some of those women?

HERRETT: Brenda Jenkins, the person who was secretary in the Washington office, just how she handled her job and everything. I just think very highly of her. Mary Jo Lavin came into the Forest Service at a very high level and had had an academic background. I think she taught at the University of Washington or something. Just watching her skill with going out and meeting people on the district. She called herself an information sponge. She just asked questions and asked questions and wasn't afraid of asking dumb questions, and wasn't afraid of saying I don't know, tell me all of this, and not knowing. I think she would be an interesting study. She went on to be a director nationally of aviation and fire. Talk about a macho and a tough world to go into.

REINIER: I should say.

HERRETT: I just admire her a great deal, and I don't know that she had much of a support system. Tough job especially. That whole arena, I think, is hard.

REINIER: What about Mary Albertson and the Federal Women's Program? Could you tell me a little bit about her?

HERRETT: Mary, I think, was the first Federal Women's Program manager in Region 6. I don't know if she was the first, if that was the first position that was designated as that and somebody was hired. She really was an advocate for women in that program, an advocacy for women in the workplace. As I see it, anyway. And Mary is just so strong that she would make sure managers knew where there were opportunities or where they had missed some!

REINIER: She was really an advocate!

HERRETT: She was an advocate. She also was able to put it in numeric terms and Forest Service managers understand numbers.

REINIER: That's important.

HERRETT: Yeah. And she did it nicely. She's always been there. And I think she's undervalued by women. I mean kind of behind the scenes. So people haven't seen the role she's played. But Region 6 really had a lot more hiring of women sooner than the other regions, and I think Mary is a lot of the reason behind that. I think there were some regional foresters that wanted also to have that and were willing to listen, but she also was there to advocate.

REINIER: Certainly it hasn't been easy, but do you think it's been easier for women to advance in the Forest Service than for minorities?

HERRETT: I think women were threatening; I think minorities are even more threatening.

REINIER: Really?

HERRETT: Men have been around their wives, so we aren't that foreign to them. A lot of the folks in the Forest Service haven't grown up around minorities, and so it's a bigger comfort distance. Now the roles that women played, wife versus professional colleague, are greatly different. But I think it's been harder for minorities. There are fewer minorities that are in natural resource fields, so the pool is not huge to draw from. But talk about scrutiny.

[Interruption]

HERRETT: I think it's been really hard for minorities and visibility. A friend of mine and a person who became a friend because he was the first black to be a ranger was Chip Cartwright.

REINIER: He's in all the pictures.

HERRETT: A lot of pictures, yes. He and Geri.

REINIER: Yes. Geri Larson, [now] Bergen.

REINIER: Bergen, yeah. And Chip, when things were really down in Meeker... I had never met Chip, but over the phone we talked because he was the first while I was the first. And he was just a real support. Talk about a friend. And helping me feel better about myself, and hopefully I've been able to give some of that back to him too. But we didn't meet in person for I don't know how many years, until we were both at a conference somewhere and could finally meet. He's gone through a lot for the Forest Service and I don't think it's been necessarily appreciated. His style is different. I think actually, women are more comfortable with Chip than some of the men are. And I don't understand that dynamic. Chip has a gift of gab and some

people don't look beyond that, that that's all he is. Well, that's not all he is. There's quite a person there. He went through and was first in a lot of ways. First African American to be a forest supervisor, first African American to be a regional forester, and he took a lot of guff to do that. I think it's even harder. And not every job in the Forest Service has to be a natural resource job; there are a lot of other types of jobs. I don't know that we've done a real good job of recruiting as much there and developing and accepting. A lot of the West where some of the national forests are, not a lot of diversity in those communities, but that shouldn't be an excuse. So some of the major areas that we have some hiring, we have national forests and regional offices in communities that are pretty diverse.

REINIER: But some of the local communities are probably pretty remote.

HERRETT: Very remote. And some minorities that I've talked to have no desire to be the only African American or the only Hispanic in those communities. Because they don't have a cultural support system. And they are very visible.

REINIER: Do you think that the presence of women in the Forest Service has changed the job in any way?

HERRETT: That's a hard one because so many changes have been happening anyway, and I don't know if it's just the presence of women. I think what is looked for in the job has changed. I don't know that I can say that's just attributable to women. I think some of the skills that women bring as far as communication skills normally, interpersonal skills, are valued more. It may be just a happy happenstance that that happened, or a necessary one for the agency to even survive. But I can't say that that's directly attributable to women. I think some of the skills that women have in terms of trying to find resolution to problems and the styles of doing that, lend themselves to problem solving in the society as it is today more easily than the win-lose model. And so from that standpoint women have sometimes an easier time of taking on a task and are more effective at it. I think men will say they'll take it on, no problem, but I think some women can be much more effective at finding solutions than some of the men can be, if they have that old style. I know some men now that are very effective in bringing about some solutions, but the old model of win-lose isn't the manager of today.

REINIER: Do you think Forest Service culture has changed because of the presence of women and at least a few more minorities?

HERRETT: I think a little bit. I think more of it can be attributed to the presence of other resource fields such as biologists, landscape architects, hydrologists, fisheries, biologists, than necessarily just women. Although I think women and minorities are part of that. The culture has changed; it's had to change. But I think it's there again a combination of factors, women and minorities being one of them, but other resource professionals being a very significant part of it.

Used to be in certain regions you had to be a range conservationist or you had to be a forester. Those were the anointed. And then engineers in the late '50s or somewhere in the '60s, a great

influx of engineers came on board. And that's when the landscape architects started to come on board. And then it was later yet when a lot more biologists started coming on. And some hydrologists, and soil scientists, that sort of thing. And certainly archaeology later on. I think it's interesting that three of the first five women to be rangers were landscape architects. Part of that is we were at the GS11 level earlier than forest women who had forestry degrees, so we were at the point where we could compete.

REINIER: Because you came in at a higher level?

HERRETT: We came in or had been there longer. I don't know that we necessarily came in at a higher level, but the advancement was faster in our field because there were fewer of us, and forests were starting to have a forest landscape architect, for example. And archaeologists the same way. At least one or two of the early women rangers had been archaeologists. And that was a major breakthrough. At least landscape architects could pseudo be natural resource. Archaeology!

REINIER: Yes. And often there was conflict over that.

HERRETT: And changing who could compete for rangers, that has happened in that time since I became a ranger. In fact, when I applied for the legislative affairs job it was advertised in the forestry series. Well, I didn't think anything of it because as a ranger Forester Administration is the series you're in. So I didn't think anything of it. I applied. And then the director of personnel in my region said, "Wendy, I wouldn't certify you to that list because you aren't a forester." And so I called Dale at that point and I said, "Dale is there a problem?" And he says, "Aaah. Once you've been a ranger you can do anything!"

REINIER: Yeah, I would think so.

HERRETT: I was selected. The Washington office didn't consider I wasn't qualified, but the next time they advertised they advertised more widely. So some of those techniques have happened in a lot of jobs. And that's good. That's a cultural change.

REINIER: Yes.

HERRETT: I think it's good. Some people probably don't, but most people do.

REINIER: So professionals are more accepted...

HERRETT: Doing different jobs.

REINIER: Doing different jobs. Yeah.

HERRETT: So there's greater career opportunities for a number of series other than just forester.

[End Tape 8, Side A]

[Begin Tape 8, Side B]

REINIER: I was saying before, Wendy, that I'm very interested in these issues of work and family. You're dual career, for example, which you've talked about quite a bit and the way the Forest Service has really helped you. Am I right on that?

HERRETT: That's correct. Bent over backwards. Of course, the Forest Service got what it wanted. They got me where I wanted to be and where they wanted me to be. They had the goal in mind. So in order to do that and get me there, they knew they had to help my husband.

REINIER: Yes. Did you deliberately decide that you didn't want to have children?

HERRETT: Yes. I'm kind of afraid of babies. [Laughter]

REINIER: Not so keen on babies.

HERRETT: Yeah, not so keen on babies. Little kids are OK. Other people's kids are wonderful. But I had never had a goal of being married necessarily. If it happened, fine, if it didn't, I was fine. I was able to support myself and I was not unhappy. But I never liked to babysit when I was a kid. I figured if I ended up having children it would be because I was a stepmother, that my experience of having a stepmother or being a stepchild was training for something, that I might end up with stepchildren and that would be OK. They'd probably be more than babies at that point! [Laughter] But also I didn't get married until I was thirty-five and I was a ranger at that time. There were a lot of things happening. I was getting to the age where I needed to have kids if I was going to have them, and I just didn't want to take that on as well. My husband would be a wonderful father. But fortunately, Tom was willing to say, "Well, it takes two of us to be parents and if that's not what you want to be, that's OK." And so we chose not to have children. And fortunately, our parents haven't been pushing on either side.

REINIER: Could you have had the career that you've had if you had had children?

HERRETT: It would have been harder, I think, because of the moves. It's hard enough for a husband and wife to pick up and leave, but with kids... And yet the Forest Service has always expected families to move with kids. And not had much sensitivity if a spouse or wife or their children have problems with that. I think there's a lot more sensitivity now to that issue. There are women who have been forest supervisors who have children, have had babies.

REINIER: Oh, really?

HERRETT: There was a woman who was acting director of public affairs in this region who adopted a baby and then worked out a work agreement to have the baby at work for awhile. We've done that a lot with new mothers. Worked out work agreements where within certain parameters the baby can be at work for awhile. And the Forest Service employees have been pretty open about it, actually.

REINIER: Are there things like flexible schedules or child care provided by the Forest Service?

HERRETT: Yes. All those things.

REINIER: All those things.

HERRETT: There's a child care center that's partially, I think, supported in the regional office in Portland, for example. There was one on the Siuslaw that we were co-sponsors for in Corvallis. Some of the remote sites, they've actually organized one of their forest houses to provide day care. It depends on the location and the individuals involved. I think there's been a lot of trying to work and make it family friendly, so women and men too can have comfort with having kids around and having families.

REINIER: Do you think male supervisors limit opportunities, however, for a woman with children?

HERRETT: I think there are some that have. But I think that's happening less and less. I think they know it's unacceptable.

REINIER: Um hmm.

HERRETT: That they can't make that decision for the family. I can't think of instances where I've seen that. If I had seen it, I would have said something, of course I think some families have decided that because of that they won't do some things, and that's their choice. Sometimes that makes a big difference on what a career can be.

REINIER: Could you be part-time and also management?

HERRETT: No. I haven't seen that that could happen yet.

REINIER: So management is a really full...

HERRETT: Yeah, to be a ranger is full-time. I've seen some job sharing on some of the technical support staff, and I've seen extended leaves and that sort of thing. But to be a line officer, I think, it would be very difficult. You couldn't do it part-time. In my view. Maybe I'm being too limiting.

REINIER: Is it even more than full-time to be a line officer?

HERRETT: Oh, definitely.

REINIER: So what kind of hour days do you have to put in?

HERRETT: Varies from location to location and what's going on at the time. And some of it's personally guided. I know one forest supervisor on the Willamette, Darrel [L.] Kenops, it's probably twenty-four hours a day for him because that's the way Darrel is. Anywhere he goes. For example, if he comes up here he has at least two or three other phone calls of contacts to make while he's here. That's just the way he manages. And they're nice to do type contacts, not essential to do. But if there's meetings in the evenings, it varies. I chose not to do it a lot in the evening type things. When I had to be there, of course, I had to be there. I traveled a lot in my jobs. In various ones. Some more than others. And that was certainly part of it. Emotionally, it's a twenty-four-hour a day job.

REINIER: And that would really matter if you had kids.

HERRETT: Yeah. Yeah. It's hard.

REINIER: I could understand that.

HERRETT: Yeah. I look at any working woman, more than working dads, there's some folks that do share responsibilities more, but I still see the brunt of child-rearing in a lot of families on the woman.

REINIER: Studies show that.

HERRETT: Yeah. I just get so tired watching because I know they're putting in all their thoughts at work, and I know they're thinking about their kids at work at times too. Or that they have to leave to do a school play or do something like that. We were pretty flexible at trying to help so they didn't have to worry about that. But at times you just had conflicts. They couldn't

be two places at once. And I'd just watch them going through that and I'm in awe of the energy that it must take and how tired they must be. It just amazes me. I know Mary Coloumbe had a baby while she was a forest supervisor.

REINIER: Oh, she did?

HERRETT: Yes and gosh.

REINIER: How did she do with that?

HERRETT: Well, you'd have to ask Mary. I think she had some depression after having the baby, as I recall. She was pretty sick, and I don't know if that was depression or if there was something else going on. That just took a lot out of her. And getting back into the swing of things and back up to speed. I think there have been other women now who had babies as forest supervisors and it's not as big a deal. It is doable.

REINIER: Was Mary the first?

HERRETT: I sort of think she might have been. And she was on a forest that was fairly remote. I think that would have been a tough situation. In fact, she was pregnant when she accepted that job.

REINIER: Oh, really.

HERRETT: Her first child.

REINIER: Did they know it?

HERRETT: I think she told the regional forester. That was pretty gutsy. I don't know if she would have done it again if she knew all that she was going to have to go through, but Mary would be the one to tell you that. Mary tells a story when she was a ranger. Mary is one that I worked with on the Mt. Hood. She was Mary Moore on the Mt. Hood, and she came in as a sociologist in our public involvement or something; it was more than public involvement. Anyway, Mary went back to school to get her forestry degree so she could compete for ranger jobs because rangers still had to be a certain series, and Mary wasn't in one of those series. Her degree wasn't in that. And so she went back and I think got either a masters or something in forestry so she could compete. And she became a ranger back on the Apache-Sitgreaves [National Forest] in Arizona. Which is a pretty remote forest. Pretty traditional range forest, I think.

And she talks about, they were doing something on one of the allotments and the permittee was an old-time rancher. I mean old man by that point. And she had just gotten there and they had sent out a letter on something and he didn't like what happened, so he came in to

the district office to talk to the ranger. Well, he got there and he hadn't realized she was a woman. He looked at her and I think he broke into tears. And just said, "Too much is too much." Meaning it was too much change all at once. And Mary realized quickly what was going

on, and she said, "Why don't we meet tomorrow so you can get used to who I am, and then we can talk about what's bothering you and see what we can do." She was pretty sensitive, I think.

REINIER: Very tactful.

HERRETT: Very tactful, and left him some dignity even though I'm sure he was just terribly humiliated to react that way. What he was coming in to talk about was so hard for him and so near and dear to him, and then to see this woman! Anyway.

REINIER: In your career, is there anything you would have done differently, looking back over it?

HERRETT: Oh! Hindsight? Not really, I don't think so. Every place I was and every job I've had was interesting. I can't think of anything that I really regret or would have tried to change. One piece of advice I give dual career couples, and career counseling with anyone in general, is to stay flexible. Some people set such strong goals that this is the next job and this is the one after that and this is the one after that. I try and advise them, don't do that to themselves. Keep some general ideas where they want to go, but if they're so rigid, they're going to miss some opportunities that might be presented to them, that would take them in wonderful directions and that they would find very fulfilling. And in dual careers also, some couples it's the woman's career, the next move is hers and the man's after that and then the woman's. And I'm going, "Don't do that to yourself because there may be some wonderful opportunities that you miss by doing that. Only you guys can decide what works for you, but don't unnecessarily limit yourselves." So. Anyway. Those were Wendy's advice on career paths. Stay flexible! Look for opportunities.

REINIER: Looking back, what have been your greatest triumphs?

HERRETT: Oooh.

REINIER: What do you feel best about?

HERRETT: I feel like I've done a reasonably good job in the jobs I've had. I feel good that I was able to be reasonably successful as the first woman coming through in a lot of positions that there are now more opportunities. And I played at least some role in that. I feel good about some of the relationships and some of the working relationships I had with people and that there's mutual respect there. What else do I feel? What jobs did I enjoy the most?

REINIER: Yeah.

HERRETT: I enjoyed my time on the Mt. Hood the first time. Actually, I enjoyed my time on the Mt. Hood the second time, but it was harder. I enjoyed my first two years as ranger a lot. I enjoyed the Washington office job immensely. I didn't not enjoy the others, but they were harder and had fewer joyful moments because a lot of it has to do with the down-sizing. I wouldn't change any of them as far as going through them. Maybe how I went through them I might change a little bit.

REINIER: How would you change that?

HERRETT: Oh, I don't know. At the time when you're beating your head against walls, [laughing] you're going, "Hmmm. Could I have done this differently?" But if I could have figured out solutions, different ways of doing it that were less painful, I think I would have changed at the moment. In hindsight, and it's water under the bridge so don't worry about it, just don't do it again somewhere else. So I don't know that I have a good answer there.

REINIER: What's been your greatest disappointment?

HERRETT: I think that sometimes I don't feel I was heard in some times that were critical to me. And that's on a personal level as far as my own feelings and abilities. I think that I wasn't able to turn around some situations, for example, the one in Meeker and the one in the Siuslaw, to be more a workable working situation. I don't think I made bad decisions in how I went about down-sizing and that. Actually, I don't feel badly about decisions I made. I think I made good decisions by and large. I'm probably disappointed that some people maybe don't see that or don't agree, somehow couldn't see the way I went about making decisions, while different, resulted in good decisions, because it was different than they might have approached it. I think of the time that made me feel good. When I left Meeker, our local timber operator, Dick Moyer, came in and he had carved out of alabaster a little bear, a white bear. And he says, "You're the only Snow White Smoky Bear I've ever known." He said, "You treated it like your own back yard but you were fair." And, really, I couldn't ask for any better comment as far as what I value.

REINIER: That was really nice.

HERRETT: It was very nice. And I wish my boss could have seen that! [Laughter] And then a couple of other ranchers took me to dinner after I was through rangering and said, "You did a tough thing. Everyone knew that that allotment needed a reduction, and you took it on. You had the guts to take it on; you did well." So I felt good about that too.

REINIER: Yes, I should say. Any other moments like that you remember?

HERRETT: Ummm. There was a group in recreation when I was director. Margaret Petersen had the wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, special areas. She and Susan Sater and Jackie

Diedrich were the three women in this sub group in recreation, and I really admired and respected the way they organized their work, shared, helped each other, even though they each had specific responsibilities. Margaret and Susan came to me one day and said, "You know, we bring something in and you already know about it. How do you know about it? It just amazes us that every time we bring something in you know about it, you know the details, and then we present something and you reach a decision very quickly, and it's a good decision." They were pleased with that. You don't get much positive feedback when you're a supervisor and so that felt good.

REINIER: I should say, yes.

HERRETT: So there are little things like that that come up here and there. When I was on the Mt. Hood, the purchasing group, at the end of any fiscal year it's a really hard time for them because they have to finish out all the purchasing. All the districts are going, oh yeah, I may need this, it has to be done for this project before the end of the year, blah-blah-blah, and taking advantage of spending the money they had. And so the contracting and purchasing group goes through a tremendous amount of work right at the end of a fiscal year. This group always sat together for a break on the second floor, and I'd wander around the second floor. The previous supervisor ahead of Dave Mohla had wandered around, but they always felt intimidated by him. It was a critical thing. I went around and it was my way of finding out information; people would tell me things, like with Margaret and Susan. I'd go around and listen; that's how I'd learn what was going on. It wasn't to be snooping, but it was just so I was aware of what was going on. And people feel more comfortable talking with you on what they're working on on their turf than in yours.

But these people, I went up after the fiscal year had ended while they were at coffee and I said, "Thank you for all your work. I know the end of the year is hard for you." And they just kind of sat there and said, "Well, you're welcome." Later on the head of that group came down and he says, "You know, we didn't know what was happening at the time but nobody's ever done that to us before." And it's just simple things of thank yous when it's heartfelt that make a difference to employee morale, and making them feel that what they're doing is worthwhile. And I think I was very good at that aspect of giving people positive feedback. I'd go out to districts and everything was doom and gloom but I'd say, "OK, let's talk about, what do you feel good about that you're doing? Tell me about those things. Let's write them down," so they could have them in front of them. They'd go, "Oh yeah, we are doing a lot! We are doing good

work." So trying to point that out too, not just the, "Oh, and by the way your job's been eliminated." Jeez.

REINIER: That was really tough.

HERRETT: Yeah, so. Anyway. So it's just some odds and ends, little things stick in my mind, but I think I've said most of them that just jumped to my mind at this point.

REINIER: Anything else?

HERRETT: I can't think of anything. Once we've finished this I'm sure I'll think of some things.

REINIER: We can always add it. Do you have advice now for women who are still in the Forest Service?

HERRETT: Oh, just keep on doing good work and keep on helping other people and keep on listening.

REINIER: And do you have advice for men in the Forest Service?

HERRETT: To keep on doing good work. [Laughter] To listen. To understand that not everyone's experience or style is like their own, and to appreciate a wider realm of what that might be. And also to understand that some ugly things can happen to people in terms of discrimination or feeling. And it's not necessarily a blatant thing; it's whether or not you listen to a suggestion and how you respond to that suggestion. You don't always have to take it, but you have to really seriously consider it and value it. It's those little things that make a difference in interactions with women. In the listening and valuing different styles.

REINIER: Anything else you'd like to add?

HERRETT: Oh, boy. No. I had a wonderful career. I had wonderful opportunities.

REINIER: Wendy, thank you very much for talking to us. This has been really excellent. Thanks so much.

HERRETT: You're welcome.

[Interruption]

HERRETT: [A little teary] Another thing I'd like to say. I owe a debt of gratitude to a lot of--and they're men--a lot of men for the difference they made in my career and what I was allowed

to do and the support they gave me. There were some wonderful people who helped me along the way and I am forever grateful. So thank you.

REINIER: You want to say who some of them were?

HERRETT: Oh, there's so many of them. There's Warren Bacon, Dick Shaffer, Wright Mallory. Craig Rupp. Denny Miller was the ranger on the Black Hills that let me be resource assistant. Dave Moran was another ranger. Jim Overbay again there. Tom Evans. Dick Woodrow. The staff that worked for me on the White River. Mark Reimers, Dale Robertson, Max Peterson. John Butruille. Dave Mohla, really a good person. Chip Cartwright. Dick Grace. Judy Levin. Dick Ferraro was my boss, was deputy regional forester and I worked with him the most. I could go in and tell him anything and he'd sit there and listen! I could rant to him and he was OK. Oh, just a bunch of people. I think of the guys who were rangers when I was on the White River. Terry Skorheim and Denny Bschor. They've been later in my career too and been very supportive. Mike Edrington. [Gordon] Gordy Schmidt. Mike Ash. Jim Furnish, Linda Goodman. Just so many people. It goes on and on. So I'm sure I've missed some very key people and very helpful and good friends too. I know I have. There's no way I can list everybody because there were some really good people. So that's it.

[Interruption]

HERRETT: Anne Heisler was the woman who was a forester already on the Mt. Hood when I got there the first time; she was public information officer. She was a good friend, and Annie, I'm sure, went through all kinds of hell that I don't think she likes to talk about. That kind of set the stage for me to come in even. And I appreciate that. You done good, Annie. That's it.

[End Tape 8, Side B]