An Interview with William E. Towell

Conducted by Harold K. Steen

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WILLIAM TOWELL INTERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Schedule conflicts delayed this interview for over a year, but Bill Towell and I got together in his comfortable home in Southern Pines, North Carolina, November 8-9, 1988. It seemed a bit early for Christmas, but his wife Virginia was in charge of a church gift program for the needy, and bags of gifts--literally hundreds of bags--fully occupied floor, table, and chair space in Bill's office and neighboring rooms.

Bill and I cleared out spots for ourselves, and the interview's two, three-hour sessions ran off smoothly. He had prepared an outline (see Appendix), which served nicely as our guide. To bolster my general knowledge of the subject, I had thumbed through a dozen years of *American Forests*, noting types and frequency of article topics and editorials. Bill made few changes in the transcript, and those were corrections of factual points, such as the names of individuals that he mentions. Our conversational syntax remains; what follows is what he said, and Bill Towell is a candid man.

William Earnest Towell was born on June 11, 1916 in Saint James, Missouri. He attended Drury College in Springfield and the University of Missouri. After his junior year he transferred to the University of Michigan, where he earned both the B.S. and M.F. in 1938. Following graduation, he began employment with the Missouri Conservation Commission where he would remain until 1967, except for a four-year stint in the U.S. Navy. He served as director of the Commission from 1957 to 1967.

Bill Towell accepted the position of executive vice-president of the American Forestry Association in January 1967, without having applied for or having been interviewed for the job. As the following pages detail, at that time AFA's leadership lacked focus and major programs were able to bypass the executive vice-president--a process he calls the "three-headed monster." Thus, much of his energy was spent on internal issues.

For a decade until he retired in 1978, Bill would guide AFA as public concern for the environment crested, even matured. In his position, he had an opportunity to become acquainted with members of opposing factions and saw that most were basically fair-minded. He developed the Areas of Agreement Committee as a means to bring such people together--to get to know each other, to discover that they did not disagree on everything, and to find out if some sort of mutually acceptable compromise was possible. By any measure, the Areas of Agreement Committee had a significant impact on the forestry legislative record of the 1970s.

Bill served on many committees, commissions, and boards, including the Federal Water Pollution Control Advisory Board, Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Advisory and Cradle of Forestry Advisory committees, Lewis and Clark Trail Commission, National Council of the Boy Scouts of America, chairman of Natural Resources Council of America, National Wildlife Federation board, Forest History Society board, trustee of Land Between the Lakes Association, president of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and president of the Society of American Foresters. His term as SAF president was especially challenging, for at that time the organization was deeply involved in expensive and divisive litigation.

Appropriately, this broad range of service brought recognition, and Bill was named Conservationist of the Year by the National Wildlife Federation, and received the Sir William Schlich Memorial Medal from the Society of American Foresters, the John Aston Warder Medal from the American Forestry Association, and the J. Sterling Morton Award from the National Arbor Day Foundation. He also received the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources Alumni Society Distinguished Service Award, the National Association of State Foresters Lifetime Achievement Award, and an honorary doctorate of science from the University of Missouri.

This interview was especially easy to do. Bill volunteered the basic outline, he responded fully and easily to my questions, and he edited the transcript almost not at all. The process made it clear how he had accomplished so much; he provided leadership while making me feel that I was in charge.

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William Towell (WT): I want to give you a feel of how I got into conservation and how my philosophy developed, because I think my fifty years in forestry has developed a personal philosophy that dates back to the Ozarks and the country I grew up in. Fire was probably one of the most influential things that I remember, as I grew up in a little town out in the Ozarks.

Harold K. Steen (HKS): A rural community?

WT: Yes. A little town of less than a thousand people called Newberg. Have you ever been to Fort Leonard Wood?

HKS: No, I haven't been in the southern part of Missouri.

WT: Fort Leonard Wood is in the south central Ozarks of Missouri, and Newberg is the railroad spur where the line goes off to Fort Leonard Wood by Little Piney River. I grew up in the little town of Newberg, and that was probably the most abused and burned country that anybody could ever imagine.

HKS: Was it logged and burned?

WT: It had been "grandmawed" to death. You know what “grandmawed” is?

HKS: No. That's a new term.

WT: Under Missouri laws, even way back then, anybody who sold forest products--logs or timber--had to say where it was cut. And most of these timber stealers said "it is from grandma's forty."

HKS: I understand. It was like the round forty.

Importance of Fire

WT: They said it came off of grandma's forty, and it was called grandmawing. But that country was pretty desolate in the '20s, '30s; burned every year.

HKS: On purpose?

WT: Oh yes.

HKS: I mean, as part of the southern tradition to burn.

WT: Yes. We lived down in the valley and the hills surrounded us then you could see all those lines of fire every spring and every fall. It made quite an impression on a kid.

HKS: The Ozarks are Southern.

WT: The Ozarks are practically on the Mason-Dixon Line. Missouri was a split state during the Civil War.

HKS: But you identified with the South?

WT: Yes. In fact when my grandfather was a young man, he drove a wagon for the Confederate Army in the Ozarks - that goes way back. But, fire was the thing, I think, that impressed me most. My dad was a country dentist, the only dentist in town.

HKS: How about the Dixie Crusaders, were they in the Ozarks?

WT: No they didn't come...

HKS: But how about the information that fire was a problem, did that...

WT: That didn't make much impression in that region, Pete. In fact, in the late 1920s there was a state forester named Frederick Dunlap who was appointed under the Weeks Act, which granted some federal money to the states to begin a forestry program. He was hired as state forester, and Paul Dunn was hired as his assistant. Paul was the first district forester.

HKS: Paul was from Missouri?

WT: Yes sir. He started in Missouri. And he was district forester down in Ellington, and they went along for about two or three years trying to get some kind of handle on that fire problem in the Ozarks, and gave up. In fact, the final report that Dunlap wrote as state forester was that fire control is an impossible task in the Missouri Ozarks.

HKS: So it was just a part of the culture, right. It's what you did.

WT: It's what you did. It killed the ticks and the chiggers, and got the undergrowth to green up in the spring.

HKS: Did it kill the ticks and chiggers?

WT: No. Not really. Usually it was done in the early spring when they were dormant. But they had a feeling that that's...

HKS: Well, out West the farmers burn so they can green up faster. I guess the black makes the soil warmer and it's done...

WT: But it was just tradition. Pa and Grandpa did it, and by golly I'm going to do it. I've seen the evidence of many an old timer riding down the road throwing matches. In fact after I became a district forester, I knew one state employee who ran a road grader, and as he graded the state roads, they were gravel roads, he was throwing matches.

HKS: Was it against the law to burn the forest?

WT: There was a law against it, but it was totally unenforceable. There's an interesting story on that: I might as well tell you now. This was down in Shannon County, which is the heart of the Ozarks on the Current-Eleven-Point Rivers. After we had our districts going, the first fire districts under the new state forester, for a year or so, we decided among ourselves it was about time to start cracking down on these people. So Charlie Kirk, who was one of our district foresters, caught a guy red-handed setting fire, He brought him in, took him to the prosecutor, and said we want to prosecute this guy. The prosecutor said that it won't do any good, but alright, the law is there, we'll do it. So they brought him up before the judge, and the judge sent his bailiff for somebody out in the hallway to panel a jury. They came in and had a jury

trial for this guy caught setting fire. The arguments weren't very good on the part of the defense attorney, but he was well known and liked in the county. Anyway the case went to the jury, and the jury went out and came back in in about two minutes. The judge said, "Have you reached a verdict?" "Yes we have, your honor." "What is it?" "We find the defendant not guilty, but we caution him never to do it again." [laughter] That was the attitude of the local people.

HKS: I imagine the game laws were enforced the same way. You catch somebody with ten pheasants, but you don't really fine them the full amount.

WT: Well, that used to be true, under the old political Department of Fish and Game, game law enforcement was sort of ridiculous, too. There were over a thousand people in Missouri that carried deputy game warden badges, which in essence were a license to violate. Fish and game and forestry laws in those days were on the books, but they didn't mean much.

HKS: You read stories where moonshiners were a problem. Stills would burn or whatever, and law enforcement would stay away from the stills if they knew what was good for them.

WT: That's right. And we had a lot of that going on out in the Ozarks too, because it's pretty isolated country.

HKS: Well the Ozarks in American culture is really where the hillbillies were. Was it different from the Appalachians?

WT: No, very similar. The mountains are not as high, but the people are very similar. In fact most of the people in the Ozarks came out of Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia - they migrated west - and the culture is much the same.

HKS: But somehow the Ozarks got all the press attention: that's the stereotype. Lum and Abner came out of the Ozarks, as opposed to the Appalachians.

WT: That's true. It was a great place to grow up, because it gave you a feel for humanity that I don't think you can get anywhere else. But getting back to fire; as a kid I was deathly afraid of fire. We had no fire department in our little town, and once a house caught on fire it was just gone. I can remember many houses burning down and flues burning out, and it was a frightening thing. It was a big railroad town by the way. That was back in the days when they were all coal-burning steam locomotives.

HKS: Were you on the mainline on the way to Kansas City?

WT: No. Mainline of the 'Frisco. Saint Louis and San Francisco Railroad which ran from Saint Louis on out to San Francisco.

HKS: This land was acquired under the Weeks purchase?

Choosing Forestry

WT: That's where my interest in forestry grew. I told you my dad was a dentist. Dad was a good dentist, he'd do anything. He never referred a patient to anyone else, because there was no one else. He did all of the oral surgery: I've seen him do bone surgery and correct people's misalignments of the jaws and teeth.

But since I was knee-high I can remember him saying there are two things I'll never let my boys do, study dentistry or medicine, because in those days you worked twelve hours a day and you were on call every night. He had an office, shared a waiting room with an MD, and they worked all the time. He said if he were a young man, he'd be an engineer or geologist, or a forester. And the reason he said forester, Pete, was that the Mark Twain National Forest in the early 1930s was in process of acquisition right there in my home town. The ranger came down from Rolla, in that little green pickup, and he was surveying and checking title and buying land all through that country of mine, and that was pretty impressive.

HKS: What did the people who owned the land think of the opportunity to sell? Were they disappointed that they lost a family farm or were they really...

WT: No, the land that we're talking about, Pete, is the hill land out of the valleys. The good bottom-land farms survived because they were productive.

HKS: So if someone had a 160-acre homestead, they cut the timber part and kept the part that was the farm, and the rest they sold to the government.

WT: Yes, there were miles and miles of unbroken timberland. The settlement was along the valleys, along the streams.

HKS: After the government got the land, what happened to the fire policy?

WT: The federal Forest Service had just as many problems as we did. This was early 1930s, and the process of federal acquisition generally was completed about 1940. I began working in the Ozarks in 1938. After I got out of college, I went right back to Missouri and organized a fire district. But for the first years the U.S. Forest Service had just about as much trouble with fire as we did on our state districts. It was a long term educational process.

HKS: I worked for the Forest Service in a small town in the Pacific Northwest. We were looked up to. We were about the only college graduates in town. We were steady payroll. People saw that federal thing as really a benefit to the community. We were asked to coach little league. People turned to us. I was 22 years old and when I walked down the street everybody knew who I was, I worked for the Forest Service.

WT: Yes, we experienced the same thing. When I went to work in the state of Missouri as a professional forester, I was about the only college graduate in the community my age. Forestry was looked up to. The people who lived in the towns, the people who were not stealing and burning, welcomed all this change very much. I was highly respected. This was one of the transitions that bothered me most in the fifty years was to see foresters go from white hat to black hat. To see the public impression of forestry and foresters change. We'll get into that later, but the preservation movement took us too far left to...

HKS: I always thought it was ironic that I got out of school in the fifties and the people I worked for used to say, "If the public only knew what we did." But when the public perceived they knew what we did, they didn't like it.

WT: Foresters were highly respected back in the 30s and 40s - in Missouri they were highly respected. If you read the history, you'll see that foresters were really the first real conservationists. Conservation movement began largely with the forestry profession. Fish and wildlife were sort of the sub-professional part of forestry. They came along a little bit later.

HKS: The SCS was formed around 1935. Did the Forest Service handle the soil conservation function, was there anyone dealing at the private land level?

WT: Actually the first farm-forestry project in Missouri was under the Norris-Doxey Act and was administered by the Soil Conservation Service in cooperation with the state forester. I was a farm-forester after I left the fire district. I was paid by the Soil Conservation Service, up in north Missouri, out of the Ozarks. But the Soil Conservation Service never became very active in the Ozark hills because there was not much farmland there, and they concentrated mostly on the river bottoms and in North Missouri - the cornland, the highly productive agricultural land.

HKS: You mentioned your grandfather making charcoal. Did he run an ironworks?

WT: My grandfather was a good carpenter. He built a lot of houses, but in portions of his earlier career, he had to cut timber for charcoal to support a family. He lived right adjacent to the Meramac Ironworks, which is out of the little town of St. James where, at the age of 13 we moved from Newberg. He worked those hills and took all the hardwood - oak and hickory. It was rather ironical that years later when I became director of conservation I had a letter from some woman in Texas who had known my grandfather. She said it's rather odd that your career is spent trying to repair the damage that your grandfather did.

HKS: I'm sure there have been studies made of this, but how many acres did it take to produce a ton or a sack or however you measure charcoal? It strikes me that it must be a lot of, when you're distilling this down to get...

WT: Yeah, it shrinks a great deal in volume.

HKS: And the amount of what you burn to make the charcoal itself.

WT: It takes a lot of wood to support ironworks where we had two or three iron furnaces. It took a lot of charcoal. They denuded most of the hills within a five-, ten-mile radius.

HKS: It was cheaper to make charcoal than to haul coal in by rail. I read someplace that charcoal was the only pure source of heat until the mid-19th century, when they finally found coal with lower sulphur content that you could actually use it in iron works.

WT: We do have a lot of coal in Missouri, but most of it is up in north Missouri and wasn't readily available, so they used charcoal. In fact I have a book, "Frontier Iron" about the Meramac Ironworks.

Education

HKS: Where did you go to school?

WT: University of Michigan.

HKS: How did you choose Michigan? That's a long ways from Missouri.

WT: Yes it is, but there's a good reason. I wasn't too sure when I got out of high school what I wanted to do, but I got a scholarship to Drury College in Springfield, a small Congregational college with about six hundred students. So

I went up to Springfield to Drury and wasn't too sure even then what I might do. I took kind of a general course for two years. Then I decided that I wanted to go into forestry. As a result of my earlier indecision I lacked a lot of the basic prerequisites. So I took one year and went up to the University of Missouri at Columbia. We had no forestry school in Missouri at the time.

I went up to the University of Missouri to pick up those prerequisites my third year so that I could get into forestry school. Geology, botany, zoology, surveying - science courses that I had not taken my first two years. While I was there, they started a two-year preparatory course in forestry. This wasn't a four-year course but two years preparation, and R. H. Westfeld came to Missouri. I took dendrology under him the second semester. Then I had a choice. I could have gone to Iowa State, Minnesota, or Purdue, but I picked Michigan because Michigan concentrates most of its forestry work in the last two years rather than intermingling with it all through. But I had those extra hours, see, I had three full years before I went to Michigan. Because of the extra hours I had accumulated, Dean Dana called me in after the first semester and said, "Bill your grades are pretty good, would you like to work on your masters while you're doing your undergraduate work?" I said yes if I could. He said, "It's going to be a tough load." After five years and one summer I got both my bachelors and masters at Michigan at the same time, in 1938. So it was a great break for me.

HKS: Having a guy like Dana as dean must have added a dimension to your education.

WT: Yes it did. Later on Sam and I became very close. He felt very strongly about the American Forestry Association, and although he was quite feeble he came to see us regularly there at AFA during his later years. He offered great advice.

HKS: During the time you were in school, the SAF was going through a lot of turmoil with Emanuel Fritz trying to keep forestry "in the woods" during the New Deal. Did you perceive that while you were in school? Was that something that you talked about?

WT: Not too much. We had a course in forest policy, Pete, but it was mostly history. I remember when I was in school there were three subjects that I said that I was not adept at and not very interested in. One was forest policy. I said who cares about all that history. Another was fish and wildlife. It was required training, but I wanted to be a woods forester.

HKS: Sure.

WT: I wasn't too interested in fish and wildlife. The third thing that, I did fairly well but I didn't particularly like was writing. But I always said I'll never be a writer, and I'll never get into forest policy. And I wasn't very interested in the fish and wildlife activities, but my career became more active in fish and wildlife for a good many years than in forestry. Writing was probably one of the most effective means that we had of communicating, and I became somewhat of a writer, and of course my work in Washington was all involved in forest policy.

HKS: That's right.

WT: So don't ever say you're not going to go a certain way.

HKS: I learned things about myself after I graduated, as did you.

WT: I had almost a major in economics. My first two years I had a lot of economics, and when I went to Missouri I took Money Credit in Banking and forest economics.

HKS: So you graduated in '38 with both a bachelors and masters. A masters was rather unusual at that time.

WT: That's right. The *Journal of Forestry* publishes each year the number of accumulated degrees. I think the number of forestry masters degrees existing in the country at that time was in the two hundreds.

HKS: I'm sure.

WT: Ph.D.s were practically all limited to teaching and a few researchers.

HKS: So you graduated and the depression was still going. Finding jobs must have been kind of a challenge.

Department of Forestry

WT: Out of my class of around sixty, I think three of us got jobs in forestry right away. I almost became state forester. The Missouri constitutional amendment was passed in 1936, taking fish, game and forestry out of politics and creating a bipartisan four-man commission. It was a rebellion, really. It was done by initiative petition.

HKS: Part of the Truman-Pendergast issue?

WT: No, but the Truman-Pendergast regime was not all bad, not for Missouri. But in the 20s and 30s, fish and wildlife law enforcement was a farce. They had game wardens, yes. But had very little control over what they had. And the forestry program was nil, except for the one I mentioned concerning Fred Dunlap, who gave it up. The drought of the early 30s caused a big decline in practically all game species; deer, turkey, quail, rabbits, everything. The people of Missouri really got their belly full of poaching, so the forerunner of the Missouri Conservation Federation got organized and started a petition, getting enough signatures to put a referendum on the ballot for a constitutional amendment taking the control of all wildlife and forest resources away from the legislature and putting them under a four man commission with constitutional authority. This was what was being organized in '37 while I was in school.

HKS: Was that the model laws leading up to...

WT: It was the model law and is still the model law of all states in the country. But I came down to Jefferson City before I graduated and made application for the state forester's job. I almost got it. But, I remember old A. P. Greensfelter, one of the commissioners, telling my daddy, "He’s just a pup. He's green, he's just out of school. We need somebody with experience." Well fortunately I didn't get the job because he was absolutely right. That gave me eighteen years under George White, who was selected as the state forester and who had a good background in the Forest Service. He probably was the best all round teacher that I could have had in how to deal with people and how to handle budgets, problems that a state forester has to deal with. So I was one of the first four foresters hired.

HKS: There was a lot of federal money through the New Deal programs, through Clarke-McNary and so forth.

WT: Not a lot, no.

HKS: Relatively speaking, or were state appropriations dominant back in your day.

WT: State funds were dominant, I have all the budgets in my files here. We're talking under a hundred thousand dollars a year for a good many years to organize four districts, to initiate fire protection over a sizable chunk of the Ozarks. We tried to fill in between the units of the national forest. That's something that's rather interesting too, Pete. We talked while ago about the Forest Service coming in on acquisition. Some place along the line the state legislature passed a law that the federal government could not buy more than twenty-five thousand acres in any one county. What they were fearful of was all the land being taken off the tax base. So all eight units of, what at that time were named the Clark and the Mark Twain national forests, were set where they encompassed the corners of four counties, so they could acquire a hundred thousand acres.

HKS: I see.

WT: Total, with only twenty-five thousand acres in each county. So if you look at the map of what all is called the Mark Twain National Forest now, you'll see eight little units. That's why they were organized in that way.

HKS: Was there a reason for this concern about a tax base?

WT: There always has been and I think there always will be. Anytime large acreages of valuable land is taken by the government, there is concern on the part of local government that it decreases their tax base. Now with George White we acquired some three-hundred thousand acres of state forestland during the years I worked with him. We didn't pay more than $5 an acre for any of it.

HKS: That's land off the tax base.

WT: That's right. One of the problems that we encountered was local opposition to taking this land off the tax base. So we copied a law from one of the Lake States, I think it was Wisconsin. George White and I on a weekend wrote the bill for the Missouri State Forest Crop Law, which provided for tax deferment on private land if it was put under management until such time that the timber was cut. But it also provided that out of state funds we could reimburse the counties for state lands that were taken off the tax roles. U.S. Forest Service timber sales also provide a 25 percent return to the counties in lieu of taxes.

HKS: But you're buying cutover land; there's no timber sale money.

WT: That's right.

HKS: For a long time.

WT: That's right. But it's amazing what the recovery has been. After I got out of school I was assigned only thirty-five miles from home, just right up the line on the Frisco and on Highway 66 in Sullivan. I had Franklin, Washington, and Crawford counties to organize as a fire district. To start I had a little

green pickup; I did have three CCC camps though, so that was my lifesaver. I had two Forest Service camps and one Park Service camp as part of my district.

HKS: What park was that?

WT: Meramec State Forest. Then it was Washington State Park. Washington State Park and then Indian Trail State Forest and Meramec State Forest. Meramec State Forest had a Park CCC Camp and later a forest camp. I worked with the three CCC camps during my early days as district forester.

HKS: Big camps? Five-hundred to a thousand people?

WT: No, two hundred people at most. But with two-hundred men and a CCC camp, I was lucky to get a fire crew of eight [laughter]. It was a pretty hopeless task, because their heart was in building shelters, picnic tables, roads, and dams. They didn't like firefighting; that wasn't too productive. But that's a later story.

HKS: Was that before it became a district forest? So you're a district forester and on your district you had camps?

WT: Yes, I was headquartered at Sullivan and there was a camp right there at Meramec State Forest. They were a great help. They built my fire towers, built quite of a lot of roads and telephone lines.

HKS: Some of that becomes obsolete, and there wasn't the money to maintain it thirty years later.

WT: Not while I was still practicing, but I'm sure it came along.

HKS: You were a district forester before a farm forester. It would strike me that farm forester was a step below.

WT: It wasn't in this case. I started work at the exorbitant salary of $125 a month, and that was pretty doggone good. We stayed at $125 a month I guess for at least two years, then up to $135. I organized a district in 1938 and I left there after the spring fire season in 1941. George White had asked me if I'd like to go up to Kirksville, up in the north part of the state, on a farm forestry project. One reason I did - my salary went up to $166.66 a month.

We drove state pickups, nobody drove a private car, so we had our transportation. When I became assistant state forester I wrote the manual of instructions for district foresters, and I can remember the figures so vividly. The limit on breakfast was 35 cents, the limit on lunch was 50 cents, the limit on dinner was 75 cents, and hotel $2 for the night. Now that covered it. When you traveled around the Ozarks, you could live very well with those limitations. So when you ask did we have a traveling subsistency, it didn't amount to much but...

HKS: It was enough. You didn't have to pay out of your own pocket.

WT: That's right. Those were the days.

HKS: How about your time as a farm forester?

WT: I spent only part of one year, about eight or ten months up there. I went to Kirksville as the second farm forester in the state under the Norris-Doxey Act.

I was paid by SCS, and the Soil Conservationist over in Chillicothe was my immediate boss as far as payroll was concerned, but I actually worked under the state forester, George White. Art Meyer was the other farm forester. Art later became editor of the *Journal of Forestry*. He was over at Wentzville, in the east central part of the state. I wound up in the northeast part of the state at Kirksville. But that was a virgin field up there. I had lots of people who had never had any opportunity at all to even see a forester, to know anything about forestry, and I helped develop a lot of good basic forestry plans for the timberland owners. Set out a lot of windbreaks. Incidentally, that was in 1941, our first child was born in October of '41, and I remember vividly December 7th of '41 at Kirksville.

HKS: Sure.

WT: And it was right shortly after that that George White asked me if I would come on in to Jefferson City to be his assistant, so I didn't stay in Kirksville too long.

HKS: Then the next step was fire chief. Were you in the service during the War? I mean, you had a child, I doubt...

WT: I didn't have to go, and I don't think my wife will ever forgive me for this, but, several of the foresters had left. Ed Seay, one of the earlier foresters, got drafted early and Art Meyer found out about the photo interpretation field that was opened to foresters and geologists and architects. He got a commission; he left about six months before I did. But I don't know if you remember that period or not, but they had the fishbowl drawing of draft numbers.

HKS: I've read about it. I was six when the war broke out.

WT: There were pages and pages of these numbers; I think my number was about fifty from the tail end. I don't think I would have ever been drafted, particularly since I was married and had a family, but I got the itch I guess. Without my wife's knowledge of what I was doing, I went down to St. Louis and applied for a commission and was commissioned, but I didn't go in till the middle of '43. I served three years as a naval officer, aerial photo interpreter. But that was after I had been in Jefferson City, about a year and a half.

HKS: So you were working as Assistant State Forester for a couple more years.

WT: Yes. I also handled the tree distribution program. Tree planting under Norris-Doxey and Clarke-McNary was a big part of our program in the state to try to interest people in planting trees for forestry.

HKS: Other than shortages like gas, tires, shoes, and so forth, were there any changes of priorities during the war?

WT: Yes, yes very much so. OCD, Office of Civil Defense, became a very active part of our program. I traveled around the state conducting classes on fire control, not just forest fire control. I went down to Stillwater, Oklahoma, as assistant state forester and got basic training in fire control teaching, combustion and all the elements of fire control. I came back and taught all employees of our department - game wardens, biologists, the nursery people - the basic civil defense fire practices. I have a booklet that I wrote.

HKS: Were short wave radios in wide use then? Because that would be a significant part of civil defense. The forestry divisions would have this communications net.

WT: They came into use shortly after we went to work, about 1938. The old SV radios, that was a Forest Service model, a transceiver that had a tunable transmitter. In other words you could vary the frequency of the transmitter just by turning a knob like you would a dial for a receiver. It would be totally illegal now. But we could cover the waterfront on frequency range. Didn't have much power output, that was the trouble.

HKS: You had to hang an antenna up in a tree or something.

WT: Hang an antenna up a tree. Put a rock or a bolt on the end of a string, and throw it up, pull the antenna up, and you could talk high point to high point twenty or thirty miles. I had all my cars equipped, and I carried one in my truck and then the other trucks so we could communicate.

HKS: So your truck would have to pull off the road, and then you built the antenna.

WT: Sure, and then later on we did get some car radios, the old SX Forest Service model again. We installed it in the pickup; it took a lot of room, but they worked.

HKS: Sure.

WT: I saw that progression of communication go all the way from the most crude, no control on the transmission frequency at all except a dial, all the way up to split frequencies and very rigid control on high frequencies. But as assistant state forester, as chief of fire control, we dealt a lot with General Electric, Motorola, in fact organized our own radio maintenance repair crew and licensed operators and all.

HKS: There's a book on the history of Forest Service radio technology.

WT: Oh there is.

HKS: There was a big lab in Portland that turned out a lot of radios. Anyhow, that was the early years of the war.

WT: Yes. Early years of the war and after the war. Actually, I was in charge of fire control and nurseries throughout practically all of my career in Missouri after I left the district.

HKS: Was that a logical mix of responsibilities?

WT: I don't know how logical it was. I would have thought that nurseries would have gone with forest management. Farm forestry, timber management, and management of state forest lands was one division, and I had fire control and nurseries in mine. Art Meyer was the other assistant state forester, and later Charlie Kirk, but I was the one that stayed on all the way through until I became assistant director, but that was quite a few years later.

HKS: You got out of the service in '45, '46?

WT: I got out in '46. Out in the San Diego with the Amphibious Training Command. After I had finished my tour of duty oversees, which was Pearl Harbor, Eniwetok, and Guam, we came back to Anacostia, which was the headquarters of aerial photo intelligence center. They assigned me to the Amphibious Training Command to teach photo intelligence to amphibious officers.

HKS: Getting ready for the invasion of Japan.

WT: Yes. I was a Lieutenant JG, and I was teaching full lieutenants, commanders, and captains photo intelligence, photo interpretation, beach studies, gun identification, aircraft and ship identification, all those things that a photo interpretation officer does. But I came back in early '46, resumed my job as assistant state forester, and was there until I became assistant director ten years later.

Fish, Game, and Forestry

HKS: You have covered fish and game and forestry. Were they your career choices as you went along?

WT: That's a good story in itself. Being a forester, we had some competition. Fish and game biologists were pretty set in their feelings about conservation programs, and felt a little bit of jealousy toward foresters. I had a little stronger hand, and more understanding of public support. When I came to Jefferson City, I can remember that Starker Leopold, who was on our game staff at the time, was doing turkey research down in the Ozarks. We had a running argument over a good long period over the relative benefits or detriment of open-range grazing. I can remember that George White and I were advocates, not advocates but defenders of open-range grazing, as contrasting to confining livestock behind fences. From the forestry standpoint, those animals that were confined did a lot more damage than those that were on the open-range. Now, open-range grazing is not good, but to compare the detrimental effects when they're concentrated behind fences to the considerably lesser damage when they're running wild. . .

HKS: Do cattle eat pine seedlings?

WT: Yes, they do. And hogs are probably worse...

HKS: Hogs I can see, but I was not sure that cattle, if they have a choice between grass and pine seedlings...

WT: I don't know how much they actually eat, but they pull them up and nip them off. They can completely ruin a bunch of seedlings. The biologists and the foresters never fully understood each other, and when I became assistant director and later director of the department, one of my greatest jobs was to weld the department together to get the foresters and the biologists working on the same programs. We're growing trees on the same lands we're managing for wildlife. And to bring a compromise and understanding in land treatment between those two professions was something I worked on very hard. The ten years I was director, I leaned much more heavily to working with the fish and game biologists, because I knew the forestry end of it, and I was trying to bring the two professions together.

I had a whale of a problem when I became director with engineers who were designing fish and wildlife projects without any input from the fish and

wildlife biologists, and to get them to consider the professional expertise that was available, and use it in their planning. I had biologists who would probably have burned off a good part of our state forestland because it would make better cover for deer and quail. But that was contrary to the forest management aspect. So I spent a lot of time trying to weld together the goals of forestry versus fish and wildlife in management.

HKS: Could have used you where I worked for the Forest Service where they hired civil engineers to lay out roads without any interest in the forest.

WT: Yes.

HKS: We had a hell of a time getting to the trees sometimes, but it was a nice road.

WT: That was a real difficulty that I faced. The department was operating under three or four different commands, each going its pretty much separate way. I. T. Bode, my predecessor, was a great guy. His greatest contribution was in defending that constitutional amendment and building the support of the people in Missouri for the finest conservation program that anyone could have built. But he let these things get a little bit out of hand, community lakes were being chosen without reference to fish and wildlife input. I had a lot of welding to do, and that's the contribution I think I made to the department.

After Jay Morrow, the assistant director, died rather suddenly on a goose hunting trip, I was selected as assistant director to Bode, to replace Jay. And I hadn't been assistant director, I guess, for three or four months until Bode resigned, somewhat of a clash between him and the commission. Anyway, he resigned, and I was named acting director. I stayed acting director for over six or eight months. At the time I didn't seek the job. When I first became acting director I thought other more seasoned, experienced people, would be better qualified. But the more I stayed in the acting position, the more I saw that I could do some things that could help the department, and I went after the job and I got it. Incidentally, Mel Steen, the former director in the state of Nebraska was my chief competitor. Mel had resigned from our department as chief of fish and game and had gone to Nebraska as its director. When the Missouri directorship came open he wanted it badly. Anyway I beat out Mel Steen. But it was after I became director in Missouri that I became very active in the International Association of Fish, Game, and Conservation Commissioners. About a year after I became director, I was named chairman of the Legislative Committee, which is next to the Executive Committee as the most active and influential committee in the international association. It's now called Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

HKS: How international is it, I mean was it...

WT: Canada, it's not as international as the name would sound. It's still called that.

HKS: But it wasn't Europe and Asia.

WT: No, mostly Canada, a little bit of Mexico, but mostly Canada and the United States. But it's still called International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. In any event, Clyde Patton, the director in North Carolina, was president. He called me in and asked me if I would take over chairmanship of the Legislative Committee. So in that capacity for about four or five years, I was commuting back and forth from Jefferson City to Washington and representing the

International Association on legislative matters. And I got my feet very wet in Congress.

HKS: What time period was this? '50s?

WT: This was the late '50s and early '60s. I become president of the International in '55 and '56, and it was late '50s and early '60s when for about four or five years I was chairman of the Legislative Committee. The wilderness bill had been up before about three or four or five different congresses but never passed. Wildlife agencies opposed it and forestry agencies opposed it. They felt that wilderness was somewhat of a handicap to professional management; you didn't have the flexibility of harvesting wildlife, hunting or fishing, or cutting trees.

Generally, the resource professionals were against the wilderness bill. I was very influential in getting the International Association to change its position on wilderness. SAF was against it. We did get the International Association to endorse the wilderness concept. I made a number of trips to Washington testifying in behalf of the International Association of Fish and Game Directors and was in the gallery with Stewart Brandborg the day the wilderness bill was passed. This was kind of a switch for forestry because even though foresters originated the wilderness concept long before there was a wilderness bill, voluntarily setting aside areas of the national forest for wilderness and primitive area protection, when it came time to pass the law to require this to be done, most foresters were opposed to it.

HKS: With the wilderness bill, you have taken wilderness designation away from the professionals.

WT: I think that the wilderness designation is a nonmanagement category. It says that the forests can be better managed by hands off policy than by applying what professional foresters can do.

HKS: But it was the thought that Congress would set it aside rather than the Forest Service.

WT: Well, that was a part of it. The Forest Service, the Society of American Foresters, and foresters and forestry in general opposed an act of Congress creating wilderness by law. The Fish and Wildlife people had a similar feeling by and large, because that too deprived them of the management opportunity.

HKS: You can't hunt in a wilderness area?

WT: Yes you can, but you can't manage wildlife. You can go in, but you can't cut, you can't burn, you can't plant, you can't build roads, but you can hunt. So by and large the professional conservation people were opposed to it, and if I did accomplish anything as chairman of that Legislative Committee it was getting basic support.

HKS: Did you ever negotiate with Bill Hagenstein? He was president of SAF about that time.

WT: I negotiated a lot with Bill Hagenstein, particularly later. Bill Hagenstein was one of the original members of my Areas of Agreement Committee. Bill and I became very close workers, we worked together on a number of things, and worked against each other on a number of things too. Bill is the old school.

HKS: He used to tell us that he had trouble getting secretaries. He said, "When I say god-damn I want it typed god-damn."

WT: Bill's a character. State rights issues were a major issue at that time.

HKS: I remember offshore oil and all that sort of thing.

WT: Yes, well it involved fish and wildlife...

HKS: Who owned the game? Was that the issue?

WT: Who's going to manage and control the game.

HKS: I see.

WT: Frank Briggs, one of my commissioners, in fact he was chairman of my Missouri commission, came to Washington under Stuart Udall, as assistant secretary of the interior for fish, wildlife and parks. And Frank Briggs told me one time, when I was still director of Missouri, that we're fighting a losing battle to protect the rights of the hunter and the fisherman, because the trend is to reduce, to cut down, to eliminate sports use of wildlife. I thought it was ludicrous at that time that hunting might be threatened. But look at what's happening now.

HKS: The gun control situation.

WT: The gun control and the reverence for life, the feeling of many people, and a genuine feeling that it is wrong to make sport of killing any form of wildlife. There was also and still is a growing feeling that the control of all wildlife should be under federal jurisdiction. That state's rights in the public ownership and control of wildlife should be vested in federal government rather than state government, or in the people as represented by state government. I remember we had a committee of the International Association meet with Udall. There was an effort to pass a federal hunting license, which would preempt the rights of the states. Of course the rights of the states had already been preempted in migratory waterfowl, I think rightly so because they're not resident in any one state, and they traverse intercontinental and international boundaries.

HKS: But philosophy aside, which is not at all trivial but is extremely important, if you were a forester on a national forest, and you only managed the habitat, wouldn't it make sense to manage the game as well? This is a question I used to ask, you see. I managed the habitat and the state managed the game that used the habitat. I realize you still have to work within your social system, but...

WT: There is a contradiction there, I'll grant you. But largely management of wildlife is management of habitat. Now the harvest is a factor, but if harvest regulations are properly written, harvest becomes really a negligible part in the overall welfare of most species, because habitat is the critical factor. As long as there's production, as long as you're harvesting only the increment, only the production, the population will go on forever.

HKS: We used to go out and count elk, because that’s federal, but we didn't count the deer, that's state. [laughter]

WT: You mean the federal had control of the elk population. There was a proposed federal license involving migratory fish, salmon for example. Also certain species of wildlife that herd over state boundaries, and because of that the federal Fish and Wildlife Service wanted to get into the act of controlling the management. The committee of the International Association met with Stuart Udall, and we expressed our opinion very forcefully, I think. But Udall said, "I'm very busy, I'm going to have to leave." After he left we were irate, and I remember Mel Steen getting up on his high horse saying the secretary made the biggest mistake of his career. He was so forceful that they went and brought the secretary back, and we got it ironed out right there, that the Fish and Wildlife Service is not going to preempt the states' rights in the management of fish and resident wildlife.

HKS: People strongly believed that elk competed with livestock for forage, and so on federal rangelands there was a need to control the elk population.

WT: They're a competitive species; they are both ungulate, and they feed on the same resource. I don't have much western experience, so I wouldn't know the competition rate between cattle and elk. Deer are not much competition with cattle because deer are woody plant browsers rather than grass eaters, so the main competition there would be the destruction of deer habitat by overgrazing of cattle, too many cattle.

HKS: Was it ever an issue where you poisoned or somehow got rid of fish and put in sportier fish, that fight harder?

WT: There've been many efforts made to introduce species of fish that might be more exciting. We tried to introduce northern pike in some of our Missouri waters, but habitat was not there. They may survive but they didn't really thrive too well. No, I don't think we had too much of that. Of course Missouri was blessed with some very fine species. The smallmouth black bass is probably the gamiest of all fishes, if anybody had to take a choice it might be between that and trout, cutthroat or the rainbow.

HKS: Do the states worry that federal money through Clarke-McNary or whatever might somehow weaken their resolve?

WT: I don't think so. There was always a competition to get more of it. Federal appropriations never came up to the level that was allowed. The states were always trying to seek greater federal appropriations. There was a lot of competition, there was a lot of discussion about the formula that would be used to allocate the money. In the Association of State Foresters, that was on the agenda every year. How to allocate Clarke-McNary, Section 2, Section 4, Fire Control, Nursery.

HKS: Was that political in that Congress got involved in the allocation?

WT: No, Congress really didn't get involved in that allocation. Later on the act was amended by Congress so that the allocation could be on a blanket for all programs, and then distributed within the state in accordance with need. Instead of getting a specific allocation for fire, or specific allocation for nursery, there was a blanket allocation to the state, and gave the state jurisdiction. But it all was subject to audit and inspection every year by the Forest Service. But it was not a fight in Congress.

HKS: I could see how a senior congressman would say, "I understand that my state is going to get a little extra on this and that." They're passing out money, and you hear stories about pork barrel. But apparently it wasn't an issue.

WT: Not in the Congress. Those federal funds in forestry have been on the decline for a good many years.

HKS: Isn't that good in the long run that the states are doing it themselves?

WT: I think so. The whole object was to initiate, to get programs started, to give states the help that was needed to get off the ground, to get sources of their own funding. Most of them are now doing it. But the allocation formula was always a topic of very heated discussion between the state foresters.

HKS: Yes, I'm sure.

WT: Incidentally, that's a title I never carried, State Forester.

HKS: Is that right?

WT: Throughout the first eighteen years of my career that was my great aspiration - to be the State Forester, or a state forester. I was interviewed, in fact I took the competitive examination for state forester of Wisconsin shortly before I became assistant director of Missouri, and was number one on their list. They decided after they had picked their slate of candidates that they would stay within the department. So, fortunately, I didn't get the job in Wisconsin, because if I had, I wouldn't have gotten the director's job in Missouri, which was a far bigger and better one.

HKS: Did Osal Capps succeed you?

WT: Osal Capps succeeded me as assistant state forester, yes. When I became assistant director, Osal was my replacement as assistant state forester in charge of fire control and nurseries. Then later when George White retired, I was director, I picked Osal as his successor as state forester. But the job that I aspired to all during the earlier years of my career - state forester - I never held. I skipped from assistant state forester to assistant director. There's a funny thing there, Pete, George White was, as indicated earlier, a tremendous guy, almost like a father to me. We had a great deal of respect for each other. But when I became director I initiated weekly staff conferences, I'd go around the table. Everybody at that staff conference I called by first name, but I still called him Mr. White, and I never was able to change that. Even though I was his boss at that time.

Recreation

HKS: The ORRRC report. Sam Dana had a lot to do with getting that started.

WT: Yes. Sam Dana was a member of the ORRRC task force that developed the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Report. He wasn't chairman of it, but he was very active on it. Frank Briggs, my former commissioner, was assistant secretary of the Interior. Ed Crafts, who left Agriculture, came over to Interior. He was unhappy because he didn't become chief and so he came over to Interior. He was the ramrod, the spearhead over there on Outdoor Recreation Resources Review and helped write the bill. In fact, I served on a committee of the International to help draft that legislation.

HKS: I didn't realize that Ed had left before. I knew he became director of the BOR, but I didn't realize he had left before that.

WT: Yes, he helped draft the legislation that created the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. And I worked very closely with Ed in drafting that and in resolving the differences between federal control and states' rights. This was a key point. And dedication of the recreation fund to acquisition rather than operation and maintenance, that was another big problem. The whole purpose was to acquire valuable lands needed or useful for public purposes before they were lost to development, to inundation or something else. In fact, after the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation was formed and Ed became its first director, he offered me the regional directorship in any region I wanted. Or I could have come into Interior as assistant director of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. But I declined.

HKS: Ed received mixed reviews from everyone I talked to. Really hardworking and so forth, but it struck me as odd that the guy who was supposed to create, make a new agency work, was as waspish as Ed was.

WT: Very able, very brilliant, but prickly. Ed could step on toes very easily.

HKS: I know that. And for a new agency to try to cut across lines. . .

WT: Ed had a great rapport with Congress. You see, he was in charge of planning over in the Forest Service, he was very active in planning and legislation.

HKS: Oh, I see.

WT: Congressional contacts, and he took that with him over to Interior.

HKS: You defer to the Congress when you're testifying, so his personality may not have come out.

WT: Well, Ed was a bright guy. He was a lot of help to me after I came to the AFA, too.

HKS: Were you involved in ORRRC yourself?

WT: No, not as a member of the commission. But I was very active representing the fish wildlife and forestry interests at the time. Joe Penfold and others were on the commission, and we had regular meetings and contact with them in the process of development of the ORRRC report, and later in its implementation. But no, I never served on the commission.

HKS: They changed the name of BOR to Heritage, and then it ceased to exist. A lack of constituency? There never was really a need for BOR?

WT: I never could quite figure out the demise either. I think it never got the status or the support it needed. I think there was jealousy too between Ed and the National Park Service. The National Park Service was...

HKS: The White House was always looking for something to chop out, and the BOR was something probably that was pretty vulnerable.

WT: The main outcome, of course, of BOR was the Land and Water Conservation Fund. That is a program that has accomplished great good for both the federal

and the state because it provided a source of money to acquire lands. The whole purpose of the Outdoor Recreation study to begin with was the fear of losing a lot of valuable wetlands and scenic areas that otherwise would be lost if not acquired. But it gave the states almost an impossible job because it enabled them to acquire a lot of lands, but provided no source of money to manage, to develop. To acquire lands is one thing, but to develop them for public use is another.

Related Institutions

HKS: Is there formal coordination with organizations like the Nature Conservancy?

WT: Oh yes. Nature Conservancy has played a vital role in the Land and Water, Conservation Fund program. Nature Conservancy is able to move in immediately with underwritten funds, loans that can be made for immediate acquisition to acquire lands while they're available and then go through the slow process of governmental appropriation, come back and buy them from Nature Conservancy. That's one of the finest programs, I think, that has been conceived by the private sector.

HKS: Is there any actual coordination with the Conservancy? Is it pretty well sure there's a federal market for this land?

WT: Yes. There is very close coordination. In many cases the government would go to Nature Conservancy and say this is something we got to have, this is something we want, it's now available. I turned that Nature Conservancy job down, by the way, back in its infancy.

HKS: We did a short article on Nature Conservancy in the *Journal* a few years ago, and we became even more aware of the internal division between the scientists, who only wanted to preserve ecologically significant areas, and the Conservancy that also needs to generate money.

WT: The inner workings, I don't know. I'm trying to think of the young man's name that did such a good job, when he was head of Nature Conservancy, Tom something, he really brought that thing up into a major contributing force in acquisition.

HKS: But it's run state by state though. There's a North Carolina Nature Conservancy.

WT: These are chapters, affiliates, but largely there's the national affiliation, national group, that has the money. People like Rockefeller would put up a line of credit, for example. It's a line of credit that could be borrowed upon, and then when the land is finally acquired, then sold or transferred, it's reimbursed. But that's a freedom of movement that federal and state agencies don't have.

HKS: On the Water Pollution Control Board are a lot of nationally prominent names.

WT: That's my second entry into the national scene. I told you about the Legislative Committee of the International Association. That brought me in contact with a lot of federal agencies. My predecessor in Missouri, I. T. Bode, was a member of the federal president's Water Pollution Control Advisory Board

for a year or two before he left Missouri. But water quality, water pollution control at that time was one of the key issues of the conservation movement for the International Association, and particularly Fish and Wildlife people, and the government effort was very dismal. It was a part of the Surgeon General's program over in Health, Education and Welfare, and as Maurice Goddard used to say, in the "sub-sub basement" of HEW. They had a meager water pollution control effort which was largely advisory and educational. But it was the conservation forces that brought this to a head. General Eisenhower, at our request, called the first national conference on water pollution in Washington, D.C. A lot of us from the states came in and testified to try to get something started in the way of cleaning up the nation's waters. Industry was there, municipalities were there, both claiming that it's not our problem. Industry would say it's the cities', the cities would say it's industry, and nobody was taking care of things.

HKS: The focus at that time was industry, as opposed to silvicultural practices.

WT: Yes. Forestry wasn't even considered as a water pollution source at that time. But it was the conservation people, it was the Joe Penfolds and the Ira Gabrielsons. I was a part of that movement that created a great demand for some national attention to the water pollution control effort. We helped draft the first water pollution control bill. I've got one of the pens - I was in the White House when it was signed - in there on the wall that was used to sign the bill. I can remember the statement I made at the hearing that we had heard enough of this industry saying it's not their fault, and government and cities saying it's not their fault, everybody's to blame, and the important thing is to get at this, get some law with teeth in it, and particularly let's get a program started in cleaning up the waters.

I got appointed to the Federal Water Pollution Control Advisory Board by President Kennedy. This is a little bit interesting in itself. I had been recommended for that appointment; it's a presidential appointment. I was bypassed for a year. We got Harry Truman, my fellow Missourian, to write a letter to President Kennedy. "Dear Mr. President, I hope that next time that you're making appointments to this very important board that you'll consider our state conservation director here in Missouri, William E. Towell." I got a copy of the reply from Kennedy back to Truman. It says, "Dear Mr. President, you can be sure that the very next appointment that I make to that board will be Mr. Towell. In the meantime, I am asking the secretary of HEW to appoint him as a consultant to serve with the board until such time as his appointment, until such time as there is a vacancy." Incidentally, that appointment, is dated the 19th day of November 1963. He was killed on the 22nd day of November. He left that day or the next day to go to Texas. And that probably is the last presidential appointment that Kennedy made before he was killed.

HKS: That's interesting.

WT: Jim Quigley was a member of Congress and he was head of the president's Water Pollution Control Advisory Board. Jim Quigley was the HEW officer in charge of that Board. We wrote and helped push through Congress the new Federal Water Pollution Control Act. I testified on it and helped write the law and had hearings with the committee all over the country. I was very active at that time.

HKS: Tell me about Charlie Callison.

WT: Charlie is a crusader. Charlie worked for us out in Missouri you know. Charlie was assistant chief of I&E in the Missouri Department of Conservation when I was assistant state forester. I took Charlie on a trip down to our fire districts one time for a show-me trip. I always carry a fly rod in the back of the car. He saw it and says, "What is that?" I said it's a flyrod. He said you mean you can really catch a fish on one of those little feathery things? Charlie wasn't a fisherman, wasn't a hunter, he was an outdoor writer. So we'd been on the road together for two or three days, and he said, "I'd like to see that." So we crossed the upper Meramec and, I pulled the car off onto the shoulder of the road. I picked up my fly rod, put a squirrel tail on the thing. There was a nice riffle coming into the banks against the weeds. The first cast and I pulled out a nice smallmouth bass. Charlie couldn't believe it. He told that story many times.

HKS: He went on to the Public Lands Institute in Denver.

WT: That was much later. Charlie came to Washington with the National Wildlife Federation. Was there a short while.

HKS: We may be jumping ahead, but let's talk about Callison, Tom Kimball, and Jay Hair, who spoke at Duke a few weeks ago. How does a coalition of hunters become such staunch environmentalists in the modern term of environmentalists? I mean their constituency's so diverse. The National Wildlife Federation is really hardcore environmentalist these days.

WT: It created a lot of problems and dissension within the Federation. I was on the board of the Federation for nine years, up until last year. I went off a year ago last March. The Federation was formed by hunting and fishing clubs, every little town, every little county, becoming affiliated into a state conservation federation group, and the state affiliated with the national. It's one of the newer conservation organizations. It wasn't even started until the 1940s, but has grown to be, by far, the biggest and the strongest and it's unbelievable what has happened. When I first went on the board of directors, our budget was six or eight million dollars and now it's over sixty million. But there are many who feel the Federation has abdicated its strong support for the hunter and the fisherman.

HKS: I would say so from what I heard Jay Hair say.

WT: I criticized the Federation for joining coalitions with the Wilderness Society and the Friends of the Earth and the Sierra Club. Not that their causes aren't good, but I think it diminishes the use and management aspect that made the Federation. I was a dissident voice my nine years on that board, because I could see them becoming more and more anti-timber cutting, anti-harvest, all refuge, all wilderness. Tom Kimball fought that, and I think was able to bridge that pretty well. But when Jay came in, they just shifted over.

HKS: Jay was introduced as president and CEO. The board actually hasn't much power right now as long as they want Jay to be there.

WT: That change was made my last year as a director. I opposed it. Jay said that the head of the National Audubon Society was president, in other major groups the chief executive officer had the title of president. I think it took away some of the grass-roots control, at least the image of control that I think made the Federation strong. Jay is a very capable guy. But Jay was never well liked and accepted by the conservation community.

HKS: Jay introduced himself as an environmentalist, he said the term. It was the forestry school's fiftieth anniversary, so to that audience he said that he was an environmentalist.

WT: We all are. Anybody in resources management is a conservationist and an environmentalist, but Jay wants that image. It makes money. That's why their membership grows 16 - 17 percent a year, why their income has gone steadily up. The public can understand preservation. The public readily accepts restriction, much more so than use and liberalization. When I was director in Missouri, the easiest thing in the world to sell was a shorter season, reduced bag limit, because the public felt that was good protection, good conservation. The hardest thing to sell was liberalization. We were fortunate back there opening the deer season to any deer the first year we proposed it. We knew that a harvest of any deer population involved taking the females as well as the bucks. But we conditioned our public to accept it. Many of the states still haven't done it, the Lake States for example, they still want to hunt only bucks. Pennsylvania let their deer population get completely out of control because they didn't harvest them, they didn't control it. It's awfully easy to sell preservation, to sell protection, but it's difficult...

Increased Federal Involvement

HKS: I'm not holding you accountable for the national election, but why doesn't Dukakis win? There doesn't seem to be a constituency for more government, and yet timber is an environmental issue, and people do accept that.

WT: Because of the dismal record we've experienced of other administrations. I was Carter's strongest supporter in the conservation community. Tom Kimball and I were whole heartedly for Carter. He was one of the worse when he came up there to Washington as far as conservation was concerned. And that's one of the reasons I retired early, I got so disgusted and fed up with the government effort, even though he was a Democratic president.

HKS: McGuire said Carter ran against the bureaucracy and it really hampered him when he got there.

WT: Yes.

HKS: That's who does the work.

WT: He couldn't use the bureaucracy and the most capable people. You won't mind a little personal animosity here. I was up for assistant secretary of agriculture for forestry and soil and water conservation, and I was one of two finalists. At that time Rupe Cutler had been with the Wilderness Society, had an insignificant job up in Michigan, but he had the support of the preservation groups, and Rupe Cutler got the job. I was going to use it just as a phase-out for my last three or four years in Washington. But even so Rupe Cutler turned out to be pretty good. He was one of the better appointments that Carter made as far as resources, land management, and land use are concerned. But after two years of trying to get through four levels of White House bureaucracy to even get any message to the president, I said the hell with it and I retired early just to get out of there. I felt ineffective.

HKS: McGuire's anecdote about going to the White House to help Carter plant the tree, and he wasn't sure that Carter was even aware there was a federal Forest

Service. It is probably a bit of an exaggeration, but it does suggest a lack of ties to the White House, too, for the Forest Service.

WT: Actually I was supposed to get that appointment, because a delegation went down to Plains and saw Carter on a Sunday. Fish and wildlife, forestry people, and he says alright we'll go with Towell on that appointment. But he tried to call Bergland, the designated secretary that Sunday, didn't reach him, and I guess after that he forgot it. Fortunately I didn't get it. Remember in John McGuire's interview he said one of the things they were fearful of was they'd appoint somebody else as chief. Well Rupe Cutler was the guy that aspired to that job.

HKS: John suggested that. Being chief of the Forest Service is more secure than being assistant secretary.

WT: But Rupe Cutler was the guy who wanted to get John's job. Well, as I say, Rupe turned out pretty good. His loyalties were still to preservation and wilderness, and the wilderness controversy was the biggest issue facing any of us at that time.

HKS: Getting back to the Water Pollution Control Board. We talked a little bit about Charlie Callison, and you mentioned Biggs, Warren, and Clapper and others.

WT: Well, those are good strong conservation names that I served with. Maurice Goddard and I served together.

HKS: Is that the Goddard chair at Penn State, Goddard?

WT: Yes. Maurice Goddard was commissioner of lands and waters in the state of Pennsylvania. Maurice and I were good friends. Hal Wilm in New York and Maurice Goddard in Pennsylvania and later Gerald Eddy in Michigan, I forget who in Indiana and Ohio. We had a coalition of agency state directors. We became great friends. Goddard and I served on the pollution control board together. Callison was on there, and went off shortly before I did. John Biggs and I served together. These were all state resource people.

HKS: What was your counterpart in the urban end of pollution, which is where most of it came from?

WT: Nothing but resistance. The Pollution Board met in Honolulu at the same time that the National Conference of Mayors was in session out there. Kennedy came to Hawaii and spoke to that group. That was just prior to passage of the legislation creating the new federal water pollution control administration. The cities came along, because they saw in it an opportunity to get the needed money from the big federal fund that we got authorized up in the billions of dollars. It was the first real effort twenty years ago to make headway in the water quality effort. Jim Quigley, you know, was appointed the first director of the federal Water Pollution program over in Interior. Then they created the Environmental Protection Agency, and pulled it out of Interior and gave it to that new agency. It would have died over in Interior the same way it died over in HEW. Federal Water Quality Administration was first assigned to Interior and then transferred to E.P.A.

HKS: Where did Ruckelshaus come in? How did he fit into that?

WT: Well, Ruckelshaus came into Washington first as a Congressman, a bright young guy out in Indiana. He came back to Washington with the Council on Environmental Quality, CEQ, which Russ Train was the head of.

HKS: Train came out of Audubon didn't he?

WT: Yes. Train came out of Audubon as the first chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality and Ruckelshaus was one of his first members. When the Environmental Protection Agency was formed Russ Train became its first head and he was followed by Ruckelshaus. Ruckelshaus became head of CEQ. That's where he made his name, over in the Environmental Protection Agency. But we used to meet with them and CEQ almost every week. I say we, the Natural Resources Council, the heads of various citizens' conservation groups.

HKS: The legal purpose of that instrument is to report to the president directly on environmental quality?

WT: That's right.

HKS: Who in the White House actually got the mail? Who was in the White House?

WT: Well, Johnson, followed by Nixon and Ford, followed by Carter, those were the three I served during my twelve years in Washington. It never exerted much influence.

HKS: Haldeman, I guess, was Nixon's environmentalist so to speak. Who was it in the Johnson White House? Lady Bird is beautifying the country, but. . .

WT: There wasn't anybody you could put your finger on.

HKS: You wonder. As an historian you go to the library and you pull these reports off the shelf and you read them, and you think boy this is good stuff, but you don't know who read them at the time, or did they actually make any difference.

WT: I don't think the Council on Environmental Quality ever carried much weight. But the Council on Environmental Quality tried to perpetrate an executive order on clearcutting. That came out of CEQ. The preservation groups got to CEQ and got them to write this executive order, and we came awfully close to having the president issue a directive to prohibit the U.S. Forest Service from ever engaging in any clearcutting on the national forests.

HKS: Russ the head of that board?

WT: Yes.

HKS: Under what law? Water pollution?

WT: No, not under water pollution but the Environmental Quality Act. CEQ covered the whole environmental field. Council on Environmental Quality represents every environmental activity, it wasn't just for water.

HKS: That obviously would have been challenged in the courts or something. You think it would have been binding? Could President Reagan do that?

WT: I imagine he could have done it. It would have violated the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act which said the National Forests would be managed for all of these purposes.

HKS: That's right.

WT: But clearcutting was a method of timber management that should not be specifically authorized or prohibited in law. Yes, he could have done it.

HKS: It's my understanding that after the Monongahela decision, the Sierra Club decided not to push the concept across the country because clearcutting was so significant in the Pacific Northwest that they would have lost the ballgame.

WT: Yes.

HKS: I hadn't heard this before about an executive order banning clearcutting.

WT: It failed for the same reason. Once we got wind of the executive order that was about to be issued, or at least trying to get the president to issue it, when nearly all of the forestry community, particularly forest industry people who had great clout, got to the president and squelched it right there. This is of course what later became the National Forest Management Act, in which again they tried to abolish clearcutting or limit clearcutting by statute.

HKS: What's the most significant thing about EPA and National Environmental Policy Act in terms of forestry? Is it impact statements?

WT: Probably the greatest obstacle that they've thrown is the environmental impact statement, which has become a tail wagging the dog.

HKS: My understanding is that NEPA is written primarily for the urban situation, where most of the people and pollution are, and it's pretty clumsy to apply in rural areas. They hadn't thought that through. So after some of these scares were over, how significant is NEPA for silviculture?

WT: It's been a bottleneck. It's been a problem in terms of silviculture, because non-point source of pollution is very difficult to measure, it's very difficult to define, and is, in my opinion, been magnified into a much greater problem than it really is.

HKS: You were in AFA when NEPA was going through. I've looked back through *Journal of Forestry* and *American Forests* and I don't recall people holding up a flag on impact statements.

WT: Well, I do. When they deliver one environmental impact statement that's carried in six volumes...

HKS: While the bill is being debated.

WT: When the bill is being debated, no.

HKS: Who anticipated...

WT: Oh nobody anticipated.

HKS: Everyone was generally in favor of the bill.

WT: Yes. The idea is excellent, but it became an obstacle.

HKS: Was there opposition to NEPA when it was going through? In any significant amount? American Mining Congress, or NFPA or...

WT: I don't remember anybody really opposing it.

HKS: I don't either.

WT: The concept was fine: that there should be an assessment of environmental impact before any project involving public lands, public funds, is involved. And that still makes good sense.

HKS: But it also proposed the creation of EPA, right?

WT: Yes.

HKS: And that's a new federal agency. It seems to me somebody would have been opposed to that other than the OMB, which is always opposed to those sorts of things.

WT: What we were trying to do was to get a focus on environmental activities that the federal government lacked. CEQ and Environmental Protection Agency were at least both recognizing the fact that their major conservation problems were not being addressed by Agriculture, by Interior, by other federal agencies.

HKS: It's a couple of decades later, but what does this do to states' rights?

WT: No question about it that every year sees greater reduction of states' rights and greater invasion of federal domination in whatever field it is.

HKS: The states don't resist like they used to. Not as outspoken.

WT: They're not as vocal. One of the attempts to answer some of that was in the block grants proposal, whereby instead of doling out money for water quality, for fish and wildlife or urban programs, that there would be an allotment of money to the state for whatever need or purpose it saw fit. That didn't get off the ground either. I remember I testified against it, I said the idea of block grants sounds good, but I'm afraid that the fields that I'm interested in, water, air quality, conservation, forestry, fish and wildlife, will come out on the short end of the stick because the municipalities and the other big state programs will gobble it all up. I remember one of the senators saying, "Well you're for it, but you don't want it to apply to you." I said, "Well, I guess that's right." I remember he challenged me.

HKS: The 60s really saw the development of the environmental movement and the civil rights movement, and politically they were intermixed. But on the resource side of it, was it more or less difficult to get things through? Like say, the southerner might be concerned about federal domination in the environment because it might carry over into education?

WT: Yes, this was a developmental stage of the whole environmental conservation movement. Sixties and the early 70s. We just went from almost disinterest in all these things to overwhelming public interest and concern.

HKS: Do you think *Silent Spring* merits the claim it's been getting as the trigger for...

WT: It is probably the most visible, tangible thing that happened at that time. It awakened a lot of people. There was almost indiscriminate use of DDT, instead of applying one pound per acre, they'd apply ten pounds - the stuff was being poured around. I think it awakened the public to the point where Earth Day and the environmental movement got its upswing. I can't really put my finger on any other trigger more significant than Rachel Carson's book.

HKS: It strikes me that *Silent Spring* must have given a boost to the wilderness bill.

WT: Oh yes. The wilderness bill had languished in Congress for at least six or eight years, and was getting nowhere. But it came along at the very early stages of the environmental movement.

It's kind of hazy to put it all back into years, but that was a period that I was serving on the Water Pollution Board. We ran into some tragic things. Went up to Alaska for example, and those poor Alaskan natives had no system whatsoever for their waste. They just went out on the tundra, out on the snow or out into the bays, and the government would have an installation with federal water source, good clean water, and the natives were not even allowed to use that source of water, or to use their septic system. We went out into Pearl Harbor and saw all the sewage from all that immense federal installation boiling up out in the middle of the harbor, raising the water level three or four feet by the force of the boil of crap and condoms and this untreated waste. This is the federal government. And every ship in the navy dumped all of its waste right in the harbor wherever it was anchored or tied up, the federal government was one of the greatest offenders. These are the things that the Federal Water Pollution Board focused on.

HKS: Ed Cliff, rightly or wrongly, caught a lot of flack for the statement that he made that the Forest Service, with all of its staff, was not prepared for the environmental 60s and 70s. Was any federal agency, BLM, Park Service or anyone else, any more astute than the Forest Service in responding?

WT: Oh no, I don't think so. BLM was far behind the Forest Service in recognizing the problem. BLM was professionally only half way up to the Forest Service. Park Service may have been a little more in step with public concern because they had been principally a preservation type agency. They have a lot of national parks, and we don't cut timber on national parks, even back then. So they were more in tune, I think, with the environmental movement.

HKS: It takes a while to change the course of an institution. You have statutes to deal with, you have personnel that are under civil service. You don't just fire a whole outfit and bring a bunch of new people in. I wasn't really sure how Ed felt people would take his statement, but he didn't get much favorable review for making that statement, "Hey we haven't been doing our job." He was the chief, and he ought to...

WT: Ed was absolutely right, and he was very perceptive, and I counseled with Ed a great deal after I came to Washington. Ed Cliff, Dick McArdle, Henry Clepper, Sam Dana; I couldn't find better counsel than those people. In fact, it was Ed Cliff and Dick McArdle who suggested the Areas of Agreement Committee. They said why doesn't AFA do something to try to bring these issues together. That was when the pollution control board meant something. It later became just a figurehead more than anything else.

HKS: How much clout does a budget director have? Do they actually get in and look at environmental issues? Unless you've got a constituency in favor, it goes out, right?

WT: The purse strings are held by the OMB. When I was there they always had a forester on the staff. He generally came out of the Forest Service or some other agency.

HKS: Is that right? I didn't know that.

WT: We tried to exert more effort at OMB level than almost anyplace else. If you don't get it written into the president's budget you might as well forget it. There are a few exceptions to that, but OMB exerts a whale of a lot of clout. And getting in at the right time to see the guy with the pencil in his hand is essential. It's the same way with legislation. You don't deal with the congressman, the senator, you don't often deal with his legislative chief, you deal with the committees, the committee staff. Usually the chief of the committee staff is too busy for you, but someplace along the line you have somebody on every congressional committee who wields a pencil. And those are the guys you get close to. Same way over at OMB, the specialist in whatever field you're interested in has great influence. Of course he's working under a mandate from the administration that we're going to...

HKS: Balance the budget.

WT: Balance the budget, we're going to cut, and of course it's always a constant battle to get in there.

American Forestry Association

HKS: I've browsed through *American Forests* of 1967 through 1978 to see what was going on in terms of the magazine. I noticed that Fred Hornaday served as executive vice-president for a year, and I assumed that was because he was being near to retirement age. But he was there one year and then you came in.

WT: Fred was there for a number of years.

HKS: He was at the organization for a long time, but he was executive vice-president one year.

WT: It was more than that, but he was kept on two years after I came as a so-called consultant.

HKS: I saw that too. I didn't know how you felt about that.

WT: It was a cross I had to bear. Now Fred was a lot easier to get along with than some of the others.

HKS: By the way, Bill. If there's some aspect where you'd like to be fully candid but you wouldn't want to harm Neil in some way, it's a standard archival process to place that portion of the interview under seal.

WT: Fred Hornaday had been with AFA for many many years, he was the business manager. Actually I think you misread the dates, he was executive vice-president more than one year before I came up there.

HKS: It could be.

WT: I think it was quite a period of time. Fred Hornaday had been the business manager. His whole background had been in finance in fundraising, budget, membership, and advertising. But when he was appointed chief executive officer, executive vice-president, he held onto those functions. Ken Pomeroy was named chief forester, and Ken was totally the policy man. Ken Pomeroy spoke for the American Forestry Association on legislation and policy and professional forestry. The tree program. Jim Craig, on the other hand, was editor who ran a magazine, who had no influence at all directed at him or over him except budgetary, and the advertising that Fred Hornaday sold. There was a three-headed organization when I went up. Each defending his own turf.

HKS: Defending it to the board?

WT: Sure. The board would deal directly with Ken Pomeroy on policy, they'd deal directly with Jim Craig on magazine, they'd deal directly with Fred Hornaday on budget, finances, and membership.

HKS: Was this a plan or did it just evolve?

WT: It evolved as a three-headed monster. When I came in, I had been administrator of a lot bigger program than that. I jokingly said, "I left an organization with a fifteen million dollar budget and five hundred employees to go here and take charge of an organization with less than a million dollars and ten employees." But, you know, it's a different level, a different scene. Ken Pomeroy had told the board that he didn't want to be chief executive, but after I was appointed chief executive, being a forester, he resented it greatly. He did want to be his own spokesman. He wanted to control the association's policy statement. Jim Craig was a free-wheeling editor. He controlled the magazine, and Fred Hornaday never attempted to tell him what he would put in that magazine, except we had a prohibition against I think liquor ads, a few things of that nature. But Jim ran his show, Ken Pomeroy ran his show, and Fred ran his show, and to make my problem even worse, they kept Fred on, moved him upstairs into a private office with a secretary for two years after I took over, and they told him that his job was fundraiser. To my knowledge he never raised a dime in the two years he sat there. I took his secretary away from him finally because she didn't have anything to do. Of course Fred resented it a bit. But Fred was really a pleasure to work with. Jim was fine. Jim took orders, he accepted overall authority more quickly, but Ken was, Ken was somewhat of a problem.

HKS: We're a little bit ahead of the story now. There was an opening; you applied for it or you were invited to apply?

WT: Let me tell you about that. I had made quite a reputation in Missouri, Missouri having the best constitutional authority. They searched nationwide for, hopefully a forester, with a wider background to become chief executive of the American Forestry Association. I didn't even know the search was going on. They started out with a hundred names, so I was told later by Maurice Goddard and Peter Watzek and others, and they finally came down to my name as the top choice, primarily because I was a forester who had ten years of fish and game administrative background, serving on the federal Water Pollution Control Board, had been active in the international association and legislative affairs, and knew my way around Washington.

I had just been elected as a director of the American Forestry Association. Dan Poole was on the nominating committee. He said there's a young director out in

Missouri that you ought to get on your board, and he nominated me and I was elected to the board and went to my first meeting at Williamsburg. I got in there at night. They were having a cocktail party, and I was standing around and Maurice Goddard came up to me and says, "Towell, I hope you accept that thing you're going to offer you." I said, "What's that?" "Oh, don't you know yet?" "Well you will." The next morning Peter Watzek came to me and said "I'd like to talk with you." He said they'd been over a year doing a nationwide search for a chief executive for the American Forestry Association, and my name had come to the top. Would I come to Washington. Well I was the highest paid state fish and game director in the country, in Missouri. I had the best program in terms again of constitutional authority, and Missouri was looked up to by the other states, and I had turned down directorships in three or four other states, including Michigan, to stay in Missouri. But I had always felt in my own mind that I would go to Washington if either one of two jobs came up: Head of the Wildlife Management Institute, Ira Gabrielson's job, or head of the National Wildlife Federation, Ernie Swift's and then Tom Kimball's job. The American Forestry Association never occurred to me. When they hit me with it at Williamsburg, I thought well I'm fifty years old, if I'm going to make a career change now is the time to do it. AFA enjoyed probably as fine a reputation as any conservation group in Washington, a very proud record of legislative accomplishment and achievement. You go back into the history of AFA and the setting aside of the forest reserves, the original Weeks Act, the Clarke-McNary Act, the Civilian Conservation Corps, all came out of AFA involvement. I thought, this is the one. So, even though my salary increase to go to Washington at that time was only twenty-five hundred dollars, which actually meant taking a great drop, I decided that this is the one I wanted, and I went. But that's where I got into the three-headed thing that we encountered.

HKS: How much of this did you know? I mean, was there an interview process where they said they'd hire you but you...

WT: I never knew anything about it. I never was interviewed. I was called in and was said that I had been selected on the basis of my background to be the chief executive, would I take it? I was never interviewed...

HKS: So they offered you a job and that's the first..., that's interesting.

WT: It was interesting. My wife and I went out to dinner that night. Udall had offered me an assistant secretaryship. He wanted me to come in as deputy assistant secretary for a year, then take over Stan Cain's assistant secretary slot. And I told you about the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. There were a number of federal opportunities that I had had that I turned down, but my wife, Virginia, and I had decided that eventually we would probably end up in Washington. So this hit us right between the eyes, and we went out to dinner that night and talked about it, and decided alright, let's take it. We called and told our daughter, and told her not to announce it until we got back. It was a complete surprise. We had anticipated some move to Washington, but hadn't thought about the American Forestry Association.

HKS: You sort of already answered this next question, this general question I was going to ask after browsing through *American Forests*, how the magazine related to the organization. It probably does more now than it did when Jim was editor.

WT: Well, it didn't, and Jim somewhat resented this. Jim was a good editor. Jim was a good newspaper man and a hell of a good writer.

HKS: It's not a rigorous analysis and I'm sure I missed things, but I tabulated articles by categories. In 1967, six articles on Redwood Park. That's the most articles on any single subject that year. Next year was four more articles on that park.

WT: Hot issue.

HKS: Hot issue. Was it a hot issue to the members of the American Forestry Association? That's the question I'm asking, does the magazine reflect the membership?

WT: No. Jim Craig was a newspaper reporter. He was hot on any subject that made news.

HKS: It was a great story.

WT: And he loved controversy. This was why Mike Frome was so dear to Jim Craig. Jim Craig thought Mike Frome was the greatest thing that ever lived because he created controversy with every column he wrote. Challenged the Forest Service, the trade associations, and he evoked lots of response, lots of letters. Jim thought this was just great, and he was really encouraging Mike to say things that he knew would be controversial. I can remember one of Mike's columns that ended up on my desk before Jim saw it, and attached to it was a note from Mike Frome to Jim, "This ought to keep the pot boiling a while." It had a statement in there that "the forests of this nation are too precious to entrust to professional foresters."

HKS: I can see that it would rankle some. [laughter]

WT: You've looked at the magazine. I had an article, "Mineral King: A Golden Opportunity."

HKS: That's right.

WT: I thought it was a great opportunity when Disney proposed to establish that beautiful ski area in a valley which has already been desecrated by mining, by grazing, by roads, and allow nobody in except by tramway with a parking lot miles below. With Disney's reputation for quality, I thought it was great. And in the same issue, Mike Frome's column was against it. Completely opposite viewpoints.

HKS: Who establishes policy?

WT: That's right.

HKS: But in a sense you were, through the magazine.

WT: When I arrived there I began to set the policy.

HKS: How about testifying for or against legislation.

WT: I did all...

HKS: Did you check with a board committee on...

WT: They gave me authority to act on my own best judgment. If I had time, if the bill was of such nature that I could review it with and for the directors, tell

them what I recommend I would. If I didn't have time to, go ahead. If I make too many mistakes they said, we'll get rid of you.

HKS: I wondered what the magazine means in terms of organization status.

WT: The magazine did not and wasn't intended to at that time, by Jim at least, to reflect the positions or policy too much by AFA. It was a news magazine of interest to anybody in the forestry environmental field. Jim somewhat resented the fact that we would question anything he would want to put in there. Mike Frome was not the only question. I said, "Jim, I don't want to be a super editor, I don't want to review any articles that go in that magazine before I see it in print, but I expect you to reflect the philosophy, the policies that are established by AFA."

HKS: That's an interesting concept, that it's a news magazine. And when Redwood Park's news, you write about Redwood Park.

WT: Yes. That was a big issue at the time, and of course the position of AFA was that we had already pretty well preserved the redwoods in state parks out there. But you know the public sentiment was, "don't cut a redwood."

HKS: You have the broad forester image, I begin to see now that it was your mandate to yourself when you were hired. When they gave you the job they probably asked you what you were going to do.

WT: If you read the first thing I ever put in *American Forests*, it expresses it better than anything I could say now. "This I believe." There's my conservation philosophy in one page. The last editorial I wrote for *American Forests* repeated that, twelve years later. In fact, I referred to it, and said I hadn't changed my mind.

HKS: Obviously it worked, but I'm still just a little bit confused. When you had the Dunns and the Kauferts and the Garratts on the AFA board, I'm surprised that they didn't come in and say, "Here’s your agenda."

WT: I came to work the first of January and had a board meeting in March, and they questioned me. They said, "Well, what's your program." I said I haven't been here long enough to develop a program, but I guarantee you that before we have another meeting, I will have presented to you my program for the American Forestry Association, and at the October meeting I did. I think it was thirty some points. They said we accept your program, not being final approval, but proceed. This is your program, go ahead. I got along pretty well with that board. I had their backing, their support and their confidence.

I had a great rapport with Paul Dunn and Peter Watzek, who was the president when I came in, followed by Paul Dunn, followed by Charlie Connaughton and others in succession.

HKS: But you took over at a time that the environmental movement was in its most radical stage. Do you think there would have been...

WT: We came to it, we came to forks in the road shortly after I came there, and it culminated in this Mike Frome problem. We reached a point where AFA was either going to take this wide open swing with the environmental movement and join the bandwagon, or we were going to stick to our guns and stand up for professionalism, for management, for wise use, as contrasted to preservation. The preservation movement is pretty much against everything. They're for more

refuges, all wilderness, no cutting. Let me give you an example. A member, Gordon Robinson, was a forester with the Sierra Club.

HKS: I interviewed Gordon; he was my first interview.

WT: Okay. He came into AFA offices and went to Jim Craig. Jim reported the conversation. The Sierra Club has saved about all the rivers it could, created about all the national parks, and we feel the urge for national park quality, now we're going after the national forests. We're going to take the national forests away from the Forest Service. We're going to make parks and wilderness out of these national forests, because we don't like the way the Forest Service is managing them. Mike Frome was following this same line of reasoning. The forests of this nation are too valuable to be entrusted to foresters. They're a public trust. AFA had to make a decision at that point, whether we were going to go along with the groundswell of environmental emotionalism or whether we were going to stand up for the principles that we believed in. This is what the whole Mike Frome affair was about. Of course Jim loved it because...

HKS: Made news.

WT: Made news. But there was actually a coalition, I understand. I've never been able to prove this, they met at the Cosmos Club and adopted as their objective to take over *American Forests* as a voice of this new environmental movement. There were people who felt that this magazine was better known, better established, and would be an excellent vehicle to carry this message out. My board threatened me, saying "you get control of Jim Craig, you get control and throttle that Mike Frome. You will do this or else." I recorded some notes during the executive session of the board, I was the only one there besides the board members. "You either control them or we will."

HKS: Administratively I certainly support that position that if you're going to have someone in charge, Jim would answer to you, you answered to the board. Obviously it worked that way before, but...

WT: It hadn't worked that way before, that was part of the problem. Jim resented that intrusion on his turf. And as I say, I liked Jim, I think he was a great editor. But he himself was a non-professional in our field. To him it was easier to understand protection, preservation, than it was management, cutting, killing, and Jim was susceptible to Mike Frome's type of writing. You know Mike Frome got fired from *Field and Stream* the same way he did...

HKS: Is that right?

WT: Yes, later on.

HKS: I noticed that Jim's editorials were hard-hitting, controversial.

WT: Yes.

HKS: And Bill Rooney's are soft - son is born, the leaves are changing colors. I suspect this was part of what you looked for in a new editor when Jim retired. We really didn't jump that much ahead of the story because this was going on at AFA at the time the environmental stuff was happening. I want to find out who makes the decisions, who is accountable...

WT: Ken Pomeroy resented tremendously another forester. He carried the title of Chief Forester of the American Forestry Association. I told him, "Ken, that's a

misnomer." He said, "The board gave me that title." He guarded it very jealously, and I can understand that. We traveled abroad together on these AFA tours. I used to sit back and watch Ken; he would present himself as the Chief Forester of the American Forestry Association, which to them, to those foreigners, far outranked the executive vice-president, you see. He wanted that image. I let him play along with it, because basically, our philosophies were pretty close together. Ken was a little bit more pro-industry than I would have been, a little bit more on that side. But basically we were pretty close together. I remember our ages were similar and our backgrounds were similar, both foresters, and I think he resented somewhat some of the fringe conservation issues that we got into.

HKS: Did you say earlier that he didn't want to be executive vice-president?

WT: I think that he, like many people have done, think that they're imminently qualified and the only one there that really should be appointed. When he told them this, he didn't really mean it. When they decided to go ahead, he resented it. If they had picked a business manager, if they'd picked a congressman or somebody unrelated to forestry as a profession, I think he would have accepted it alright. I don't think he wanted the headache of budgets and memberships and all that thing, but he wanted to keep his role as the policy spokesman on the Hill and with the agencies, which he handled exclusively. And he did very well. Ken was a very capable guy. But he did resent me.

HKS: Let's talk about broadening forestry's image, by that you mean it's more than silviculture.

WT: That editorial right there says the whole thing.

HKS: How do you do this with an organization?

WT: I wanted the American Forestry Association to do what the National Wildlife Federation did, but they went to extremes. The Federation was an organization of fish and wildlife protection and management and primarily a spokesman organization for the hunter and fisherman. Look what it's become. I wanted AFA to be a broad environmental agency on the same level as the National Audubon Society or the National Wildlife Federation, all working along with wildlife managers, Wildlife Management Institute, Sport Fishing Institute, and those groups.

HKS: Did this start with the board? You had a pretty narrow board. Narrow in the sense...

WT: Yes. But the board hired me because they wanted that broad image.

HKS: Did the board have much turnover where you could bring in a fisheries person and a waters person on the board? Not you personally, but the nominating process.

WT: The nominating process endeavored to do this. Durwood Allen in wildlife, for example. I was elected to the board originally as a fish and wildlife representative. I never served as a director, I went to my first meeting but I had to resign from the board the day I took the job, which I did. I wanted to see AFA join the Izaak Walton League, the Audubon Society, and National Wildlife as an umbrella conservation agency involved in all conservation issues but with a focus on forestry. The only one with the forestry focus but involved in water

quality, air quality, wilderness, fish and wildlife. I wrote major articles for the magazine on fish and wildlife.

HKS: I saw that as I was going through the magazine.

WT: That's what they told me when they offered me the job. We want to broaden our image. A lot of people think that we are nothing but an association of industry people. It was to a great extent then. Industry and the Forest Service were the principal supporters and members of AFA.

HKS: Membership was thirty thousand and then you announced it in '71 as eighty-three thousand, sort of the peak in the early '70s. So a lot of people were joining.

WT: Mid '70s. We couldn't lose in those days, Pete.

HKS: These people were outside the typical forestry track.

WT: The environmental sweep brought in a lot of non-forestry people, and *American Forests* was a whale of a good magazine. The association has no grassroot contacts, no affiliates, no chapters, just members in a national organization. Unfortunately, the type of membership that we attracted during that period of growth from thirty to say eighty thousand were not the hard core forestry interests that stayed with us. I happened to ride the crest of the wave and was able to show a black budget figure every year, and membership gain every year for twelve years. But then decline set it. Rex Ressler, who succeeded me, happened to come in at a time when AFA's program philosophy and its policies were not of great public interest. Rex Ressler's long suit was really the same as mine - policy and legislation - he was an expert. He knew how to get around on the Hill, he knew the people, the agencies. But membership, budgets, finances were just more than he could... Well, it was the times more than anything else. I didn't do anything magic, I rode the crest.

HKS: You have a list under coalitions some of the names we've already talked about. Is there something specific, or are these just the kinds of people...

WT: These were the people that almost always were together on any issue. When I went to Washington Tom Kimball was probably the closest friend that I had in professional field outside of Missouri. He was director in Colorado. Johnny Biggs in Washington, Phil Schneider in Oregon. Working with Pink Gutermuth and Ira Gabrielson and Dick Stroud and others already in Washington. So when I came to AFA, I had a cadre of cohorts that I had been working with and knew, and we understood each other. Tom Kimball and I used to go to lots of the same meetings, be on the same program. Almost invariably our speeches would be just almost duplicates. He would prepare his totally independently in Colorado, I'd do mine in Missouri, and we'd say the same thing. So we were in tune. But that was before the proliferation, and we were soon overtaken by lots of new organizations and new people. Dave Brower was on the fringes.

HKS: I met him once.

WT: He's a character, but a very dedicated and capable preservationist.

HKS: Certainly shy enough. His wife was there, she carried on most of the conversation.

WT: Dave built up a great following.

HKS: Sure did.

WT: He left Sierra Club and he created his own Friends of the Earth and it prospered.

HKS: Interesting.

WT: When I hit Washington, I landed running because I had been working with these same people, back through the International Legislative Committee.

HKS: Let's talk about disaster fires.

WT: When I first arrived in Washington, I didn't know too much how AFA should operate or could operate and I knew that we needed meaningful program direction. We had to have something to grasp. That was the year they had these tremendously big fires up in Alaska, and up in the Northwest, a disaster fire year. Merle Lowden, who was chief of fire control over in the Forest Service, came to see me. I'd known Merle, he was Clarke-McNary Section II fire control chief down in the regional office of Milwaukee when I was fire chief of Missouri; we'd had many years of working together.

He came over and he said, "Bill, here's a real challenge. AFA could take the ball and really run with it." I said, "What's that Merle?" He said we've got to get a handle on this disaster fire thing. We've got no vehicle in the federal government or with the states for really dealing with disaster fire situations whenever and wherever they occur. There is no master plan for coordination, for consolidation of equipment, for moving of manpower, for overhead, into a disaster situation. There's no method of funding if we bring in a lot of people from other states into a disaster fire. Who's going to pay for it? Who's going to be responsible for the liability, the insurance, all of the details, the replacement of worn out and lost equipment? We need to have a master plan for dealing with disaster fire. I said that it sounded like a good idea, Merle, what do we do? Well, you ought to convene a disaster fire task force. AFA should organize a group of people to address this as a working task force over a period of time to come up with a program for dealing with this. This is the genesis of the Areas of Agreement Committee.

HKS: I see.

WT: This is where the whole idea generated; it was my rude awakening to the competitiveness and resistance between agencies at the federal level. The National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, Office of Emergency Preparedness, they were jealously guarding their prerogative to deal with disasters. They didn't want any other agencies or any other program to have anything to do with a disaster when it occurred. Well that process can't handle the fires because the disaster first has to exist, then the governors have to ask for federal assistance, a decision has to be made, then they begin to generate some kind of assistance, mostly financial. But that didn't deal with emergency fires, which is a matter of planning, pre-planning, organization, legalities of moving men and financing the operation. You'd be surprised how many hours we spent arguing between the Forest Service and OEP and Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, all these, and the Department of Defense, which owns more and controls more lands than the Park Service, they were all involved. And we hammered this thing out despite antagonism and resistance. We evolved a disaster fire plan that organized the forces, provided a means of funding. We didn't get the bill passed, but it influenced OEP to

incorporate it into their organizational plan. You'll find a lot of articles in *American Forests* magazines about the disaster fires task force. We had separate publications on it. We did a lot of good, particularly in public awakening.

HKS: Yeah, I'm not surprised about the difficulty. I was on a fire in a national forest on the Oregon/Washington border and there were different firefighting techniques depending upon which state the fire line was in.

WT: The liability of crossing that state line. You did it quickly. What if it burns up, what if somebody's killed?

HKS: We were backfiring in Washington. State of Oregon didn't believe in backfiring. It was amazing, just on a very small scale. But you're talking about...

WT: We were talking about a national scale for dealing with disaster fire situations whenever and however they occur. Don't get me started on that Yellowstone fiasco. [laughter] I'm going to talk about fire later. I've got some pretty strong ideas.

HKS: Fire is trendy.

WT: It's one of the greatest tools that we have in management. But one of the least understood tools, I think.

HKS: Policies go in and out of fashion.

WT: I've seen the complete opposition to any fire. I grew up in this. Back when I was a district forester, we opposed fire in any form. And we taught the general public to be against fire. Then later on, when we found out the valuable uses of fire in management of forest stands, fish and wildlife habitat, then we had to contend with a public that was opposed to it because we taught them that.

HKS: Foresters in the 30s convinced the public that clearcutting was an evil force, and look what happened. Who use clearcutting, well it's the foresters.

WT: We used to laugh about clearcut and burn when I went to forestry school. If you want to talk about the biggest mistake you could make: clearcut and burn. Now that's probably the best tool of management for intolerant even-age species.

HKS: That's right.

WT: There's no other way. But that's right. The greatest problems that we face generally, Pete, are of our own creation.

Trees for People

HKS: That's for sure. We make fun of the Japanese who worry about saving face. They don't corner the market on saving face. Once we get into something we'll defend that to our death, seems like.

Trees for People, is that a specific campaign or just a concept...

WT: That was the immediate follow up to the disaster fire task force. I decided right now, the disaster fire thing, that this was a meaningful role for AFA, to find projects that needed attention and convene or organize an effort to deal

with them. Trees for People was an outgrowth of an airplane ride. I went out to San Francisco to a meeting of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. I was flying back to Washington, my seat mate was Gordon Zimmerman, who was head of its National Association of Conservation Districts. A very fine grassroots organization, lots of clout legislatively.

Gordon posed a question to me on that plane trip. He said, "Bill, what's the greatest problem confronting forestry in this country today?" I had thought somewhat along those lines myself, I said "Well Gordon, probably the greatest problem that we have right now is what to do with this 2/3rds of our nation's forests that are in private ownership, private non-industrial ownership. They are producing less than half of what they should, they are mistreated, they are abused, they're not reforested, the private landowners have no real incentive to invest in them, manage them, and as a result we are going to reach a time in our history when this vast area, 2/3rds of all our forests in private hands are not going to be contributing as they must and should to our well-being, to our economy. I said that I wasn't worried about the industrial forests, industry will pretty well take care of themselves, and public forests will be managed because they have a mandate to do so, but who's going to take care of all these small ownerships? His response was, "Well, why don't we do something about it?" I remembered the disaster fire project, and I said maybe we ought to create a task group.

It started out with NACD and American Forestry Association and these other agencies that we invited in - both government and private conservation groups. We involved the Forest Service, we involved BLM, we involved National Wildlife, the forest industry, extension foresters, and we created another task force. And it was named Trees for People. To give my friend Pomeroy a little pat on the back, I said Ken I want you to chair Trees for People. Ken worked his heart out for about three years and produced very fine documents and analyses. The whole thing boiled down to incentives. How can we provide the incentive for private landowners to do something about it? Incentives take many forms. First of all is information: you've got to educate them, you've got to provide the tools for alerting them to the fact that they can do something, that there is help. You can manage these small private holdings, but you've got to also make it economically desirable to do so. Taxes emerged as one of the biggest obstacles. Tree planting assistance. The result of that was a bill which we had prepared, a private, non-industrial forestry bill which did not pass. It was drafted, it was introduced, but what emerged was the language of that bill being put into the farm bill. The FIPs program, Forestry Incentive Payment. So that was a direct outcome of Trees for People.

Trees for People later became a major focus of lots of studies. When I retired, I headed up a special project for the Forest Service. I was a consultant for two years on private non-industrial forestlands. We held a series of four regional conferences and a national forestry conference, primarily to bring together a whole bunch of studies like Trees for People that had been done on private non-industrial forestry to put it all into focus, to come up with a program. Much of that was alleviated by legislation that was passed then, during the period and afterwards. But Trees for People was the second major policy directive effort that was organized under AFA after I went there.

HKS: Did you see much difference in American Forest Council, AFIs tree farm program, and Forest Farmers'? Forest Farmers is almost militant; they tell me that they are different from American Forest Council, that they're managing the land for the owner, where AFC manages the land for the industry. AFC says we're all the same. But in terms of what you're talking about, the incentive, you have

different kinds of allies out there and those would be, I suspect too, your major allies.

WT: That's right. They were both very, very strong allies and participants. Walt Meyers of Forest Farmers participated in our task force. Forest Industry, Forest Industries Council participated in it, John Hall and his people. But there...

HKS: What were the politics? I mean, who would be opposed to this?

WT: I don't know if there was any real opposition to it. It was a matter of how we're going to achieve it. Industry has always fought against more and bigger federal appropriations for forestry, whether you realize it or not. Industry has always said don't let the federal government get too big, get the states into it. The forest industry has always been a very effective lobbying organization at the federal level. They would not see eye to eye with massive federal payments to the private landowner.

HKS: Of course I have no idea what percentage of land we're talking about, but IP and others had their own extension services. They managed the land, harvested the timber, theoretically managed the land well. I don't know...

WT: That's right, because these are the larger private ownerships in a given area. It doesn't matter to them where the wood comes from, whether they grow it or whether...

HKS: That's right.

WT: As long as it's grown and is there to meet the demands of their industry. Some of them have very effective programs. Nurseries, free trees, planting assistance, tree planters, technical foresters that go in and help the private landowner, but this was only scratching the surface. It wasn't getting to the great multitude, particularly here in the Central and East where there is no big forest industry. In the South and the Pacific Northwest, they were able to help a great deal.

HKS: I was in Washington a few years back and AFI was telling me that they were very concerned about the way the Forest Service measured forestland. They claimed that there was a lot less forestland around than the Forest Service said there was, because they were counting all these half-acre woodlots in back yards and so forth. This was a bone of contention; I'm just trying to figure out areas where FIP would be very sensitive.

WT: That would be one. I can remember the federal program, forest inventory, which is federally financed through the Forest Service, working through the states to come up with an inventory periodically in each state. The argument being, what is a forest? Is it one acre, is it five acres, is it forty acres, you're going to have to draw the line someplace as to what minimum size constitutes forestland.

HKS: And what's productive. It may have trees on it but you can't cut...

WT: That's true. That can be significant because when I was assistant state forester, we had aerial photography of the entire state, and we mapped every county from the aerial photographs. You've got a line of trees running up a gulch here, the width of your pencil line quadruples that, and you've got a little five-acre patch here, you start to color it in, you've probably covered

ten acres instead of five. So that when you start measuring all of this you've magnified what is actually there.

HKS: That's right. I never quite understood why the Forest Service would claim there are more forests than there are in terms of what the industry said. I'm not sure how it harmed the industry, but they obviously were nervous about what they said was overestimate of actual available wood supply. I didn't understand what the issues were.

WT: Regardless of what the actual acreage is, we know that well over half of it, 3/4s, 2/3rds of it is in private ownership.

HKS: You've traveled a lot. When I go to IUFRO Forest History meetings, I find that what to do with the small woodland owner is international - everyone, every country that has private ownership has the same problem for the same reasons.

WT: That's right. We ran into it over in Finland, Sweden, Norway, less so in Germany, but we encountered it particularly in the Scandinavian countries.

HKS: If they haven't solved the problem in those smaller countries...

WT: They've done a lot better job of solving them than we have, largely through co-operatives. It's sort of foreign to our free enterprise system.

HKS: Yes.

WT: A little bit socialistic to promote cooperatives, particularly under state governmental...

HKS: In agriculture, farm coops go back to the 19th century.

WT: Why not in forestry, I don't know. But other countries pool their resources and equipment, their expertise, they've got foresters serving a lot of cooperators and the equipment travels from one to another and they harvest and then they plant. But they have a big problem, same as we do. They have a little bit different solution to it than we came up to. Probably more successful.

HKS: You can pass a forest practice act that says if you log, you must reforest and protect against fire or whatever, but you can't pass an act that makes them log.

WT: That's another subject in itself. I want to talk to you later about reorganization, which we skipped over when talking about Jimmy Carter. That was a major fight that AFA alone pretty much won. My good friends in the conservation community deserted me on that one.

HKS: I have one more question on Trees for People. I'm not sure if this was significant when you were with AFA, cause I didn't know the board members very well. Profit. That's actually what it's about, right? Forestry is more than what the chief of the Forest Service says it is. It's what a woodlot owner thinks it is too, whether it's stacking firewood or tapping sugarmaple. It's also small scale. Should *American Forests* reflect this range?

WT: The basic foundation of private non-industrial forest management is to meet the objectives of the landowner. Underlying everything else, you've got to approach each individual owner on why he owns that land, what he wants it for, what he expects from it. Then, if you're going to induce him to produce products

that will enter the marketplace, be of commercial value, there's got to be incentives to do so. There are almost as many reasons for owning and buying this land as there are buyers and owners.

HKS: We own twelve timberland acres in the Durham city limits. We have a house in the middle of it, and I'm not sure if I could manage the forest in the city limits, I don't even know if the laws apply. I'm keeping ahead of the beetles, that's what I'm doing right now.

WT: But you bought that because it had an appeal to you. It gave you a protection that you felt desirable, and that in the back of your mind you see that as a growing investment. It is an investment in future gain.

HKS: That's right.

WT: And without that incentive, you might not have been willing to make that investment.

HKS: I'm being taxed on buildable lots. The incentive is for me to clearcut and put condos on, and probably the next owner will do it.

WT: It may reach a point where you'll have to, but in the meantime you'll realize a considerable profit I'll bet, when it reaches that stage.

HKS: Our taxes are twice as high as they were in California. The assessed valuation of our twelve acres in Durham is within a few hundred dollars of what it was in Santa Cruz for a quarter acre. Proposition 13 really made a difference in California. But we can still manage, it's not a hardship for us to give those taxes, but every seven years they reassess. One of these days we're going to say we just can't afford to own this park anymore...

WT: Taxes emerge as probably the most influential anti-incentives. People were more interested in holding or keeping down their taxes than they were in getting cash to do something.

HKS: We own sixteen acres in Washington State; it's undeveloped. We declared it forestland and our taxes are 10 percent of what they were before we had it classified as forestland.

WT: But if and when you cut and sell that timber, or realize an income, you'll probably have to pay some...

HKS: We did, we've cut...

WT: Pay some yield tax.

HKS: We've cut and we've paid yield tax but the property tax stays the same.

WT: As long as it's devoted to that purpose.

HKS: And if we develop it, it's taxed retroactive for ten years.

WT: That was that forest crop law we wrote out in Missouri to hold down the tax burden until such time as there was a harvest and income or a sale to pay it. That's part of the incentive package. But Trees for People and this private non-industrial forestry conference plan that I did after I retired all comes up with the same basic answer. But underlying it all is somehow understanding what the

landowner wants and expects from his investment and hopefully to induce him to do things that will produce a valuable crop with the feeling that if you have a crop of value there, eventually it will be harvested and put to use.

HKS: Right now, for me, it's firewood. Lot of it. I had to buy a chainsaw, a wheelbarrow, and a woodstove, but I'm in business.

WT: If you've got a twelve hundred dollar white oak that grows out there, you're not going to cut that for firewood, you're going to sell that to veneer people. Like that $37,000 walnut out there in Indiana. One tree.

HKS: That's amazing.

WT: Don't worry too much about what the outcome, or what the eventual use of our forests might be. Let's manage them, let's get the optimum growth out of them, if the value's there it will probably be realized.

HKS: Since I live there, I favor the hardwoods, which is sort of reverse forestry; it's much nicer to have the sun in the winter and the shade in the summer.

WT: I used to be a hardwood man. I fell in love with these pines around here. Course I'm living under a pretty good stand and that's about a ninety-foot tree I'm looking at out there.

Wilderness

HKS: Preservation movement. We've talked about that some. Wilderness.

WT: It's good. Wilderness preservation is an essential element of conservation. It's the most appealing to the public because it requires the least understanding. We had advocates who would have set aside all of Alaska, except that which is already developed, into nonuse category. Also if they could, to no hunting, no cutting, no nothing.

HKS: Do you think the eastern wilderness debates with the Forest Service using the purity issue involved hypocrisy?

WT: No, I don't think so.

HKS: Not just on the part of the Forest Service, but out West it had to be pure but in the East it could be cutover land with trees on it.

WT: There is nothing uncut in the East.

HKS: I understand that.

WT: If you take the original definition of wilderness as the concept originated in the West, there is no eastern wilderness. There can't be, because it's all been roaded and cutover and built on and used for many years. But the irony of the thing is that those who now appreciate these eastern forests that have been restored under management by professionals, now are so attractive and so valuable and so desirable that we have got to take them away from these professionals and set them aside for nonuse classification. "The Lands Nobody Wanted." You've read it, I'm sure. Cutover, burned over, tax delinquent. You couldn't give them away back at the turn of the century. When the depression

years hit in the '30s you could buy any of it for the back taxes almost. But after fifty years of management as national forests or acquired lands under state protection they've grown back, they're attractive. Now they want to classify them in some category to protect them so they won't ever be destroyed again. You know nature, it's dynamic, just like those lodgepole pine stands out there in Yellowstone. They destroyed themselves, they were dead, heavy fuel accumulation. They were just right for a fire of that magnitude. Nature will harvest what we don't. It will replace it with what ever is the climax species for that particular site.

HKS: Take the long view. Redwood used to grow in South Dakota. In another period of time it's going to be gone. It's on its way out, it's down to about 1 percent of its original range or something like that.

WT: Redwoods are largely a product of flood and fire ecology. The superlative redwoods groves that we admire so much out there in California are on the alluvial flats where periodic flooding and periodic fire have favored them. If we take away periodic flooding and periodic fire, eventually the redwoods will die out and something else will take over by natural succession.

HKS: That's right. You mentioned Gordon Robinson earlier. Were you routinely involved with him at other times? According to my interview with Robinson, he sat down with Senator Randolph and others to help draft a NFMA bill. Was Robinson a guy you'd see a lot in Washington, D.C.?

WT: Not a whole lot. I had a few contacts with Gordon Robinson. I had most of my contacts with Mike McCloskey and Brock Evans. Brock Evans was the Washington representative of the Sierra Club. Mike McCloskey was executive director after Dave Brower. I dealt mostly through him. Gordon was their forester, kind of an extremist, kind of a renegade forester.

HKS: Proud of it.

WT: Yes, very proud of it. He was a renegade. But they found it very profitable to their organization to be against the status quo of the agencies. Brock Evans was a very good friend of mine. I admire Brock Evans, he's a brilliant young lawyer, but he just believed completely that you don't cut. Well, he wouldn't say it that way, you just don't hurt it, don’t touch it, don't kill anything.

I'll tell you a story about Brock Evans and me going down the middle fork of the Salmon River in a rubber raft. Tom Kimball and I are both ardent fishermen, so we had this four-or five-day trip down the middle fork of the Salmon River with the Forest Service. Tom and I fished all down the river, we'd hit these little blues holes at the bottom of the ripples and we'd pull a cutthroat trout out of just about every one of them. We'd pull in at night and clean those fish and wrap them in foil with butter and onion and salt and pepper, throw them in the coals of the fire. Brock Evans would eat them like they were going out of style. He just loved them. One night I said "Brock, you sure like those trout." "Oh yeah, finest eating there is." "So why don't you fish." "Well, I don't like to." "What do you mean you don't like to." "You catch the fish, I'll eat them." "Well, why don't you like to fish, it's a lot of fun." "Well, he said, I don't believe in sticking hooks in things." I said, "Well Brock, what difference does it make whether you stick the hook in it or whether I stick the hook in it. You're going to eat it." "Well, I like steak but I wouldn't kill a cow."

HKS: He likes to live in a wooden house but wouldn't cut a tree.

WT: That's right, that's right.

HKS: I read *American Forests* starting in '67. I don't know how long Mike Frome was there before then, but he was...

WT: Quite a while. Mike Frome is a product of the Forest Service. There's a great story about Mike Frome. He's a New York Jewish boy with a great disfigurement over half his face. Do you know Mike?

HKS: No.

WT: Enormous birthmark. Small of stature, with a deep ingrained inferiority complex.

HKS: I've seen his photographs, but they must have always been posed.

WT: He was a poor boy, and as I recall, he did not have much education, but he's one hell of a good writer. And Mike got interested in nature, in forestry, and Bill Huber of the Forest Service kind of took Mike under his wing and taught him, carried him around to a lot of the places and showed him what the Forest Service was doing. He wrote very knowingly of forestry and the Forest Service for quite a long time, and was a product very much of their creation, but a beautiful writer. Then he began to exhibit some of his anti-establishment views, and the column that gave him the most exposure, the best exposure he had---his books, he wrote several, even before he was a columnist for the *American Forests*, didn't give him the exposure. The public following that *American Forests* did, and that was his great vehicle. But then he began to bite the hand that fed him, so to speak.

HKS: His books on wilderness and two on the Forest Service; I'm not sure of the sequence in terms of his being with AFA or not.

WT: Some before and some during. But he was going, he was writing, he was recognized as a forestry writer/columnist before I went there. He and Jim were well established. My main problem with Mike Frome was not Mike Frome as much as Jim Craig. Jim encouraged it; he made no effort to tone Mike down, he liked the controversy that he was creating. He refused to listen to the admonitions of the board that we somehow had to bring him more in line with our philosophy. Jim threatened to resign right after Mike was fired.

HKS: Was Mike technically Jim's employee?

WT: He was a paid columnist. He wasn't on the staff. He was paid the paltry sum of $250 a column, which at that time was our highest paid article, highest pay we made for a contributor. My mistake was in trying to force Jim to control Mike. Finally I put it in writing in a way that backfired. But, I don't want to...

HKS: I probably have given more emphasis to Frome in this analysis when other things are even more important. But in February 1970 he said, "The Forest Service has gone mad." That's kind of strong. Clearcutting in Montana, the Bitterroots. Bitterroot was really a top story for a long time.

WT: If you go to the Bitterroot today, it is one of the finest examples of good management that you'll find, and the same way with Monongahela. What they

objected to at the time looked like disaster, but they're beautiful to behold today.

HKS: Frome said he was getting letters from Forest Service employees saying, "You're right, keep at them." Do you think that was basically true? Would a single letter come, or would thousands?

WT: There were a couple. There were a few disgruntled ex-employees who were on his side, yes, there were some. You know the birth of the environmental movement brought in some new young blood too that believed in this. The Forest Service made mistakes. Monongahela was a big mistake, largely in its magnitude. The philosophy that you can reproduce intolerant hardwoods better in open clearcuts than you can under selective cutting, there's no question about it. But they didn't have to do 640 acres in one spot at one time. You know, when judiciously applied, what they did was fine, but it would have been fine, wouldn't have aroused the antagonism. I don't blame the people down there, it looked like hell. And the same way up in the Bitterroot. But from management standpoint it was good forestry.

HKS: Was it touchy to inaugurate the AFA disclaimer on the Frome column? That suddenly appeared...

WT: Yes, that suddenly appeared. I ordered it.

HKS: It stopped for a couple of issues, then it came back, then he was gone.

WT: The board ordered me to get control of Mike Frome. Either he tones himself down to our general philosophy or he goes.

HKS: Was it interpretation or just that the language was too harsh? What was the issue, really?

WT: It was more in the language, the personal attacks. He went after individuals. He attacked the chief of the Forest Service, and he was abusive to a proud agency. I remember that the assistant director of the National Park Service when the whole Frome thing came up just got on me unmercifully. About six or eight months later Frome took out after George Hertzog, director of the National Park Service, and he came to me and said, you were right, you should have done it. And I've had a number of editorial and journalistic people tell me later that as the chief of the organization that publishes this magazine, that I had every right to exercise some degree of control over what he was saying. Now some call it censorship, but what we should have done was to say "Mike, you're done, you're fired. You no longer write for *American Forests*, and let it go at that. But again I was trying to correct it through my editor, through Jim. Of course Jim being a journalist didn't believe in censorship. I don't believe in censorship either, but I do believe that if somebody is expressing far out philosophy and points of opinion that are radically different from the organization and the publication...

HKS: Gets back to what I asked initially, how does *American Forests* reflect AFA?

WT: Well, it didn't at that time. When we tried to make it reflect the philosophy and the policies of our organization, that's when Mike Frome no longer fit. It was a crossroad, and that was the time when AFA either goes down the same road with Wilderness Society and Sierra Club and the rest of them or

whether we take an approach of moderation, professional use, and management. That was the road that my board wanted me to take.

HKS: Sometimes when you look for something you find it even if it's not there. I was going through *American Forests*, watching what Frome was doing and then what happened. I didn't see any letters to the editor asking "Where's Mike Frome?" Did I miss them?

WT: Yes.

HKS: They were published in the magazine. People said we miss Mike Frome, bring him back or whatever they said.

WT: Some of them. And other magazines, when *Living Wilderness*...

HKS: I was going to ask how they got their hands on those files.

WT: Uh-huh. That's a good question. You can guess can't you?

HKS: Jim?

WT: Either Jim or a very preservationist associate editor, a gal, who wouldn't harm a hair on a deer, and I guess she was almost in love with Mike Frome's writing and philosophy. I don't know which one of them did it, or whether it was Pomeroy that put me in the hot seat. But it came from within. Actually, the letter that appeared, and this is not known, the letter that appeared in the *Living Wilderness* on which my signature is there for Jim to censor Mike Frome is a forgery. That letter never existed.

HKS: I remember a letter signed by Charlie Connaughton in that article.

WT: Charlie was my president, he and Virlis Fisher just absolutely despised Mike Frome, and Dave Brower and what they were trying to do. Of course they had a lot of support from Paul Dunn and others.

HKS: At the time Paul Dunn mentioned something to me about Frome's unfair language - he and Charlie were on the FHS Board, although Charlie wasn’t very active in our organization.

WT: Jack Anderson was going to write a real blast at American Forestry Association about this catastrophe letter he'd read in the *Living Wilderness.* I says Jack, before you do it, you check the authenticity of that letter. I said, "That’s a forgery." He never printed a word. Somebody had retyped it on our stationary. It had to come from within. I can show you the original letter and show you the forgery.

HKS: Does the fact that *Living Wilderness* published the file reflect a sort of breakdown in the collegiality of people that happen to disagree?

WT: I think *Living Wilderness* hurt themselves more than they did AFA. I think many thought...

HKS: They didn't check validity. They didn't come back to anyone there and say "Look, I'm going to have to run this, but we want to make sure..."

WT: No, it was just a complete surprise. It was to me. Now whoever fed them information, whoever fed them copies of letters that they used had to come from within AFA.

HKS: I would think so unless somebody broke into your office Watergate style and took files out.

WT: That's an interesting story. But it was a turning point. It was something that had to be addressed. Admittedly it was poorly handled.

HKS: That's how it turned out, but it might have turned out just fine.

WT: In the memo that I originally wrote to Jim Craig I used the word censor, "I expect you to censor Mike Frome so that he no longer is abusive to individuals..."

HKS: Censor has a pejorative connotation always, but censor is...

WT: Yes, I took the memo up to Jim and he says, "Well, I don't like that word censor." I said alright. I scratched it out and wrote in edited. There was something else he didn't like, too. I changed that. But when the letter appeared in the *Living Wilderness*, somebody had retyped it with the original words back in there.

HKS: Using my arbitrary categories, it seems to me there was a definite shift in the content of the magazine for a couple of years after Frome. More articles on leaves turning, and maple syrup, and less on national policy. This might be my imagination.

WT: It may be in the feature articles.

HKS: Sure. Editorials were still there, but articles...

WT: Not in my editorial column, because that's what I continued to address as spokesman for AFA. That column was originated, "What's New at AFA," as an official spokesman of the association.

HKS: In 1975, that's four years later, you ran a six-part series, Forest Service Report to Shareholders. It seems to me that deals with the national issues. But Anthony Netboy's "Save the Blue Whale," how did that...

WT: Well, Anthony Netboy was another good friend of Jim Craig's. He's…

HKS: I'm in favor of the whales too, but why is it in *American Forests*? Was it ever discussed with someone asking "how come?"

WT: No. General interest articles never came before me or the board for editorial approval. Legislative matters did. I told Jim that anytime that we spoke out on any policy or legislative matter that I wanted to review it. But he was perfectly free to pick and choose general interest, contributed articles as he saw fit. It's his magazine. I don't believe in an administrator being a supereditor.

HKS: I agree wholeheartedly. One thing I want to talk about is when Frome was still there, I felt at the time, and in looking back I still agree, that AFA and *American Forests* took a hell of a lot more responsible position on clearcutting than SAF ever thought of doing. All they could do was trot out those professors saying it's an acceptable silvicultural practice, but you wouldn't know there was a controversy.

WT: I tried hard to get a hold on the clearcutting issue. I went to *National Geographic* and tried to get them to do a *National Geographic* special on clearcutting. It wasn't glamorous enough, you know, it wasn't their bag. But it hurt. This is why we began to lose membership, because if you stand up in defense of clearcutting, you still have to deal with some of these dastardly clearcuts like we have around here...

HKS: You refer to the Bolle Report. I mean, the presentation strikes me as balanced. The reader knew that there was a controversy and the different points of view from reading *American Forests*. You didn't really know that from reading *Journal of Forestry*.

WT: No.

HKS: It was like reading a silviculture textbook.

WT: I'm very critical of SAF during that period for not taking leadership. The profession, in my opinion, should have been out in the forefront of these legislative policy fights, and they didn't do it.

HKS: Absolutely.

WT: I was very critical when Hardy Glascock came before the Congress and testified against several of our state and private forestry bills. He says, "The Society of American Foresters has not taken a position on these, so without a position we cannot support." I jumped all over Hardy. You know, if you don't have the guts to get out and fight for it, what your organization believes in and the profession of forestry certainly should have been represented. And I feel that SAF abdicated its real role.

HKS: I agree.

WT: AFA had to take it over.

HKS: I think SAF abdicated its role. That's my view. But this is your interview, not mine. We can do mine tomorrow.

WT: I had a few years of helping to influence SAF's policy, and we spoke out a few times. I testified for SAF the year I was president, and we took some positions.

HKS: Was it hard to do?

WT: No.

HKS: I mean, did the industry people or the Forest Service people say, "you can't say that?"

WT: We have these policy task forces in SAF to develop positions, and you take those position statements. If you can't go before Congress and make a substantial statement, then there's something wrong. No, I was critical of SAF for not being aggressive enough in defense of the profession. But we didn't hesitate at AFA.

HKS: There must have been kind of awkward moments around the office after Frome left, and *Wilderness* carried those letters.

WT: It was extremely awkward and frustrating and lot of misunderstanding and the story couldn't be told. I was told not to attempt to explain. When you get into controversy like that, the more you attempt to explain it and get people to understand your position, the more you perpetuate it.

HKS: Sure.

WT: So we just cut it off and let it die. We lost some members, we had some very critical letters, and you can read them. But I think we did what we had to do at the time. We did it maybe in an improper way. Didn't do it as deftly as we should have, but it had to be done.

HKS: I suppose in part it was just a holdover from the three-headed monster.

WT: That's right. It was a part of that triology that I inherited. If the magazine doesn't reflect the purpose, the philosophy, the policy of the organization, then why have it? It's not an entity unto itself. If *American Forests* doesn't express the position, the reasoning, and thinking of the organization, we might as well discontinue it.

HKS: AFA has political policies. The Forest History Society has not. Every once in a while people say we should put a disclaimer in front of the *Journal of Forest History*. I say, disclaim what? But *American Forests* is different. AFA does have policies.

WT: Every ten years we have an American Forest Congress which develops a clear policy statement for forestry in America and the association. Of course by nature of every ten years it has to be something broad. It has to be general goals. But in the interim, every issue that comes up has to be resolved in terms of its application to the association of forestry, and where I could, I utilized my board to concur on what positions we should take. If I didn't have time, I took them and hoped for the best. Now that's what Hardy wouldn't do. Hardy said the council has to act on this. We don't have a position firmed up yet. By the time they got it, it was too late to be of any use. You've got to move. You've got to move in the right circles in the right way. That's Washington.

HKS: I read Neil's editorials, and I keep wondering, does he really have a guideline. I'm not being critical, I'm just trying to observe how these things function in the abstract. Since I wrote about organizations years ago, I try to see how the real world functions.

WT: No. There's an executive committee, I'm sure Neil has used it. Sometimes if I had any question, any doubt, I'd get on the phone and poll at least a majority of my executive committee, maybe read a suggested proposed statement to them. At least the gist of it. It can be done. Hardy could have done the same thing with his officers. I don't want this to be an anti-SAF...

Wild Acres Controversy

HKS: I guess you don't want to spend too much time on the Wild Acres business.

WT: I could spend a lot of time on that. I inherited that one. I became a president-elect for two years and president for one, and past president for one, right through the middle of that thing. John Barber, Tom Borden, and I were the three delegated task force members to resolve that thing. I was commuting to Washington at least two times a month for two years.

HKS: Hard to believe that whole thing happened.

WT: It goes right back to the thing that I've said many times. So many people don't know how to retire gracefully. When you leave an organization, you ought to get out of the way, let that organization be run by whomever is in control.

HKS: Yes.

WT: So many people don't want to give up. They want to hold on.

HKS: I don't know him very well, I like him, but I wonder why Max Peterson's chief emeritus.

WT: I don't know either. I've never seen this before in the Forest Service.

HKS: What's Dale supposed to do?

WT: How about distinguished chiefs like McArdle? Why was he never...

HKS: I don't know what's going on, but anyway, it'll come out. I'll interview Max one of these days and ask him about that.

WT: That Wild Acres thing was a real fiasco.

HKS: How tempted was AFA ever to have moved out there?

WT: We weren't the slightest tempted. I told them from the beginning that's a mistake. It's one of the best investments they could have made in land, and it's worth a fortune. But I said, you're moving yourself from the center of things, you're making yourself inaccessible to the people that you ought to be working with. You're leaving the mainstream. You're not cooperating with the other conservation/environmental groups. I think it was a big mistake. Just the physical location out in Maryland.

HKS: Wasn't that the terms of the Tom Gill's bequest, that they had to use it for a building headquarters?

WT: No. The decision on Wild Acres had been made, and Tom Gill gave them the money to do it.

HKS: Okay. That sequence.

WT: Tom Gill was a great friend of forestry, a wealthy man. This is something aside, but rather interesting. Two days after Tom Gill died, I got a letter, personal letter in his handwriting addressed to me at the American Forestry Association. Says, "Dear Bill: By the time you read this, I will be gone. But I want you to know that I have provided in my will for so much money devoted to

the American Forestry Association." How much he appreciated AFA. A personal letter, signed. He'd told his secretary, "Mail this upon my death."

HKS: The gift to SAF got all the publicity, but going through *American Forests* I saw that AFA got some money, too.

WT: Yes, we got ten thousand. They got five hundred thousand. They got a big share of it. Which was fine. He was more inclined toward the profession than he was to member organizations.

HKS: I saw the photographs of the new AFA building, and you sitting at your desk with a grin from wall to wall. You must have some feelings about recent events. Selling the building...

WT: Yes.

HKS: Where was the headquarters before you got the building?

WT: Right next to the Army/Navy Club down on Faragut Square, between 16th and 17th and I Street and K Street. Lafayette Square. That's where Connecticut goes up toward DuPont Circle.

HKS: Yes.

WT: Our office was a little three story townhouse about 35 feet wide right next to the Army/Navy Club. Had a little elevator about 2 1/2 feet by 2 1/2 feet. Two people could get on if they were very good friends. But it was a beautiful location. Now there is a complete new big office building, and where you drive down into their parking lot, that's where our office used to be. Sold that for $600,000.

HKS: My goodness.

WT: I think they paid something like $60,000 for it many years ago. And the big new place up on 18th Street, just south of Massachusetts Avenue, we bought for $625,000. I think they sold it for 2 1/2 million. What made me so sad was the big parking lot that later became a condominium apartment next door. I could have bought it at the same time for a million dollars; it later sold for six million. Not too many years hence. But the board said we don't need it, we've got all the building we need. That's neither here nor there. Good investments are always easy to see in hindsight.

HKS: They are, that's for sure. But you were still close enough. You weren't too far from NFPA and all the rest. You were also close to the White House, but Congress is what you want to be close to, right?

WT: The agencies and Congress. I say we had more daily contact with the Interior building, Agriculture building, than up on the Hill. But being downtown with that meeting room we had become almost a universal meeting place.

HKS: If you were to place a value on that meeting room in terms of how much rent you took in during the year, you'd say the rent was irrelevant.

WT: We didn't take in any rent on that. The only rent we ever earned was on the fourth floor. We'd rented some space up there to a law firm. No we never charged anything for use of that room. But that room was one of the greatest assets that AFA had. Having that space was one of the greatest assets that the American Forestry Association had. It kept us in the main stream. It kept us working with these other organizations that are so important to us. You don't do anything alone in Washington, not very successfully. You develop friends and partners and coalitions that accomplish things. This is why Areas of Agreement was so effective, because it didn't represent AFA, it represented the organizations that came together.

HKS: What did Congress think of this? Did Areas of Agreement testify as Areas of Agreement Committee?

WT: Yes.

HKS: Ok.

WT: In unison. We would go as a group and sit at a big long table. We were doing Congress's work for it. Because all in the world that Congress does is try to bring to a central focus diverging points of view. To try to resolve it into the most logical form, and if you get all the extremes coming together with a common objective and a common purpose, it carries a whale of a lot of weight.

HKS: Denny LeMaster gives one example where Humphrey's cutting through this room and sees you guys working, and he goes over as he figures there must be something worthwhile going on if you guys can sit at the same table, just being together.

WT: Yes. I heard one senator, I can't tell you who it was now, say this is a first, this is a landmark. He said when the wolves and the sheep come in here together, in perfect harmony, and ask us to do something, you're durn well assure we're going to do it.

HKS: Yes.

WT: This is the real benefit of that process.

HKS: Another part of Denny's book, and I wrote some words for your foreword to it, it struck me as significant that a seasoned member of Congress, somebody who has been around a long time, is not that impressed by a bill's merit.

WT: Essentially Area of Agreement does the job that Congress is attempting to do, and if it can be resolved in a easy way for them and they're assured that the major objections have been removed, that's really all the legislative process is. Incidentally, legislation is not as much passage of good legislation as it is weeding out bad legislation.

HKS: I want to follow up that statement you made; you get rid of all the objections, and what's left is the law.

WT: That's right. Frank Biggs told me one time, he was assistant secretary of interior. He became United States senator to fill Harry Truman's unexpired term. He said, Bill, 98 percent of the job in legislature is to kill bad legislation.

He said we don't pass 1 or 2 percent of all the bills that are written. But he said, it's just as important to kill a bad one as it is to pass a good one.

HKS: Sure.

WT: So this is what Areas of Agreement brought to those committees, an agreement between extremists. Maybe not complete agreement, but on enough issues that resolved a conflict.

HKS: Would there be minority reports?

WT: Eventually on the National Forest Management Act, we had to abandon the extremists and bring a moderate coalition together that became the wording of the actual legislation. The minority viewpoint did not prevail. We won that fight.

HKS: How does Areas of Agreement differ philosophically from the Natural Resources Council of America?

WT: The Natural Resources Council of America is an organization to exchange information and not to take positions on major issues. In fact, they are prohibited by their bylaws.

HKS: Okay. So it's a meeting ground.

WT: That's right. Exchange of information to let each organization know what the others are doing, to inform them on what's coming up.

HKS: When Brock was chairman there were issues about Chicanos picking grapes and so forth.

WT: I don't think NRC ever, never testified as an organization before Congress.

HKS: Okay.

WT: Now what we did do is fund some studies. The Alaskan Yukon River study, when they proposed the big dam on the Yukon. We hired researchers to analyze that thing and to come up with a position as to what would be the consequences. There were so many disastrous consequences or disadvantages over the benefits, that NRC printed the report and sent it out as a somewhat of a position. But we, but the bylaws prevent the organization from taking positions on specific legislation or programs.

HKS: But obviously, in terms of people you dealt with, there was overlapping membership.

WT: Oh yes. All kinds of overlapping membership. We encouraged every organization to take its own position and to become active.

HKS: But the people you have lunch with at NRC might be some of the same people of Areas of Agreement.

WT: That's right. One of the real advantages, I think, of Areas of Agreement is getting to know your adversaries on a personal, friendly basis. Philosophically, Brock Evans and I were never in tune, but we're friends and have great respect for each other's position. I just used Brock as an example, I could name others.

But you can imagine a Bill Hagenstein and a Stuart Brandborg getting to sit face to face across a table. [laughter]

HKS: No I can't.

WT: Well, it worked.

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Abused Land Recovered

WT: I don't feel that I quite covered my background in the earlier days out in the Ozarks that led me into the outdoors and conservation fields. I was a woodrunner, you couldn't keep me out of that woods country. I had a trapline and I'd get up at 5--5:30 every winter morning and run my rabbit traps; I just had somehow a drive to be out doing that kind of thing. The funny part of it was that we were in a drought in terms of wildlife population then. I never saw a deer in Missouri when I was a kid. I never saw a wild turkey when I was a kid. But as we brought this conservation program into being the build up in deer and turkey has just been phenomenal out there.

HKS: So fire was killing the forests.

WT: Fire was destroying the habitat and along with poaching wildlife there was a decline. Fire alone wouldn't do it. Fire can create some good wildlife habitat, it wasn't good in terms of turkeys, but it was probably better for deer. But the poaching plus the land use plus the drought just had us in a real depression in those days. When I was director, I opened the turkey season for the first time in some forty years. We had a gobbler season, I believe for three days, and we killed something like 200--250 gobblers. Today they'll kill 50 or 60 thousand out there in a year. But our program of transplanting, of making them available to people, and opening the season whereby the poacher could kill his turkey legally and brag about it brought in protection that we couldn't otherwise get. Open seasons are one of the best management tools we have in terms of protecting the species.

HKS: Is it pretty hard to hunt wild turkeys?

WT: Yes. There's nothing greater in my opinion than the wild turkey hunt in the spring for the gobbler. I would rather kill one gobbler than any deer, moose, elk, or any animal that swims, flies...

HKS: Is there much meat on one?

WT: Oh yes. The biggest one I killed was 23 pounds, but that's a big gobbler.

HKS: Commercial turkeys have been bred until they are all white meat.

WT: The wild turkey is excellent eating. The meat is not bright white like the domestic turkey. Kind of a tan-brownish color, but it's just as sweet and if well prepared, wild turkey's just as good as the domestic. Not the big broad breasted bird. They're very powerful, though. You take a bird that can fly into the air at 23--25 pounds, it has to be powerful. In any event, that outdoor living of mine was the genesis of my real forestry interest.

I can remember the tie rafts that used to be floated down the Big Piney and the Gasconade rivers. Big long rafts, couple of hundred yards long. They'd wait till the floods in the Spring, and they'd be hacking their ties all winter and they'd bind them together and float them down just like they did the logs in the north country. I used to watch the tie hackers out in the woods. Anytime they'd find an oak tree big enough to hack out a tie, down it would come. With their broadax they'd notch them and peel that stuff down, and they'd square up a tie just so easily...

HKS: Out of oak.

WT: Out of oak.

HKS: It's hard for me to imagine it's easy to square oak.

WT: Well, they did it. I told you earlier, we were on the Frisco Railroad, and that was the biggest tie yard, I guess, on the Frisco, when they were brought in there. We had acres and acres of stacked ties air drying after the tie hackers brought them in. That was my playground. We used to play on the tie yard.

HKS: I read somewhere that the average life expectancy of a railroad tie is seven years, untreated. But oak would last longer than that, I assume.

WT: Yes. Most of our ties out there were oak. They didn't use much hickory in those days, but it's oak, hickory...

HKS: Out west they sawed pine trees and fir.

WT: They wouldn't last at all without treatment. Nowadays your ties are all sawn and pressure treated. But in those days they were put right down into the track untreated.

HKS: I'm trying to imagine driving a railroad spike into an oak tie. That's quite a chore [laughter].

WT: You know what the spike hammers look like...

HKS: Yes.

WT: ...and there's a lot of power behind them. That was my earlier introduction into forestry and forest devastation. Fire and tie hackers, and my trying to catch rabbits and possums.

HKS: What led to Areas of Agreement philosophy, this concept that you should try to get together to make something work and quit fighting each other?

WT: I have always been a compromiser, a mediator. I never cared much to fight when I was a kid. I got into a few scraps, but I'd rather work my way out of a scrap than to get into one, a physical one. But I think you probably saw the parallel when I talked about the Conservation Commission and AFA. When I became director in Missouri, the department was disjointed. We were in three separate buildings. As I said I had fish and game biologists going their way, engineers going their way, forestry going its way and no real overall plan to bring into focus the common purpose of fish, wildlife and forestry management. My first move was to try to consolidate that department into a cohesive working unit. I established a weekly mandatory staff conference. The very first opportunity when I could find the right space, I moved the department into a single building;

Farm Bureau had just built a new building and had a whole floor, so I moved the whole department in there pending the time that we could establish a headquarters, which we did. Have you ever been to Missouri?

HKS: I've been to Kansas City and St. Louis.

WT: You've never been to Jefferson City. It's a showplace. The Department of Conservation headquarters is what they call "campus type" construction, it's actually six, seven, eight buildings, all interconnected with passage ways and all built out of wood, balconies around the second floor, and it's a beautiful showplace. We bought forty-two acres and built nature trails, ponds, all kind of teaching conservation elements into the headquarters. But again, the whole direction that I was aiming for was to bring the department together to make it a cohesive operating unit, which...

HKS: Do you have any sense that when the AFA board was doing this national search and they picked you, that they had looked far enough into what you had actually done, that they saw AFA needed the same thing?

WT: I'm sure they did. I didn't quite realize it at the time, but I knew that they wanted to broaden AFA's image. AFA, whether we wanted it or not, was pretty well tied into the industry in terms of public image.

HKS: Sure.

WT: I think the word "Association" implies that we were an industry controlled or dominated association, which, of course, was not true, but a citizen/member conservation organization. And the programs and pretty much the philosophy of AFA through the years have been tied almost directly to the Forest Service, and to a lesser extent the industry. The board of directors wanted it to become broader. They wanted it to be environmental: fish, wildlife, recreation, air and water quality. Those are the things that I think they were seeking when they went out looking for a new executive. But also, hopefully, to bring the whole program into a central focus. Not have the magazine, the business, and the policy all go their separate ways.

HKS: But the board was responsible for that.

WT: That's right, but you know boards, Pete.

HKS: I understand, but...

WT: They meet once or twice a year and they don't devote too much time to the details of an organization. As a chief executive, you know that. You pretty well control and run the organization. If you get too far out of line the board will bring you back into line. You need that flexibility, the ability to speak out promptly when the need exists, not waiting for some long process of direction from a board that doesn't know all the ins and outs. There's usually a lot of experience involved on the board, but they're not there on the scene ready to move. The executive is.

HKS: Yesterday you said you were riding with someone and he asked you what the biggest single problem was in American forestry. You said the small woodland owners.

WT: Yeah, that was Gordon Zimmerman, head of the Soil Conservation Districts.

HKS: Did you present this to the board, and they said, "Yes, this should be the primary focus of AFA." You made your emphasis on this...

WT: You mean after Trees for People?

HKS: Yes.

WT: Yes. At the first opportunity, we created the task force before the board ever met. In other words, we embarked upon the Trees for People effort. When the board met we told them what we were doing, they approved it whole-heartedly, and it became a major focus for about three years.

American Forestry Association Today

HKS: What I'm fishing for here is, the word might not be apt, the niche. If an organization is to survive in this competitive world of so many organizations, it has to have a niche. If you are successful finding this niche, then you have membership support and people don't drift off into National Wildlife, or the Sierra Club, or some... they stay with AFA.

WT: That's really, I think, the problem existing with the American Forestry Association today. It has not found that niche, whereby it is solely recognized as the leader in that particular field. The focus ought to be on trees, all aspects of trees. You know the national register of famous and historic trees? Urban forestry has become a recent focus of AFA. I'm not sure that urban forestry alone is big enough. It's a new field, somebody's got to cover it, and I think AFA rightfully entered into it. But the real focus ought to be on our major forest areas, the producing trees.

HKS: Small woodland owners are a primary constituency of the American Forestry Association, and my stereotype of the small woodland owner is not an environmentalist but probably a philosophical conservative. If AFA is going to go after those people and retain them, it's a whole different philosophy than being quote "hard-charging in the conservation movement" on the national level. Obviously federal taxes have something to do with small woodland owners and all the rest, but it's state and local that's so important to them. I'm just trying to think of the articles in *American Forests* that you would or would not select to meet the small woodland owner's constituency as opposed to the national conservation movement.

WT: I don't feel that AFA ought to be wholly focused on the small woodland owner. That is what I detected at that time as being a gap. There was no one, no real organization or effort made to work with through the small woodland owner. There's a small woodland owners organization as you know, now.

HKS: That's right.

WT: I don't think AFA ought to abandon its principle focus on all forestlands; the public forestlands must remain a very essential part of AFA's focus. The profile of the Forest Service has always been high and should remain, but at that time when Trees for People became one of our major efforts, that was a neglected area. Just as urban forestry later was recognized as a neglected area. But I wouldn't want to put all my eggs in one basket in any one of these facets. I think that AFA's niche is trees in all categories and aspects.

HKS: I understand that a new thrust for AFA is going to be dealing with the greenhouse effect and reforestation to absorb carbon.

WT: It should be. Forests are an extremely important part in our environmental quality formula. They occupy about two thirds of the land area in the world. They are important, that's why there's so much concern being expressed over the depletion of the rain forests, the tropical forests, because they don't reproduce themselves. They're not being put back, reproduced. They're going into pasture and into other things, and the species that they have there on the forest soils that exist just don't regenerate.

HKS: Right.

WT: Every acre lost is an acre lost. Much like our delta hardwoods here in this country. That has, over the years, been a rapidly declining acreage, and it doesn't go back into forests. A few acres might be planted in cottonwood or other fast-growing species, but most of it goes into soybean, corn, or something else.

HKS: We left off yesterday on the Mike Frome issue. Obviously it was painful and frustrating that you really couldn't speak out. I don't know how many people you've told what you told me yesterday, but do you have more thoughts on that or you want to go on to...

WT: I think we've overemphasized the Frome issue. The significance of it was the fact that it was a turning point, it was a conscious decision on the part of the association not to become a part of the radical-emotional-environmental movement, whereby we're out to save the world.

HKS: If it hadn't been for the Frome situation, the clear decision would probably have been deferred?

WT: That's right. I've said many times, Pete, that extremists give opportunity to moderates. You have to have somebody challenging the status quo, the extremists, the guy with the radical idea, to bring an issue into focus. But they're never resolved in the extreme. This is getting back to my mediator-compromising position. We should be grateful, I guess, for the anti-hunter, anti-fisherman, anti-tree-cutter, because he precipitates action out of the Congress, out of the agencies involved, and it was these types of early environmental conservationists in the late '60s and '70s that gave AFA this opportunity it had to resolve many of the questions in a moderate line, rather than in an extreme line. Forest and Rangelands Resources Planning Act, National Forest Management Act, all were resolved pretty much along the middle of the road compromise position that the Areas of Agreement would have found.

HKS: We are a very conservative country and maybe most countries are that survive. Just look at the difficulty of getting a statute enacted as opposed to getting one stopped. Mike McCloskey pointed out to me one time that you have to get twenty-two yes votes along the way for a bill. If you get a no vote anywhere, you kill it. So if you're against what's happening, it's a much easier task. I used to wonder what would happen if the Sierra Club was ever in favor of something, because getting something through for the Club would be as hard as for anybody else. But stopping something was much easier.

More on Areas of Agreement Committee

WT: This is true. As I told you yesterday, the main function of a legislator is to kill, to eliminate bad ideas.

We haven't talked about the genesis of the Areas of Agreement. I've already mentioned the fact that we had the Disaster Fires Task Force and Trees for People, which involved the process of bringing all the interested parties together and working out solutions to differences. I forget the exact year now, early '70s, when the Timber Supply Bill was introduced in Congress. Timber Supply Bill was a quick effort on the part of the forest industry to get the old growth forests of the West dedicated by law to be a source of supply to stop the peaks and valleys of supply of timber and the price escalations that went up and down with it. There were some severe shortages in building supplies. Then there would be an overabundance of building supplies and the price would fall, and the industry would be hurt. The Timber Supply Bill probably aroused more irate environmental action than anything I can recall. The Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, the Friends of the Earth, National Parks and Recreation, all got up in arms over it. Incidentally, the Timber Supply Bill almost got through Congress. It had, however, been so modified, so amended by committee, that by the time it was ready for final passage in the House it was rather innocuous. All of the rough edges had been knocked out of it and merely recognized the fact that the national forests timber supply could play a role in helping to alleviate these rapid rises and falls. It wasn't too bad by the time it was amended, but it was disaster at the time it was introduced. But it polarized the conservation movement; the forest industry and the conservation community were really at loggerheads, they were bitterly fighting over the Timber Supply Bill. And when it came up for a vote, it was defeated by a voice vote, it never became a record vote in the house, but I say it wasn't too bad at the time. Ed Crafts called me, he said "Bill, here's a real opportunity for AFA." I said, "What's that, Ed?" "Well, there is a need for a policy definition of just where national forests fall in terms of meeting needs of timber supply and the economy. There needs to be a balance between national forests timber use and other uses of the forests. AFA can play a vital role if it can help bring these two forces closer together somehow to help heal the wounds."

HKS: Ed Crafts by this time was in BOR wasn't he?

WT: He was retired.

HKS: Okay.

WT: Crafts had retired. I think he and McArdle both had discussed this, as I recall McArdle also talked to me about it. But it was at their urging that AFA decided, or I decided, and the board later confirmed it, that we should make an effort to establish a national policy for national forests. We had the Organic Act creating the national forests, we had the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act, which defined the multiple uses of the forest resources must serve. But there was no clear defined policy of just how this all fit together -- we're in the wilderness controversy at the time. I remember Charlie Connaughton continually harping on the fact that there's no central overall policy, we lack a national policy for management of all of our forest resources, for even knowing where they are, what they are, and how they're going to be used. We'll talk about the policy bill later, but, as a result of the antagonism between the groups over the Timber Supply Bill, I called a meeting of extremists from both sides. The Bill Hagensteins, the George Craigs, the John Halls from industry, and Mike McCloskey, Brock Evans of the Sierra Club, Brandborg of the Wilderness Society,

Ray Kotrla of Trout Unlimited. We had the Tom Kimballs and the Dan Pooles and Dick Strouds and the moderates in there too. It was a cross-section of the whole conservation community from one extreme to another. I asked them to meet at the Cosmos Club to discuss the Timber Supply Bill to see if there was legitimate legislation to answer a need which people knew existed. If that wasn't it, what was? That first meeting; it's kind of hard to portray the antagonism that existed across the table.

HKS: A lot of words had been said by that time.

WT: Oh yes, they had been very bitter. The denunciations of one and another. If industry had come to the conservation community to begin with and asked for their input and help in trying to devise a plan, a bill, that would meet this existing problem, everybody recognized there was a problem, that they could have found something. But it was an end run. It was introduced quickly without much knowledge and pushed.

HKS: I think maybe Hatfield introduced it.

WT: I think Hatfield did introduce it. Yes. Its failure was almost certain from the beginning because you can't do an end run in Congress and in Washington. The result of that meeting in Washington at the Cosmos Club is that everybody got a chance to spill his guts, to say what was on his mind and to call names. It was actually a confrontation between ideologists. The amazing thing was that everybody there thought it was one of the greatest endeavors that they had participated in. They began to understand each other's point of view a little bit. The preservationists recognized that there might be a need for a policy on national forest timber, and the industry people recognized that conservation and preservationists groups were focused primarily on protection of de facto wilderness. The wilderness issue hadn't been decided at that time, everything that which had not been logged, had not been roaded, had not been under management was potential wilderness. So those were the two extremes that were faced. They all agreed that it was a good exchange and they wanted to continue. So we scheduled a second meeting out in the Forestry Center in Portland. I think you could probably guess that the industry people far outnumbered the national conservation leaders that I was able to get out to Portland.

HKS: Correct.

WT: But we had good representation. They sent their local representatives from California, Washington, Oregon, and it was another good meeting. The thing about it, Pete, is that they began to become friends. People who had been antagonists and calling each other names began to see that there was a reasonable answer to some of the extreme positions that the other took, and they began to understand each other a little bit better. So as a result of the Portland meeting, we decided to create a working committee - the Areas of Agreement. We didn't call it that at the time, we didn't know what to call it. We decided that we needed a small group of ten, twelve, fifteen people who could regularly sit around the table and discuss these issues, not just the Timber Supply Bill. But the forestry issues as they came up. So that group formed by convenience, most of them were in the Washington area, this is where we begin to use AFI and NFPA as the forest industry representatives. But Bill Hagenstein and George Craig continued to come all the way from California every time we called a meeting. The conservation groups were mostly right there. Brock Evans, Tom Barlow, Environmental Defense Fund, Kotrla, Trout Unlimited, and I forget now who the National Parks and Recreation, their young forester, but we had good representation, well balanced. John Hall and his people over in NFPA were always

there. We had strong support from Larry John and Dan Poole and Stroud and the American Fisheries Society. Strangely enough, the Society of American Foresters attended but was almost uninvolved, because they said that their positions had to be delineated by the board, and they had to have studies. They weren't free to move as rapidly as we felt this committee would.

Federal Legislation of the 1970s

We began to discuss the needs, the problems, and what the Timber Supply Bill attempted to do. We all agreed that something was needed, and before you can decide what the forests of this nation are going to do or are supposed to do, you have to know more about them. Well anyway, the result of this whole thing was the Forest and Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act, RPA. This was the legislation that evolved. Jim Giltmier, Bob Wolf over in the Senate Agriculture Committee and congressional research participated fully with us all through this process, and several other staff people from the Hill. The end result, as far as legislation was concerned, was RPA, which came out of the Areas of Agreement, working with and through the staffs of the congressional committees.

The first year, long before we ever resolved anything into legislation, we made some findings; the object being that we had differences. We were at odds between the extremes as to what was needed. Let's don't argue about our differences. Let's see if we can find some common ground. What can we agree on? The first thing: the Forest Service needed more money. Forest Service programs are underfunded. I can see George Craig, "Yeah, we need more roads. We need more budget for timber harvest." And Fish and Wildlife over here, "We need more biologists, we need more investment for fish and wildlife and habitat." All recognized that greater funding was needed. Secondly, they recognized that current appropriations were out of balance. That the national forests were not being managed in full accordance with the Multiple Use Act, whereby equal funding and focus was given to recreation, to timber supply, to water. Every time appropriation bills came before it, the Congress would up roads and up the timber harvest and downgrade the amenities. So we agreed that they were out of balance. They need more money. We went to the Forest Service and said, "Alright, look here. If you were able to balance the programs on the national forests, what would you do? We want you to come up with a--I forget the exact word--best opportunity. If you were able to say how much money you want to put here for wildlife, how much you want to put for recreation, how much you want to put for wilderness, how much you want to put into timber harvest, and all of these categories, what is your best opportunity? If this Congress was going to go with you." They furnished us these figures based upon their best analysis in performing their chore as required by law, their Program for the Seventies.

HKS: You've mentioned quite a few names. Was there one or two particular people from the Forest Service that worked with the committee?

WT: Ray Housley was one, we worked with various ones, they were assigned. But invariably we would have someone from the Forest Service there to give official input. I believe Max Peterson was in there before he was chief, too. The personnel over there is so plentiful that they were able to have somebody at the time we needed them. I asked the committee, "Well, alright. We have agreed on a principle that the programs are underfunded and currently out of balance. Would you be willing to go as a committee to the House and Senate Appropriation Committees and support the Forest Service for increased appropriations and a balanced program based upon the Forest Service's own recommendation." "Yes,

glad to." We went to the committee staffs and got invited as an Areas of Agreement Committee for five, six straight years to come and testify on appropriations. This is when I told you one senator remarked, "This is the first time I've ever seen the sheep and the wolves come in here together. But as long as you're in agreement, boy, we're behind you." And we succeeded, Pete, in getting increased appropriations, but not across the board. We were never able to defeat the congressional prerogative of them deciding where line-item monies should go. As you could imagine, industry people would in their testimony and their statements plug the need for more roads and greater timber supply. You can understand, too, why the other side would ask for more wilderness, more wildlife, more recreation money.

HKS: So Areas of Agreement did not work with OMB or the White House, you went directly to Congress.

WT: Direct to Congress. Later on we recognized that we were batting our heads up against a brick wall, unless we could also get into the president's budget, even though Congress has a certain leeway and does exercise its prerogatives of appropriating the money over and above or under the president's budget. The battle is half won if you can get into the president's budget.

HKS: It strikes me that OMB would have been all over the Forest Service just for cooperating with you guys.

WT: Later on they were cooperative.

HKS: Because it's lobbying in a sense for the Forest Service.

WT: It did evolve that we figured that our efforts probably were better spent with OMB, but we never ceased to use our combined forces to go before the Congress.

HKS: How do you work with OMB; what's the actual process?

WT: You have to know the names. They're the most unrecognized, undefined group of people there in the Executive Office Building, and you have to know the names and the players to even know what office to call. Usually OMB would have assigned representatives from the agencies working with their staffs. There could be somebody from the Forest Service in there working with one of the budget analysts, maybe somebody from the Park Service. You can find out the right approaches to make. They're not very receptive to meeting with groups...

HKS: I can understand that.

WT: They want to do their thing without too much outside interference, but it can be done. Who was Jimmy Carter's first OMB director?

HKS: Bert Lance.

WT: Bert Lance. I had met Bert Lance. Tom Kimball and I had gone down to talk to him in Georgia before Carter was inaugurated, and knew him. So we went to see him, and he welcomed us with open arms. He said yes, we want you to meet with our staff. That was a breakthrough because previous OMB directors didn't care much about having too much outside influence other than from the agencies and from the administration itself. But we did break in. I've forgotten the names of the people, but they had foresters, they had wildlife people on their staff who were familiar with parks, recreation, the facets that we were interested in.

This Areas of Agreement effort continued, I think, five--six years, almost to the time that I left, focusing principally upon the appropriations. I remember the first year we went before Congress, there was 18 million dollars for forestry research on less disruptive environmental logging practices in the West. It had a name, an acronym, I've forgotten what it was. We saved that just by our combined efforts. We were able to get sizable increases in forest research.

There's two things in forestry that are magic words in Congress: research and tree planting. Any facet, any activity in forestry that is easiest to sell are those two. You can always say, well we don't have enough information, we need more research. Research and tree planting, reforestation is a better word, the millions of acres of public land and private lands are not being reforested. It's in the record, you've probably read it, how much increase we were able to get in Forest Service appropriations, particularly in those fields. You will remember also that Congress continues to up the appropriations for roads and timber harvests in the West.

HKS: You can go through *American Forests* where it announces the budget. This is what the president asked for, and Congress always gives more.

WT: Always gives more. We included state and private forestry, we covered the whole gamut and we were able to keep the forestry appropriations in general pretty much on the upswing through that process. As I told you, the first tangible legislation that evolved from the Areas of Agreement was the RPA, Forest and Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act. The rangelands were sort of pushed in by the agricultural interests. They were on our team. "Why should we limit this to forestlands?" Forest Service is responsible for a lot of rangelands, too. It was logical, although our primary motive was to resolve the forestry issues. Forest and Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act. You're familiar with what it calls for. Unfortunately, it's never been implemented.

HKS: I don't recall any opposition to RPA. Every one was in favor of the concept. Is that correct?

WT: That's right. I think that was due to the fact that we had everybody involved in its planning and drafting. They had an old saying out in the Ozarks, Pete, that "we'uns is down on what we'uns ain't up on." Anytime you try to get one facet, one group to work on its own, everybody who's not been in on it is going to oppose it. But when you've got all the players involved in the formation of something, they have had the opportunity to express their dislikes and generally those are resolved before it comes into a tangible form. No there was no great opposition to RPA.

HKS: Was there a feeling at the time that this really won't work? That Congress will not appropriate the kind of money that is needed?

WT: This was the whole hope. What it called for was the agencies to develop, first of all, an inventory. Where do we stand, how much to we have, where is it? The inventory is the essential platform upon which a program is to be built. Then the program is to be adopted, not by Congress, but the administration is to recommend to the Congress a program, and that program balances out all of the uses, all of the needs. Then Congress, by that law, is required to implement that program after it has accepted it. The administration prepares it, presents it to Congress, Congress adopts the program, then it pretty much guarantees implementation in terms of funding. This never did sit right with Congress. Congress doesn't like to have uncontrolled...

HKS: I understand that, so why did they vote yes?

WT: They voted yes on the process, but when it came time to implement the process, they never did.

HKS: How about OMB? That would be a brake on the...

WT: It should have been, but OMB didn't like it either. Again, it removed the flexibility. A program could only be developed about once every five years, and in the interim period if they had their hands tied it was not in accordance with the normal appropriations process.

HKS: You had some heavy hitters like Humphrey carrying the flag for this. It probably got through because of them as much as anything else at that time.

WT: That's right. We had some strong support in the Congress. We had a lot of good conservation support. The idea's still good. The weakness in it is the obligatory appropriation.

HKS: Sure.

WT: It never will be what was intended in the original legislation.

HKS: What do you feel about the criticism? RPA should never have been passed. Is that Monday morning quarterbacking?

WT: I think the intent was fine. It probably should not have had the mandatory funding in it because there's nothing that a legislator dislikes more than not having control, not being able to say up, down.

HKS: LeMaster said supposedly the Forest Service appropriations would increase more than BLM's, and he had some graphs but he didn't have statistical verification of his analysis. Is there a sense that RPA did generate more money?

WT: Oh yes, I think there's no question. It also generated a lot of controversy. You see what the Forest Service came in with were a range of plans. We can do this to one extreme, we can do five or six different intermediate levels to this extreme. And the Forest Service, I guess, by administrative directive, was never able to say this was the plan level that we want. They had hearings, and some groups would come in and want the lowest level, some would want the highest level, and there's always controversy. And the Forest Service was accused of imbalance of favoring things that whomever was looking at it didn't like.

HKS: That's what I was wondering; how it looked in the real world when the Forest Service represented the Park Service and BLM as the spokesmen for all the other agencies, how comfortable the agencies were that the Forest Service would fiddle with the numbers a little bit.

WT: It was good in principle, Pete, but it just didn't work. Still we're getting a good inventory. Every five years we are getting a look at where we stand, what we have, and we're getting presented some alternatives to where we can go.

HKS: Somebody told me, this may have been accurate or not, that 20 percent of the Forest Service staff people were involved in RPA assessment data collecting. It was an enormously expensive piece of legislation.

WT: Like the environmental impact statements, tremendous sums of money, and man hours spent. It became the tail that wagged the dog. I have forgotten now what project it was, but we had a cardboard box with six volumes of one environmental impact statement on one particular project delivered to my office. Who's going to read it?

HKS: That's right.

WT: And how many millions of dollars, literally, went into it--manhours, time. Same may be somewhat true with RPA. The assessment process is good. We need periodic inventory of what we have, where they are, what our needs are, and projected future supplies and demands. But if you're going to spend 20 percent of your personnel and time developing it, maybe it too is...

HKS: On your outline here under RPA you have Randolph-Humphrey. Now Randolph-Humphrey to me is National Forest Management Act. Was Randolph involved in RPA?

WT: Yes.

HKS: In the constructive sense?

WT: In a constructive sense, that's right. We had no great controversy at that time, on RPA. Humphrey was probably the leading forest advocate--generally through Jim Giltmier and Bob Wolf.

HKS: Tell me about Humphrey. Was he an idea man? Did he really get involved in any of this, or he was just a sponsor of things.

WT: No, he knew what was going on. He had very capable staff. Hubert Humphrey, in my opinion, was a senator who really did his homework. He sat there in that Senate Agricultural Committee and presided, could ask searching questions. He was not uninvolved in any way. I was a great admirer of Hubert Humphrey. One of the big disappointments in my political recollection is that he didn't become president. I thought a lot of him.

HKS: That Chicago convention. I don't think any Democrat could have come out of that looking good.

WT: That was sad. I was on a boat trip at the time and missed it on television, but was pretty sad. I've seen the stories and pictures of it since. But, well...

HKS: When you think of what Humphrey is involved with, had his name on: Multiple Use, Wilderness Bill, RPA, National Forest Management Act. He is a major figure in American conservation history, and yet how many people know that? They think of him as all these other things that he was, but he was. . .

WT: He was real. If I had to put my finger on two people who I think have been our real champions over the years, Hubert Humphrey and Mo Udall would be probably foremost. There were lots of others.

HKS: How about people like Talmadge, because they're in agriculture, and forestry's...

WT: Tallmadge was a great supporter too. Tallmadge was the one who requested the private forestry bill, the three little bills that Dennis LeMaster talks about. Tallmadge worked very closely with Humphrey. They were right down the line

together. I've forgotten the name of Talmadge's legislative assistant right now, but he was always 100 percent. You could go to him and get...

HKS: Tallmadge and Humphrey would disagree on lots of other things.

WT: Oh yeah, sure. But in forestry, the Forest Service, they were pretty much teammates.

HKS: I talked to John McGuire about this. It's still not clear in my mind, the line of progress between RPA and the National Forest Management Act. Was the National Forest Management Act to deal with the deficiencies in RPA?

WT: No, it was totally different. National Forest Management Act arose out of a controversy, a particular controversy which involved Monongahela and Bitterroot in which there began to develop a groundswell of public opposition to the forest practices of the Forest Service. RPA has to do with program and appropriation, but actual practices on the ground of Forest Service operations resulted in NFMA.

HKS: So although the Forest Management Act is technically an amendment to RPA, that is not really the purpose of it.

WT: That's right. Forest Management Act is a number of things. It repealed the Organic Act, which prescribed how timber was to be used and cut and managed. It prescribed over the RPA how forest management practices on the national forests were to be done. It didn't cover the broad aspect that RPA does, but it overrode and superseded both the Organic Act and the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act and RPA. It was a clear definition of what the Forest Service could and could not do on the national forests.

HKS: Getting back to Areas of Agreement, during the period between RPA and National Forest Management Act, Areas of Agreement must have been pretty active? I mean there's a lot of controversy during that time.

WT: Oh absolutely. Probably the most effective work that we did was on. . . Well I won't say that, but we were just as active on National Forest Management as we were on RPA, but we had a particular problem to address there. Now the Areas of Agreement committee actually broke down on the National Forest Management Act. We were not able to keep the extremists working together. We finally resolved the National Forest Management Act by splintering. The preservationists groups broke off and continued their drive to, literally by law, prohibit clearcutting on national forests. They didn't give on this issue at all. We kept together the moderate conservation groups and the industry on basic principles that should be embodied in legislation on practices on the national forests.

HKS: The Church committee guidelines provided the technical language for the National Forest Management Act section on clearcutting. It grew out of the Bitterroot controversy, right? Isn't that why Senator Church from Idaho had hearings. . .

WT: The Church guidelines eventually evolved as pretty much the pattern that National Forests Management Act took.

HKS: The Church committee guidelines were perceived at the time as an environmentalist victory?

WT: They did prevail with certain modifications. Church guidelines were a lot better than most of the industry people claimed. The preservationists were fairly strong for the Church guidelines, but they didn't go far enough for them. They were better accepted by the other side of the coalition. It was in the middle of the argument over the Church guidelines that the Brock Evans, the Tom Barlows, all of these people spun off and demanded that the Forest Service really be brought to task and controlled hereafter in their forest practices and management. They wanted to prescribe silvicultural rules for every region. The moderate forces recognized the fact that timber management was not something that could be prescribed by legislation. I remember that Dan Poole and Gordon Zimmerman and Dick Stroud, and I think that Dennis LeMaster, who was with SAF at the time, worked with us on developing the basic principles that would go into the National Forest Management Act. With some modifications the Church guidelines became middle of the road in terms of what they covered. I remember there were nine principles. First of all that you don't write silviculture into legislation. It's a flexible management tool that has to be adapted to each situation. It was those basic principles that we delivered to the Senate committee at the last minute that were pretty well incorporated into the legislation. Now just prior to that, the environmental groups tried to get passed, through the White House, an executive order on clearcutting. Somehow they got to the Council on Environmental Quality and had written an executive order to be signed by the president that would forever prohibit clearcutting on the national forests. It wasn't forever, but it was a very strict prohibition to outlaw clearcutting as a management tool.

HKS: How about BLM? Where they ever part of this? Because the environmentalists were really less conscious of the fact that BLM has a major stand of timber that it's managing.

WT: No. BLM was never much involved with this whole controversy. Now we did support and pass the multiple use organic act for BLM, which put them into management objectives similar to the Forest Service. That BLM land was to be used for multiple uses and copied pretty much the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act.

HKS: I was surprised that there was so little interest in FLPMA when it was going through mark-up, as opposed to the National Forest Management Act. I guess one just overpowered the other in terms of public attention.

Executive Order Banning Clearcutting

WT: I think that's right. There was never that much interest on the BLM organic law. But anyway, this executive order on clearcutting - I've never seen organized opposition develop so quickly. It was almost a secret. It too was an end run, an attempt to resolve this thing before legislation came up, by executive order.

HKS: Who was president then? Carter?

WT: No. It was Nixon.

HKS: Nixon. Was there an assumption that Nixon would actually sign something like that?

WT: There was every indication that he was going to. Again, because of the fact that so many people were ignorant of it, not involved in it, it aroused great

opposition. As I mentioned before, when the forest industry makes up its mind that it really wants to go to work on something, it's pretty influential. So they got it killed in the White House.

HKS: Backtracking just a bit, in the September 1970 issue of *American Forests* there was an article, maybe an editorial, on the problems of forest management on the Monongahela. There were other indications before the Monongahela lawsuit that there were problems there. Was the Forest Service not responsive to even its own findings?

WT: Forest Service was too slow to react. Forest Service silviculturally figured it was right and defended itself rather than recognizing there was a groundswell here that had to be dealt with.

HKS: The problem wasn't the traditional decentralization, where the Washington office stays out of regional interests, more or less. No one really was too concerned...

WT: They just didn't realize the impact, the seriousness of the groundswell that was coming up. Bitterroot and Monongahela were mistakes in magnitude, not in silviculture. The ideas were fine, but they just didn't recognize that the public opinion could generate so quickly and so vitally against the vastness of what they were doing.

HKS: At the 1975 centennial of AFA Humphrey spoke. I was there and I was impressed by his observations, which I assume that he felt were basically accurate, that the tactical error was the president of the West Virginia Izaak Walton League played golf at a course where you could see clearcuts.

WT: I didn't know it was from a golf course.

HKS: That's what he said; that was the anecdote.

WT: The Izaak Walton League chapter in Virginia, I think, was the first grassroots opposition to what they observed over there. But it was based upon the silvicultural findings that we talked about: intolerant species, desired species like cherry and tulip poplar just can't be regenerated under overstory. In order to get desirable species regeneration naturally, you have to clearcut. But you don't clearcut two sections on an exposed hillside where everybody can see it.

HKS: Was the Izaak Walton League generally an advocacy group during this time?

WT: They became more and more so. Joe Penfold was a great spokesman. Joe died about mid '70s, but the Izaak Walton League was pretty much middle of the road, but on this issue became an extremist group.

HKS: In Forest Service history up until the '50s they talked about Izaak Walton League and "other wildlife organizations." The Sierra Club and Audubon were never mentioned by name. Izaak Walton was the only group that Forest Service ever mentioned in staff memos up until the '50s, then of course it started changing. It's sort of interesting that the Izaak Walton League in the eyes of the Forest Service was the conservation group that went to...

WT: I think it was because their spokesman was highly respected, Joe Penfold. Izaak Walton League was a moderate--agencies and Congress both listened to people that they like and feel are honest with them and are fair. If you ever

try to fib a little bit or try to lead Congress or even the agencies in a direction where they question your integrity, you've lost. If there's anything you've got to maintain, it's the respect of the congressional or bureaucratic people you're dealing with. Joe Penfold was a man of great integrity. That's why Izaak Walton League was looked up to at that time. The Sierra Club never really got out of California, until late '60s, early '70s. The Wilderness Society was a voice crying in the wilderness, literally, up until the wilderness bill came out and its passage. National Parks and Conservation Association; Tony Smith was a radical, a rebel who, well Tony went his own way. He was an independent. I could see where Congress wouldn't listen to too much of Tony's lip, even though he was a nice guy. The Wildlife Management Institute asserted great influence. Ira Gabrielson, Pink Gutermuth, Citizens for Conservation Organization, Spencer Smith they had there, were very influential. Most of these other groups proliferated during that environmental-period - Friends of the Earth and the Wildlife Protection Groups.

HKS: AFA's policy bill. Sikes was your guy. I'd never heard of Sikes before, but obviously he was an important player.

WT: Yes, he was. Charlie Connaughton was drastically opposed to piecemeal legislative efforts - the Timber Supply Bill, RPA. He said what we need is an overall federal policy on forestry that should be adopted by the Congress that will be our guideline. Let's not do this piecemeal. We've got the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act, we're going back to the Organic Act, and we have no clear defined overall policy. American Forestry Association with the help of the Forest Service wrote a National Forest Policy Act, which was introduced in the house by Congressman Sikes with a lot of other cosponsors.

HKS: Why Sikes? Florida is not a timber state. What was his interest in this?

WT: He became very much interested in our Trees for People effort. Ken Pomeroy was close to Sikes, and we gave Sikes an award, as I remember.

HKS: Of course, he could be from north Florida where timber was important in his district. I don't know anything about Sikes other than he's from Florida.

WT: He was a good friend of the American Forestry Association, as was Hubert Humphrey. He had introduced the Forest Policy Act, and there were a number of approaches. We wanted to get the president and the Congress to authorize a Forest Policy Commission; it was one method of going about it. Commissions often come up with some good recommendations; but often it's just a cumbersome, expensive process of getting nowhere. So we felt that if we're going to develop a clearcut policy for forests of the country, private as well as public, that we need a policy act to alleviate the need for management acts and forestry extension acts and all this bunch of piecemeal legislation. In other words, attempt to do it at one time, to create either a definition of policy or a method of arriving at policy. The Forestry Policy Act didn't attempt to delineate exactly what all of the policy would be, but it created a committee and a process within the Congress so that policy could be formulated. But the bill never got off the ground. We had hearings on it.

HKS: Too ambitious.

WT: Yeah, overly ambitious. But I remember it was Charlie Connaughton's continued demand: "We've got to have a policy, we've got to have overall policy and quit fighting the brushfires." But when Monongahela and Bitterroot come up, you know, there's an immediate need for action there. If the decision of the

court on Monongahela had been applied to all the eastern national forests, it would have put a grinding halt to all Forest Service management.

HKS: But RPA had some potential for being this overall. . .

WT: Yep.

HKS: You have the assessment, here's the need, here's the programs.

WT: That's right.

HKS: That could have worked.

WT: It could have. That's what I kept trying to tell Charlie. I said, "Charlie, we're not in dire need if we get proper implementation." I think Charlie's effort on forest policy came before RPA was finally adopted. It all sort of overlaps. Our demand for overall forest policy preceded RPA and continued after RPA became law.

HKS: How effective or influential was the Committee of Scientists in actually finding what NFMA meant? The only thing I've ever read about that was Luke Popovich's article in the *Journal of Forestry*. He wasn't sure if it had been co-opted by the Forest Service.

WT: I don't think it ever accomplished a great deal. Again it was an effort, I think, made to forestall opposition to whatever program plan it'd come up with. Art Cooper was a member of that committee. As we both know, we never got the administration program, any administration program, adopted. We presented lots of alternatives, the Forest Service did, and created lots of controversy among the extremes, but we never got a coherent program approved by the administration. This is what OMB was strongly against.

HKS: The National Forest Management Act was passed twelve years ago, almost thirteen years ago, and it seems to have satisfied enough people that it's still there and people aren't attacking it. I guess it was successful.

WT: Yes. It gave the Forest Service a flexibility but did put some restrictions. The Church guidelines pretty much became operative, even though they were never adopted officially into the language the National Forest Management Act. The Forest Service interpreted the guidelines about what the public would want. The provisions of the legislation leave it in the hands of the Forest Service, but do limit it rather severely as to how far they can go. I think it was a pretty good solution to a real mean controversy. If the courts say clearcutting is forever prohibited by edict, see how their hands would be tied. But we whipped that.

HKS: It also made an effort with FLPMA to bring in the Forest Service and BLM into line.

WT: Yes.

HKS: I don't know that it's actually been successful. The language that attempts to set comparable values for the Forest Service and BLM.

WT: That's another big point of controversy, over the implementation of that fair value on grazing. Even though the law requires that grazing fees be set at

a fair market value, the administration consistently has, under pressure, kept the grazing fees lower than what anybody...

HKS: But they are lower on BLM land than they are on Forest Service land. And it could be that...

WT: Here again the Bureau of Land Management lands are much more susceptible to local control than Forest Service land.

HKS: Except for things like these flaps over privatization, no one ever hears about BLM. I imagine that most folks wouldn't have even heard of the agency.

WT: They adopted a title, National Resource Lands, and you never hear the term used. Legally, they're not BLM lands, they're National Resource Lands. But did you ever see that term anywhere? I see where they made a big swap up here recently. BLM owned a chunk of land, it was in Dallas, some city in Texas, worth 15--18 million dollars, that they swapped for eighteen thousand acres or something in the Everglades. That was last week. BLM sits on a lot of very valuable property. Cities have sprung up around some of their isolated desert land out there, and put tremendous values on the land.

HKS: I got a kick out of it when, I forget her name, when the lady that's the head of EPA that left under such a flap early in Reagan's years. She was married to the director of BLM and someone like Dan Rather said, "And her husband is an official in the Department of the Interior." I thought, that guy doesn't even say he's the director of the Bureau of Land Management, it's not even considered newsworthy.

WT: Burford. Ann Burford.

HKS: She was married to...

WT: She was married to Bob Burford, who's the director of BLM.

HKS: Right, but he was characterized on national news as an official in the Department of Interior, not director of BLM, which suggests where BLM sits in the national consciousness.

WT: The Bureau of Land Management has been very, very susceptible to political and public pressures, you see. You know they had local advisory committees on all of their range allocations. BLM has been a tool of special interests.

HKS: The Taylor Grazing Act set that up.

WT: That's right. There are a lot of good professional people in BLM, but they've never been able to exercise their professionalism as in the Forest Service.

HKS: Did you happen to read Marion Clawson's memoirs?

WT: Yes.

HKS: It's kind of interesting.

WT: He is a remarkable individual. The depth of his knowledge in our fields as from an economist's point of view is just unreal. He's untiring, I guess, in his research efforts, he's just always reading, delving.

HKS: It indicates the lack of constituency, but if you look at the Department of the Interior historically, you have BLM, Bureau of Indian Affairs, you have some pretty lackluster agencies, traditionally, in Interior. Park Service has a certain cadre and esprit de corps and so forth, but the other ones are kind of ho-hum.

WT: But the Park Service has lost a lot of that. George Hartzog brought a lot of grit, a lot of drive and determination into the Park Service, but a lot of it's been lost since George left. George was a great ally, incidentally, on the reorganization thing. George Hartzog tried to pull Cecil Andrus off of that reorganization kick he was on. We might talk about reorganization.

HKS: Sure.

Reorganizing Government

WT: It goes back a long ways. There've been repeated attempts in history, as you well know, for the Forest Service to be put back over in Interior, to consolidate the agencies. It's been almost a continual fight for survival, and just the thing we're talking about, the difference in professionalism of the Forest Service over in Agriculture as opposed to land management agencies over in Interior. There's no comparison. The level is so much higher, that you can readily understand why there's all the resistance to keep it from going over into that agency. Jimmy Carter, when he became governor in Georgia, set out to consolidate agencies. The Georgia Forest Service was a very independent industry-controlled and supported agency. He couldn't tolerate the independence that it enjoyed in the state as far as legislation and support. So he reorganized, he was going to pull that Georgia forestry agency over into the Department of Environment or resources, which he failed to do because the support of Georgia's forest industry was too strong. State administrators, governors, don't like independent commissions. Independent commissions erode the executive authority that the governor has. He'd like to put all independent commissions and boards under administrative heads that he appoints. Of course this is what he accomplished in Georgia.

Tom Kimball and I went down to talk to Bert Lance before Carter was inaugurated. Bert Lance tipped his hand to us right there. He said, "There's one thing that Jimmy's going to do when he gets to Washington. He's going to get that Forest Service reorganized into a Department of Natural Resources." Which tipped us off to what to expect. Sure enough, one of the first efforts that he made was to create a Department of Resources. Basically, it was a beefed up Department of the Interior with the Forest Service moved over. The concept is good. I can see no reason why land management agencies couldn't be in a single department. But the tie between forestry and agriculture is strong. The big fallacy of the department through Carter's reorganization plan: he wanted to move all land management agencies under a single control, then have divisions that would control the various aspects. There would be a department of resources, there would be somebody who was in charge of forestry on these lands, there's somebody in charge of fish and wildlife, here's somebody else in charge of grazing--have a multi-headed administrative set-up exercising different uses on the same land, which just absolutely couldn't work. You have to have a single control and then a balance of different land uses.

Carter came up here hell bent on creating a Department of Resources. Of course Cecil Andrus, his secretary of the Interior, was promised this. When Cecil

Andrus was offered the secretaryship of the Interior, he was told that well, you're going to be the head of a new Department of Resources. I'm going to get the Forest Service over here. George Hartzog had been director of Parks, he was out at the time. I'm not sure. Anyway he went to Cecil Andrus and told him if you want to get a Department of Natural Resources, you'd better make sure you've got the right people out of the conservation community on your side and come up with a proposal that eliminates the main objections that they have--which was principally use management, just individual responsibility for certain and various uses. George suggested to him who he ought to see: Pink Gutermuth, Bill Towell, Tom Kimball. But Tom Kimball was on Andrus' ball team. Tom Kimball took me to see Cecil Andrus at George Hartzog's insistence. But Cecil Andrus didn't give me a chance to even say what I wanted to, he lit right in. He says, "Boy, the first thing I want to do when we get this reorganization, I want to fire that chief of the Forest Service, John McGuire." He says, "That damn outfit over there needs to be brought up to executive control, there's too much freewheeling."

HKS: Denny refers to that statement, but, it wasn't that McGuire was doing a bad job, it was just that he was too independent.

WT: That's right. The agency.

HKS: The agency.

WT: The agency was being held up all the time to the inefficiency in Interior. Independent agencies that operate without too much political control are disliked. The last year or two that I spent in Washington was fighting that reorganization, and we finally whipped it. We exposed it more than anything else, exposed it for what it was. I publicly proclaimed on a number of occasions, in print and elsewhere, that Cecil Andrus said, "the first thing I'll do is get rid of the chief of the Forest Service, we'll whip those boys into shape." We had a big conference, you remember, up at Duke on the reorganization.

HKS: Do you think if there hadn't been the work that you and others did it would have gone through because no one was paying attention? In the beginning of a president's administration there's a certain honeymoon period.

WT: That's right. Who's the guy from Florida he brought up as head, his staff man in charge of reorganization? Pettigrew, I believe was the guy's name, something like that. Actually he became Jimmy Carter's staff chief on reorganization, and boy we crucified him on a number of platforms, meetings, where he would appear.

HKS: Denny said Carter's folks didn't do their homework with Congress.

WT: Jimmy Carter. I was as strong an advocate for his election as anybody could have been. I was much impressed, I'd met him personally, I'd corresponded with him on conservation issues while he was governor, while the campaign was on, and after he was elected. But he probably was the greatest disappointment that I've ever encountered in a chief executive.

He came to Washington, not familiar with the agencies and unfamiliar with the way the Hill operates. He was a novice in the big leagues. He'd probably been a good governor. But he was inexperienced and a novice in Washington. Instead of looking for and appointing the most knowledgeable and the most experienced people in the various fields, he brought with him a cadre of good old boys and

gals in key conservation policy positions who - all they knew was don't shoot that deer and don't muddy that river. They were shallow. One of the greatest disappointments I had in my twelve years in Washington was Jimmy Carter not living up to my expectations in terms of environmental issues and conservation. I think his heart was in the right place, but he didn't have the right people in the right positions.

HKS: The election last night might have reflected Dukakis's inexperience with the national campaign, as opposed to Bush's.

WT: This is what worried me about Dukakis. I voted for Dukakis.

HKS: I did too.

WT: I'm a strong believer in the Democratic philosophy. But he would have, I'm afraid, been somewhat another Jimmy Carter. His lack of experience. Anybody who's been a senator or in the Washington scene for 10, 12, 15, 20 years is certainly going to know a whole lot more about the workings up there than somebody who's been the chief executive out in a state.

HKS: Let's talk about the Nixon reorganization. You said it's a whole different set of circumstances.

WT: Yes, a different set of circumstances. I think that Carter's was a vindictive type thing. He was going to come up here, "I'm going to show these guys," and tried to push through something. Nixon's plan wasn't a big push. It was organized and thought out, and a deliberate effort to try to reduce the agencies to create a Department of Resources.

HKS: Roy Ash's study.

WT: Yes. It wasn't a fly-by-night, it wasn't a quick fix. The fallacy again of his reorganization was that it was going to be functional jurisdiction on the same lines. A split jurisdiction. In other words, people trying to do different things all on the same lands. I think there should be a reorganization of the resource agencies in the federal government. My personal belief is that there is some kind of a better way of bringing environmental forestry, land resource agencies into better coordinated and unified control. EPA could have been a department that accomplished this. Instead it just takes on water, air, environmental pollutants. You've still got your land management.

Regulating Private Forest Land

HKS: How about the Federal Forest Practices Act, setting state standards. That got a little publicity, and didn't go very far.

WT: No, it didn't go very far. States' rights again. The Federal Forests Practices Acts was an attempt to prescribe by law those practices which contribute, or are contributing factors, to pollution sources. Many states already have certain minimum forest practice laws. But the fallacy of the federal/state forest practices act was it would have been a federal mandate to the states that they adopt certain standards. If they don't then the federal government would step in. That's an invasion of states' rights again.

HKS: The Forest Service proposed something like that in the late '40s.

WT: They sure did.

HKS: The last of the regulations.

WT: Forest regulations in the '40s, late '30s and early '40s, when I got out of forestry school, it was a hot issue. The Forest Service was strongly behind federal forest regulations. Which being state administrators, we took strong exception to. There is a strong element right now, Pete, that would require federal jurisdiction of all resources in the nation: the forests, fish and wildlife, of air and water, federal jurisdiction of all environmental resources over the functions of the states.

HKS: It's pretty tough, it seems to me, to write a law that deals with the ecological diversity in the continent.

WT: You can't do it. Of course there's always a plum, there's always federal money for the states to do the jobs themselves. If the states don't do it then the federal government will step in and do it for them.

HKS: To have guidelines for Douglas-fir and loblolly pine. I don't know how you'd do that.

WT: You can't.

HKS: Or hardwood in Kentucky or something.

WT: You can't prescribe renewable resources management by edict, by law. You can set up principles. Forest practice guidelines are fine, but we need to have local jurisdiction. There is so much variety in species, in topography, in soils, you just can't prescribe what is right on a national basis for all the diversity we have.

HKS: I understand that. I worked in California where the attempt was to prescribe. This lack of confidence in professional judgment is a tough one.

WT: You can't log on slopes more than 10 percent or 30 percent or whatever it might be. There's all the differences in the world in soil stabilities. Some of them you could log 80 percent, and you wouldn't disturb a thing. But, you can't prescribe this.

HKS: *American Forests* said the Public Land Law Review Commission report should be implemented.

WT: The public land law review report was largely implemented. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the Land and Water Conservation Fund were direct outcomes of that study, of that effort. There was pretty serious proposals in the Public Land Law Review Reports. You remember...

HKS: One hundred and thirty-seven.

WT: Wayne Aspinall was able to get through some almost disastrous recommendations in terms of the western lands, grazing and that sort of thing. Implementation, I think, was piecemeal. But it did focus national attention on the important recreation resource at a time it was badly needed, created a vehicle for dedication of the offshore oil revenues to the Land, Water, Conservation Fund. But you know they never have been fully released, they still

had to go through the appropriations process. But that legislation was all pretty well set before I got to Washington.

I participated in the hearings, the activities of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Commission, as a director in Missouri and chief of the legislative committee of the International. But, never too much involved.

HKS: There was a first commission in 1880, one in 1903 and one in the early '30s and then this last one, and they make fascinating reading for historians, but you're not sure they really amounted to anything.

WT: This was what Charlie Connaughton and I talked about on the national policy for forestry. Commissions do create a lot of publicity and a lot of splash, but when it's all said and done, they don't accomplish much. This is why we pretty much decided on legislative initiatives.

HKS: They're sort of like - put in RPA terms - they're assessment, but there are no programs. A big assessment.

WT: Yes.

International Forestry

HKS: Almost every issue of *American Forests* for a while had an article on what I'll call international forestry. You might not have thought that way. There's Bill Towell in Sweden. Back from India you were really impressed by the population problem. Was there any difficulty in justifying the AFA sending people to Europe, did it cost money at the time?

WT: Actually the trips that I made overseas were at no cost to AFA.

HKS: Is that right?

WT: These tours that we organized and directed carried with them one free passage for every fifteen, I think it was. So either Pomeroy or myself, in one case Paul Dunn or somebody else representing the association would and lead the tours, but at no expense to AFA. Now the trip to Indonesia, I went as an appointee of the National Academy of Sciences to do a natural resource workshop with the people in Indonesia responsible for resource management, and that was all paid by the Academy of Sciences. Joe Fisher went, I was the forester on the team.

HKS: How about reaction to the articles themselves? Like, why are you putting in stuff on Sweden; I want to know about Connecticut. How was this received by the audience?

WT: Very very well. In fact they seemed to be very receptive to what's going on in other countries. Of course it's helpful to us back here as you know, how other countries are handling their forest problems.

HKS: I understand but I just...

WT: It was well received. Our concern for world forestry, Pete, parallels that of more recent years been expressed by SAF. Nations have become closer together in reality now than states used to be. The interchange of resources back and forth between nations now is just almost like crossing state borders. The

American industry that's playing a major role in denuding the tropical forests in Indonesia and South America deserves our attention. We as the biggest users of these resources from other countries have a certain responsibility for conservation and for what is happening to these other countries through our use. We are hogs in terms of how much of the resources we are overusing. Our standard of living is a contributing factor. . .

HKS: No question about that.

WT:... to the degradation of environments in other countries. We should as environmentalists/conservationists be concerned. I think it's been helpful to us, too. I got to know some of the foresters pretty intimately over in central Europe. I think you've possibly read some articles, an article I wrote on Dr. Kwasnitachka the chief of the West German Forestry Service. We would go through the Black Forest and some of their beautifully managed forest stands over in West Germany, and there were 100, 150-year rotations. To me the stands were very dense and dark. I remember Merle Lowden asking, "Why don't you thin this out? Why don't you get some growth on these trees? You could do the same thing in 60-year rotations." He said, "Well, we've tried that. What's the hurry? We went through that two or three hundred years ago, but we found out that we could not get the quality we wanted." They've developed a totally different philosophy. Maybe we're a little bit too anxious in some of our management decisions over here.

HKS: We're caught up in compound interest charges.

WT: That's right. Maybe we should be a little bit more deliberate and thinking more in quality rather than in quantity. You know, you learn these things.

HKS: When I was in forestry school, we learned how wonderfully European forests were managed. Then I went to eastern France and I thought "my god, they ought to get in there and do something," it just looked awful. And this was a managed forest?

WT: You were talking about private nonindustrial lands, how they've been able to get the landowners themselves to organize into these cooperatives. Maybe it'd only be five or six landowners, but they'd go together, they'd buy a tree harvester. But somehow or other they were able to make their small treelots profitable by sharing equipment, by sharing expertise. They don't hire a forester, they employ the services when needed. They found answers that we're still seeking over here. So I'm a firm believer in the values of these international exchanges.

HKS: I am too. I'm just wondering in terms of the people who send in their $15 a year, if they thought AFA was forgetting what it's all about.

WT: AFA never paid for any of our foreign excursions. They did pay my way down to the World Forestry Congress in Buenos Aires, but most of the trips that I was ever involved in were financed outside of member funds.

American Forestry Association in Decline

HKS: One of the things we really haven't talked about is AFA itself. You start in '67 and you've got this three-headed monster and you're working to correct that and you have to depose Mike Frome, but...

WT: You remember I told you that I went to Washington when the job at AFA was offered to me, because although I hadn't recognized it earlier, I then recognized that AFA was probably the proudest conservation organization in this country. You go back in its history to see how AFA was at the forefront of practically every major resource issue that ever came up. The whole purpose of AFA originally was to get the forest reserves set aside, somehow protect the remnants of this great resource in the public domain. Being able to influence administration to set aside what are now the great western national forests was largely AFAs doing. The passage of the Weeks Act to set up funds for acquisition of lands, to begin programs, Clarke-McNary later on, cooperative financing to encourage the states to get going, all were spearheaded by AFA, almost all of them. Weren't many organizations or conservation groups. The Civilian Conservation Corps was a direct outgrowth of AFAs recommendation, that forestry and recreation, wildlife and natural resources was a good place for this manpower, emergency manpower to be directed for some useful purpose.

HKS: I'm just thinking of AFA as an institution. You were also a manager of a small bureaucracy, as it were. You hired, you put carpets on the floor, you did that sort of things. AFA has fallen on hard times, an institution that has been around for 115, 120 years. It's not just the environmental movement. It's gone through hard times before.

WT: Yes it has. And has survived before and will survive.

HKS: The '20s were when Pack took his group and walked out.

WT: Walked out and created a splinter organization. AFA has periodically gone close to industry and backed-off. Jim Craig told me one time in his early days with the association, they came on hard times. And a very powerful spokesman from the industry came to him and said, "Look here, you play ball with us with this magazine you don't need to worry about financing. We'll take care of you."

HKS: Let me follow up on that. If you have 80,000 members putting in $15 a year, that's $1.2 million just from the little guy. Other than buying ads in the magazine, what else did industry do financially for AFA?

WT: We had some corporate gifts. I think the biggest one I ever had was maybe $10,000 per year, most of them five, but you know for 3 or 4 or 5 percent of our total budget, you can't knuckle under to industry, and I was always grateful for the fact that I was not beholden to any financing group. I welcomed the industry contributions in reasonable quantity, but they would have been willing to have made AFA industry's spokesman. We could have become the American Forestry Association as an adjunct of the forest industry. That offer was made. In periods of hard times some of that contribution was accepted. But then there was almost a constant see-saw back and forth to solicit some help and at the same time pull back away from control.

HKS: Well, you made money on trail riders, right?

WT: Yes, for a while. That became a losing item. Now they've reinstituted it. They abandoned it for two or three years after I left. You know an organization has to have an image. Trail Riders of the Wilderness is one of our good ones. People recognize the American Forestry Association for something it started, originated, and maintained over all the years. The Register of Big Trees is AFA's image. Even though they might cost us out of pocket, they're worth preserving because that's part of AFA. We should be the one single conservation organization in the country with that focus on trees. That doesn't mean that

we're only on trees; this is where I came into AFA, they wanted more than that. They wanted the broader conservation/environmental image. But AFA's on hard times for a number of reasons. There's no grassroots, we don't have any affiliates, we don't have anything really for members to do.

HKS: That's not a change.

WT: No, that's not going to change.

HKS: AFA was successful...

WT: Let me tell you a parallel that has been successful. Created not more than twenty years ago was the National Arbor Day Foundation, out there in Nebraska City. National Arbor Day Foundation, a magic combination of words. But the membership, I think, is $10 a year, and in that short space of twenty years with no great effort, I've never seen any major campaign on membership, they're up to over 400,000 members right now.

HKS: Something to be in favor of, right. Easy to be in favor.

WT: While the American Forestry Association has dropped from 84,000 down to 30 some. Image. Image, again. I think that is probably the key reason, in spite of its proud history, pride in its record of accomplishment, AFA is suffering hard times. I think it's a great magazine; the editorial policy has fluctuated between the timber industry and the environmental, you know, it's been broad. The National Wildlife Federation, it didn't start until the 1940s, has grown to 5 million members, $60-70 million budget. AFA who has a lot longer history has declined. I don't know the answers. It's just as I said yesterday, I was fortunate to come in at the right time, rode the crest, we had a steady growth the whole twelve years that I was there. I guess that I was just lucky to have left when I did. But it worries me.

HKS: Financial support is often construed as a means of control. I'm trying to figure out where the money came from for AFA, if it didn't come from industry. Members was a major factor, must have been 80--90 percent of the budget from just a general membership.

WT: The combination from industry and foundations never amounted to as much as 5 percent.

HKS: So Trail Riders made money for a while. How about your annual meetings. They used to be much larger than they are, and you had a registration fee. Do they pay for themselves?

WT: We tried to make them pay for themselves. We used to have a very low registration fee and big attendance. Then as the effort made to get the people who participated to pay for the thing, and fees kept going up to $50--$75, the attendance fell off. What do you do at an AFA meeting? You go to listen to a program. You don't come to vote on anything. You don't have any voice in what the association is doing or is going to do. There's no grassroots tie.

HKS: Was Hank Garraty under you or was that Rex? I can't quite remember the sequence.

WT: He came in with Rex.

HKS: Okay.

WT: That fund raising effort, Pete, I think hurt the Association much more than anything...

HKS: I'm glad you said that because that's my feeling, too.

WT: It was almost nauseating in its obvious effort to extract money. Hank Garraty was recommended to us by Hester Turner. I think he had helped the Campfire Girls of America, or Girl Scouts, or somebody she was associated with. Here's what AFA needs, he's a good fundraiser. I was very thankful I was sitting down here in Southern Pines when that series of pressure letters went out. I think it was unbefitting an organization of AFA's stature to resort to that begging pressure method of pulling itself out of financial difficulties. I liked an organization that was self supported by its members, by the people who felt they were getting enough from their membership, that they would continue.

HKS: We were heavily involved in fundraising. We had a professional fundraiser too, but we never gave him his head like the AFA gave Garraty. Our fundraiser didn't go out and make speeches, he was invisible, he was behind, he was a coordinating person.

I think boards like fundraisers because it gets them off the hook, and they don't have to go out raising money.

WT: Federation has had some problems in that regard, too. They've had to fire fundraisers who didn't turn out.

HKS: Jim retired. I don't know how broadly you searched; I remember you exchanged letters with Ron Fahl, our editor. You hired Bill Rooney. You were looking for something. I'm not asking you to critique Bill, I'm putting it in broader context how the magazine fits into AFA's broader mission. You said yesterday you didn't want a newspaper man creating news, and controversy, you wanted something reflective. But *American Forests* really changed dramatically--dramatically in terms of more soft news.

WT: I see what you mean. Bill's more of a...

HKS: Sentimental.

WT: Yes, sentimental, citizen type aspect. I think he's done a good job. He probably hasn't had the policy direction.

HKS: When you interviewed Bill, and you said "I'd like you to come and work for us, here's what I want you to do." If it's not a violation of confidence, what did you tell him that you wanted him to do? You had something in mind.

WT: Yes, I had something in mind. I was looking for a man that came in with no prejudices whatsoever, who had a editorial/journalistic background and could put out a magazine that would be popular and reflect interests of the readers but at the same time reflect policies and philosophies and programs of the association. Now Bill Rooney was not my first choice. I did talk with Ron Fahl, I talked with Bill Vogt who later went to *Journal of Forestry* as editor. When I finally settled on Bill Rooney, I thought I had the type of man that would appeal to the member constituency of AFA more so than Jim. Maybe I overestimated him.

HKS: I was just curious because...

WT: That little banner there behind you. Bill Rooney and his family gave me that when I retired. "Bill, you have touched us, we have grown." He and his wife and his kids put that together...

HKS: That's something Bill Rooney would do, that's the image I have of him. That's not a bad image for somebody to have of the editor. Roughly, what percentage of the articles in *American Forests* are solicited or invited as opposed to coming in over the transom?

WT: I think that at least 75 percent are contributed voluntarily. There is some solicitation; we would seek articles along a certain vein and certain well-established writers who we know. Jim used this more than Bill Rooney does. Jim would go out after specific subjects and specific writers. Jim was a good editor. I never will forget what Jim always said, "Just remember one thing, short sentences, strong verbs, very few adjectives." That was Jim's bible: short sentences, strong verbs and very few adjectives. That's what it takes for good writing.

HKS: Strong verbs. Verbs are where the action is obviously. Monroe Bush reviewed books forever. Is that a good idea, in retrospect?

WT: I don't think so. To my knowledge it was a waste of money.

HKS: Most journals send a book out to individuals to review, but AFA has had a guy judge all the books.

WT: A book reviewer. Henry Clepper did it for a while, and I don't think it's good at all, but it was well established and Bush, after he moved to Colorado, continued to do it. But that was Jim's idea. He didn't pay much. He got the books, I don't know what he would do with them, but...

HKS: He must have gotten a thousand books a year.

WT: Quite a lot. I reviewed a few books, those that I was particularly interested in that I thought had applications to the association.

HKS: Because at the Forest History Society we must get two hundred books a year for consideration for review, but *American Forests* is a much broader subject, and he picks two or three books, twenty-five books a year, we'll say roughly out of a thousand.

WT: You do a lot more reviews.

HKS: I understand that. It's a different type of journal.

WT: You try to cover the field of forest history in your reviews.

HKS: That's right.

WT: I'm disturbed by AFA's fortunes. It bothered me a great deal when they sold the building. I told you while ago about one of the things I'm proudest of out in Missouri was building a beautiful complex office space for the organization. When I went to Washington I found totally inadequate the townhouse there, we didn't have room to expand. We couldn't grow. We had no place to put other people if we wanted to. I was able to get a good price on what we had and convert it to something much bigger, much better, so you can see how it must have hurt when they got hard times and had to reap the $2--3 million asset that

they had. You can't live out of your reserves. You know, you've got to make your day-to-day operations pay for day-to-day costs.

HKS: I was very much intrigued what you said yesterday, how important that meeting room was to AFA's mission. Maybe that vision has been changed. I heard that AFA looked at the building - how much it cost for heat, light and water, maintenance and so forth - and that meeting room was a white elephant. But to you it was central to...

WT: The Natural Resources Council of America met there all the time that we had that building. We would not have had the Area of Agreement committee without that space.

HKS: That's obvious, you have to have a space to meet.

WT: You've got to have a space, and you're not going to do it crowded up in a little director's office. I think that home is vital to an organization. The image with our own building with the name on the--American Forestry Association. I remember how excited I was my first trip to Washington to walk up the street--The National Geographic Society, right there. Had its name on the building. I felt the same pride with AFA. Now you walk up, I haven't even seen it, but to an office building and someplace when you get in the lobby you look along a chart, The American Forestry Association, fifth floor; it's not the same. I, as a director of the National Wildlife Federation, was very strongly in favor of putting up this big new building which they're going to dedicate next March. The building they had was beautiful. Murals and the carvings out front that will be incorporated in the front of the new building. But the federation has grown so big that the investment it is making in downtown Washington is bound to be another moneymaker in terms of growth and investment. There's always going to be demand for office space in downtown Washington, you can be sure of that. It's not going to diminish.

HKS: It doesn't matter who gets in.

WT: Just look at what happened to that doggone city since the twenty years, twenty-two years that I've known it. The buildings are all twelve stories high, all the same level, and it's the most unappetizing looking city when you get back away from the monuments and the parks, because there's no character to it. There's no skyscraper here, and little building here, it's all level. But that's under the statutes or the covenants of the district. They can't go higher than the Capitol or higher than the--I don't know what the prescribed level is.

A Typical Day

HKS: Describe, if there is such a thing, a typical day for executive vice-president. You come in to work. How do you know what to do? Other than maintain the office and so forth.

WT: You have to be a self-starter. I don't think I ever had a day in AFA when I wasn't fully occupied. An awful lot of correspondence, fires to put out. You know, a membership organization hears rather frequently from members who have one thing or another to say. But if I had nothing to do in terms of immediate demands, I was always thinking in terms of policy. You can never keep up with the legislative process. You've got to look at the *Congressional Record*, you've got to keep informed. You've got to keep up your contacts. Conservationists are awfully prone to meet, always wanting to get together for something. Invariably

there would be a committee meeting over here, meeting someplace else, no end to cocktail parties. If you wanted to you could get drunk every night in Washington free. Go eat hors d'oeuvres, and a lot of my friends did that [laughter]. I can't drink like that, but you'd be surprised how many people float around Washington from cocktail party to cocktail party, eating the hors d'oeuvres and drinking liquor.

HKS: Ten thousand bills introduced to Congress every year. Obviously most of them never get very far. How does AFA know that a bill is in there that ought to be looked at? Did you have somebody reading all through this stuff?

WT: Yes. Dick Pardo was delegated the responsibility of following the *Congressional Record* and alerting me or the rest of us anytime there was any bill of interest to us. Usually you knew about it. Lots of publications. National Wildlife Federation had a weekly publication, Sport Fishing Institute, Wildlife Management Institute, their publications alerted to any bills of interest.

HKS: So you see this in one of these newsletters, NFPA or whatever, this Senate bill so-and-so, do you get on the phone and call that staff? What's the next step after you see there's a bill that you're interested in and you want to know more about it?

WT: If it's originated from somebody we know, if it was NFPA, we probably would have been called in on it in the drafting stage, in the early stage.

HKS: That's true.

WT: Industry is pretty effective in lining up its ducks before the shoot starts. The Forest Service, for example, may prepare a bill at the request of let's say Tallmadge. The agency itself would send us copies of their proposal as soon as they were free to do so. The private forestry bill that Tallmadge introduced was prepared by the Forest Service as one bill. Forest Service, as soon they fulfilled their requirement to him, they saw that we got a copy of it. I immediately convened the Areas of Agreement Committee to study this legislation, and this is one, getting back to legislation again, this is one that we resolved every difference that anybody could bring up in the Areas of Agreement Committee before we took a final copy over to Jim Weaver, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Forestry, and said this draft has been revised according to--named all the agencies that participated in it--to our knowledge there is no objection by any of them to this bill right now.

He said you mean to tell me that the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, the National Forest Products Association, none of them objected to this bill. In fact, it went through the Senate, went through the House with almost token hearings. Had no hearings in the Senate, passed the House unanimously, passed the Senate on voice vote without any dissent whatsoever. One thing that they did to it instead of making it into one bill, they broke it down into three components. That's the only change they made. Dennis covers that well in his book.

HKS: Yes, the three little bills.

WT: That's one we needed in order to complete the policy program of forestry. We had the RPA, we had National Forest Management Act, we had the FIPs program and private assistance, the extension, the research and the forestry technical assistance came out of a private bill. That sort of covered the waterfront. It

accomplished what was left of Charlie Connaughton's desire for overall policy for forestry. As I say in a period of ten years we rewrote the forestry laws of the nation in those pieces of legislation. But the last one was the easiest, the simplest thing in the world. I think it shows the value of the process because Congress didn’t have to sit and listen to dissident voices on this portion of it and strong support over here and resolve any differences that existed because it was all done before they got it.

Incidentally, the extension foresters were so pleased with our efforts in passage of the Cooperative Forestry Extension Act that they got together and promoted my Honorary Doctor of Science Degree from the University of Missouri.

There's a funny story about that, too. There was a typo in my Bio that went to the Missouri Doctoral Committee. It said I was a member of the Technical Advisory Committee of the National "Gay" Survey. A member of the Committee said, "I will never vote for that guy Towell because he's mixed up in that Gay Movement." Of course, he soon learned that my affiliation was with the National "Gas" Survey.

HKS: Let's get back to *American Forests* magazine. To generalize, when Bill Rooney became editor the issues were handled in editorials that often you wrote, but there weren't articles about the issues. The articles were separate from the issues in a way that under Jim the articles were generated to become part of it. Was this deliberate? First of all, is my perception accurate?

WT: I think your perception is accurate. I don't think it was deliberate, however. As I say, Jim loved controversy. Any legislative, any policy issue, generally was controversial. Jim looked beyond to people like Leon Minkler, for example, to write lots of articles because Minkler was kind of way out. For a forester he had a very critical view of the Forest Service. That's the kind of thing that Jim solicited. He liked Frome. He liked people like Arnold Bolle, the prickly ones. I don't think Bill Rooney ever had that much insight into the journalistic controversial arena that Jim Craig did. Bill Rooney was there about two years I guess before I left. I think, has drifted more toward this soft...

HKS: Well they reorganized the magazine to six issues a year. They're trying to bring some of the policy issues back into the magazine, for better or for worse. I don't know how the membership is responding to this.

WT: I don't know either. Surprisingly enough, I don't get much feedback from AFA. I'm a life member, I bought my membership. But I don't get any minutes, I don't get any board...

HKS: I'm a life member too.

WT: I don't get anything except what a life member gets in the way of magazines' special mailings. I'm not complaining. I do know how to retire gracefully, when I get out I let somebody else run it.

HKS: I'm a fan of AFA. If the Society hadn't been involved in the move from California to North Carolina at the time, I would have applied for the job that Neil got. I have no experience in the Washington scene, I have no idea if I would have been a finalist or not, but...

WT: You would have been great at it.

HKS: I appreciate that. I don't know what they're looking for.

WT: I just thought it was the right time, the right way to go, the right organization...

HKS: So I was sort of stunned that here's my favorite organization having real difficult problems and no one seems to know what to do about it.

WT: I wish I knew the answer for them. I suggested a name change, I've suggested the possibility of merger, you know, a different image, maybe the National Arbor Day Foundation might be a potential candidate. I even talked while I was a member of the board of the National Wildlife Federation that maybe the federation should take on fish, wildlife and forestry as a further adjunct and be absorbed into that larger organization. National Wildlife and Forestry Federation or something. I don't know the answer. They're on hard times, and it worries me because I was so proud of the history and the twelve years that I had there that I hate to see it degenerate for whatever purpose, whatever reason. I don't think it's degenerated, I just think it's a period.

They have appointed some what they call regional representatives, but I don't think this will do it. I don't know what regional representatives can do except maybe poll some of the members on issues and find out what the grassroots feeling might be. At one time we proposed affiliating with state forestry associations. But they're almost totally industry supported, and most of them are not willing to submerge their identity to an overall one. So instead we formed a umbrella association, National Conference of Forestry Association Executives or something like that, whereby the AFA through its bigger national concept could help these smaller groups. They still meet, but it's more just an exchange of membership procedures and fund raising and that sort of thing. I don't know the answer Pete. I wish I did. We're going to have to develop something that's more popular than middle-of-the-road, compromise, balance, management, use, you know that's not a sexy product to sell. You get out on either extreme and you've got something to arouse interest and excitement. I said earlier, the preservation movement gave us a role in mediating and moderating the final results. I think AFA had its finest hour in bringing these differences down to a middle-of-the-road solution, but that's not a saleable product, you know. I admire the guy that's got some strong convictions and stands up for them unswerving. But that's not the way that battles are won, that's not the way that Congress works. That's not the way you formulate program and policy. Your extremists just don't win. They precipitate action.

HKS: Legislation, obviously, was a major part of your responsibility...

WT: I consider it the biggest part of my job. I was very fortunate in having a good business manager in Jane Evans. She had a promotional effort, it was low key but kept the money flowing and kept the membership growing and I could devote my talents and my efforts to that which I liked, which was the legislative, the policy aspects of it.

HKS: The magazine is the only thing the members see.

WT: That's all he gets.

HKS: All they know about what is going on in AFA is what comes in those six times a year. Most members don't know what the AFA's up to, other than your editorial or something, but who reads editorials?

WT: I used to get a lot of response. There's hardly an issue that went by that I didn't have a policy statement in a current issue. Maybe it's editorial pride, but I seemed to get more reaction, more response from my little one-page column or the articles that I sometimes submitted than anything in terms of members. Now Neil writes editorials, Rex Ressler wrote editorials. Maybe they didn't get the same reaction, I don't know.

HKS: You sure as hell wouldn't know that AFA did all those things. I've told people that AFA's greatest recruitment gimmick is its history. People really need to understand what AFA has accomplished over the years.

WT: I agree with you, and I took that job because I recognized what AFA had been and could and should be.

HKS: AFA I suspect will survive and thrive again.

WT: It will. Neil's not a forester, as you know, he's a soils man. But he brought to AFA a strong background in association management, in membership, in finances, in budgets and personnel. But he came from a grassroots organization where soil and water conservation districts have their own officers, and they elect their representatives, and they come to the annual meeting, they have something to do. So I imagine he was frustrated by that lack of membership cohesiveness.

How do you generate that kind of continuing growth of members? You do it either through the magazine or through a program that has appeal. The Arbor Day Foundation sends out ten little seedlings with each membership renewal. A very simple job for a nursery to grow a little dogwood and a little black spruce, and they come out of that little package you can easily put in the mail, but that's a membership inducement. AFA at one time used to send out a packet of seeds, and I think that must have been a little bit effective. Arbor Day has magic in its name. Foundation is a hell of a lot better than association. I've told the board this many times, that word association is hurting us. We're not dealing with the people who were living at the time of these accomplishments, we're dealing with whole new generations. I was constantly fighting the identity as a forest industry.

HKS: The word forest means axes to most people. Same way with us.

WT: Yes, but forest history has a different connotation.

HKS: Most people think it's the history of lumbering.

WT: Some of your most interesting articles are on lumbering. But I think you have a mandate to preserve, to accumulate and record, preserve as much of this history as you can. You've got a clear mandate. You're not lobbying for anything.

HKS: I don't know how much AFA material that you have that we don't have in the AFA records. Neil sent a bunch of stuff down just before AFA's move. They had reason to get rid of it.

WT: They had to get rid of some things.

HKS: There's some of your material in there. But the plaques and stuff, that takes either wallspace or box them up.

WT: Nobody wants those. I noticed that some of the organizations, the Society of American Foresters, for example, has some of the medals and plaques that have been awarded to people in the past and they just give them back to SAF.

HKS: We've got Henry Graves' Pinchot Medal now, and I thought, gee that ought to be somewhere other than with us.

WT: Books I think you can use. My old textbooks for example, they're outdated, but historically they might be of value.

HKS: Dated things are the most valuable to us. What we don't have is a complete sequence of forestry textbooks in the various fields to show the advancement of technical knowledge.

WT: AFA had in its library all the forestry series from the very beginning, every issue. I've got a couple of copies of Gifford Pinchot's *Breaking New Ground* in there.

HKS: I don't know if the McArdle Library went with AFA or not.

WT: I hope it went. That's a prize possession. You ought to have it if they didn't keep it. I've got notes or written text of every speech that I made from the time I got out of college. Someday I would like to do a fifty-year report or analysis of the transition of the conservation movement since my days in the University of Michigan School of Forestry and Conservation, which was the first educational institution attempt to bring conservation into the field of forestry. I graduated and considered myself a conservationist, as a resource-oriented professional with a focus on forestry. I'm strongly endowed with that concept of management and use, and wise use, and waste to me is contrary to everything I've been taught. To stand and let mature stands of lodgepole pine grow old and die and burn up is a waste of resources. Even if it's in wilderness, some logical use should be made of it.

HKS: Another place to give serious consideration to would be the Missouri State Historical Society or the University of Missouri, at least for all the Missouri years. I would think that they'd be excited about...

WT: The business files of the Missouri Department of Conservation I left at Missouri; I brought only my personal stuff. The business operation, except some projects I worked on like Areas of Agreement, I left with AFA. AFA has had most of what I had, but I still have some things that they don't.

HKS: Since you were a state employee, the State Archives of Missouri could perhaps justify accessioning personal papers.

WT: I'll start with you. I'll box up everything.

HKS: Alright. We'll take it all if you'll trust our judgment on final disposition.

Time to Retire

WT: Far as I'm concerned, after I give it to you, you can do whatever you want to with it.

You know the legislative process is a very trying, tiring one. You don't go before appropriation committees without an awful lot of homework, soul searching, and I'd been through this process for twelve years and I reached the point where, damn I hated to face another year of this. It got to be tiresome. The Areas of Agreement thing was very gratifying, we produced some excellent results, and everybody says this is a trademark of the AFA, keep it going, keep it going, but even that gets weary. To convene committees and hammer out issues and to organize schedule for the hearings and do all this thing.

We came down here to a Forest Farmers meeting in about 1970, and I fell in love with the Sandhills. So we bought our tree farm, 350 acres, in 1970--71. Bought a lot on the Pinehurst golf course and later traded it for a condominium. This was our vacation home. We came down here and made lots of friends. But in 1978, the year I retired, we came down here the 4th of July, and my wife and I started looking around, we found a house and we just decided to buy it. We were going to rent it for three years and retire when I reached 65. But when I put all this together and thought about how anxious we were to get down here and how we, over a period of ten years, literally been involved in rewriting all the forestry legislation on the books. We had accomplished sort of an end objective. I told you I was disenchanted with the Carter administration. We had whipped the reorganization plan, and we were both anxious to get down to our new home, and I said time to quit. And I hadn't planned to at all. But...

HKS: There was no retirement age at AFA?

WT: No, in fact I quit when I was 62 1/2. I told the directors when I came with them, you've got me for fifteen years. I went there at age 50, thinking 65, but I didn't wait till 65. So things had gone well. I had left Missouri when I was on top. I'm a firm believer when you can to quit when you're ahead [laughter] whether you're playing poker or pitching horseshoes or anything else, quit a winner if you can. I left Missouri in good graces, everything was going well. And after twelve years with AFA I felt that I had made probably as much contribution as I could, maybe it's time for new blood, and step gracefully out while they still want you. I know lots of people, have lots of friends, who didn't know when to leave, and how to stay out after they did leave.

HKS: I was impressed that somebody as hardheaded as Weyerhaeuser keeps on senior vice-presidents as consultants and gives them offices. Maybe it's easier to get them to retire if you give them that, but some must be a pain in the neck.

WT: They're a pain in the neck. I told you about my predecessor being kept on for two years. Fred's a nice guy, in some ways he was very helpful, but he was just extra baggage that we had to support, and he didn't produce any meaningful contribution to the operation of this association. I don't want to breathe over the shoulder of anybody who's trying to take a job that I had. So I got away. In fact, I didn't even go to an AFA meeting until a couple of years, three years after I retired. To do so would detract from the successor, you know he's the focal point, he's the one who ought to be up front and all the old friends would gravitate to the chief executive that they knew. There comes a time to quit, and in your case, wherever you are at that time, you'll know it. I read an article one time that unless the job changes dramatically or drastically over that period of time, that ten or twelve years is about enough in one slot, that you've used up your ideas.

When I became director in Missouri, I had a platform. I had thirty-five goals that I presented to the commissioners, after the first six months or so, that I wanted to accomplish. After ten years, I think it was about thirty-three of

them, the other two had been turned down, we had accomplished. And you can't be in a job of that sensitivity over that long a period of time without stepping on toes. When you're making decision on promotions, divisions, and reorganizations, changing of laws, a fish and game director's job is one of the most demanding, one of the most exacting, controversial jobs there is. Everybody knows more about your business than you do. After ten years I recognized that I had accomplished most of what I set out to do and had some feelings of, not animosity, but not the best of working relationships with some of the people I had bypassed and stepped over, so I decided now is the time to quit. Age is another factor. You know, at fifty you don't wait too much longer if you're going to make a career change, too. I think I quit Missouri at the right time and I think I quit AFA at the right time.

Society of American Foresters

HKS: After you left AFA you became more active in SAF. Do you want to talk a little bit about SAF?

WT: Yes. I didn't mean to ridicule Hardy Glascock, but I did feel very strongly that the Society of American Foresters was not fulfilling the role that a professional society should fill.

HKS: The controversy was whether professionals marked timber, or could technicians vote. That was what SAF thought was the cutting edge.

WT: In all the time I was in Washington, I had this feeling. Before I retired I was asked if I would consider being nominated for the presidency. I think it was Walt Meyers who first approached me. I said, "Well, Walt, not this year because Tom Borden is running and he's already declared, and I would be running against Tom." They said, well next time. In the meantime, I retired. In fact I almost waited too late because if I had been out of the mainstream for another year or two, I probably wouldn't have been elected, because people forget very quickly. So when the time came he called me and said "Well, how about it now?" And I said, "Alright, go ahead." So, I think any professional, Pete, who wouldn't aspire somewhat to being the head of his professional organization is lacking something in drive or ambition. Any doctor that wouldn't consider it a great honor and work rather hard to become president of the American Medical Association, or any lawyer, the American Bar Association, I think is lacking in professional drive. I said, "Yes, I would be honored and proud." Well, unfortunately, it was a disastrous time to become president of SAF. Here we get back to that retirement thing again. Poor old Hardy Glascock, when he left SAF, somewhat earlier than he wanted to, and somewhat against his will...

HKS: The same thing happened to Henry Clepper, right? Is there something about SAF that does that to its staff?

WT: I don't know what it is. Anyway, Hardy was unhappy to give up his role as SAF chief executive, he had organized this Renewable Natural Resources Foundation, and so when he retired, this became his seat of power. This was his thing and another case of the tail wagging the dog. He began to think of the Renewable Natural Resources Foundation as being bigger and superior to the parent society that spawned it. It was purely a creation of SAF, SAF money, 95 percent that initiated it, founded it, supported the Renewable Resources Foundation. It was SAF money that bought the land. It was largely SAF money that built the building it first occupied. But then the foundation became bent on

being its own thing, and dominating, and gaining control of the rest of the ground that SAF had acquired. It was a mess.

It was in process of litigation when I became president-elect. We spent a big pile of money on lawyers, and I guess the foundation did too, but I think their lawyers took it on contingency, if they didn't win, they didn't get anything. I don't know how they came out. But for four years I served on the council and was on the three-man committee to resolve the dispute. Here again was a mediation effort. Seems like I've spent my whole life trying to compromise and resolve something in the middle ground that is acceptable to all. I'd like to be an extremist sometime, and not be a compromiser. But this occupied the greater part of my attention. We did some other things at SAF while I was on the board or on the council and as president, but nothing really noteworthy. I think we did get it resolved as best we could, without actually going to court on litigation. There were certain restraints that we were under, under the zoning restrictions of Montgomery County that had to be dealt with. There were other organizations involved.

I think we could have beaten RNRF if we had gone to court. But in the process we would have alienated the Range Society, the American Fisheries Society, several good friends who were with other organizations and affiliated with RNRF, so a compromise was in order. But in doing it, we severed ourselves from the large share of future dissension over land. In other words, we got our own building, we got our own land, RNRF got its own portion of the estate. We felt this was necessary to avoid future controversy. The concept was good, but I think Hardy forgot after he left SAF that this was the parent organization, this was the backbone of the thing, and he tried to make this other bigger and stronger.

HKS: Who succeeded Hardy?

WT: There were two temporaries in there, John Barber was the final one.

HKS: Was it that hard to find a successor? I'm just trying to stand back and watch the process.

WT: That happened before I came on the council. But I did select John Barber's successor. I was president the year that happened. That RNRF thing just wore John out.

HKS: Was that Ron Christensen?

WT: Yes.

HKS: I mean Denny was in there. Didn't he pull out?

WT: Well, he was offered the job.

HKS: Yes, he was offered the job.

WT: We talked to Arnett Mace first, and Arnett turned us down. We went to Denny LeMaster and Denny accepted, then his family business ran into a problem, and he withdrew.

HKS: I'm not looking for gossip, but I'm just interested. Henry Clepper ran SAF forever, Hardy was there for a long time. Ron Christensen was in for a few years, and he left, I've heard through rumor he was asked to leave. Is the

forestry profession becoming more divided and so it's harder on the staff or what?

WT: I don't know. Ron Christensen was technically good. He was well versed in the society and its operations, but he was unbending. He couldn't smile. He was just too serious in everything. I thought he was quite capable. He was our third choice in the search, he went through...

HKS: At the time I thought it must be a tough way to come in. The job offered to somebody else, and publicly announced. Denny pulls out and well, "we'll give it to Ron, who's on the staff."

WT: I give him credit for one thing, though. I called him on Christmas Eve, and I said "Ron, we want you to be the chief executive of SAF. He said, "Well I'm flattered and what's the salary?" He knew that we had offered Arnett Mace 75 thousand. I don't know that we had ever agreed on salary with Dennis LeMaster. I says well, "we're thinking about starting you at about 60, which is about what Barber had made." He says, "I won't come at that salary." He says, "I know that the job has been offered to somebody else for 75," he says, "I'll take it for that." I admired him for that. And he got it. It's a lot harder to do things as the chairman of the board like that than it is as a chief executive. When you're hiring the chief executive, it's a tough job. But I don't know what the final difference was between Ron and the council, I was long gone by then.

Well, I again say that the Society of American Foresters ought to be at the forefront of any major forestry issue. It shouldn't be encumbered by lack of direction and ability to move. It irritated me tremendously when SAF either wouldn't testify or testify in the negative vein to major legislation that'd come up through the forestry community. Here's a profession not exerting any leadership.

HKS: It didn't testify for or against reorganization.

WT: Why?

HKS: I don't know.

WT: They're not going to help themselves by their location out there in the ivory tower. It's just like researchers who want to isolate themselves from the administrative problems. I had Fish and Game biologists that wanted to sit back in the university climate and make recommendations, but never have to face realities of enforcement, game laws, and legislatures, and the realities that matter.

HKS: What do you think about the regionalization of these forestry journals? What it says to me is the *Journal of Forestry* does not meet the needs of the profession.

WT: That's exactly what it says. I can remember back when the *Journal of Forestry* was so damn technical it was almost impossible to read. I started looking at some of these calculations with about forty-five characters in the equation, I'm so far gone past my...

HKS: But *Forest Science* took a lot of pressure off the *Journal*.

WT: That's right. *Forest Science* and the *Journal of Forestry* ought to be sufficient without the regional ones. But there was a local demand, and they're

subsidized. SAF helped pay the cost of it. The initial start up cost is almost entirely born by the parent society.

HKS: In that sense it's playing a leadership role, but I see that the provincialization of a profession is not a good trend.

WT: That's right. I agree fully on that. I think this merely lends to that regional concept.

HKS: Yes.

WT: I wanted to tell you how proud I am of the profession. I sort of accidentally got into forestry as a chosen career because of my father's influence, because of my association with the very early beginnings of forestry out in the Ozarks out where I grew up. I couldn't have picked a profession that could have been more gratifying to me in terms of personal fulfillment. Of what it has meant to me to see what forestry has done to the areas that I have been most familiar with. I remember those hills out there that burned over every spring and every fall. The awesomeness of those fires that I looked at and smelled and saw results in terms of bare flatrock hillsides and muddy rivers and gravel washing up, all because of the denuded lands that overcut, burned, uncared for.

You ought to go back there and see that country today. That Little Piney River is clear, the trees cover the hillsides, you don't see those exposed flintrocks. Fire is universally opposed in the Ozarks now. When it was almost universally set and purposely burned when I was trying to fight the situation fifty years ago. You just needed to ride through there. My old district there in Washington County, I drove through it last fall when I took my wife out for her fiftieth high school reunion, I just couldn't believe it. Indian Creek, where I had fought fire day and night, beautiful stands of mixed hardwood, pine, it's recovered. I've seen all that in my lifetime as a professional forester, fighting obstacles that others said was impossible. We built fire towers out of telephone poles with climbers on them, built wood towers during the war when steel wasn't available. I remember George White taking one of the regional foresters out on a trip one spring in Missouri, got up in Eminence Tower I think it was. He says, "Looking around from that tower there was a fire on every degree of the 360 degrees of the alidade." Some were far out, some were close in. But you couldn't turn that 360 degree circle without seeing a fire on every bearing.

Now fire is a rarity. The Ozarks have recovered tremendously. And when I think of the wildlife benefits: Missouri is probably the leading turkey state in the country right now when turkeys were practically extinct. I never saw a deer as a kid, but they kill tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands each year. The water fowl population, particularly the Canada goose, had built up merely because we provided the space, the refuge, the protection, the feed that took care of their greatest need in the winter, habitat. It's been a very gratifying career.

I spent two summers in the Upper Peninsula, the summer of 1936, and the summer of 1937. I remember running compass lines, I worked with the Michigan Department of Conservation up there, trying to reestablish some of the boundaries. I ran one compass line that you took one compass shot for a whole mile. We'd get the compass set, set a stake out there, stake where I started here, and then I could go on up, see the whole mile, lining up with the stakes that I had set over there. That was pretty bare country.

HKS: Sure was.

WT: These great big old white pine stumps were everywhere. They used jackpine mostly to reforest that country. You go up there and look at it today, it's a sight to behold. This is the result of care and protection and management that our profession brought. I took a trip down here to the south, the spring of '36 or '37. While I was a senior. The spring of '37. Our annual forestry trip. This country doesn't look anything then like it looks today. The thing I remember most were these great big fields, eroded gullies, big raw deep gullies, sagegrass, old worn out cotton and tobacco fields. I remember we climbed up Mt. Mitchell, and at that time the chestnut trees, the ones that had been killed by the blight, were still standing. And there wasn't much on that hill except these great big stark chestnuts. They'd logged off most everything else. The chestnuts were still standing, all grey. Now, of course, they're all down. But the recovery, these old field stands (most of this pine we have in the south is old field natural) came in. In the Appalachians, the forests are a result of the Forest Service acquisition of management and protection. It's been a tremendous improvement that I have witnessed in the profession.

HKS: Makes you wonder if we would have done all that if we'd been enslaved to compound interest rates.

WT: I'm not sure we could have. This is where government, I think, has a role. Private industry couldn't have done it. Profit wouldn't...

HKS: Not with the bookkeeping system that we use, anyway.

WT: No, but I still go back to the Lands That Nobody Wanted. Every acre that the Forest Service bought out there in the Ozarks was for a pittance, mostly back taxes. The biggest problem was the cost of clearing the title, the abstracts in getting clear title. Same way in the Appalachians here. The land itself was considered worthless. Now they want to make it into national parks, wilderness, and refuges. But as far as gratification is concerned, I'm glad my daddy wouldn't let me become a doctor or dentist.

HKS: I think you went into forestry for the reason a lot of people do. The sense of actually doing something you can observe.

WT: You see the result. You start something and you complete it. I can go out there now and show you the trees that I planted fifty years ago. George White and I had a walnut grove planted down on the Meramec River bottom, big beautiful walnut trees, they're producing a big crop of nuts each year. I went back to Ann Arbor to the Stinchfield forest. I did my masters work out at Stinchfield. I didn't even know when I came in. It used to be a big open field there, and a gate, and I said where's that gate, where'd we used to come in. He said, you came right through it. That stand of white pine, back there. You know, it's something to see a forest that you planted yourself.

HKS: I guess I haven't been back to areas where I observed, or participated in reforestation, the trees would be doing pretty well now, if they survived. I worked in forestry only a couple of years, and I went off into history, but I left a little mark up there in the Pacific Northwest.

WT: I am now shed of all conservation affiliations. After I retired I was on the board of the Forest History Society, Society of American Foresters, Forest Farmers, National Council of the Boy Scouts, Land Between the Lakes Association,

National Wildlife Federation, honorary vice-president of the American Forestry Association--seems like there's one or two others. I did as much traveling for a while as I did before I retired. All those are past, now. I just went off my last board. Which is kind of a good feeling.

HKS: You've certainly contributed a lot.

WT: I'm not sure about that.

Appendix

Oral History Outline, by William E. Towell

Personal Background (What led to Areas of Agreement philosophy?)

How it all began

Ozarks
Fire
USFS - Acquisition, Mark Twain
Grandfather - charcoal (iron works)

Missouri Department of Conservation

Ground floor - George White, I. T. Bodoe
Model law
District Forester
Farm Forester
Fire Chief

Asst. Director & Director
Compromise - Fish & Game and Forestry

International Assn. Game, Fish & Conservation Commissioners

Legislative activity
Wilderness
States Rights
O.R.R.R.C. - B.O.R.
Land & Water Conservation Fund
Water Pollution Control Board (Callison, Goddard, Biggs,
Warne, Clapper)
C.E.Q.
E.P.A.

American Forestry Association

Turning point
Broaden Forestry image
Bridge between forestry - F. & G. - Recreation - Water
Coalitions - Kimball, Gabe, Pink, Stroud, Callison, Penfold, Brandborg

Disaster Fires
Merle Lowden
O.E.P. - USFS - NPS - BLM
Amendment to Emergency Preparedness Act
Trees For People
Gordon Zimmerman
Ken Pomeroy
Forestry Incentives
Research
State & Private Funds

Obstacles identified
Taxes
Information gap
Technical assistance
Incentives

Preservation movement
Wilderness
Gordon Robinson
Mike Frome - the whole story (never been told)

Timber Supply Bill
Crafts - McArdle

Genesis of RPA

Giltmire - Wolf
Randolph - Humphrey

Areas of Agreement

Review written history
Wilderness
Monongahela
Bitterroot

Clearcutting
Executive Order (CEQ - EPA)

National Forest Management Act
AFA's Policy Bill
Fight over basic principles - moderate coalition

State and Private Forestry Bill - Sen. Tallmadge
Christmas Tree
Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act
Forest Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act
Renewable Resources Extension Act

Reorganization

President Carter
Cecil Andrus

Time to Quit