

Smithsonian Folklife Festival Interview

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Forest Service National Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

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Interviewer: Sandra Forney

Sandra Forney (SF): Good morning, Dan.

Daniel Bauer (DB): Yes, good morning.

SF: Name, title, address, and phone number please.

DB: [laughs] Yes. Dan Bauer. B-A-U-E-R. And I'm a senior special agent in the United States Forest Service. My current title is the national program coordinator for Counter Drug Operations, and our address is 1621 N. Kent Street, Room 1015. That's here in Arlington, Virginia, 22209. And my phone number is 703-605-4736.

SF: Tell me something about your background, your profession, and what you're doing now.

DB: Well it seems like only yesterday. I actually started with the United States Forest Service in 1976. I started out as a fire fighter. Initial attack, heli-attack fire fighter, using both a ground fire engine and a helicopter. Based out of West Yellowstone, Montana, on the Gallatin National Forest. And our helicopter was based in the West Yellowstone Smokejumper base. It's a satellite base to Missoula. There's generally anywhere from thirteen to fifteen smokejumpers, and then we had our helicopter there with a crew of about four to five fire fighters. And that took care of 1976, and I was promoted to the supervisor in 1977. And it wasn't because of my great skills; it was because I was the only one left of the original crew. I fought fire again in 1977, and started working the latter part of the '77 season as a fire prevention technician. The years of '78 and '79 I was fire prevention, and I also started work as a winter ranger. West Yellowstone, Montana has the distinction of being the busiest—at that time, and I think still to this day—the busiest snowmobile area in the entire United States. Literally thousands of people on each individual trail every day when I started patrolling both Nordic ski trails and snowmobile trails in '78 and '79. Got out of fire and was a recreation officer. I managed during the summer months the developed recreation area, which you can imagine is pretty busy in West Yellowstone. At that time Yellowstone Park campgrounds would fill up by eleven o'clock or noon, and ours would fill up about an hour later. We had several large developed campgrounds that were full every single night in the summertime. Very busy developed site. We had a visitors center at the earthquake—Hebgen Lake Earthquake Visitors' Center. Very, very busy area. And then we had a lot of dispersed as well on the Gallatin. So it was a pretty large recreation program. Eventually had the Lee Metcalf

Wilderness. So we had a combination of the high-use developed site. Through the early '80s I kept changing hats. I started to actually get into law enforcement in '79. I became what they called at that time a level two forest protection officer. I had that interest, as well as my supervisor at the time was what they called phase three law enforcement. He had gone through state academy, law enforcement academy, and they did basically what our level twos. They were allowed to issue citations. They did general patrols. They were basically the district law enforcement. So a combination of an interest in law enforcement and having my first line supervisor being a law enforcement guy. And the position of fire prevention as well as winter ranger really had many of its components... the basic duties were what I considered enforcement. Compliance patrol for fire. Compliance patrol for public safety on the winter trails. So it was a pretty good fit. So I went through the old level two training, I'm pretty sure it was '79. Then went through what they called the old level three training, in 1980, which was a little bit more intensive training. I think at that time it was an eighty hour class. That's how I kind of started with the law enforcement, but I had many hats on the Gallatin. Luckily I got to be a generalist instead of a specialist. I was doing the law enforcement, I was doing the winter work, I was doing the wilderness, the developed. We also had some fairly large problems with bears. I took over a lot of the bear/human conflict program. That sounds kind of odd; most people don't know what that is. Basically we had a [design?] program to reduce available foods to the bears in our campgrounds. Did a lot of public education. Did a lot of generalized patrol; actually had two seasonal employees and that's all they did, was just look for bears, look for problems, and talk to people and do education programs. And it was 1983 we actually had a fatality in one of our developed campgrounds, where a bear attacked and killed one of our campers. And as you can well imagine the reaction to that was rather severe and rather work-intensive. Our busiest campgrounds were closed to anything but hard-sided vehicles. I probably live-trapped maybe thirty or forty grizzly bears in a couple year period. I lost track of the black bears we used to trap, but we had a lot of bears. At that time in the early '80s, mid '80s, West Yellowstone Montana was totally surrounded, on three sides by national forest, on one side by Yellowstone National Park. It wasn't uncommon to have five to eight bears, both grizzly and black bears, in the town on a given night. So it was a pretty tremendous time. The town, the community as well as the forest and the town went through a pretty significant program of Bear-proofing]. Anyhow that was an interesting career path, but it was a pretty busy job. But as far as the law enforcement—it seemed to be a natural fit with most all of the duties that I had. Bear compliance; like I said before, the winter ranger; public safety aspect. But it was difficult because I had so many other duties. The collateral law enforcement duty was a rather difficult fit. Sometime that's a full-time—not sometimes, it is [emphasis] a full-time job. For eight hours a day I would supervise and manage pretty large recreation programs, try to deal with the bear issues. Then at midnight I'd be getting called out to deal with drunks in the campgrounds or bears attacking vehicles or whatever. So it was becoming more and more difficult being a collateral duty law enforcement officer, given all of the duties as assigned. Not a complaint as much as just a general observation. A lot of our people have gotten that same boat, where they had a lot of duties already on top of the law enforcement, but then the law enforcement, you couldn't just hang that up at the end at four-thirty, where oftentimes you could with some of the other duties. So it went on, and basically I maintained that same job on the Gallatin until [pause]—See, I'm old, I

forget so much—until about '87. I started to look to get out. Broaden my horizons. And I eventually found a position on the Los Padres in Region Five. Los Padres National Forest. It just happened to be from West Yellowstone, Montana, which is the coldest place in the nation on a day to day basis, with ten feet of snow, to the coast at Big Sur California, where there was, when I first went to look at the site, there were palm trees and sandy beaches I patrolled. No grizzly bears. No snow. Or little snow. So it was an interesting... So my wife and I, we moved to Region Five of the Forest Service. And that position was about an equal split of fire prevention and law enforcement. We were stationed in Pacific Valley, California, which is literally right on the coast. We could hear the sea lions and waves from our kitchen window. It was a rather remote fire station. All that was at the station was a fire engine, [live?] patrol vehicle, and a small contingent of recreation managers, which my wife was. She's also a Forest Service employee. She managed the recreation, developed the recreation at a number of campgrounds along the Big Sur coast. She took care of those. But that was an interesting duty post. Big Sur is a very interesting place. Aside from being very, very beautiful, it's an interesting mix of cultures and locals. And I became extremely busy on the law enforcement side of things. California, unlike Montana, it seemed that anything that happened-- vehicle accident, suicide, fire, burglary-- it didn't matter what it was because we were the only emergency service. Not just law enforcement, but fire service. We were dispatched to just about anything that happened within about a seventy-five mile stretch of the Big Sur coast. As you can well imagine that's a very busy place. Even though it's remote, there's still about seven and a half million people drive by every year. So it's extremely busy. My patrol unit and our fire engine responded on almost a daily basis to some type of incident that occurred. Not just wild land fire. We did a lot of that, but it was an awful lot of other response. So it was interesting. We were there for not quite four years. Almost four years. It was a very interesting place. I became very involved with drug enforcement. At that time we had the dubious honor to probably produce more marijuana than just about any place at least in central California. Didn't have a whole lot of support. I was the only one on the coast side, law enforcement officer. So my counterpart that was on the inland side, Monterey District, he'd come over and help me, and then I'd go over and help him, but it was kind of a small contingent. Normally you'd have eight to ten people doing what we were doing. Anyway we muddled through and survived that duty post. But it was nice. Patrolling beaches was nice. The nice thing about every area that I've been, particularly when you're in a little bit highly stressed position like law enforcement, or even fire—there's always a place to kind of take a breather. Montana was certainly that way. I knew where all the moose were hanging out and the elk were hanging out. And Big Sur was kind of the same thing. I could be pretty stressed out. I remember answering four suicide calls in a two week period where I was the first response. You just kind of work that way through the summer. But I knew the places to hang out and watch the humpbacked whales, watch the sea otters. It was a pretty unique area. Elephant Seal Beach. It was a lot of fun down there. Anyhow, that was my stint in California. My Southern California on the beach. I even had a surfboard. Had to hang up my snowmobile clogs and got a surfboard. [laughs] Not being very smart, we again started to look to broaden our horizons. So the next thing I know, I had a full-time law enforcement job in Alaska. And in 1991 we packed up with the dog and the Trooper and what little we owned, and moved on to Seward, Alaska. The Chugach National Forest. On the Chugach I was the first full-

time law enforcement officer that they had had. I was also the only one that they had, for 6.5 million acres. And I came to find out what 6.5 million acres was all about. The Chugach, even though it's in Alaska, is a very busy forest. For three months out of the year it could be rated as an urban forest. It's the first, the closest forest, the only forest located next to Anchorage. It's about a quarter of a million people to three hundred thousand people. So there's a pretty good sized population base that recreates on the Chugach Forest. The Chugach is all of Prince William Sound. Half of the Kenai Peninsula. There's a pretty sizeable part of it over on the eastern side of Prince William Sound in the Cordova, Copper River area. That's a little bit hard to access. The interesting thing about the Kenai Peninsula, it's all accessible by road, unlike a lot of Alaska. And so it was a very busy place, and it was a place where a lot of summer tourists that would come to Alaska, would come to Anchorage and then they would recreate. Some of the well-known fishing areas are the Russian River, the Kenai River—world-renowned for their eighty pound king salmon. So it was surprising to be in Alaska and probably deal with as many people as we dealt with in Southern California. But as you can well imagine, one officer for 6.5 million acres—it was not something that you did with ease. But it was also really fun to tell the stories about how I would get an emergency call from Cordova, about Prince William Sound, and I would have to drive two and a half hours to Anchorage, get on an Alaska Airlines jet, fly for an hour to Cordova, jump off the jet, jump into a float plane and fly for another hour and a half out to the Bering River area where I could answer the call. There was numerous times where that would happen, or I'd have to wait for a charter aircraft to fly into Prince William Sound, or a full day's boat ride. So logistics up there were... That was probably one of the most interesting things about Alaska, aside from the fact that it was probably the most beautiful place I've ever lived and been. But logistically it was very difficult. And everything up there required either... if you had the ability to drive, it was a long drive. My patrol area extended, just by road, probably almost two hundred and fifty miles, that I have to go to the end of it. And by air, like I explained, it was almost five to six hundred miles. Just a long, long place up there. Just about everything required a boat or a plane, or helicopter, or skis or snowshoes. Or snowmobile or dogsled. So that was pretty unique in itself. Alaska was a great time. Again, my wife, she was the recreation officer, she managed the developed campsites on the Seward district, the Chugach. Dealt with a lot of the same issues that we dealt with in Montana. And even a lot of the same issues that we dealt with in California. Just the high use. We used to have the combat fishing areas where you'd have fist fights, people in other people's fishing areas. It was an interesting mix of people. Even dealt with the bears, although the bears weren't nearly as interested in the people there as they were in the salmon. But I had to do some bear management up there as well. I was the discipline. Everybody else got to laugh because I had to discipline the bears. Oftentimes we'd have three or four brown bears on the Russian River trying to steal people's salmon, which they didn't like—not the bears, the people. So we'd either have to use rubber bullets or some other kind of aversion training to try to move the bears out, with varying degrees of success. Had a few incidents of conflicts with some injury, but nothing terribly serious. But it was still a little... Because I was used to the Yellowstone ecosystem bears, and the interactions and the problems we had there, the first couple years in Alaska my nerves were kind of frayed seeing that many bears standing alongside people fishing on the Russian River, but I mellowed. I mellowed after

a time and realized it was a pretty normal event. If you've got salmon and berries the size of your thumb you really don't care about garbage and hamburger and things like that. So it was an interesting mix up there. Alaska was a great time, absolutely. Kind of old style Forest Service, and by that I mean the district had numerous parties; it wasn't uncommon to be over at the ranger's for Friday afternoon barbeque. It was just a very nice experience. Of all of them, Alaska was probably one of the nicer experiences. Beautiful spot. But again we didn't learn. [laughs] So in 1994 we decided to move to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Now the reason we did that is my wife was born and raised in Pocatello, Idaho, which is just over the hill from Jackson, and she actually used to work in Jackson, Wyoming, at a guest ranch. In fact, I'll digress a little bit, how I met my wife through the Forest Service. Back in West Yellowstone, back to the bear trapping. At that time she was working for Satellite Guest Ranch from Jackson, but she was in West Yellowstone, Montana. They catered to rather high dollar fly fishing type trips, and one of the grizzly bears that was breaking into summer homes and campgrounds on the Hebgen Lake on the district, on the West Yellowstone district, was also breaking into this guest ranch that she managed. Well the story goes, I went out to trap the grizzly bear. The best spot was at this ranch, just for location, that I could set the culvert trap. And nobody knows exactly who got trapped during that course of events, but that's how we met. I was live-dropping a grizzly bear on the ranch that she managed. Now back to Jackson, Wyoming. We both had a real love for Jackson, the Tetons, and that area. And I said way back in the late '70s when I was in West Yellowstone, if I could ever get a job in Jackson, Wyoming, I would take it. Well I had to follow through on my threat, and in 1994, late September of '94 we moved to Jackson, Wyoming. On the Bridger-Teton. Where I ended up again as the first full-time law enforcement officer on the Bridger-Teton, and the only law enforcement officer on the 3.5 million acres of the Bridger-Teton. Jackson is pretty unique, again. Most people know it's a tourist town, busier in the summer than it is in the winter, but very busy in the winter with the ski hills. But being in proximity to Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Park, it had a lot of use; a lot of developed use, a lot of disbursed use. It had a lot of bears. [laughs] It had a lot of resource issues as well. Not a lot of logging, but it had a lot of grazing. It had a lot of oil and gas leasing down in the southern districts. The forest stretched from the southern boundary of Yellowstone Park with about a three hundred thousand wilderness, the Teton Wilderness is in that area-- it's almost three hundred thousand acres, I believe; pretty fair-sized wilderness area—all the way to Kimmerer, Wyoming, which is about a four-hour drive. Wyoming highway drive, not D.C. traffic drive. So it's a pretty good stretch, pretty good expense. They combined the Teton and the Bridger Forests, which made it at one time, until I think the Toiyabe, the Humboldt-Toiyabe, the Bridger-Teton was the largest forest in the lower forty-eight. I think it got beat out by a few hundred thousand acres when they combined. Anyhow, Jackson was a really good duty post. We had a lot of friends still there, it was a beautiful area, the front steps of our house looked over on the Grand Tetons. Pretty unique. Had a lot of, certainly a lot of work for law enforcement. I was the full-time law enforcement officer. I eventually got another officer on the southern end, so that helped. Alleviated some of the driving. But it was a very busy area. While we were there, there were some unique things that happened. We had two White House vacations, where I was actually detailed to the Secret Service. It was in '95 and '96. The first one was about a two month vacation. It ended up... they were only there about eighteen days, but by the time

everything is set up and taken down, it ended up two months of work for the Secret Service. But it was actually enjoyable. Certainly something unique, foreign to my experience. It was pretty tremendous to be able to actually take the first family river rafting; take the family out horseback riding, hiking. So it ended up being pretty fun. The second year it was a little shorter vacation. Everybody kind of had the routine, and maybe it wasn't so unique anymore, but it was still very interesting and enjoyable. Jackson being Jackson, it wasn't uncommon for us to do a lot of the dignitary type work. We used to have a lot of heads of state; we used to have a lot of Supreme Court justices; we used to have a lot of senators and congressmen. They'd just come out and play on the National Forest. Snowmobiles, skiing, whatever. Each winter I would take King Hussein of Jordan and his family snowmobiling. Or be available for security service at Jackson Hole ski resort. They would come out, Queen Noor's sister owned a house in Jackson, and they came out every winter. So that was fun. That was a lot of fun. Most people don't get to go snowmobiling with a king. It ended up being very enjoyable. Just another one of those other duties as assigned. It ends up being a neat story and gets even better with age. But we survived Jackson. And not being very smart, we started looking around again. And that's how we ended up in Washington. I was offered a very lucrative position. Definitely a new challenge. To come back and work as a special agent. The first position I had back was working in their enforcement liaison section, and basically helped re-write the national policy and handbook for law enforcement. That was one of the tasks. Dealt with a lot of issues with the media. A lot of legislative affairs type issues. And it was just a well-rounded, more geared toward field enforcement. It was back here obviously, just doing the liaison work, and the policy work. That was 1998. Late spring of 1998. And here I am. Many, many years later. Longer than we ever expected. Surprising. My wife again came back. She is now one of the land specialists, over there with Lands and Special Uses. She takes care of all the non-recreation special uses, like filming. She does a lot, like she was detailed to the White House energy task force. Lot of land issues. She enjoys it. And I certainly enjoy it. I think it surprised us that after being in places like Montana, Wyoming and Alaska, that we could actually move to Washington, DC. And the downside is the suits and the traffic. But there are upsides. It's just like anyplace else; it's whatever you make of it. We can find some pretty neat areas here, just like we did—certainly not as wild, and there's not nearly as many grizzly bears. But we've found a lot of things to do. It's afforded us some pretty unique experiences, both on and off the job. My duties right now, I run and manage, at least provide oversight for the drug enforcement program. A lot of people don't even realize that we have law enforcement in the Forest Service, and they certainly don't realize that we actually have full federal drug enforcement authority, given to us in 1986 by the National Forest System Drug Control Act. Back in the '80s, early '80s—and I experienced this in the late '80s in California—there was a pretty tremendous problem with marijuana cultivation, in California particularly. And in some respects on the Daniel Boone National Forest and some of the eastern forests. Had a pretty significant problem. So Congress enacted the drug act and gave the Forest Service law enforcement drug authority, and over the years the situation has decreased and increased. We're now on a significant increase of both smuggling, marijuana cultivation and methamphetamine production. So we created a structure, a drug staff, that, because of the work load because of the issues, the emerging issues, we pretty much have a full-time drug staff. So that's what I take care of now, is the drug

enforcement end of things. Again it's a pretty significant work load for people out there. Sometimes it's almost too encompassing, but it's a pretty significant work loaf.

SF: You know, thinking back, into the mid-70s, you know, why did you want to work, choose to work for the Forest Service? What was the draw there?

DB: The back of outdoor magazines, and matchbook covers. And I'm not being totally facetious. When I was growing up... I was born and raised in Minnesota. In the Twin Cities area, but in Minnesota. And my father was a fairly avid fisherman and hunter, and from days I could walk I would go with him. And we took a lot of family vacations up to the North Shore, in Tofte, Minnesota. I still, to this day, know the cabin we used to stay in. Did a lot of stuff in the woods. I guess I grew up really enjoying outside and outdoor activities. As I grew older and was a little bit more independent, most everything I did revolved around either canoeing in the boundary waters or getting out to the mountains somehow and hiking either by myself or with a group of friends. So that was always just the interest that I had. When I went to school I went into wildlife management, and that's what... I went both to Anoka Ramsey College and the University of Minnesota. I was in wildlife management. But I always wanted, I guess even back then, the interesting thing when I look back—my long term memory seems to be better than my short term now, but—I always had an interest in either the game warden, forest ranger type of thing. And the story that's told—I don't really quite recall it, but—when I was ten years old, my parents and my brother, we took a trip to Yellowstone National Park. And I can recall the trip quite vividly, but I don't recall what my mother keeps telling me that I told her back then: that I was going to move to Yellowstone and become a forest ranger. I can recall quite vividly watching a back country ranger at the east gate, at Pahaska Teepee, coming out of the woods, and unsaddling his horses and throwing them in the trailer and driving off down the road. And I said, that's for me. Interestingly I ended up, my first position, out in West Yellowstone, Montana. But I don't remember saying I was going to become that, but that's a good story.

SF: [words unclear]

DB: Yeah.

SF: And having been in the Forest Service a number of years, would you care to comment on... You mentioned that you were the first and only law enforcement on a number of the units that you worked on. Would you care to comment on the historic work in the Forest Service in terms of law enforcement, and how it compares or contrasts to the current work in law enforcement?

DB: I'm very interested in the history of it. I wish I had a little bit more history, but from my understanding and from what I have read and delved into—and I think most people that are in the Forest Service know this—obviously in the beginning of the Forest Service, there was very few people. And the basic premise back then was to protect what resources we had. Probably more so than manage the resources. Manage probably meant protection back in those days when we had unfettered logging and use of wildlife and

everything else. So when you read or see old historical photos from the early 1900s, basically a ranger's job was to go out and enforce the regulations, protect the timberlands, and most—and we talked earlier—most of the photos that you see are of the old rangers and workstaff. They had their sidearm on and a horse and a pack mule, and basically that's what they did eight hours, ten hours, twelve hours a day. So I think enforcement has a real historical significance in the United States Forest Service, as it grew up. I don't want to talk like an historian, but it appears as it grew up and we became more resource managers and not so much the protection end, the direction was more of the sciences of management, the forestry science. How do we manage this species of trees? How do we manage this acreage over here? And a little less probably from the protection side. Even though again and most of us in the forest, protection is just another tool of management. But I think we probably went on more the management. And I think if you look through the 40s, 50s, and through the 60s, it was more we dealt with the forestry end of things and not the enforcement side of things. The use, population, everything else, kind of grew up around the forest, I think. And slowly some areas, not all areas, but I think some areas recognized, we maybe need to be looking at protection again. We may have some problems, particularly where there are more urbanized forests. We have some problems that are on the forest that we need to deal with from an enforcement point of view, or enforcement. There wasn't but just a handful, literally a handful of special agents in the '60s. And I don't have that exact number; I can get that, but there was just a handful. Most all the uniformed enforcement people were like what I described earlier in West Yellowstone, where we were level 2, unarmed, limited training, could issue citations, but that was kind of the backbone of enforcement, enforcers, for quite a while through the '70s. We started training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center at Glynco, Georgia, in the late '70s. We started sending more people through. That's a full police academy. At that time it was equal to what an officer would receive at any of the larger municipalities or county or state academies. Very good academy. And we started sending our people through that. And when they came out, they were law enforcement officers. But again, for the most part they were collateral duty. It was a duty as assigned. Many of them were in fire. Many of them were in recreation. Some of them were in the timber management, or wildlife. But again, as I described earlier, sometimes that didn't work real well because law enforcement has a tendency, especially in busy areas, to be pretty all-encompassing and kind of a 24/7 job. It's kind of hard to hang the hat up. So when you got done at the end of your day with your real job, you had to kind of strap on the gun and go do your other job. I mean, I can remember times when I would be out with my campground crew in coveralls fixing a pump in a campground, and two hours later I'd be driving my same vehicle but in uniform writing tickets people out in that same campground. It was... At times that made it very difficult. There were some expectations I think at the time too. It was, I'm not sure all of the Forest Service understood—even to this day, but particularly back then—I'm not sure they understood the role of what law enforcement was; what it meant, how it fit with the organization, if it fit at all. I think there were some resource managers that didn't really want to see that end of things. Which was fine, but it had a tendency sometimes to cause some conflicts out in the woods between law enforcement and resources, the resource managers. Now I think we've grown up considerably over time. I'll just tell you one little anecdote. When I got out of the academy in 1983, in February of 1983, I'd gone through like I said a police

academy; I'd been doing law enforcement for three or four years by then. Got out of a very high-caliber law enforcement academy. When I got back to my home unit I was told that I had to keep my handgun locked in the safe in the front office, which the receptionist and the district ranger had the combination to; and if I felt that I needed it I could call them. Now that, it's not that uncommon a situation for back in those days. It has changed drastically since then. I think we've become much more professional. I believe the Forest Service has begun to understand the role in resource management, how it fits. And what I see today, from what I saw back in the late '70s, early '80s is a total turnaround. A total turnaround. Law enforcement now in the Forest Service is what they call straight line. Law enforcement officers work for another law enforcement officer, all the way up to the director here in Washington D.C. And that helps alleviate either real or perceived conflicts, where somebody that maybe doesn't have law enforcement expertise is managing or supervising or directing a law enforcement person to do certain duties and tasks. And while there may be a few problems still existing where, the feeling that they don't have control over those people-- who are still stationed on local units, districts, and forests and regions—I think that's starting to go away. They're starting to realize that that's probably the best way to go. It's going to stay that way; that's not going to change. The interesting thing is, the Department of Interior, where Park Service, BLM—Bureau of Land Management—U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; they're in the process right now today of re-organizing their law enforcement divisions. And time and time again. Between General Accounting Office and Congress and Office of the Inspector General, all of the reports that kind of drove this re-organization in the Department of the Interior refer back consistently to the Forest Service and how they re-organized their law enforcement. And they now, right now Interior's going that way. So obviously it's a model that even outside people see as a working model. So I think... It's been a success story. And we've got a long ways to go. We've got a long, long ways to go, but I think we're finally starting to come back into the fold. And it isn't just the resource managers. Sometimes some of our own people in law enforcement, they have to continuously remind themselves that we are a service entity to the management of the national forest system. No more, no less. We sometimes move in different circles, but we still work for the United States Forest Service and we are a service entity to that overall mission. So people say, how is drug enforcement part of the overall mission of the Forest Service? If you look at the basic serving people and protecting resources, certainly it is that to me. Illegal drug activities on national forest systems land is a huge impact, to not only the natural resources, but a huge public safety and employee safety concern. So it certainly fits in with the mission. Anything that we do does. I mean it's not a stretch to say that any enforcement activities that we take out there on the forest is not part of the overall mission. Perhaps when, you know, the problem is that we only have about six hundred field law enforcement officers and agents for a hundred and ninety one point six million acres. And as I went into earlier, I was one of one for six point five million acres, and then one of one for three point five million acres. Well it's kind of hard... You had to do a lot of creative scheduling. [laughs] A lot of creative scheduling. And sometimes the rangers and resource people, they see a problem—and it is a problem; I'm not discounting the validity of their problem—but they may see a problem in the campground, and their law enforcement person might see a problem elsewhere. Again, it, sometimes we have to weigh... You have somewhat significant felony crime occurring

over here, and you may have a lesser degree, a misdemeanor type campground type violations occurring here, and that one law enforcement has to weigh, what do I take care of? I may not make the resource folks happy by not dealing with this, but I have to deal with this more serious crime. So just by sheer numbers, or lack of sheer numbers I should say, that can sometimes cause conflicts. But again, I think most people understand that our folks get pulled pretty well, and relationships that seem to be getting rebuilt and are increasing with our law enforcement folks and the forests and districts out there I think it's been pretty positive in the last few years.

SF: You mentioned that there are about six hundred field agents across the country within the Forest Service. Earlier when we were talking, you mentioned that there's also an upcoming possibility for turnover, and the need for bringing in new folks to take on these functions.

DB: You bet.

SF: Could you talk a little about that?

DB: You bet. We're just like anybody else, I think. If you look at the overall agency, or if you even look at other agencies, they kind of go... It's almost kind of like the rabbit population. It's cyclic in nature. We're right on the verge of having, better than sixty percent of our workforce is eligible to retire right now. And a number of them... Because we're in law enforcement, we're under the law enforcement/firefighter retirement. Mandatory retirement at age fifty-seven. And there isn't any wiggle room on that one. A number of our folks are near mandatory retirement. And a number of us, and I do say us, are already eligible to retire, although we've got a couple of years to go before mandatory. But we're going to have a pretty significant turnover of workforce. How does that affect us right now? Our positions, when we open a position... For the basic field law enforcement officer, which is about a GS-5, 7, 9, we get seventy to a hundred applicants for most of these positions, particularly if they're in an area that, you know, a nice area. We get a lot of applicants. We don't have a shortage of people to apply for our positions. So it shouldn't be a problem finding an applicant pool to fill a lot of these vacancies. So there isn't all of a sudden going to be this vacuum from six hundred to two hundred. I think through normal attrition and through the normal hiring process we should be able to maintain our levels. One of the concerns we have is the lack of Forest Service background. If you look at, you talk to just about any special agent or any law enforcement officer that has more than five years experience, almost all of them came from the ranks of the Forest Service, or some land management maybe; game warden, Park Service, something. But they all had some corporate knowledge in land management. Again, most of my counterparts, of my age group, in the law enforcement/investigations division, started out either in fire, or in recreation. A few of the came from other agencies, but they've been with the agency for years and years and years. So one of the fears that we have is as we gain our new employees... I'm not discounting them, I'm not saying that, you know, they're from another agency, a local sheriff's department; we get a lot of them from border patrol; a local sheriff's departments, uniformed Secret Service... It's a great job. I mean, I've had SES Secret

Service agents want to know how they can apply for a GS-12 agent job with us. So I mean it's a good job. A lot of people want to work for the United States Forest Service. Can't blame 'em. I kinda liked it. But we're a little bit afraid that we're going to lose some of that background. Being able to talk to the district rangers, the resource people. Understanding what a timber sale is. Understanding what a grazing permit is. Understanding what a developed campground is. And how that fits in to the overall picture of law enforcement. And how, unlike other law enforcement departments, some of the decisions that our people have to make are based on resource management and not necessarily just pure black and white regulations and laws. So it'll be interesting to see how we recruit and how we train and how we maintain that level.

SF: Tell me a little bit about the kinds of tools, skills, et cetera, that are used in your line of work.

DB: Well, we're kind of like anybody else in that respect too. We're becoming a lot more in tune with the technical aspects of the work. The basic tools of law enforcement have always been there. The basic forensics, the defensive weapons. They haven't changed much over the years. They've changed names and colors maybe, but, you know, good, sound investigation is still good sound investigation. It doesn't matter if you do it with a compass and a map, or GPS. It's still, you know, investigation is investigation. And good, safe policing is still good, safe policing. The patrol officer out there with the old Willys Jeep and the revolver was just as good a patrol officer as the one with the brand new Ford Expedition and the high tech gear and plastic belts and everything else. But you know, good safe community policing is still good safe policing. But we have some tools to help us. The GPS is one of them. Just, you know, for location. Our radio and communications system, again, when I started out, I was lucky to have anybody to talk to. Now we've got some pretty good coverage. Most of our people have some pretty good coverage. We demand that they have good coverage. We're even looking at some of our in-vehicle computer systems, where they have automatic dispatching and locations, where they can do a lot of their, just the normal day-to-day checks and routines, right there, real time. We're looking at some of the ticketing. Reporting has always been a problem. And I don't blame them. I know what reporting and statistics and data entry and all that. But. Where that they issue a citation, it'll be an electronic citation, it'll be automatically entered. There's a lot of whiz bang things we have. We've got some special technical gear for investigations and surveillance, things like that. Some fairly high-tech things. I'm on a number of working groups to look at different methodologies and technologies to detect illegal drug activities. Everything from satellites to high altitude imagery to acoustics to even signatures, smell signatures out there. So there's a lot of things going on, but again, the basics are still the basics. Technical tools of the trade assist the officer and the agent, but there's still good basic policing and investigation is the way you do it. Unlike most of the other people in the Forest Service. You know. We have a lot of very highly trained people in fire, and we obviously have highly trained people in their given professions: wildlife biologists, or you know. Anybody out there's got an unbelievable amount of education and training, but some of the things that really set us off are just some of our tactical training. I mean everybody else in the Forest Service doesn't have to go through a biannual defensive tactics, re-certification training; combat firearms; we

have a lot of different training. I was a combat firearms instructor for years. Taught both the field and at the academies on combat firearms use. There's a lot of things that are pretty unique to the law enforcement unit. Sometimes interesting and sometimes scary to some of our people. When they see our people dressed in camos with long arms and walking through the hallways to their vehicles. It's interesting. When I used to teach firearms I used to love to drag other foresters, people there, just to either to partake or to watch, to see that it was what it was, what it was all about, and how serious it is. But it's something that we have to do, and we have to maintain both from the liability standpoint and from an officer's safety standpoint, we have to do this on a continuing, reoccurring basis. You can't just, you know, shoot your gun and do defensive tactics and arrest techniques at the academy in 8993 and expect to be proficient in 2003. So we do it on a reoccurring basis.

SF: Last question for you, Dan. What potential exhibit, display, demonstration, or participation would you recommend for the festival at the Mall that has a law enforcement twist to it?

DB: I think it would be great to have a full display. Like I said, we never have a shortage of people apply for a position, so there's obviously a desire and a real keen interest out there. You know, I [laughs] I look back. When I was a very small kid there was four things, for things that I wanted to be when I grew up. I wanted to be a forest ranger, a policeman, fireman, and a jet pilot. Well I made forest ranger. I got the police out of the way. And I got to fight fire. But I haven't quite got to the jet pilot. But I'm, you never know. But anyhow. There's always that interest. Particularly within the young people. But I think there's an interest overall, with the public, on that aspect of what we do. Just take a look at television or anything. So I think it would be really interesting for people that, not only are not aware of what the Forest Service does, but don't have any idea... If they did know about the Forest Service, they really didn't know that we had that aspect or that kind, you know, the law enforcement component. Also because our, in uniform, and the tools, and our vehicles. I think it would be a very interesting display. I think it would warrant, I [emphasis] believe it would warrant a display, we have those on hand or certainly anything that needs to be done could be done to meld a pretty unique and interesting display, and I think it would be nice to have representatives from the law enforcement and investigations division. We have, we're getting better again, and that was something that's changed over the years, and a lot of people said, why do you have to have a different uniform? Well it kind of does separate us. We don't want to be separate from the Forest Service, but for not only our law enforcement officers' safety, but for the general Forest Service employees' safety. There's a clear line that, these people are the law enforcement people, these are the resource people, and we hope that creates a little bit more of a safety net. But I think it would be really beneficial to have a couple of uniformed officers, and even have a criminal investigator, at least at the display area, that, when people have an interest and ask the questions, can answer those questions. I think it would be a very interesting display. Our vehicles are highly marked and look very good, very professional. Our officers, when they're in full uniform, look very professional, and would shine a pretty positive light for the Forest Service. And like I say, I think there would be a lot of interest. For most of the fairs that I used to do as fire

prevention officer, and in law enforcement, we always had the long lines here that wanted to either say “Is that a real gun”, or touch Smokey. [Laughs] So we always had a good, fun booth.

SF: They’ll want to here your sirens.

DB: Exactly. I love kids when they’re in that situation, you know you’re going to get the two questions. Is that real? And, can I turn on the siren? But that’s okay. They’re still there, and their, you know, big old wide eyes, and it’s a lot of fun. But I think it would be a, I think it would be a pretty interesting display, if you could have one.

SF: We’ve got six more minutes on the tape. Is there anything in general that you would just like to share with regards to the upcoming Folklife Festival, or the Centennial for 2005?

DB: Well actually I’m glad that somebody’s really paying attention to the centennial. I remember, when was it? The 1990...? Now, you see, again...[Offscreen voice prompts ‘1991’.] ’91. We’d just got to Alaska. And I remember my anger when in 1991 we were celebrating at least that anniversary and the Park Service was celebrating their 75th anniversary. And they got the big part in the parade in Seward, Alaska. That bothered me. I like to see us... I think the Forest Service is a unique and fantastic organization, but I think we fall down a little bit when we start to sell ourselves. And I hope that we can really do the best we can, at least in this venue, and then maybe continue that on. I’ve just seen it time and time again, and again, in the little experience I’ve had in fairs and large national conferences where we’ve had booths, not just law enforcement but Forest Service booths, there’s a huge interest in it. And it’s just too bad that we can’t get that word out a little bit better, so I think this is a good opportunity. And again, I think, law enforcement I consider, after a number of years with the agency, I consider law enforcement a completely integral component of managing the hundred and ninety-one million acres out there. So I obviously think it needs to be there. But it also adds a little pizzazz. But I hope that the Forest Service really tries to sell itself. I guess that’s... If I have one complaint on the agency it’s in that respect, and my wife and I—because she’s got a number of years in—we both agree that we just need to try to sell ourselves better. We always seem to react to the bad press, but we don’t seem to really get out and beat the drum. Unlike some of the other agencies, like Park Service and some of the other ones that do a pretty good job of that. So I think this is a good opportunity. Particularly in the nation’s capitol.

SF: Very good. Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW