Pat Lynch
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Encampment, Wyoming

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Interviewer: Cher Burgess

Pat Lynch (PL): My name's Pat Lynch, L-Y-N-C-H, and I was a ranger in Region Two, the Rocky Mountain region, of, down in Colorado, at Rifle, Colorado, and also in Wyoming, where I'm at now, in Encampment, Wyoming, on the Encampment District. And prior to that, I actually started with the Forest Service right out of high school in 1957 on the ZigZag District of the Mount Hood, on a trail crew. And I had grown up in Oregon near the Mount Hood National Forest, the ZigZag District, and that's how I got acquainted with the Forest Service and the national forest system, and how I'd become attached to that as a possible career. And so in 1957 I went to work on the trail crew, did that that summer; started college at CSU in forestry and range management. And during the summers I would work for the Forest Service. I worked several summers on the Roosevelt National Forest, on trail crews, on thinning crews, doing miscellaneous maintenance on buildings, and lookouts, and maintaining phone lines to lookouts, and those kinds of things. Just kind of general kinds of work. And then when I graduated from CSU in, actually in 1963, went to work for the Forest Service in the forest supervisor's office on the Arapahoe Forest, before they were combined with the Roosevelt National Forest. The headquarters then were on the, in Golden, Colorado. And so I worked there for, from March until June, in lands and special uses, and did a variety of jobs there; and then went in the military for two years, and when I came back the Forest service gave me a job as a lands forester on the Clear Creek District of the Arapahoe Forest at Idaho Springs, Colorado, and I was there for two years. And then I transferred to Aspen, Colorado on the White River National Forest, the Aspen District; then was assistant district ranger there for four years. And I was involved in all kinds of uses, from special uses, recreation, range management, timber management—although timber was kind of a small load at that time on that district-- and with a lot of emphasis on recreation, and I was a snow ranger there in the winter time. And so I was there from 1967 to '71, and then moved to Dillon, Colorado, where I was assistant ranger there; worked in all aspects of the district, but primarily recreation. I was also snow ranger there; was involved in the development and expansion of ski areas. Copper Mountain was just in the formative stages and I laid out ski trails there at Copper Mountain with Chuck Lewis, who started Copper Mountain, and also with expansions at Breckinridge and Keystone; and those areas were growing at that time. So moved from there then to, in about 1973, moved from there to Rifle, Colorado, where I was district ranger, and that's on the White River National Forest. And we had quite a balanced workload in resources there; not a lot of recreation, but we had oil and gas production, we had range management, we had fairly small timber load, but a pretty good sized range load. That was a good assignment. I moved from there to Encampment, Wyoming as the district ranger, and that was in 1975. And moved to Encampment, and we had a real good balanced workload, and recreation, range, timber; little bit of minerals, and small amount of special uses. So I did that for a few years and then moved to Alaska, and took a job in a regional office as a regional safety and training officer, and was in Alaska for two years in the regional office; and then resigned from

the Forest Service in 1979, late 1979, moved back to Encampment, and started a business, or expanded a business that had already started, which was Western Heritage Company.

The purpose of Western Heritage Company was not just to make a living, but was also to kind of protect the heritage of the Forest Service, or at least encourage esprit d'corps in the Forest Service by providing merchandise and things that had some historical background to them, so that people would not forget the heritage of the Forest Service. So it's been a labor of love, and through that business I've been able to keep in touch with the Forest Service, and I know a lot more people in the Forest Service probably than if I'd remained in the Forest Service, because I speak to people in different regions of the Forest Service practically every week. And so the Forest Service is still… I always say that I never left the Forest Service. They just quit sending checks to me in about 1979. But I still feel a very strong part of the Forest Service family and my best friends are Forest Service people, either in the Forest Service or retired from the Forest Service.

So I've for a long time had an interest in the history of the Forest Service, and one of the things I have an interest in is kind of the uniforms, and how the uniforms evolved into what they are today; and I found that kind of interesting and fascinating. And then during the celebration of the national forest reserves, which was, they were established in 1891, and then in 1991 the Forest Service decided to have a centennial celebration to celebrate the establishment of the forest reserves, which subsequently became, of course, in 1905, national forests. So we participated in that, and one thing we did is kind of restore the old uniforms that had started in 1906 really. And when Gifford Pinchot in 1905 took over the Forest Service there were several things he wanted to do. He wanted to establish the Forest Service in the public's eye as a service organization, and he wanted the forest officers to be recognized as having some authority over the national forest, because the public had become accustomed, even when the forest reserves were established, to pretty much do on those public lands what they wanted to. And so Gifford Pinchot wanted to change that; and he was very diplomatic about it, but one thing he wanted to do was have people in uniform, and also to have a badge that represented some authority. And so he changed the badge from the round badge that the forest reserve officers had had, and that was, it said on the badge "Forest Reserve Ranger" and then "Department of the Interior". And that's because the forest reserves were in the Department of Interior. And that was not a distinctive looking badge, and so Gifford Pinchot held a contest among Washington office employees in 1905, a contest to design a Forest Service badge that would represent some authority to the people. So several submissions were made to that contest committee, and they were not happy with anything that anybody submitted. They had all kinds of different designs; they had a maple leaf design and several different designs, but nothing was really very satisfactory to Pinchot. So it turned out that there were a couple of gentlemen that worked for the Forest Service: one of them was Edward T. Allen and the other one was William C. Hodge. And they worked in both the Washington office and California; they worked between those two offices. And one day they were in Missoula, Montana—there's different versions of this story, but they were at least in the field in Montana—and the most popular story is that they were in Missoula at Union Pacific train station, and they were looking at one of the time schedule tables for the trains, and on it appeared Union Pacific's shied; and so one of them, it was Allen I think, that drew the Union Pacific outline shield on a piece of paper, and he put 'U' and 'S' on it, inside the Union Pacific shield; and then William Hodge—and this could be one way or the other, but anyway the other gentleman, I think it was

Hodge—he drew a tree on a cigarette paper that he took out of his pocket, and overlaid that on the drawing and the 'S'; and then together they put across the top 'Forest Service' and 'Department of Agriculture' across the bottom. And that's how the shield evolved. And they presented that to the chief, the chief forester, Pinchot, and that was accepted. And so that was like this badge here. And this is a replica of that badge. The original badge, number one, is in the chief's office. So if you go in the chief's office today Dale Bosworth is very proud to show you that badge that was the number one badge. And we borrowed that badge in '91 and made a mold of it, and had reproduced that badge. It was… It's kind of interesting. This badge was used from 1905 until 1915. So it lasted ten years. And it was used on this first Forest Service uniform.

[PL has several uniforms on hangers behind him, and he displays them as he speaks about them.]

This is a replica of that original uniform, and they adopted this uniform and it had this high collar that was fairly tight around the neck. And it was not a very popular uniform. Those that wore it complained about it; said it was a German crown prince uniform. So they said that because they just didn't like it. They thought that it was a little too militaristic for them, and they just didn't like the way they looked in it. And actually I've got this… This was actually the first one; this was the second variation from this one. This had the pockets on it. So they changed that somewhat. That was in 1905 that they drew up the specifications for this. And they put out bids for it in 1906. So in late 1906 they issued a contract for this uniform. Well then they modified that somewhat to this one where they took those pockets off of the top, and then this one could be unbuttoned and the lapels turned down so that it was a little more comfortable to wear, and could be worn closed or open. And most of the time it was worn more open. So this was a little bit more accepted. And actually this uniform then, was basically, with very little modification, was the uniform that was worn from 1909. So this one was 1906—the end of 1906—until 1909, and then this uniform took over, and it was used for several years, it was used 'til about 1922, and then they came up with the Norfolk style jacket, and then that remained in effect until about the mid '30s. Then they changed to a more modern, less military looking kind of a coat. And so in the mid '30s they went to… Actually the reason they went from that Norfolk jacket was that President Franklin Roosevelt had complained to the undersecretary of agriculture about the way that coat looked. And so it's interesting that the president had that much interest in the Forest Service uniform, but he complained about it. And also it had happened that during the time of that uniform, from 1922 to the mid '30s, that other uses had been adopted; and there were people gas station attendants, and the hotel bellhops and other people in the kind of service industries had adapted that as their jacket as well, or their coat style. And so they changed that to a different uniform, and then that uniform in 1935 lasted until about 1978, '79. Then that uniform changed to pretty much what the uniform is today. Different materials are being used now and so forth, but kind of the style has evolved to what it is today. So this was the type of shirt that was used early on. And they also had this in kind of a gray flannel. But it was a placard style I guess they call it, and they had these buttons on the front. And so that was the prescribed shirt. And then they wore choke bore britches. These breeches that laced up, and you would wear in a boot; have a boot like this. And so you could either have a tall boot like this or you could have a riding boot that came up the leg. But anyway these were called choke bore breeches, and that was commonly worn then with both that uniform and then this one that was used from 1909 to about 1921 or '22.

So that's kind of an overview of the evolution of the uniform, and certainly there's never been a hundred percent acceptance of the uniform at any time, regardless. You can imagine a wool uniform that people used in the South in the summertime, and even in the West in the summertime, was not a very popular material. But there was not the variety of materials in those days to use that of course we have now. So there was always some complaints about the uniform as there still is today. You can always find something wrong with the uniform.

Kind of along that line with kind of the early history of the Forest Service: America's first forest ranger was named William R. Kreutzer. That's spelled K-R-E-U-T-Z-E-R. And it's pronounced Kreutzer [Kroyt-ser]. And it's kind of an interesting story about Bill or Billy as he was called at the time. His father had come from Bavaria and had some training in forestry. And he immigrated to this country in the 1800s, and he married a British lady and they first lived, I think in Pennsylvania, but they decided to move west. And they moved to Colorado, and Billy was born in Sedalia, Colorado, which is about twenty to thirty miles south of Denver. And they lived on a ranch, and they were dependent to some extent on products, like posts and poles for their ranch there, that were found on the forest reserve. And at that time the forest reserves were not under management at all. And in 1898 the government decided that they would appropriate some money for the management of these forest reserves. And they politically appointed certain people as what they called superintendents of these forest reserves. And a gentleman by the name of Colonel May in Denver was appointed as superintendent of the forest reserves in Colorado and Utah. And he was a lawyer. He had been in the Civil War and was a colonel. And he was appointed, and it had got published in the newspaper that they were going to hire some rangers; that the government had got some money and they were going to hire some rangers. They were actually going to start trying to manage these forest reserves.

And so Billy was working for a ranch that wasn't too far away, a few miles away from his home ranch; but he was working for a neighbor rancher, Mr. Metcalf. And his job was to look after the cattle and to see that they were moved around up on the forest reserve, and that was his main job. He was basically a ranch hand; he was nineteen years old. And he got this letter from his father. One day he was riding his horse and he got this letter out and he was reading it, and his father was telling him that there might be a future for him in these forest reserves; that they were going to hire some rangers. And so he thought about that as he rode along, and he finally convinced himself that that was what he should do. He had seen wild fires regularly on his rides up into the forest reserves looking after these cattle. There were constantly smokes all around in the summer time, from lightning strikes primarily. Nobody was doing anything. This was public domain and there was nobody hired to deal with these. And that bothered him, it bothered his father. And also kind of the unregulated cutting and use of the forest reserves was an issue with his father, who had this background and training in forestry. And so he read that letter over and said, maybe that's… talking to himself as he rode his horse back to Mr. Metcalf's ranch, where he lived. And he said, you know, maybe I should look into this. And so he got back there and he told Mr. Metcalf, and Mr. Metcalf said, you don't want to go to work for the government. He said, there's no future in it, and besides I don't think that ranchers like myself and others are going to buy into this, regulation by the government. I don't think it's going to happen. Well Billy said, I think it's worth a try. So the next day he saddled up his horse Blue and rode the twenty some miles into Denver to, I think it was Arapahoe and Sixteenth or Union Streets where Colonel May's office was. And he went in, knocked on the door and went in and saw this Colonel May and said, I

want to be a forest ranger. And he said, how did you know I was going to hire any forest rangers? He said, well my dad sent me a letter and told me you were going to be hiring some forest rangers. And he said, well that's interesting because I just got the authorization a few days ago and I just got financed to do this. So they had a good conversation and Colonel May said, do you have any kind of political references from any politicians? And Willy said, you know if this is the kind of thing that I need to get this job, then I'm not interested. And Colonel May said, well wait a minute. That's okay, we can probably do without those. Let me talk to you some more. And he told him about his father and his father's background in forestry, and some of the things his father had done on his own property and his interest in forestry. Colonel May said, Well I'd like to talk to him some more about that. But he said, tell me about what you can do. He said, well, and keep in mind that Billy was only nineteen at the time, he said I will assure you that I can do a good man's work every day, and I will work hard. This is something that I'm interested in. I've been concerned about seeing these fires up on the forest, on the Plum Creek Reserve s what it was, the Plum Creek timberland reserve. And he said, both my father and I have been concerned about that. So he says, I think that I can do the job. I've put out a lot of fires already, just on my own. So I'd really like to have this job.

So they went out for lunch and they came back, and Colonel May said, well Billy, I think I'll hire you. And Billy was kind of surprised; and he said, I'll pay you fifty dollars a month. You've got to provide your own horse, and your own pack animal; and I will get some tools for you, and I'll get you a rake, a shovel, a double-bedded ax, a bucket… and it seems like maybe there was one other thing that he would provide Billy. But Billy was to provide his horse and his pack horse at his own expense. So anyway he gave him this instruction, basically words to this effect: your job is to go back out there and get out there and put those fires. Ride as fast and as far as you can, as the Almighty will allow, and get out there and put out those fires. Kind of words to that effect.

Anyway that was kind of the beginning of the career of Bill Kreutzer. That was in August of 898. And Billy was kind of short in stature but a very tough guy, and he managed to gain the respect… In fact, one of the early incidences, there was a ranger, Womak was his name; he'd been hired after Billy had, and he was over on the Battlement Mesa forest reserve I think it was, and he had got accused of killing somebody. And so the government dismissed him and Billy took his place. And so there was this transfer. It was about 1900 or 1901 I think. And Billy rode over to the Battlement Mesa reserve, and he was just settling into this cabin that was provided for him there. And these two ranchers rode up, and they said, you know, we don't really like having the government boys here. And he said, we especially don't like that incident where Womak killed a local person, and we just think that you ought to saddle up and head on out. And Billy reached out to shake his hand, and when he did that he took the gun out of this guy's holster and shot about all six rounds through the roof of the cabin, and in the course of that incident he managed to disarm the other fellow that was with him, and he said I intend to stay here. And over a period of time those became really good friends actually of Bill's. But that was the kind of a guy he was. He was a no-nonsense guy. He worked for the Forest Service—of course then in 1905 he was still employed by the government, and when the forest reserves became national forests, then he began working for the Department of Agriculture instead of the Department of Interior, and of course that was the beginning of the Forest Service. And so he stayed in government Service for forty-one years and retired in, I think it was about 1939 or thereabouts. And the interesting thing is, he could probably be the poster child for the Forest Service at that

time in terms of serving the public, caring for the land—you know, the motto that's now in place, "caring for the land and serving the people"—and he established himself in the communities as a real community leader. He really only had about a sixth or eighth grade education there in Sedalia in a one-room schoolhouse. But then he managed all through his life-- and I've visited with his grandson, who lives in Loveland, Colorado, and I've also visited with one of his sons as well—but he was preoccupied with educating himself. And when he retired from the Forest Service he had quite a lot of education; almost, as I understand it, almost had like a law degree. And so he self-educated himself. He was forest supervisor, when he retired he was forest supervisor on the Roosevelt National Forest. And he had mentored a lot of people that stayed in the Forest Service. And when he retied from the Forest Service he got a letter from Gifford Pinchot, and I'd like to read that. This is actually the original letter signed by Gifford Pinchot. And this is interesting in a couple of ways. One of them is that it shows how Gifford Pinchot stayed in touch with Forest Service employees, and the Forest issues and mission all through his life. I mean, this was written on November 27th, 1939, and it was to Mister William R. Kreutzer, Fort Collins, Colorado. "Dear Kreutzer. I have just recently learned of your retirement after your remarkable service of forty-one years, and I cannot deny myself the pleasure of writing to congratulate you. It seems a long time ago when you and I first met, but I do not forget that you were in it before I was, although I began my work in the old Division of Forestry a month and eight days before you started under the land office. On the other hand, you certainly lasted a whole lot longer than I did. Every good wish to you for health and happiness now that you have retired. When you come to write the story of your life in the Forest Service of the government I am sure you will not forget to contrast the conditions at the beginning and at the end. With every good wish to you once more, faithfully yours, Gifford Pinchot." That was a wonderful tribute to Bill Kreutzer. And also, as I said, it speaks of Gifford Pinchot's interest in the Forest Service right up until he died just a few years after he wrote this letter.

There's a book that's been written called *Saga of a Forest Ranger*, and Lyn Schumacher, who himself was a forest ranger and had spent time on the Aspen district in the early years, wrote this book. It had been started by some others but he finished this book. He was public affairs officer in the regional office in Region Two. And it's a wonderful story about Bill Kreutzer. *Saga of a Forest Ranger*. And you can sometimes find these—of course it's a long time out of print—you can sometimes find these in used book stores and so forth. But this was written in 1958. It was published by the University of Colorado Press at Boulder, Colorado. So that's an excellent book that everybody in the Forest Service should read. It tells a lot of the stories of some of the conflicts that they had with the grazing, and how Bill dealt with some of the permitees, and some of the people that weren't permitees that he was trying to make permitees. So this is an excellent book.

This is a pretty good view of Bill. This bust was done by his grandson, who's a sculptor in Loveland, and that's taken from a picture, from a photograph, and his son, Jack Kreutzer, did this. And Jack told me that when he was, when Jack was only about six years old he remembers walking down the street in Fort Collins with his granddad, and that's where the forest supervisor's office was for the Roosevelt. And this was after he retired, but he knew practically everybody in town. He was really well-liked and well-respected. Made a tremendous contribution to Region Two. His entire career was in Region Two. At Gunnison, and over by Grand Junction, on the Grand Mesa. And then I think he spent some time in the regional office as

well. And then retired as forest supervisor. But he made a wonderful contribution to the Forest Service, and never really got the recognition, I think, that he should have. But it's pretty well undisputed that he was America's first forest ranger. So let's see, what else might I…

Cher Burgess (CB): [Remark too faint to hear]

PL: Oh, okay. And one of the jobs that I had in the Forest Service was being a snow ranger. And they still have snow rangers. They probably don't have as many as they once did. But at the boom of the ski industry, which was probably in the late '60s and early '70s, that's when ski areas, particularly in the West and in Colorado in particular really expanded; skiing really caught on and expanded. And most of the ski areas in the West are located on national forests in some degree on another. Some are almost entirely all on national forests and some only have portions on national forests. But California, of course, has a lot of ski areas in Region Six, and during the '60s skiing became a real important interest to people, and so the industry really grew. And so the Forest Service responded to that by developing winter sports specialists and snow rangers: people that really specialized in ski area development; not only in administering day-to-day, overseeing activities on the ski areas in terms of working with the ski patrol and doing avalanche control work, and watching primarily for hazards that could affect the public. Inspecting the lift facilities themselves; making sure that the break systems were working, that the cable alignments were proper, that the [shib?] liners that the cable rode over were being replaced as needed; trying to minimize the opportunity for derailments of the cable and just to make sure that the skiers operate safely and make sure that hazards were marked in the ski trails. And so there was quite an effort in the '60s to train people. And so schools were put on, avalanche schools were put on to train people that worked on these areas, and they were called snow rangers. And they would have summer duties; most of them were permanent employees that would have summer jobs. So they were year-round employees but they had summer duties that dealt with recreation or other functions on the districts. So I got interested in, and had always been interested in, skiing, and grew up near the Mount Hood Nation Forest and grew up learning to ski near Timberline Lodge and Government Camp on the shoulders of Mount Hood. And so when I had an opportunity in the Forest Service to go in that direction, then I did, and when I had my first job at Idaho Springs I got involved in ski area administration at Loveland Ski Area, and transferred from there over to Aspen; and was there for four years and worked on helping the development at Snowmass Ski Area. When I moved there in '67 nothing had been done in terms of lift building or anything at Snowmass. And so that was just beginning to develop. So I worked there in the summertime, helping lay out trails and look after the resource as they were clearing trails and so forth. Would specify where water bars would be across the slopes, and how to deal with protecting the watershed primarily. And at that time they still allowed grazing on the ski areas. And so there were summer activities related to the development of ski areas, and then in the wintertime you did these activities to protect the public safety. And so we would spend three or four days a week working on the ski areas. There was another fellow there that was a GDA, which was a General District Assistant, and his name was Dick Sireese. And he and I were the snow rangers at that time, from 1967 to '71 while I was there. And we would go to different ski areas and try to go to a couple different ski areas each day, and check them out. And then we'd be involved with throwing charges into likely areas that would avalanche, to set those off before they became really catastrophic avalanches. So that was kind of the work we did as snow rangers. Even at that time I considered it a pretty good duty, but more recently I've considered it almost absurd that I

would get paid to do that kind of work. [Laughs] So it was a lot of fun and it was a good time in my career. And then I moved from there. Because of that experience they were developing and expanding ski areas over in Summit County of Colorado and I moved over there in 1971 and was there for three years, working with Keystone ski areas they developed and the laid-out trails there. Copper Mountain was not yet developed and it was just beginning to, and I always say the best skiing at Copper Mountain was before they built the lifts, because we got ski trails laid out and the trails were cleared, and then with snowcats we would go up and ski the trails to make sure that the trees were cleared that needed to be cleared. We didn't leave too many trees in the middle of the trail or certain areas. And so I worked c loosely with Chuck Lewis who was the president of Copper Mountain. So we did that at Copper Mountain, and also Breckenridge was expanding, and worked with people there in the industry. John [Rom?] was the president of Breckenridge, which was a part of Aspen Skiing Company. So worked with him and others at Keystone, 'cause Keystone was expanding as well. So that was a great time, and there are still snow rangers, and they still do basically the same job. In many cases they turned those jobs, delegated more of those jobs to the ski areas themselves to do. But the Forest Service still has an important role in insuring public safety on those areas, and working with those areas as they seek to expand to accommodate their areas as they seek to accommodate growth and expansion and more skiers. That was the big time of skier growth and development. And since Beaver Creek was constructed in I think about 1976, there's only been one other new ski area built on national forest land. And that one is up in Montana, I believe, and it opened about five years ago. But there's still snow rangers and they still perform an important function. The Forest Service had snow rangers clear back in the '60s. And in fact some of the fellows that were snow rangers were involved with the Squaw Valley Winter Olympics in 1960 at Squaw Valley, and Paul Hauk was really one of the premiere guys in the winter sports business in Colorado, and he went to Squaw Valley and represented the Forest Service. There was a team of about five snow rangers that went there and kind of helped insure public safety and safety of the participants on the ski areas during that time. So there is a whole kind of a culture of snow rangers that's sort of a society or brotherhood of snow rangers that started way back in the '60s. And the Forest Service even prior to that had a responsibility on skiers, but they didn't really get fully involved until the '60s. So that's kind of the history of snow rangers as best as I can tell it, and there's probably others that can tell it better.

[Apparently listening to off-mike question by interviewer.]

Oh yeah, guard stations. For example, here on what was the Encampment District, which is now a part of the Brush Creek-Hayden District... We changed the name of the Encampment District to the Hayden District about 1977, when we combined the Snake River District on the west side of the Continental Divide here on the Medicine Bow to the Encampment District, and joined it to the Encampment District, and then at that point we named it the Hayden District. Well in that area of about four hundred and thirty-five thousand acres, which comprised the Encampment District or what became then the Hayden District, there were about seven or eight guard stations that existed throughout that four hundred and thirty-five thousand acres. And the reason was the early rangers would take off, and they would go and spend a week or two, on horseback and with their pack horse, ride to one of these guard stations and spend that time there, and they would ride that area that could cover reasonably in a day from that guard station, ride out and check it out; check on fires and check on any logging operations or timber cutting that the local ranchers

or tie hacks or whoever was using Forest Service resources. So these guard stations were very small and very austere in terms of their furnishings and so forth. They basically had a single bed, a wood stove, a table; which functioned as a place that they would eat but also fill out their diary and do their work. They used a booklet like this, and this would be where they would write down all the work that they did that day. And so they kept this diary, and they had a few other reports that they had to fill out. But anyway they—paperwork was minimal at that time, thank goodness, so they got a lot of field work done. So that's how guard stations were used. And they still exist on many districts. Some of them have been removed because road systems have been put in place that negate the need for a building to be there. But there are still many guard stations that are used in a similar way, for field crews to go to and spend time when they're going to be working on a project for a week or more in one location. So they still have a function. They probably historically have a lot of nostalgia to people that have used them. It's interesting, I was reading a report one time of a district ranger on the [Aspen?] District, and he was telling about building a guard station up towards Independence. Independence Pass, and also the town site of Independence. And he summarized for the forest supervisor how much he had spent on building this guard station. And he had, you know, nails and roofing and lumber; and of course he'd cut the logs himself. But anyway he got all done and it was like two hundred and sixty-four dollars that he had spent on building this guard station. So some of them were built by the rangers themselves and at very minimal expense, and they are still in place now. So that's kind of...

[Apparently listening to off-mike question by interviewer.]

Oh, yeah. On some of these guard stations where there was a lot of snowfall in the mountains, which is pretty characteristic of the West at least, there would be a hatch or a door that would be above about the eight foot level. So up in the kind of crown of the building there would be a door that goes into the building, and then you'd go inside and then go down a ladder and get into the building, because the snow would cover the door, and there would be no way without shoveling for several hours that you could get inside that building. So there were occasions when rangers would go out and use these in the winter time. For example, they would frequently go out and run snow courses. And later those were done by the Soil Conservation Service, which of course is now the Natural Resources Conservation Service. And they would cooperatively go out and do these readings, but a lot of times the ranger would go, and before the Soil Conservation Service the Forest Service would do it by them selves. And then they would use this information to predict runoff in the spring so that the rangers would have an idea what to expect n terms of runoff for irrigation. So a lot of times they would have a hatch in the floor, a place in the floor where they would keep canned goods and certain staple foods that they could store in there, so that when they went up there in the winter time they'd be able to have something to eat there. They would store it down in these places below the floor where the animals if they would get in, or pack rats or whatever, wouldn't find these things; and also where they wouldn't freeze quite so badly. So I just really think guard stations are neat, and I've actually built one on my property here so that I can have my own guard station. But it's not really my own guard station now. We built it in 1991 as a part of our own contribution to the centennial celebration of the national forest system, and so w make that available to Forest Service employees that travel through this way and want a place to stay at no charge. So we want to share that with other Forest Service family members.

[Apparently responding to off-mike suggestion.]

Oh, okay. Well in Alaska there were and still are ranger boats. And ranger boats go back in history basically as far as the Forest Service in Alaska, particularly on the Tongass. And there's a fellow who currently works for the Forest Service, has for some time, Paul Macintosh; I think he's in some way detailed from Ketchikan to the Chugach, and he may have transferred up to the Chugach. And Paul has done a real good research and study on ranger boats. If you have more interest in ranger boats you want to get in touch with Paul, but what I can tell you about ranger boats is, when the Tongass National Forest was established, and prior to that when it was a reserve, ranger boats were an absolute necessity. That was the only way you could get around. It was before there was access to airplanes, which of course the Forest Service uses extensively in Region Ten now. But ranger boats were the only way to get around. So the ranger would have a boat, and they varied in length from thirty-some feet to maybe fifty feet, and that's the way he would travel around. That's the way he would get to villages, that's the way he would get to different islands, and check on the national forest. And so they have kept those in Alaska and they still use them, almost on a daily basis. If a field crew, whether it's an archaeological crew or a timber crew, any field-going crew that has to get to the field will use ranger boats to get to the field. And of course there's quite a road system in southeast Alaska now, but also they use those as a place to stay. They can accommodate six to eight people on a ranger boat, and so the skipper will function as kind of a cook sometimes, or he'll have an assistant; between the two of them they'll just take care of that crew. They'll take them to where they want to go and then they'll stay anchored in close to shore, and then they'll fix them their meals. And so it's just kind of their motel out on the water. So ranger boats have played a real important role in southeast Alaska, And also one other place where they've played quite a role, and that's in Lake Chelan on the Wenatchee National Forest. They have ranger boats there as well, to get around on Lake Chelan. So ranger boats are still in existence. They've restored some of them recently. And the Sitka ranger for example, that's located in Sitka, works a lot in southeast Alaska on a daily basis. So they're an interesting part of Forest Service history, particularly in... They're really kind of an icon for the Forest Service in Alaska. I would say ranger boats are to Region Ten, or Alaska, as lookouts are to the national forest system on the lower forty-eight.

Lookouts are another subject altogether; but lookouts in my opinion, should really be the icon for the Forest Service; kind of the white hat icon. Caring for the land and serving people; I mean you look at a lookout and that's what they say to me. And so lookouts are something that we kind of neglected through the years. And because of the Forest Fire Lookout Association and other interested groups there's a real movement to try to preserve lookouts. At the same time, because of the austere budgets of the Forest Service and limited budgets for maintaining structures, there's a movement within the Forest Service, and I can understand this, but there is a movement to eliminate lookouts that are no longer really functioning, and have degraded in condition to the point where they're no longer usable. But I think of lookouts as something that are worthy of maintaining and restoring. We're actually losing lookouts in the United States almost at the rate of one lookout a week. And so I would like to see kind of an accelerated interest in lookouts, because of that loss; and I know several that have been burnt down by the Forest Service or otherwise removed, but we've also lost several, even this summer, that have been burnt through wildfires. So I think every effort should be made to preserve lookouts. And I think there's enough interest by the public, and certainly by the Forest Fire Lookout Association.

I'm a director of that organization so obviously I'm biased, but I think we can rally support for Forest Service lookouts to be preserved. And if any are known that are threatened the Forest Fire Lookout Association would like to know about it and would like to do what it can to help preserve these.

[Apparently responds to off-mike question.]

Yeah. I could summarize kind of my feelings about Forest Service history a little bit, in that I see that the kind of a current, at least the newer employees of the Forest Service, is missing out on really a colorful history of the Forest Service. It's not being protected; it's not being taught. The heritage of the Forest Service is really a wonderful history. The Forest Service has survived all kinds of controversies. Contrary to a lot of other agencies, particularly the Department of Interior, that have really been kind of overwhelmed by some of the controversies. But the Forest Service has really been above that for the most part. There's been a few runs at the Forest Service, but the Forest Service historically has been really an agency that has been the model federal agency for other agencies to look at, to say how do we run an organization that is really providing a good public service for the taxpayers? So I would just like to see more of an emphasis. There's still a few people around that have kind of the enthusiasm for the history of the Forest Service that I do. A lot of retired people that you could enlist to come and give talks to new employees and tell them something about the history of the Forest Service. It's important, and I would hope that a new emphasis with this new century and the Service celebration in 2005 could re-stimulation that kind of interest in our heritage.

END OF INTERVIEW