AN INTERVIEW WITH

F. DALE ROBERTSON

by

Harold K. Steen

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Introduction

F. Dale Robertson was born in Denmark, Arkansas, on July 17, 1940. He earned a bachelor of science degree in forestry from the University of Arkansas in 1961, and began a career with the U.S. Forest Service. That career was unusual in that he would become chief of the agency, in 1987, and also because the end of his tenure was highly controversial. Although other chiefs have experienced intense external pressures, Chief Robertson was the first to be removed from office, in 1993, since President Taft fired Gifford Pinchot in 1910. The interview that follows traces this highly successful but unusual career, and we can see how each assignment provided a framework for the future chief to view the ever tougher issues of modern times.

Dale encountered opportunities and was able to handle them effectively, such as being a management trainee in the Washington Office early on. He worked for and favorably impressed people who would remember him when subsequent opportunities appeared, and his career advanced accordingly. But he is also familiar with management at the field level. He was a district ranger--he is the only chief who had been a ranger--and a national forest supervisor.

While he was on assignment in Washington, he earned a master's degree in public administration in 1970, a time of student unrest. His classmates, mostly younger, were more radical than he, but he could see that the Forest Service would be hiring this sort of people in the future--people who routinely challenged convention. He remembers the experience clearly; from he then on worked to balance program management with the need for creativity.

Change was already upon the Forest Service when Dale became chief, but it fell to him to articulate these changes more specifically. Many forestry professionals at the time challenged his views, but he felt he had no choice. As he saw it, traditional forestry had “hit the wall’, and gradual shifts of practices were not acceptable. During his tenure clearcutting, controversial for generations, was ended as a standard practice on the national forests. He believes that the Forest Service had held on to multiple use forestry too long, using it as a means to smooth over controversy. He also states that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), with its mandate for interdisciplinary management, has caused forestry to no longer be the lead profession. But it was the Endangered Species Act, passed shortly after NEPA, that was the “hammer” that drove the change. He points out that no matter how you want to look at it, multiple use forestry as practiced on the national forests had created endangered species, and the law was unforgiving, driving an “arrow through the heart of multiple use”. Ecosystem management was to provide a new way to look more broadly at the multiple use mandates that are imbedded in the statutes that govern the agency. He treats the adoption of ecosystem management in detail.

His handling of the spotted owl controversy prompted the Bush White House to direct the secretary of agriculture to fire him, but the secretary declined. His implementation of the Thomas report, named for Jack Ward Thomas who would turn out

to be his successor, was seen as too restrictive to commodity uses. Shortly thereafter, the Clinton administration removed him because he represented Republican priorities, but then continued the ecosystem management program that he had put in place. Dale observes that a chief cannot do a good job unless he is willing to be fired, that the pressures are just too constant and complex. Every day, the chief must put his job on the line, or the inevitable compromises will result in weak management. He recounts his final months with candor and empathy.

He tells us what it is like to be chief, but he also tells us what is not like. The chief's day is too fragmented for reflective thinking and developing a vision for the future, as people throughout the agency generally assume. Instead, the chief reviews and approves or not initiatives from staff who do have the time to study and reflect. He noted with a grin, however, if a chief does have an idea that it has a better than even chance of getting adopted, if he insists.

I first met Dale while he was associate chief and had been elected to the Board of Directors of the Forest History Society, my employer at the time. I remember clearly sitting with him privately and presenting an idea; he listened as though what I was saying was the most important thing in the world. I could see how this mannerism would serve him well in his leadership role. After being named chief he could no longer attend our board meetings, and I did not see him again until the national forest centennial celebration in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, in 1991. I chanced upon him during a reception, and we chatted a bit about his growing up in Arkansas. Our final meeting, before this interview, was in his office during a book signing. So we knew each other, but not all that well.

Prior to the interview we exchanged several letters, as we roughed out and agreed upon an outline that served as our guide. He answered my questions fully and in good humor--he still has the ability to make you feel important. But there was a time or two during the interview, such as when he was characterizing Washington, D.C., as a place that "chews you up and spits you out," that his face hardened as he remembered the at times unpleasantness associated with being chief of the Forest Service. We sat for three four-hour sessions, and later he carefully went over the transcript and made only minor changes and corrections. The text remains in its conversational form, which varies at times from a more formal written style.

The interview took place at the Robertson home in Sedona, Arizona, in August 1999. The fine home has spectacular views of the famed red rock, and one evening we watched the sunset from the deck. On the ground floor is Jane Russell's pool table (the actress is a Sedona fixture, as well as a national celebrity), one of the first pieces of furniture he bought, and a must-see on a home tour. Throughout the house are photos and plaques that represent his career. My unofficial survey suggests he favors mementos from individual national forests over "higher ranking" so-called grip and grin photos of official Washington, although he speaks with affection about shots of him with President Bush on a fishing trip and another standing with Barbara Bush.

You might be cautious if Dale offers to take you for a jeep ride over some of the older roads, his standard test of visitor courage. Thoughts flashed through my mind of the

various TV commercials that tout similar vehicles charging up streams, but we pretty much stayed on dry land. That evening, he mixed “the perfect” margarita for my wife Gail and me, and we joined Mary Jane and Dale for dinner at one of their favorite restaurants. A pleasant evening for all.

The small town of Sedona is ringed by national forest lands, and Dale’s home is only a short block from a boundary. Thus, the agency is well known locally, and initially people brought their complaints to him. He always sent them to the district ranger, whose office is nearby, in the full spirit of the Forest Service tradition of decentralization--local issues are to be dealt with locally. Besides, as he emphasizes throughout the interview, he is no longer with the Forest Service; he is happily living his new life.

Harold K. Steen

Harold K. Steen (HKS): Okay Dale, let's start with something straightforward, place and date of birth.

F. Dale Robertson (FDR): July 17, 1940, in a little community called Denmark, Arkansas.

HKS: Small town?

FDR: Oh, this was rural Arkansas. It didn't even have electricity.

HKS: So you started off as a rural person rather than urban and all that?

FDR: Yes. This was just an intersection in a road.

HKS: At some time in your life, age sixteen or something, you started thinking about forestry. How did you get involved with this field?

FDR: Well, I grew up in a rural area and my dad was a big squirrel hunter, and he and I would go squirrel hunting a lot in rural areas of Arkansas. I guess it was about my junior year in high school; I took this course in vocational education, and they ran me through all of these tests, you know, what your aptitudes were and what your strengths were. I came out very high in mathematics and science. So I remember sitting down with my vocational education teacher and she said now with the results of these tests here are professions that you would fit nicely into and would be good at. I got down to the F's and there was forestry and I said, yeah, that's what I'd like to do. So that's kind of how I got into forestry. Then she said, oh, we have a great school here in Arkansas. At the time it was Arkansas A&M. It's now part of University of Arkansas at Monticello. She said let me get you some material from the forestry school at Arkansas A&M. So she wrote off, got me material and I read all that stuff and the more I read the more excited I got about forestry. So that's kind of how I came to that conclusion.

HKS: I took a vocations course, it was required when I was a freshman in high school. Under forestry, which I had been thinking about, it said you must be able to snowshoe and ride a horse and paddle a canoe. I've always been afraid of horses and I never thought about forestry for years because I knew I couldn't do what you had to do to be a forester.

FDR: I might add, she says, oh, by the way, they've got scholarships for students with a B average or above. I said fine. So I wrote off for that and I got a fifty-dollar scholarship [laughter], which my dad was impressed with.

HKS: Fifty dollars?

FDR: Yes, just because I had a B average or higher in high school.

HKS: By your resume you graduated in ’61, and the first key position in the Forest Service starts in ’64, assistant ranger. There’s three years in there you don’t account for, so what did you do out of school?

Beginning in the Forest Service

FDR: I worked two summers for the Forest Service while I was in college. And I was at Mt. Ida, Arkansas, in the Ouachita National Forest. That was just two summer jobs. When I graduated from college in ’61, I went to Region 6 as a forester on the Deschutes National Forest, in Bend, Oregon, and I was there only fourteen months. I loved it, but in those days Region 6 hired too many foresters. I don’t know if you remember that period of time, they had foresters just coming out of their ears.

HKS: I graduated in ’57, and they hired seventy-nine foresters in ’57. I was one of them. So there were a lot of foresters around.

FDR: In Region 6?

HKS: Region 6.

FDR: How long were you there?

HKS: A year. Then I was drafted.

FDR: I was there for fourteen months, and my wife was a little homesick for the East. So one day I came in and there was this telegram from the Washington Office looking for a bright young forester to go into a training position in Washington, D.C., as a management analyst. So I thought about that. It was GS-9. I talked to my wife and she said, well go for it. So the next day I filled out my forms for this GS-9 management analyst trainee job in Washington.

HKS: And you were a 5 at the time?

FDR: No, I was 7. I filled it out and didn’t think anymore about it, but about three months later I got this notice I’d been selected to go to Washington, D.C., as a management analyst. Then I thought, you know, now what do I do. But I went, and I was there for two years. I might give you a little background on that position. Remember Larry Mays?

HKS: No.

FDR: He was the internal audit guy for the Forest Service when they had an internal auditor reporting to the chief. Anyway, he was very influential in setting up that job, and I was the third person in it. In fact, his son, Kent Mays, was either the first or the second, and I was the third. Anyway, the idea was to run us young guys through the Washington Office, find out what it’s all about, go to night school in public administration. I took a few courses here and there at American University in public administration and was there

for two years. That accounts for the three years; two in Washington as a management analyst trainee, one in Oregon as a forester. Then I went to Texas on the Sabine National Forest as assistant ranger. So I got exposed to the Washington Office early in my career during my second and third year in the Forest Service.

A kind of a neat thing was I lived over south of Alexandria, Virginia, and Ed Cliff, the chief at the time, lived in old town Alexandria, and Ed rode the bus. And I rode the bus with Ed Cliff. Here was this little old GS-9 riding the bus and every once in awhile I would sit by Ed Cliff. He had his briefcase, and he worked on the bus a lot. But occasionally he'd just sit and talk to me and tell me about things, and I learned a lot from Ed Cliff riding on the bus way back in 1962 and '63. So I sort of had a connection there with the chief. I never will forget the day I left to go to Texas. Duncan Giffen was my boss at the time. I don't know if you ever ran into him, but they just had a little reception in my office, you know, coffee and cookies and people came by to wish me well, and in walks old Ed Cliff. He must have spent thirty minutes with me. Now here was the chief spending about thirty minutes with me before I was going to Texas as an assistant ranger. So I always had a soft spot in my heart for Ed. He was a great guy, and I always appreciated him taking time with me as a young professional.

HKS: It would have been tough for me to do what you did. I was so provincial. The idea of going back East--I think I would have resigned from the Forest Service if they had forced me to go to Washington at that age. But you were more adventuresome and you did that.

FDR: It was a great two years. We really enjoyed it. I learned a lot. Duncan Giffen was my boss, and I was in a trainee position, and he spent a lot of time with me. I mean, he took me on as kind of a personal project. He was serious about training and developing this young forester. So I got acquainted with the Washington Office. I got acquainted with the people. The mysteries were solved about Washington, D.C., at an early age. I knew they weren't all they were cranked up to be. I could see decisions made in Washington, how they got made and how they got interpreted on the ground at that time. It was kind of like Kaufman said in his *Forest Ranger* book [Kaufman, Herbert. *The Forest Ranger: A Study in Administrative Behavior*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press for Resources for the Future, 1960], the field people were very observant of what top management wanted and busted their butts to do what top management wanted. So it always impressed me back even in those days and when I first started out that Washington, D.C., decisions weren't as perfect as field people thought.

HKS: I would guess that most people at the forest level never look beyond the regional office, don't even know they're allowed to think about the Washington Office, it's so exotic.

FDR: That assignment more than anything else did demystify Washington, D.C., for me.

HKS: And that was a single position; there weren't ten?

FDR: Just one. There was one guy behind me and then I think they eliminated it. The Forest Service, and probably rightly so, always has to cut budgets, cut people, and this was kind of a luxury to have a trainee position in Washington.

HKS: But it would be fair to say that you were more prominent in the agency than you would be had you not done that, and it probably helped your career.

FDR: Oh, it probably made all the difference in the world because my next assignment in Washington--again, they knew me, and I probably got into another key position because the people knew me and for one reason or another were somewhat impressed with me. So I came back to Washington and worked for some of the same people.

District Ranger

HKS: Are there any experiences as assistant ranger or ranger that you think helped you particularly develop as a Forest Service employee, or is your experience rather typical?

FDR: I would say it was rather typical. When you're down in the ranger district, there are day-to-day matters of dealing with the public and the resource, and it's a great training ground. I sent you a note one day that I was told I was the only ranger that had ever become chief. Did you ever find out if that was true or not?

HKS: We looked. My guess was that Lyle Watts or Ed Cliff would have been rangers.

FDR: Ed had never been a ranger.

HKS: No, and Lyle Watts started out as assistant forest inspector. I don't know when they did away with that, but he was probably one of the last ones, the old concept of inspectors. So you are, as far as we can tell, the only ranger who made chief.

FDR: I'm kind of proud of that, but it kind of startled me when I was told that. I'm glad you checked that out. In response to your question about was there anything in particular about the ranger's job that helped me develop my Forest Service career, the ranger's job is the basic unit, and I think it's important that chiefs kind of understand how things fit together at the ground and how things happen. Forestry is both an art and a science. It's not just a science. You have to compromise a lot and work things out at the local level and things are never kind of straight-line logic. It's kind of important to know that when you're dealing with people and resources on the ground and you're trying to juggle things and make things work.

HKS: We'll talk more about this as we go along. It's my belief, and I want you to comment on it at the proper time, that the Forest Service, because of legislation, is less decentralized than it used to be. There's planning requirements. The district ranger is not as autonomous as the ranger I worked for felt he was at that time. He was an old-time ranger, got out of school in 1930 or something. Been a ranger all of his career, and he ran his own show.

FDR: Where were you?

HKS: I was on the Snoqualmie National Forest.

FDR: Oh, okay. I was on the Deschutes in Oregon, so I didn't know those folks.

HKS: Did you feel autonomous when you were a ranger? Did you feel that decentralization really worked for you?

FDR: Yes. The neat thing about it was that I was a ranger in eastern Oklahoma. My supervisor was over in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The Ouachita National Forest has three ranger districts in Oklahoma. So Oklahoma did not have a supervisor's office, just those three ranger districts, and then they had a grassland way out in western Oklahoma. John Tom Koen was my supervisor. He designated me, and my predecessor too, to be the Oklahoma representative. So as a ranger in Oklahoma I got to go to governor's conferences, go to Stillwater, Oklahoma, where all the USDA agencies had monthly meetings. I got to range over the whole state of Oklahoma as the Forest Service representative, doing the kinds of things that forest supervisors would normally do, and of course, my supervisor did some of that. But it was a kind of a broader ranger's job by being in a big state like Oklahoma and being as a ranger the spokesman for the Forest Service in that whole state. So that was nice. I forgot what question I was trying to answer there.

HKS: I asked the general question about decentralization, how much you ran your own show.

FDR: I felt in charge of my district, although I'd have to say John Tom Koen, my forest supervisor, was kind of a traditional Forest Service guy, and he knew how to manage his rangers. [Laughter] You always knew John Tom was kind of looking over your shoulders there.

HKS: He was southern and used both names, John Tom?

FDR: Yes. John Tom Koen. He was kind of a legend in the Forest Service. His dad was a big Forest Service guy, so he was second generation, and he ended up being assistant regional forester in Region 3 for lands and recreation.

Early Lessons

HKS: You spent some time in Region 6. Is it a whole different Forest Service between the Pacific Northwest and down on the Ouachita when you were there? These are Weeks Law national forests in the East. Does it matter where you are when you work for the agency, the culture and traditions?

FDR: There's a lot of commonality, but then again there's differences. The Toledo Bend Reservoir is a big hundred and eighty thousand acre lake built by the state of Texas and Louisiana on the Sabine River. The Forest Service lost about thirty or forty thousand acres of land to that reservoir. As I recall, I had two big jobs in Texas. One was clearcutting the bottom of that lake that was going to be flooded, and I was a real hit with the timber industry because usually you're out there being very careful about what they do and moving dirt. We were behind schedule and I was saying, just get those trees out of there. I don't care what you do with the land. [Laugher] So between me and the timber industry, we got that land cleared. The other big job which was a big issue in the South was trying to get control of grazing because cattle and even hogs in places had been out on the forest in the South from way before the Forest Service ever came into being in the South. I was kind of on the front line. I made many of the initial contacts to go out to these old guys who had been grazing cattle their whole life on the national forest open range, as had their fathers and grandfathers, and say, look, this is federal land, so we need to get your cattle under permit, and you need to pay a minimum amount for grazing these cattle. And that was tough. I did that as ranger in Oklahoma and as assistant ranger in Texas. Both Texas and Oklahoma were tough states on that. I literally got thrown out of some houses and yelled at and, you know, who in the hell are you, a damn federal bureaucrat down here to tell us we can't run cattle where my pappy and grandpappy grazed these cattle. So that was tough. That probably helped shape my attitude toward adversity and conflict. On a one-to-one personal basis I'd never faced such a tough situation before in trying to tell people that.

HKS: I had assumed that all those battles had been fought and won in the teens and the '20s.

FDR: In the West. See, it wasn't until the 1960's in the South. Well, here's some history. They used to call it the general integrating inspection, GII, of Region 8 by the chief's office back either in the late '50s or early '60s. Westerners with western experience on that team came down, drove around in Region 8, saw all these cattle and I think some hogs, and asked the simple questions, where's the permit for these, where's the allotment, who's the permittee. Region 8 had to say, oh, we don't have any permits for these, these cattle are just out here. A major recommendation from that GII from the chief's office to Region 8 was you've got to get the cattle under permit, under management, under control. And that was a big, tough issue in Region 8. I was one of the guys on the firing line. It's nice for Washington Office folks and regional offices to make these very logical conclusions about policies and programs, but somebody had to go out and tell the sixty-year-old guys you've got to get a permit and you've got to pay for this. And it was tough. I mean, I literally got thrown out of some houses. I got yelled at, screamed at. This was very upsetting for these old-timers.

HKS: Did the congressional delegations mess around too?

FDR: Well, they may have. I was down at the lower level. It never got to me. So in Texas as assistant ranger I was clearcutting about thirty thousand acres to get the land ready for the reservoir and trying to get the cattle under permit, and then we had all these oil wells. I remember when I went to work there the ranger said you get the oil wells and you get

the cows on this district. I had a tough issue there dealing with the oil companies. They were terrible. I mean, we didn't own the mineral rights.

HKS: I was going to ask that.

FDR: The Forest Service did not own the mineral rights, and we had these fly-by-night operators come in drilling wells and making a mess. We had pollution, and the water would run off in the creeks, and salt water in the oil. So I got the oil wells and the cows and that reservoir. I'm trying to get around to answering your question about whether the West was different from the East. Well, those were three issues that occupied my time in Texas. The West, the grazing issue had been dealt with fifty years earlier. Obviously, the culture and the shape of the Forest Service vary.

I made a speech to the Region 3 supervisors in March, and I talked about the behavioral approach to organizational studies where you no longer look at organizations by the organization charts and the policies and the manuals, but you look at what people actually do. The behavior of the people in the organization is basically what the organization is. Of course, that was what Kaufman was trying to do in his study, *The Forest Ranger*. We were one of the first organizations that they took a behavioral approach to study in organization. Kaufman was trying to say what is it that rangers do. I mean, that is the real Forest Service if you can identify what the rangers do. So if you look at what I did in Texas, even though we were the same organization operating under the same manuals and policies and everything, what I did there was altogether different than your question of what did people do in the Northwest. What people did in the Northwest was timber production. At least in those days the majority of the organizational effort was devoted to developing the country, getting roads built, timber harvested, and getting it done in a multiple use way so that you minimize the impact on other resources. Big production job.

I'll always remember the time I went to a national budget meeting. It was the week Nixon resigned, so it would have been twenty-five years ago. The big issue was how to allocate the budget among the various regions. I was there representing Region 6, and I remember that the supervisors, especially from Region 3 and Region 4 and Region 1 and 2, their big concern was we cannot finance our organization. We need money to do the basic job. I finally got up in that meeting and said, well, we have a different perspective. I was supervisor in Region 6 at the time on either the Siuslaw or the Mt. Hood. I said, I don't have a problem financing my organization. That is not a concern of mine. My concern is getting the production job done. Here I was in Region 6, and my primary focus was getting the production job done. The other supervisors, their primary concern was that they couldn't get enough money to finance the basic organization. So again, I'm reflecting on your question about that culture. Region 6 was a hard-charging, production-oriented outfit. In those days, your performance rating depended a lot on whether or not you got your timber sale program done, and probably rightly so at the time. At the time, Oregon was the number one timber producer in the United States, and that was the biggest part of their economy.

HKS: I remember that the Willamette National Forest used to produce more timber than Region 8, something like that.

FDR: Yes.

HKS: There seemed to be evidence that if you went to a district that got it's cut out, it had newer pickups than the ones that didn't.

FDR: To think about your question in that aspect of being the culture of the organization that was under the gun to produce--a production-oriented organization with time schedules and things to get done--as opposed to a culture and a forest where you're just scraping by, you've got the minimum number of people and you're scratching everywhere you can to just get enough funding to keep everybody employed. Different culture, different orientation, different things that drive you when you go to work every morning. That's kind of a digression from your question, but I think that explains a lot.

Oklahoma was probably the toughest place in all of Region 8 to get grazing under control. Oklahoma, and trying to get control of the grazing program because we had some really determined people in Oklahoma that weren't too nice about the grazing. We impounded cattle in Oklahoma. My predecessor had hired a local rancher who had been one of them to be the range technician on this district. I never will forget my first day on the job. I'd come from Texas up to Oklahoma as ranger, and the first guy I met was my range technician, who had been one of those people we were trying to get control of the cattle and get them under permit. I came in and introduced myself. He said can you ride a horse, and I said yes, I can ride a horse. He said do you have a cowboy hat, and I said I don't have a cowboy hat. The next morning I went to work there was a big, nice cowboy hat sitting on my desk. He said do you have cowboy boots, and I said I still have my forester boots. He said I don't want to see you out of this office until you get those cowboy boots on and your hat. He said you come from Texas; I don't know if you know too much about the range business. I said I know quite a bit about the range business. He says we're going to capitalize on your Texas reputation. [Laughter] So my first week on the job, me and this guy Kenneth Rose, who's a great guy, a terrific guy, and who deserves the credit far more than anybody else for getting control of the cattle and the hogs--we had a big hog problem in Oklahoma. He said let's just ride around for two or three days. Get your cowboy boots on and this hat he bought me. So he and I drove around and I met all of these old guys, and some of them, man, they looked tough to me. Kenneth did all the talking. Basically, he said to these guys, look, we've got a new ranger in here, Dale from Texas, look at him. You're going to have to get in line and get your cattle under permit, and you're going to have to pay for this. I just let him do the talking, and I just rode around looking as tough as I could. [Laughter] We did impound some cattle and had the U.S. marshals out.

This one guy, Joe Herbert, he was a tough nut. He was mean. He was defying us and he had his cattle out, so we had the U.S. marshals come and they arrested him, took him up to Muskogee to the U.S. Magistrate, and while he was in Muskogee we rounded up his cattle. There was even a shootout. Well, we had his cattle impounded. This was my predecessor, and he came up and shot the lock off the gate and let his cattle out. But anyway, it was tough. You know, all of these experiences shape a guy. Where you're at in the organization and what issues you're dealing with, and rightly so, dominates what you do, what you think, and how you spend your time, and what your focus is. So those were issues in the East, Texas and Oklahoma, which were somewhat even different than

other parts of Region 8. Region 8, and especially the coastal plain states, was really dealing with this grazing issue. Entirely different set of issues than what the Westerners dealt with in the Northwest and elsewhere, especially the timber folks.

HKS: I was going to ask, I have your dates here, Weyerhaeuser bought out the Dierks in ’69 I think. So the national companies were just coming into the South. Was there an impact on timber management from your experience, or were you just a little bit ahead of that?

FDR: I would have been a little ahead of the Weyerhaeuser folks. I was in eastern Oklahoma, which really has a unique history. Oklahoma didn’t become a state until 1912. It was Indian Territory. The Ouachita National Forest in Arkansas is one of the few public domain national forests in the East, and it still had a lot of timber, big pine trees. The district I was on used to be Choctaw Indian nation, and they had passed some laws to divide up the reservation. It wasn’t a reservation, it was a nation of individual Indians with individual allotments of land. What the Indians did, they just sold it. So the Oklahoma part of the Ouachita National Forest was just clearcut after the Indians sold it to companies in the 1920’s.

When you cross that Oklahoma-Arkansas line you see a very distinct difference in the timber type. Arkansas still had a lot of that old growth, southern pine. Oklahoma was all young second growth, a lot of it in hardwoods that didn’t get regenerated to pine. So I was not in the timber business much in Oklahoma because of that. Twenty-five percent of the receipts from the national forest goes to the local counties. Well, Ouachita National Forest, the bulk of which is in Arkansas, big timber, all the timber revenue mainly was Arkansas, yet they allocate the 25 percent fund based on acres. So I used to brag to my county commissioners I was returning to the county in the 25 percent fund something like four times my total income in Oklahoma. [Laughter] They liked that, and you have to go with what you’ve got going for you. But I was draining all of that money out of the high-income counties from Arkansas over to Oklahoma. I don’t know if the Arkansas people ever realized that was going on, but I did.

HKS: I didn’t know that. I thought the allocation was timber cut in the county and receipts went to that county, but you’re saying within a forest it’s allocated…

FDR: By acres.

HKS: Okay, always something more to learn.

FDR: When I was in Oklahoma as a ranger, I really worked hard on the grazing program and on high recreation use. We did have a timber program, a couple of million board feet and big timber stand improvement crew. But Oklahoma folks, they don’t have much forest, and they’re proud of what they have. So we got heavy recreation use out of Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

HKS: I see that Ed was still chief when you went to Washington. Was he behind that? You’d already been there and people there knew you, but explain how you were picked,

or did you volunteer or what? Do you have more you want to say about being a ranger? I don't want to cut you off.

FDR: No. So how did I get back to Washington?

Management Analyst

FDR: Ed Schultz was the regional forester in Region 8 at the time. During my first tour of duty in D.C. he was the division director for administrative management, and I got well acquainted with him when I was in Washington my first time. They had a GS-13 management analyst position open. My previous assignment back there was as a trainee, so I wasn't a fully functional, full-fledged staff person. I was just hopping around getting a lot of training. But they had this GS-13 management analyst position open in Washington and, of course, it was only four years later and a lot of the same people there that I knew, and they wanted me back. Ed Schultz was a regional forester who I knew very well because he was my boss's boss when I was back there the first time.

HKS: Wasn't Schultz associate chief?

FDR: No. Here's Schultz's progression. When I went to Washington as a trainee, they had a division of administrative management, and he was the director of that. While I was there he got promoted to the position of associate deputy chief for national forests. Then Chet Shields replaced Schultz as the director of administrative management. In the meantime, I transferred to Region 8, and then a little later Schultz came down as the regional forester in Region 8. Then Schultz left the regional forester's job in 8 and moved back to be the deputy chief for national forests, and he was not there long until he had a heart attack and died instantly.

HKS: I heard from McGuire that Schultz was expected to be the next chief but he died. John said he looked around and saw there wasn't anybody else except John to be the next chief.

FDR: I was down in the organization, but Schultz was a terrific guy who was smart and had good judgment. I mean he was all the kinds of things you would look for in a chief. McGuire was probably about right on that. You never know how those things play out, but he died suddenly from a heart attack.

Back To Washington

FDR: Back to your original question. Now this is kind of interesting. I had a Job Corps camp, Hodgin's Job Corps camp on my ranger district. You probably know the Job Corps center directors report as a line officer to the forest supervisor just like a ranger reports. In other words, the Job Corps camp wasn't under my supervision, but I had it on my

district and got the benefit of all the work programs that they had. Well, we had a vacancy on the Job Corps camp. It was a GS-12 center director and I was a GS-11 ranger. So my boss, John Tom Koen, decided he wanted me to move over to be the Job Corps director, but I wasn't jumping up and down with enthusiasm about that. I was enjoying my job as ranger. The center director lived right next to the Job Corps center and it was kind of isolated, and my wife wasn't looking forward to it either. But I was resigned that I was going to move from my ranger's job to be the Job Corps center director.

All of a sudden right in the midst of this I got an offer for this GS-13 management analyst job to go back to Washington, and it made my boss, Koen, mad. I remember him coming out to my house and sitting down with my wife and me. He says, now really Dale, you ought to take this Job Corps center job. But Washington offered me a job back there, so it was kind of a dilemma. I knew the regional forester, Ed Schultz, and he knew me. Koen tried to appeal to the regional forester, let's force Dale into the Job Corps camp director's job rather than letting him go off to some nebulous job in Washington. Ed said, let's let Dale make up his own mind which way he wants to go, and that's how it ended up. My wife and I talked about it. Of course, she'd rather go back to Washington because we liked it back there, rather than going out to the remote area in the Job Corps center. So I decided to go back to Washington over the objection of my forest supervisor. I would have to say that second job in Washington was due to my first job and people knowing me and wanting me in that job. If you look back on my career, that first decision that I made as I came in off the marking crew on Region 6 one day and saw that telegram about a GS-9 management analyst trainee job in Washington being open had a lot to do with my whole career.

HKS: Sure. I know from interviewing other chiefs and deputy chiefs that personnel takes so much of their time, watching people throughout the whole agency. They have to have two or three candidates for each position. So you were put on some kind of a list early in the game, tracked in a way that you wouldn't have been had you stayed you stayed out in Region 6.

FDR: I don't know that I was on a list, but I knew people that were in key jobs and they knew me. Having seen it from the very bottom to the top, it's not like preferential treatment, but there is this thing of exposure and you are tested at each step and you have to kind of pass the test in people's eyes that you're successful and you can handle things. It does provide you the opportunity, but it doesn't guarantee anything if you don't produce and you don't succeed. Going back to Washington was a terrific opportunity, and I succeeded. Some people would have tripped and not succeeded. So it's opportunity plus being able to produce and perform and succeed.

HKS: What does a management analyst do, or does that vary from time to time depending upon the issues?

FDR: It was a great job because you got mixed up in everything in the Forest Service. The whole objective of a management analyst primarily was to improve the efficiency and the management of the Forest Service. We did a lot of organizational studies.

HKS: So it wasn't issue by issue, it was more general?

FDR: I got to deal with things across the board. I had some programs, too, back on that job. You get some terrible jobs because there are some management programs that have to be managed. One of the jobs they gave me when I went to Washington was the personnel ceilings job. Are you familiar with that? You not only allocate dollars but you allocate how many people each organization can have. There were congressional limitations at times, and when there weren't congressional limitations on how many employees the Forest Service could have, the OMB always gave us a ceiling. You can only have so many people. That was a tough job that they gave me; I ended up managing the personnel ceilings job. I had to deal with deputy chiefs because we'd assign number of people by deputy area and number of personnel for each region and each station and State and Private Forestry. That was a point of conflict because people would have money, but we wouldn't let them hire people. I had to negotiate that and manage it and got into some terrible conflicts, but I survived all of that. Again, that was a test of a person, a young guy, you know, a GS-13.

HKS: Were you the only one or was there a bunch of them?

FDR: I was the staff guy handling that. Now when I got into tough negotiations I'd have to call on my boss, who was Russ Cloninger at the time, or Chet Shields, who was the division director. When the going got tough on negotiations--basically telling regional foresters and station research directors and deputy chiefs they couldn't have more people--it was tough, it was bad news, so they would help me out. But I had to do all of the staff work, the allocation of the people, work with their staff people, sometimes working with deputy chiefs. We had what we called in those days assistant regional foresters for operations. They had all the administrative functions. I did have that program and that got me in contact with a lot of people in the Forest Service. I mean, the guy that runs the personnel ceiling program is kind of like the budget officer except it's for people. Everybody knows them. I got well acquainted throughout the Forest Service, and plus I got to do some organizational studies. I got involved in some of the reorganizations of the regions and the national forests, got to travel around and be a part of those teams.

HKS: Seems like that experience was especially useful to you when you were chief.

FDR: Oh, it was.

HKS: You came out with a knowledge of the agency that most people don't have.

FDR: Exactly. I think if you interview a lot of people they would say I knew as much or more about how things worked in the Forest Service than probably any of the other chiefs.

HKS: That was just about the time that the hiring of more blacks and so forth was well under way. Was that a part of your job to deal with that issue of personnel ceilings?

Graduate School in Public Administration

FDR: No, I was in this job from 1968 to 1972. In '72 I moved to Oregon as the deputy supervisor of the Mt. Hood. I was in that position in the Washington Office for four years. Let me go through those four years for you. In direct answer to your question, diversity and hiring of minorities was just beginning to become a priority, and as I recall, it didn't back into my personnel ceiling that much that I was managing at the time. But I was there four years. Remember, I had gone to American University my first two years in Washington and started out a program to get a master's degree in public administration. With a forestry background and with a degree in forestry, which is primarily technical and scientific, there was something called deficiency courses that you had to take before you could even get into a master's degree for public administration. So I'd worked out all of my deficiency courses in my two years that I'd been there way back in the beginning, and I'd had a couple of graduate courses that I got worked into. I worked a year in 1968 and 1969 in that management analyst job, and then my boss and Chet Shields, both my boss and my boss's boss, said you know, we got you started on this degree in public administration, how about just taking off for a year or nine months and finishing it up full-time. I said well, that sounds pretty good to me. So my second year in Washington I went to school full-time. I did it in nine months because I had all my deficiency courses out of the way and a couple of courses done. In the fall of '69 I went back and enrolled full-time in American University, and in 1970 got a master's degree in public administration.

HKS: The Federal Employees Training Act was still in force at that time.

FDR: Yes, and I got full salary and all my expenses paid. It was just like being on the job except I was going to school. But I'd narrowed it down where I could get it done in nine months. Chet Shields was a big promoter of that. In the beginning the Forest Service selected their top people to go to Harvard to get a master's degree in public administration, and two of the first people who did that were Chet Shields, who was my boss's boss at the time, and Max Peterson. They were two of the first Forest Service graduates out of Harvard with public administration degrees. So there I was with Chet Shields, who was really an advocate of that, being my boss's boss and just across the hall from me. I think he had a big influence. Chet and my boss, Russ Cloninger, came to me with the offer why don't you go to school for a year. So I did. I got a master's in public administration from American University. That was right at the height of the Vietnam War, and you may have been on the college campuses then, too.

HKS: I was a grad student in '69, so I experienced some of that.

FDR: The campus was in an uproar over Vietnam, and when we invaded Cambodia the campus just erupted. I got tear gassed twice that year, not being a participant in it but just as an observer. I figured that was part of my education. [Laughter] See what was going on. One day I walked out of the library and there was this big group of students and a lot of chanting and hollering. I walked over to get in the middle of it and see what was going on. I looked across the street and there were DC policemen shoulder to shoulder for, I don't know, must have been thirty or fifty yards of them, and some of them were two and

three deep. It looked kind of harmless to me. I'd never been in that situation before, but all of a sudden the students started in a coordinated way throwing bottles and stuff over at the DC policemen. No sooner had those bottles hit the policemen than the tear gas bombs were lobbed back at us. [Laughter] So I got tear gassed that day. There were all kinds of bomb threats. I remember one night, due to a bomb threat it was so disruptive to our classes finally the professor just says we're going out under the streetlights and finish our class. So here we were out under the streetlights finishing our class that night due to the bomb threats.

I'm digressing a lot, if that's okay. I really think that was a very useful time to go to school because it was obvious the young people were setting off a whole new way of thinking about this country and how they were ignoring what had gone on up to that point as kind of off-base, not right, and trying to set us on a new course which you'd have to say has been fairly successful. Here was a turning moment in my life in terms of my thinking. I was taking this course in organizational behavior with a wonderful professor, and there must have been about twenty of us in class, which was a nice small class. It was in Washington, D.C., and the military was sending back these military officers, colonels, from Vietnam and they were rotating them in and out about every twelve months. They didn't know what to do with all these colonels when they got them back to the States. What did they do? They sent a lot of them to school. So the makeup of my class was me as a civilian and about three or four military officers who had come back from Vietnam and who had been sent to school to get a master's in public administration. The rest of the class was these young people who were very rebellious and had change on their mind and revolt. So it kind of made a nice discussion group.

We had this class in organizational behavior. In the '50s they came out with the behavioral approach to studying organizations. Up until the '50s organizational studies were very dry and boring and irrelevant because they'd look at organization charts, how policies were made, and boring stuff that was totally irrelevant. There was a guy, I forget his name now, who wrote a key book on the behavioral approach to organizations. Basically, he was saying that how we studied organizations before is irrelevant, and what you need to do is look at behavior of the organization, what people do, what motivates people, what causes them to do what they do, and how management influences behavior. That whole new behavioral approach to organizations set off a whole series of books on individual organizations, a behavioral approach to the study of the organization. Fortunately, the Forest Service was one of the very first to be studied.

This whole class the whole semester was to read these books that had come out since the 50's on the behavioral approach of organizations, and by that time there were fifteen or twenty of them. Now, there's thousands of them I guess. But this whole class oriented around reading one of these books a week and spending three hours discussing it. Well, guess what book came up about week two or three, *The Forest Ranger*. Even at that point I had read *The Forest Ranger*, I had been a forest ranger. I was kind of proud of the Forest Service, you know. Right on, the Forest Service had it all put together. Well, we went to class that night, and I was really looking forward to this discussion. Somewhere it came out, I said I'm an ex-forest ranger. The whole class centered on me, and you cannot believe the negative comments from these fifteen or so young people, my classmates, about the Forest Service. Such remarks, how could you work for such a stifling,

militaristic organization. The Forest Service is nothing but an organization that manipulates these poor rangers out there and what they do. You don't give them room for creativity. You don't let them be themselves.

HKS: This opinion was based upon reading Kaufman?

FDR: Yes, reading Kaufman. And Kaufman's book does orient how the Forest Service controls its rangers to get them to do what the Forest Service hierarchy wants them to do. And this was almost unanimous, we would never work for the Forest Service. That is an outfit that is too militaristic, too manipulative of their people, does not let us operate as an individual. It was a negative session, totally negative on the Forest Service. Nobody in that class except me and these two or three ex-military people who came to my defense somewhat--the class walked out, thumbs down on the Forest Service. They wouldn't even go to them for an interview for a job. The Forest Service would be their last choice for an organization to work for, based on Kaufman's book. Remember this is the group of people that in 1969 was anti-establishment, anti-organization, anti-traditions, and the things that the older people held dear to their heart. I came out of this saying whoa! Something isn't right here. I mean, I was smart enough in 1969 to know that we were going to be recruiting these people. You can't get away from the fact young people are the future of this country and the future of our organizations, and that really set me back on my heels. I said I've got to rethink. I had two choices, one that these are a bunch of hothead young people that are anti-establishment and they're overreacting, they don't know what they're talking about, or these are people that are going to be future leaders of this country and they may moderate over time but they are operating with a different set of assumptions than what we traditional Forest Service people, including top management, are operating under today.

HKS: So the issues weren't ever clearcutting or anything; it was just working for the agency itself was bad.

FDR: They got completely turned off by Kaufman's description of how the Forest Service, in their minds, manipulated the rangers so that they would act and behave in line with the desires of top management. That is a basic conclusion. Kaufman says the Forest Service was very efficient because the actions of the rangers are in line with the desires and direction of top management.

HKS: I had heard that Rex Ressler was one of the rangers that…

FDR: And so was Chet Shields.

HKS: Oh, is that right?

FDR: Yes. So that was one of those defining moments in my life. I was on the defensive. I was trying to defend the Forest Service. I had two or three military officers in my class that were pitching in to help me, but the professor kind of threw in with the young people. Now, he was just kind of stimulating discussion because he thought it was one of the best classes that we had, and it was. Looking back on it, we were dealing with the cultural issues of this country at that time of what organizations are facing and how do

you control the organization but at the same time how do you free up creativity and innovation and individuals to express their individualities and all of that. So it was quite an experience. But I always remembered that, and because of that one night's discussion I always had very clear focus in my mind of trying to balance management and control of the organization side by side with freedom, individuality, creativity, innovation, to try to kind of strike a reasonable balance because you can't go all one way or the other way.

HKS: We might come back to this when we're talking about the *Inner Voice* and other cultural change issues.

FDR: I would say the *Inner Voice* folks are kind of the third or fourth generation of what I was facing there in American University in that class. I kind of diverged there on you, but that was one of my four years in Washington, D.C. Seems like your question was what did I do during that four years as a management analyst.

Forest Supervisor

HKS: My guess from looking at your resume is that they had plans for you but you needed more seasoning, so they sent you out to be a supervisor. Do you agree with that? How did you get to be a supervisor of the Mount Hood, or was the Siuslaw first?

FDR: Siuslaw. It was my own desire to be a forest supervisor. I was very deeply involved in the administrative management aspects of the Forest Service during those four years. I loved to be a ranger, I loved resource management, and so it was my desire to be a supervisor. Now, that may have matched up with some of my superiors' view of things too, as you point out, to get me some more experience. But it was my desire to go back to the forest. So I got on the roster to be a forest supervisor.

HKS: You do this by saying, "I want to be on the roster?"

FDR: Yes. Back in those days they had what they called a 6100-10 personnel form, and you got rated. Anybody could express their desire for any kind of a position in the Forest Service and be rated as a candidate for that position. There were triple As, ABAs, triple Bs. You got rated on your experience and they had a whole host of other factors--your personality, your track record, your initiative, your creativity, your managerial skills, and those things. So those two combined. You'd get an A or B or C on your qualifications and then an A or B or C on your experience, and that got combined into A, B, C. That was the mechanics of the thing. So anybody could say they wanted to be a forest supervisor if they met the educational requirements, but then you got rated A or B or C on your qualifications and experience which then determined whether you got into the competitive group. So anyway, I said I want to be a forest supervisor, and I got rated triple A. Then I got into that group that forest supervisors were being selected from.

HKS: Did you have any choice over regions?

FDR: No, under the old system, if you said you wanted to be forest supervisor you basically said I'm willing to take a supervisor's job anywhere there's an opening.

HKS: Part of the Kaufman business that the Forest Service runs your life for you.

FDR: Yes. Now things are wide open. In fact, due to criticism of that old system which worked very functionally, now all jobs are advertised and anybody that meets the minimum requirements can apply and then they select from the applicants. So now you can be selective on which jobs you want to apply for, but in those days you applied for supervisor and that meant if you weren't willing to go to some of the supervisor jobs in those days it would probably be a disqualifying factor.

HKS: The folklore when I was on a district was you could turn down one promotion and that was it if you had reason. But you turn down two, you stayed there the rest of your life. Now that may not have been literally true, but everyone believed it, and you're saying it's probably the way it worked.

FDR: Well, in those days it would have been disloyal to say I'm willing to go to the supervisor's job in Mount Hood but I'm not willing to go to say the Coconino in Arizona. They'd say that there's something wrong with this person, he doesn't really want to be a supervisor or he'd go any place we wanted him. So my name started going out for GS-14 supervisors jobs and, of course, at that time there were some 15 supervisors, and the deputies were 14, so what I was really applying for was GS-14 jobs as supervisor or deputy supervisor.

HKS: You jumped two GS ratings when you went back to Washington but that's not common, right? I mean, isn't it pretty hard when you're a 13 to jump to a 15?

FDR: No, I was a GS-11 ranger and I went into a GS-13 job, but they underfilled it so I had to spend a year at a GS-12 and then I went to a GS-13. You can't jump, but you can underfill a job.

HKS: Okay.

FDR: They underfilled that job in the Washington Office in order to get me in it. My name started going out, and it wasn't long until it went to Region 6. Being back in Washington, I kind of knew what was going on, so I knew more than say most applicants. The Fremont National Forest was open in Lakeview, Oregon. Well, it looked like I was going to go to the Fremont. I don't know if you're familiar with the Fremont but it's one of the more remote national forests. Then they started juggling people around out in Region 6, and they decided to send the GS-14 deputy on the Mount Hood to the Fremont. Then they selected me to fill in behind him as the GS-14 deputy on the Mount Hood. I was there for a year and then moved to the Siuslaw as forest supervisor. The Siuslaw is in Corvallis.

HKS: Corvallis, so that's a good town to be in?

FDR: Yes, oh yes.

The Clearcutting Issue

HKS: All right. Let's see, the dates that clearcutting was becoming controversial, Monongahela and so forth, you were at a distance looking back East. How did you feel about the issues? You're now in a big timber forest.

FDR: Yes, and it was just common wisdom in Region 6 in the Doug-fir region you couldn't do anything but clearcut. Clearcutting in the west side Region 6 was so deeply, I mean it was the wisdom of the forestry profession that's the only way you could deal with the Douglas fir. In my view now, Region 6 was not as sensitive even to the Monongahela situation as they should have been. It was just gospel and wisdom. The forestry schools, too, that's all they taught. There's just one way to manage the Douglas-fir forest and that's clearcut, burn, and plant.

HKS: That's right.

FDR: I don't really think the Monongahela thing really impacted Region 6's thinking that much. Now ponderosa pine, that's a different story because a lot of the ponderosa pine was selectively managed, always has been. But even they got into clearcutting in ponderosa pine as well. Since you're mentioning clearcutting if you want to digress here, I don't know how structured you want this.

HKS: We can put things together as needed.

FDR: You know, looking back on it, and as chief I was finally the guy that said we're going to quit clearcutting. We had the Monongahela thing and then we had the National Forest Management Act. The wording in that act, which taken literally, Congress thought they had put an end to clearcutting at least in a massive way. But then the Forest Service and timber industry got in there piddling around with the wording of the National Forest Management Act; the National Forest Management Act says the Forest Service won't do clearcutting, and then it has the qualifier, unless it promotes overall multiple use management or something to that effect. Well, the Forest Service took the maximum advantage of that exception, and I think looking back that was one of the misjudgments the Forest Service made on clearcutting in that they tend to emphasize the exception rather than dealing with the issue, which was uppermost in the minds of a lot of the Congress and the people thinking that clearcutting is bad forestry, it's bad management, it's ruining the land. We foresters all know the story, but clearcutting just did not sell to the American people. The Forest Service missed an opportunity in implementing the National Forest Management Act to emphasize the limitations on clearcutting rather than emphasize the exceptions. And so we continued that controversy to the point that it just got unbearable.

HKS: It's hard to go back and replay the tapes the other way when McGuire was chief, but does a chief have the ability to buck the industry and Congress in 1976 to put a

different interpretation on that act, or was that the only realistic way the Forest Service could behave?

FDR: The Forest Service, in my opinion, had a choice there. That was a major juncture and point in time, which could have gone this way or that way, and it wasn't just McGuire. I think McGuire was going along with the collective judgment of us group of foresters that says eliminating clearcutting is not necessary.

HKS: I have this perception that industry has these people in Congress, Mark Hatfield as an example, and Hatfield would have been all over the agency. My gut feeling is industry would have been upset with this.

FDR: Well, they would have, but there was Senator Bumpers from Arkansas that got it put in there. I mean about the clearcutting, and he was unhappy the other way. The Forest Service had a choice. It was controversial and environmental groups probably weren't on top of that to create the controversy so much at the time to force it the other way, but industry and the Forest Service went this way on it whereas it could have gone the other. The other thing here is the science wasn't there. I mean we had perfected clearcutting, burn, and planting in the Doug-fir region. I mean we had almost gotten that down to an exact science. It wasn't until we started this ecosystem management, which started out as New Perspectives under my tenure, that we even started thinking about alternative ways of managing these forests. At the time the decision was made research thinking had not progressed to the point of what are some alternative ways of managing this timber resource other than clearcut and burn and plant. So if the Forest Service had gone the other way, it would have been a helluva challenge, not only controversial but what do we do? It would have been a brave decision to step into kind of the unknown world if you're still going to produce timber.

HKS: I've got a background in forestry. I've always felt that one of the weaknesses is that foresters felt that clearcutting wasn't the problem, public ignorance was the problem.

FDR: Exactly.

HKS: If the public just understood it then they would be supportive of clearcutting. I don't know if foresters still make that claim, but there's not a whole lot of evidence out there that the public is ever going to agree that it's a good thing.

FDR: When I was chief I had decided in my own mind I had to get out of the clearcutting business. I knew that was going to be controversial with the Republican administration who listened to the timber industry. And I remember going to Grey Towers six months or a year before we announced the end of clearcutting as a standard. The clearcutting decision was that we would no longer use clearcutting as a standard prescription for harvesting timber. There would always be some exceptions, and you need some exceptions, but it wouldn't be a standard way, which it was up until that point. I remember telling this story to the RF & D's in Grey Towers. I said I read a story about dog food the other day. This company produced the best looking dog food and they packaged it wonderful and they were trying to market it through the stores but it just wasn't selling. So the president of the company called all the people in and asked what is

wrong, we've got this best dog food and it's wonderful stuff and you guys aren't doing your job in selling this dog food. One of the salesmen spoke up and said well, Mr. President, the damn dogs don't like the food. They won't eat it. And I related that to clearcutting. I said we are standing here saying as professional foresters this is beautiful, it's the way to go, it's what needs to be done, why aren't you selling clearcutting. I said the people don't like it, and we've got to reflect that in our thinking. I said we've tried to run this thing too long and we've tried too many ways over such a long period of time. We are not going to sell clearcutting to the American public. We've got to figure out a different way to approach managing the timber resource on the national forests.

My dog food story caught on in the Forest Service, and I'd get feedback from it every once in awhile. In my mind it was never a question after I had been chief for a year or so of whether we were going to get out of clearcutting or not. It was how could I work that decision through the system, even the forestry schools. The forestry school deans meet once in awhile, and after I announced the clearcutting decision a Stephen F. Austin professor made a plea with the forestry school deans. Fortunately some of the forestry school deans came to my defense. Some thought we've got to get rid of this chief, he's abandoned scientific forestry. We can't have a chief that's abandoned scientific forestry. The Stephen F. Austin professor was saying I was abandoning scientific forestry. Even in that group some hadn't gotten the message. Some of them had but others hadn't. The Stephen F. Austin guy organized a big meeting down in Texas and brought all the forestry school deans from the South to have a confrontation with me. So I went down, you know, and it was just me and the deans, and I laid out my case on why I decided what I decided. I think he was expecting the deans to really come down hard on me, but I was so proud of them. There were about three or four deans including the guy from Texas A&M who were saying you know, the chief is right on, we've got to make some changes. And the end result of that two-day meeting at that little camp where the Stephen F. Austin guy had organized the meeting was that there were about three or four deans who were saying you're right on, we need to move with you, chief, and the others were kind of in the middle. So the meeting turned out almost the opposite of how the guy from Stephen F. Austin had intended. I think his agenda had been to send the chief back to the D.C. with a message from the deans he's off on the wrong track. It did not turn out that way.

HKS: We know that the deans get together at least once a year. It would seem that this wasn't an issue that they discussed, otherwise that person wouldn't have been as isolated, wouldn't have been surprised by how it turned out.

FDR: Yes. In fact, there were two or three deans. I remember especially the guy from Texas A&M really came on, and it was kind of nice he was from Texas with Stephen F. Austin being in Texas, too. He really came on strong that we've got to make some changes our schools in our training of young people.

HKS: The SAF had a referendum about 1960. As I recall, there were about seventeen hundred who voted out of fifteen or twenty thousand members. It was on forestry education, should they teach what was then called multiple use education as opposed to the traditional timber core. It was portrayed as multiple use being kind of off on the fringe. The vote was about ten to one against multiple use education, in part because

there wasn't enough time in four years. Forestry has used that four-year limitation as an excuse for deficiencies for a long time. It takes five years to teach forestry, but no one will do that. At that moment Henry Vaux was dean at Berkeley. He said the public will be confused by this vote but their perception of what forestry is, is more than application and silviculture. He was very prophetic. There was an opportunity forestry had, and they missed it. There's probably others, too, and they're still scrambling to catch up on terms of forestry education.

FDR: The end result of all of that is, at least on the public land, the foresters are no longer calling the shots on the basic direction and management of the forest. We've lost a lot in terms of influence on decisions that are being made in the natural resource arena.

HKS: Going back to these SAF studies on education, starting in the '20s and continuing study after study well up until the '60s, one of the major problems forestry faces is the academic quality of people who go into forestry. Some very, very bright, capable people go into forestry, but most go to forestry because they don't want to be bookish, sit behind desks, deal with policy issues, and the environmentalists just cleaned them up.

At that Grey Towers meeting where you talked about ending clearcutting, do you recall what reaction you got from the regional foresters, especially 1, 5, and 6 where timber is important? Did they nudge each other and wink, or what do you think they were thinking?

FDR: You'd have to ask them but I think they were sympathetic to my view but didn't know how to work the decision through the policy process and make it stick.

HKS: How do you deal with a Walt Lund type there in Portland who ran timber management for a long time? I believe he fully accepted clearcutting as a proper silvicultural practice, and unless you remove him from a job, how do you change? I don't want to beat up on Walt Lund, but he comes to mind. The difficulty of making a change when you've got real people out there--and that's what you were talking about with your experience in graduate school, your cultural changes--you have people on line that aren't going to change or won't be enthusiastic about it.

FDR: Well, I had a strategy which I worked over time. First of all, you just can't tell people to stop breathing without giving them an alternative. So you had to work on the alternatives first. I had that grand scheme in my mind; we came out with New Perspectives, which was a pilot test. You're familiar with that. That looked at alternative ways of managing the forest, and then ecosystem management helped and the Endangered Species Act helped. We did do on a pilot basis some alternatives to clearcutting so that people could kind of see yes, there is a future here without clearcutting. To make such a major change in thinking you had to go at it on a stage by stage basis providing people alternatives at each step of the way. In the southern pine we always had options, but even there clearcutting, even-age management infiltrated the southern pine region to the point it was gospel down there too. But once you got alternatives so that you don't sound like some preservationist that just wants to shut down timber harvesting so that you can come across we're still in the timber management business as a part of the overall forest management and there's ways to do that. It took us

a long time to get to that point. But you could not go to Walt Lund and a lot of other people in the Forest Service and just say shut down clearcutting. They'd say well, now what do I do. You want me to shut the timber program down. You got to provide alternatives and you got to kind of have a grand scheme and start moving the change through the system in a logical way with a lot of people out here that's impatient with your progress.

HKS: Are there other experiences as forest supervisor that you think changed the way you looked at the world when you were chief?

FDR: The Siuslaw is in the Oregon coast range. From the timber standpoint it is about the most productive timber growing forest in the country. But it's rugged and unstable country, steep slopes. The Forest Service used the clearcut, burn, and plant standard prescription on the Siuslaw. You clearcut the Doug fir, burn it, plant it, and then you spray all the brush with herbicides about two or three times until you got the Doug-fir going. I mean, we had that down to an exact science. From a professional forester's point of view, in timber production we got as good as you could get on the Siuslaw. We were doing a great job. Now some side effects of that unstable country, we were having to build roads in this steep, 70 percent slope country, and we were having lots of landslides. The other thing, the Siuslaw was the most productive salmon producing forest in the lower 48, so we had all these salmon streams. I was kind of new to Region 6. I was new and fortunately we had a new regional forester, too, Ted Schlapfer, who came from Region 8 and replaced Rex. But I could see in Region 6 that folks were just kind of willing to accept that tradeoff of these landslides and screwing up the salmon streams. The fish and game department was just all over our back complaining. Some of the environmental groups were beginning to complain. So I decided just to take on that landslide issue and the road building.

HKS: Was that faulty engineering or just the price you paid if you built a road in there?

FDR: That was just the price you paid. We had the engineering down to the ultimate in terms of technical aspects of building roads. We were just building roads in unstable country, and we'd get the rainfall over a hundred inches and we'd get these major storms come through and the land would get saturated. There were even landslides when there were no roads built. I mean you'd just see them out in the forest because it was so steep.

HKS: And there wasn't any technology, balloons, helicopters?

FDR: Well, we were experimenting. We had a big experimental program there where we went into some of our toughest country, and we did some helicopter logging, and we did some balloon logging, and then everything was skyline. We were the ultimate. The Siuslaw was absolutely ultimate in logging, technology, road building, and the practice of forestry. But in spite of all that the toughness of the terrain was bigger than all the technology we had because we were having a lot of landslides and screwing up a lot of salmon streams. So that became a big issue. I was kind of the first guy in Region 6 who said we've done all we can do technically and we better stop some of this. Of course, that created big headlines in the paper. Ted Schlapfer was a pretty brave guy, but he called me up and said what are you doing down there. I thought I was just making a logical

decision. I'd go out on the ground and see, and then the fish and game folks were coming down on us hard. So that was a big issue, and I actually pulled some sales, reengineered some roads, cancelled some roads when I finally got the people in sitting down eyeball to eyeball talking saying yes, we know in advance this road's going to fail, it's just a matter of time in spite of the fact we've done everything we know to do. So I cancelled some sales. I modified some existing contracts. I didn't go out and cancel existing sales but some sales on the drawing board. Cancelled some roads. It was a lot bigger news in Region 6 than I thought it would be; I thought I was just making some reasonable decisions.

HKS: There are O & C lands in the Siuslaw?

FDR: Yes.

HKS: Was the BLM sensitive to those issues, because they're pretty much a timber sale organization there.

FDR: They were looking at me with a suspicious eye, although the Siuslaw had the toughest country. They've got some tough country, too, but it was not as tough as our country. It's geologically young country and it's still moving.

HKS: So literally the decision was take the timber or not take the timber, but if you take the timber you're going to have erosion?

FDR: Yes. We were accepting that tradeoff as a cost of doing business. I was still committed to the timber program, but I fell short of my target a little bit, which was kind of unheard of.

HKS: Did you ever think about the need to reduce the allowable cut on that forest to take the pressure away, or is that unthinkable at that time period?

FDR: The south end of the forest was just treacherous. Even when Charlie Connaughton was regional forester out there they decided that the south end of it was just too treacherous geologically to harvest timber. To go back in history, we had the Columbus Day storm out there. Remember that?

HKS: Yes. I lived in Portland at the time.

FDR: We had massive blow down in the coast range, and the Forest Service had gone in there on a kind of emergency basis and put in a lot of roads. They had salvaged that blow down from the Columbus Day storm, and the south end of the Siuslaw as a result became a disaster area. They weren't well-engineered roads, and it was an emergency, and the country just kind of fell apart. Even Charlie Connaughton when he was regional forester said I'm going to put a moratorium on the south end of the Siuslaw Forest on timber sales. But what did Charlie do? He did not reduce the allowable cut. So I was doubling up. In the south end I had a moratorium, no timber sales, but I was doubling up on the rest of the Siuslaw to make up for it because we never reduced the allowable cut. It was complicating matters, and the difference between the moratorium area and where we

were cutting was just a matter of degree. Looking back, Charlie Connaughton, the regional forester, and the supervisor should have just stood up and said if we can't log the south 20 percent of the Siuslaw, we're going to reduce the allowable cut accordingly. But that wasn't in the thinking. So here we were doubling up. It wasn't a problem of available timber, I mean the Siuslaw was a tree factory really. But I was the first guy that said, wait we're not going to do some of this, and that created quite a stir in Region 6 among my colleagues. My career could have gone down the tubes right there.

HKS: I was going to say it didn't destroy your career.

FDR: Ted Schlapfer was the new regional forester. I was the new supervisor. Industry kind of came down hard on him. He talked to me, he said are you sure you know what you're doing down there, Robertson. I said Ted, you just got to come down and look at this. You cannot look at this objectively and say we don't need to make a change. So Ted stood behind me, but he got nervous a little at times.

HKS: Maybe that's why you went to the Mount Hood, get you out of there.

Workforce Diversification/Ecosystem Management

FDR: I was only there a little over two years, and then my old boss on the Mount Hood retired. They selected me to go up there. It was a GS-15 forest and the Siuslaw was a GS-14, so I got another promotion to go up there. It was a rough and tough two years on the Siuslaw. Even then we diversified the Forest Service in terms of professions and we later then started diversifying it with minorities. But the turmoil was beginning to boil even at the local level because we had landscape architects, soil scientists, wildlife biologists. Siuslaw had a fisheries biologist so the organization was beginning to diversify, and even when I was supervisor I had a lot of support among those other professions in some of the changes I was making, even though the old line foresters were beginning to wonder what kind of a guy we have here. Line officers are key people, but what's underneath them and the thinking of the group of employees was beginning to turn just because we had diversified in terms of professions even at that time. Today in the Forest Service, and I've been out of it for going on six years, but even our chief is a fisheries biologist. I'd say it's these other professions that are influencing things more today than the forester is.

That was one of the things Kaufman talked about in his book. He said basically the Forest Service was a forester, engineering organization with a smattering of these other folks, but it was clear to Kaufman who was running the show; it was the foresters and there were a lot of conflicts. I told the supervisors this the other day in Region 3. I said you've got the toughest management job any generation of Forest Service managers ever had. I said we look back on the old Forest Service as having it all together and doing a great management job but there's evidence even the foresters and the engineers couldn't get along very well. The old Forest Service didn't do a commendable job of integrating foresters and engineers. Think of your job today of trying to integrate all of these professions. An integration of professions does not come easy. Integration of minorities is a lot easier and women is a lot easier task than integrating professions because they come

up with different training, different ways of thinking, and every profession thinks their way should be the centerpiece.

HKS: That is tough. Some of this difficulty must start at the university level. Were the universities responding to this change? They turn out the people the Forest Service hires.

FDR: I had a lot of discussions. I had a good relationship with the forestry deans except some of them, like the guy at Stephen F. Austin who thought I was abandoning scientific forestry. You always have a framework that shapes the flow of things. It's kind of like the river determines the flow of the water. In making a decision or deciding how things are going to go, you decide the framework, the basic framework, you're going to use. And for most of the history of the Forest Service the foresters' framework was the river, the model, the line of thinking that was used to make decisions with the other professions, with the side streams coming in. We'll modify a little here and modify over there to reflect fisheries or wildlife or range. The forestry model, I believe, is no longer the main line of thinking.

In the Forest Service, now you've got all of these other professions that have different models or ways of thinking, and that's probably governing the Forest Service right now to a large degree, if not entirely. The Forest Service--and I'm talking about the Forest Service in kind of the genetic way--we hung on to the traditional multiple use management concept as the means to resolve this difference longer than we should have. We almost deceived ourselves there for I think a few years that sure we've got this conflict, we've got these different disciplines with different ideas about the management of the forest, but that all comes together under the umbrella of multiple use management and all will be well. I mean that was the mentality of the Forest Service for many years and during that period of time that I'm talking about me being forest supervisor and even probably chief.

There was a startling thing that blew that myth out of the water for me when I was associate chief. We had a college professor (I've forgotten his name, he's well known in the Forest Service) who had done a study on the attitudes and feelings of the wildlife biologists in the Forest Service and I think in Region 4 and maybe some other regions. This was a confidential questionnaire to the wildlife biologists. He felt impelled, thank goodness, to come in. He says Dale, I need to talk to you. I need to give you the real feel for where your wildlife biologists are coming from in their thinking on this confidential questionnaire he had designed and had all the wildlife biologists to answer. He says I've got to tell you, your wildlife biologists are not buying into your multiple use management concept. Down deep they feel that they are having to compromise too much under your multiple use management concept, and you have unhappy wildlife biologists. They are feeling they are not being true to their profession and that they're just modifying things along the edges here rather than practicing their true profession. He said this means trouble for the multiple use management concept when you get down to the real feelings of your wildlife biologists, and they should be the ones that are the closest to the foresters. There's a big overlap between wildlife management and forest management or timber management. He set me back and got me thinking, you know, as great as the multiple use management concept is and it's the law, it is smoothing over a lot of

conflicts and making things look a lot cleaner than what it really is if you pay attention to your specialists out there.

HKS: Well, this is my theory. The core problem was you couldn't have multiple use without timber. National parks have a lot of uses, but they're considered single use because they don't have timber. But that's the foresters' culture. The silviculture based education that we all had, you can't not have timber harvesting and practice forestry. The manipulation of the habitat; I mean, timber was the solution to every issue, and that's sort of run out of steam in modern times.

FDR: Yes. Ecosystem management is the new framework for the Forest Service which is much broader and it provides a lot more flexibility and opportunity for all disciplines to participate. Whereas the old multiple use management was, like you say, largely timber driven when you had a timber forest. The Forest Service didn't know it at the time, but we were planting the seeds for the destruction of the multiple use management concept, and I'm talking about the concept we had in our mind for how to manage the forest. I mean, we were sowing the seeds when we hired all of these other professions. You cannot hire these other professions--fisheries biologists, wildlife biologists, landscape architects, soil scientists, hydrologists, I mean we've got all kinds of ologists--and then over time expect them to become quasi foresters thinking like foresters.

HKS: Part of the shift that started with NEPA; now these other disciplines were no longer advisors, they had to actually sign off on the document. That forced a rethinking, but I'm sure it takes a while. The act starts in 1970, probably in the mid-seventies before the Forest Service really starts taking it "seriously" that the wildlife biologists must sign off on this plan. It's no longer asking what he thinks. If he doesn't agree with it the process stops. So a lot of this was happening.

FDR: It was a movement in the country, and the Forest Service was getting with the movement by hiring these people. I mean you have to have an interdisciplinary approach to things. Maybe some people were, but I don't think we ever really played out in our minds how that was all going to end. The seeds for change were in NEPA and interdisciplinary recruiting and these sorts of things and the unhappiness of wildlife biologists and other specialists. It would scare the old-timers if you had a fisheries biologist as the chief of the Forest Service. I mean that was a forester's job. Now we even have the fisheries biologist as chief.

HKS: It was always in the mind of the Society of American Foresters that every state forester had to be a graduate of an accredited forestry school. That was part of the whole momentum. Let me ask you this, at this time in the mid-seventies when the agency was hiring more of these disciplines, were the schools turning out qualified wildlife biologists, qualified to actually go out and make decisions? I mean, where did you find qualified people in the other disciplines.

FDR: Oh, they were turning them out. They were producing wildlife biologists and these other people and there was a high demand for them. It was a competitive recruiting. There was even competitive recruiting among the national forests, going after the best. With foresters, you brought them along and they were trained and you kind of had an

apprenticeship period before you really moved into an operating job. It was a kind of culture of training and developing foresters, but all of a sudden you brought recent college graduates without an apprenticeship on the job and you had to throw them right in with the mature, well trained, well experienced foresters to do these NEPA documents. That was a tough thing, you know, these old gray-haired foresters having to deal with not only somebody with a different discipline but a recent college graduate that had no experience. We treated recent college graduates almost like journeymen when they came out of school. They weren't ready for it, which was a disservice to these folks, but there was no other option.

HKS: Being fresh out of forestry school and working for the Forest Service, you kind of watched and didn't say a whole lot if you were working for an old-timer because you'd say all these silly things. I was always surprised when I went out into the field to find that what I had learned in school actually was the way it was done out in the real world.

FDR: So this meshing of all the many professions has not come easy for the Forest Service. But, you know, under the circumstances I think the Forest Service has done about as well as could have been done. It was just a humongous task that has not been easy.

HKS: Are there more supervisor experiences that you feel are formative? Some of the things you're saying surprise me. I didn't know that the state fish and game were on your case in the Siuslaw because you were screwing up the streams and that the agency was not responsive to this. That's contrary to the very limited experience that I had. We worried a lot about getting junk in the water, but it was always the private lands on the national forest that were the problem. Here it was all national forests.

FDR: No, no, remember there was the Olympic National Forest, the Siuslaw, and the Siskyou. Those three were having the big problem. It was those coastal range forests.

HKS: The coastal.

FDR: I don't want to mislead you that the problems in the Siuslaw were something that was generic throughout the whole Forest Service.

HKS: They were exceptional there?

FDR: You had these three forests in Region 6, the Olympic, Siuslaw, and Siskyou that were having all kinds of problems. It's those coastal forests that were also the prime salmon habitat streams, too.

HKS: And there probably was some activity in Alaska then that was also an issue.

FDR: Yes, but Alaska tends to be more stable than that coastal country in the Pacific Northwest. I'm very familiar with the Mount Hood. They, too, were doing about the best professional job they could do in designing timber sales and designing roads, and it was working there because the country was more stable and they didn't have the problems that those coastal forests were having with the unstable geology. It wasn't like the whole

country was unstable. I'm glad you brought that up. Those landslides were predominately a problem of the coastal forests.

HKS: How about Region 5 on the coasts, did the geology change? It's still the same problem.

FDR: Yes, they had problems down there, too. But I think Region 5 was probably a little more sensitive to that than Region 6 had traditionally been. But I moved to the Mount Hood and I didn't have a landslide problem. I mean, the technology was sufficient to deal with the situation in those forests, on the Cascade forests.

HKS: During break, you said that you had a story about Herb Stone.

FDR: Herb was retired regional forester in Region 6. He was getting on up in years; he was pretty old when I was the forest supervisor for Mount Hood in Portland. I don't know how Herb and I got together, but one day he and I went out to lunch and gosh, he must have been eighty years old or so, I don't know. He always had an interest in the Forest Service, so he wanted me to bring him up to date on what was going on. We had a lunch or two together. We'd just had a big project forest fire on the Mount Hood, and he wanted to know about that, so I told him. And somewhere in the conversation I said you know, it's a lot different these days, Herb, about 40 percent of our firefighters are women, and he says what! I said yes, about 40 percent or so of our firefighters are women. He said that's what I thought you said. He said I just can't imagine that. How would you handle all of that. He said I just don't understand. I said well, this is the new Forest Service, you know, women are a big part of the Forest Service, even our firefighters. And he says I'm just startled that you would have a woman firefighter. Herb was one of our very progressive leaders in the Forest Service, yet he could not comprehend a woman firefighter. That says something about how the Forest Service has changed over the years.

HKS: There's a generational shift, and I think the revolutions of the '60s put a lot of pressure on the system. Each generation rejects the old to some degree, but we almost skipped a generation during the '60s.

FDR: Herb was my regional forester when I started to work for the Forest Service. Region 6 had this big Junior Forester orientation every year for the new class, and they'd take us to Portland. Did you go through that?

HKS: I went through that, yes.

FDR: For three days, and Herb showed up on the last day and made a speech. He was our regional forester. I still remember the basic essence of his speech to us new foresters. He'd just come back from Washington, and the big issue was the Cascade Wilderness, it later became a park. He'd gone back to Washington and basically what he was saying is you can't believe how big of a wilderness area they want. He was giving us his rationale on why the large areas up in the state of Washington, why we shouldn't have much wilderness there. It will interfere with multiple use management; it later became the Cascade National Park. I'm not sure how all that came about but it was the wilderness

issue that Herb talked to us about. So he was trying to convince us even there with the new generation of foresters in 1961 that this wilderness thing maybe has its place but it certainly needs to be restricted, and don't let it interfere with multiple use management of our national forest in the northwest. I still remember that speech.

HKS: What I remember about Herb Stone's speech to my earlier group--which I guess was a tip-off that I wasn't going to stay in grassroots forestry, as it were--he said, remember it's to the benefit of the Forest Service and its policies to sustain a healthy timber industry. Now I wasn't opposed to that. But I thought now there is a very interesting policy statement, I wonder how he knows to say that. I was trying to stand back even then, at age twenty-two, and become more policy oriented.

FDR: You could call it the thinking in the Forest Service and it was very consistent.

HKS: It was probably still part of the folklore when you had management responsibilities in Region 6 that the Forest Service returns to the treasury this huge amount of money. That makes a good agency because we're not just a weight on the taxpayers. That was a driving force behind timber sales I think. Congress was responsive at that time.

FDR: The whole system was set up. Forest Service receipts supported your schools, the roads, the local government. I mean the Forest Service was interwoven with the economic viability of those counties and schools, especially the big timber forests. If the Forest Service didn't produce, it did have a major impact on county budgets and county services, roads, and schools. I guess they're beginning to untangle that now.

HKS: There was this belief within reclamation that the dams were justified because it generated revenue, it didn't cost anybody. The water was there free to the taxpayers and so on and so forth. And 'til that mythology is broken down, it's pretty hard to change.

FDR: Maybe it wasn't deliberate but we're playing to the American people. Government is big, it's wasteful and not carrying its weight and this was the Forest Service's way of saying yes, we carry our own weight.

The Route to Associate Chief

HKS: The next move is a big one. You've never worked in a regional office and you're about to go back to Washington again in 1981 as associate deputy chief. Do you know the process by which you were selected?

FDR: Well, I had another job there first. I went to a special assistant to the deputy chief first, to Phil Thornton, the deputy chief for programs and legislation. Program and Legislation has RPA, legislative affairs, the budget, policy analysis. It was a pretty important deputy program area. Phil had a special assistant, GS-15, so I took a lateral assignment. I really didn't want to go. The regional forester, Dick Worthington, came out and talked to me. He says well, you better take this or come up with a damn good reason why you shouldn't. And all the reasons I came up with, mainly, was I was having a great

time supervising the Mount Hood and I didn't want to leave it. This wasn't going to work, so I took that job. Had nobody working for me. I was just a staff assistant to Phil. But I did get involved in all the areas, the budget. Seemed like I never got into a specialist job. I always had some broad job, the budget, the legislative affairs, policy analysis, and RPA.

Phil's big, big issue at the time when he hired me as his staff assistant was we had all this planning going. We had RPA, we had regional plans, had forest plans, we had the budget, and Phil worried about how all of these plans integrated into a whole. National forest planning was under another deputy chief for national forests. Then there was the research planning under the deputy chief for research. Phil almost had an obsession that somehow he didn't feel comfortable that all this planning was fitting together. He said figure out how this fits together, and if it doesn't fit together tell me what I need to do to make adjustments. It was a great job but an impossible one. I got deeply involved in the budget, and I got involved in research planning and national forest planning and regional planning and RPA trying to explain how all of that fit together. I drafted it out on paper and, you know, if you simplified it enough it all fit together, but you had to simplify a lot to make it fit. There were rough edges. That was one project that was good for me but one I never did solve. I did that for a year. Phil retired and Lamar Beasley was the associate deputy chief. He moved up to be deputy chief, and I moved in behind him as associate deputy chief. So there was about a year there when I was in that staff assistant's job just kind of roaming all over the program areas.

HKS: As associate deputy are you a member of the Senior Executive Service yet?

FDR: Yes. I moved into the Senior Executive Service when I moved into the associate deputy chief's job. Plus that's what put you in chief and staff, which is the highest deliberating body in the Forest Service.

HKS: You went to the daily morning meetings?

FDR: Yes. That was my baptism in that. I was there only about a year or so.

HKS: Were there any particular issues that came along?

FDR: I was doing some of the same stuff I was doing as staff assistant except now I had line authority and it wasn't all persuasion. I could sit down with a little more influence and try to coordinate these things.

HKS: Is there roughly a fifty-fifty balance between programs and legislation in terms of your attention? I mean, legislation must be a huge activity.

FDR: It is. This was the first job I had where I started testifying in Congress, where I could go up and represent the Forest Service in the administration. So it was in this job that I had my baptism into facing a committee and testifying on legislation and the budget. I still spent a lot of time on the budget, the RPA. The RPA was somewhat threatening to some of the rest of the Forest Service because people had their own plans. I think you alluded to that earlier, that the RPA had the tendency to centralize some

planning and centralize some decision making which were governing on lower level plans, if you want to call them lower level. RPA was somewhat threatening to the established way of doing business in the Forest Service because for the first time you had a centralized planning process for resource management. I spent time working on these conflicts between RPA and the program areas (NFS, Research, S&PF), how all that fit into research planning and national forest planning and state and private forestry. Budget, RPA, and legislative affairs was how I spent my year or so there.

HKS: Were there any particular issues or controversies?

FDR: Mount St. Helens blew up during that period of time, and we did a lot of thinking on how to deal with Mount St. Helens. We got legislation introduced. That was one of the first times I testified in Congress. I got involved in Mount St. Helens because it was a legislative issue, what kind of legislation to govern it. We had to get our act together. I remember going over and briefing OMB on it and other people in Washington, getting the administration's position on what kind of legislation we wanted. I testified, and so Mount St. Helens was the issue I cut my teeth on, on how you take an issue and work it through the poky process in Washington.

HKS: Was it controversial? I mean, were there people for and against in that sense? Obviously it was a unique situation. Volcanoes don't go off every day.

FDR: John Crowell was our assistant secretary. The big issue wasn't whether we ought to preserve Mount St. Helens and make it something special. But there was another big issue, especially for John Crowell, what were the boundaries because he wanted to salvage a lot of that timber. Drawing those lines was very controversial, and almost everybody wanted bigger boundaries than John Crowell. He wanted narrower boundaries because he wanted to salvage the timber more than everybody else.

Dick Lyng was our secretary, and I remember I had to brief him with John Crowell. Crowell's a great guy. I like the guy, he's very friendly but he also has thoughts, and he's very articulate in getting his thoughts put down and articulated to other people. So he and I got the job of going down to Secretary of Agriculture Lyng to brief him on our testimony and the position we were going to take on Mount St. Helens. So old John laid his case out for Lyng, and Lyng was a wise old guy and everybody wanted a bigger boundary than John wanted. John kept pushing the boundary in. John was very forthright in saying, Mr. Secretary, we want this boundary here because all of this timber is blown down and we can salvage, but he said it's controversial, other people want it broader. Secretary Lyng just sat there and listened to him and when he got through Lyng said to John Crowell, he says John, I think you're way too conservative with those boundaries. I think some of the people who disagree with you maybe are right. It set John back. To Dick Lyng's credit we broadened those boundaries out a little bit beyond what John Crowell wanted.

HKS: I would think that Crowell had some pretty good industrial support in Congress that would keep those boundaries narrow. Although Weyerhaeuser had a huge amount of blow down, there was concern the markets would be glutted and you couldn't really salvage that much stuff. There was a lot of stuff in the press about the salvage.

FDR: It just wasn't in John's thinking to see mountains of old growth Doug-fir laying on the ground and somehow preserving that through time. It was beyond his bounds of reasonableness.

HKS: With that the jurisdiction gets transferred to the Park Service during this process?

FDR: No, it's a national monument but under the Forest Service.

HKS: Oh, I thought all monuments were automatically under the Park Service.

FDR: No, we have some monuments in Alaska as well.

HKS: Okay.

FDR: Normally monuments are, but in Alaska we set a precedent in monuments managed by the Forest Service.

HKS: I can see that would be a little sticky within the agency with the Park Service drawing maps, too, but that didn't happen.

Do you know how you were selected to be associate chief? Were you interviewed? What was going on, do you know, do you remember?

FDR: I remember how it unfolded from my perspective. I don't know how the decisions got made. But I was in my office one day, and Doug Lietz walked in and said I need to talk to you, Dale. Doug was my predecessor. He walked in and closed the door and he said, I'm retiring. I was probably about the first person he told outside of Max. He said, Max and I decided to send your name across the street as my replacement, and I was shocked. Here I was associate deputy chief. There were all those deputy chiefs and all of a sudden I was jumping over deputy chiefs. I don't remember what my reaction was that much, but I was kind of flabbergasted. And he said, this is very confidential. He pointed out to me that it would have to be approved by the secretary of agriculture. It could be rejected across the street, but that he and Max were sending my name across as the new associate chief. He said we need from you a detailed resume listing all your experiences and what you've done to go along with the package as our proposal. So I said fine and I worked that up. Then I had to bring in my secretary, who had to type it behind closed doors, and I said well, this is going to shock the hell out of you, but I said the chief is proposing that I be the associate chief. I've got to send across this resume of my experiences, and I need you to type it for me, but it's very confidential. I remember she was shocked, too. I had to kind of tell her twice, almost disbelief. So that's what happened, she typed it up and I got it to Doug, and Doug and Max worked it through the system. About a month later it was announced Doug was retiring and I was the new associate chief. So I think it was a decision between those two guys, Max and Doug.

I always made the assumption that two events were connected. They had just replaced the chief of the Soil Conservation Service, Norm Berg, who was a career professional, with Peter Meyers, a political appointee. He ended up being a very good friend of mine, really

a great guy. He ended up being the deputy secretary. There was a lot of flack about that, really a lot of flack, about replacing a professional head of the Soil Conservation Service, our sister agency, with a political appointee. There was flack about that, and you always are suspicious of an administration politicalizing your organization, and it wasn't two weeks after that that Doug decided to retire. I'm telling you what I figured in my own mind that since there was such flack over the Soil Conservation Service, now would be a good time to make a major move in the Forest Service, since the administration is sensitized to the professionalism in the Forest Service and Soil Conservation Service.

HKS: So if the secretary had turned down the recommendation it wasn't because he would have wanted somebody else in the Forest Service, he might have wanted somebody from outside the agency?

FDR: That has always been a concern of the Forest Service. Our strategy when dealing with administration and political appointees in agriculture is always to have multiple candidates well qualified to move into any position we've got, and that was the number one protection to keep political appointees out of the Forest Service. It is just something that is always in the minds of the chief and top management. You always have to have people coming through the pipeline that are well known and supported by the secretary of agriculture and the assistant secretary.

HKS: From your observations up until that time, do you think that concern was well justified or just part of the culture because this goes way back in the agency?

FDR: It's both. I mean you see what happened to the Soil Conservation Service. They haven't had a career head since. Once you break that precedent that almost then becomes the precedent--continued political appointees. I don't know the history of the Forest Service all that much, but I suspect there has been many times when new administrations have come in that there's been a very serious threat on outside political appointees coming in.

HKS: If you look at the dates, there's pretty obvious a pattern that chiefs announce their retirement in the middle of an administration.

FDR: Yes. I kind of broke that, we can get into that later, not my own doings, exactly. You try to have people well in the saddle with good support on the Hill so that it makes it difficult to replace someone. Max went through that. Max was appointed by the Carter administration, and there were actually some rumblings to replace Max with probably a political appointee when the Reagan administration came in.

HKS: Had you worked enough with Doug Lietz and Max? Obviously they knew who you were and had an opinion about you, a favorable opinion. Where did you overlap with them?

FDR: Max and I go back a long, long ways. Remember, during my first job back in Washington as a management analyst trainee, Max was one of the graduates out of Harvard, and he was in that group. I worked with Max in administrative management back in the beginning. So Max knew me. Another story is that when I was deputy forest

supervisor of Mount Hood, John McGuire initiated a major reorganization study of the Forest Service. That would have been in 1973, which basically resulted in the reorganization with deputies in each region for state and private, administration, and national forest management. I don't know if you're familiar with that organizational study. The previous one was done by the McKenzie Company, which resulted in previous organization. But McGuire decided in 1973 to have an internal organizational study of the whole Forest Service, and Chet Shields was put in charge of that. They selected a broad group of people in the Forest Service to work on Chet's reorganization team and this was a big deal. I mean, we worked on this for about three months almost full-time. Then they had a steering committee for the organizational study team, and Max at the time was regional forester in Region 8 and he was on the steering committee. Chet and I go back a long ways and so Chet asked if I would serve on his reorganization task force, which I did. There were about twenty of us I guess, and we stayed back in Washington and did most of our work. Then Chet was the associate deputy chief for administration and issues kept coming up that he had to take care of even though this was supposed to have been a full-time reorganization study.

Chet asked if I'd be his vice chairman of the committee, and I said yes. So I ended up, with Chet being gone half-time on business, chairing this reorganization task force. We went around and interviewed all the staff directors and deputy chiefs and got input and put together alternatives, you know, did the regular organizational study in 1973. But we would periodically bring in our steering group, which included Max, Warren Doolittle, and others. It was a high-powered steering group. So I ended up being the one presenting the results of our study to date to the steering group and getting their comments and interacting with them and kind of chairing that. And Max was very interested in organizations, so I worked a lot with Max. Max took more interest in that reorganization than any of the other steering committee members. Frequently Max and I would get off at night and fiddle around with the organization study. He'd give me inputs and thoughts on how things ought to be worded, and I added a lot of what Max thought ought to be reflected in the organization study. So it was during that experience that I was deputy on the Mount Hood but detailed to this job that I got fairly well acquainted with Max.

We went around and interviewed employees. Public involvement was just getting started in the Forest Service. John McGuire is a pretty perceptive guy. He said, you know, we're talking public involvement with the public, and I think we should have some employee involvement in this organization study. So we took off a couple of weeks and took our draft product and we held public meetings in all the sections of the Forest Service. I took Region 6 because it gave me a chance to go home and see my family. I went around to two or three national forests and we had meetings of all employees. We talked about what we were doing and some of the options and feedback from them on how they think the Forest Service ought to be organized and all of that. It was a big deal, the first public meetings in the Forest Service with Forest Service employees. John asked us to summarize what all the employees were saying about the Forest Service as an organization; this was 1973, and we were getting some rebellion then. There were some pretty cutting remarks about the Forest Service organization. There was pretty cutting remarks about top management in some cases because the Forest Service still had a little of that Kaufman effect. They felt stifled and too directed and too militaristic, again, this opportunity for freedom and innovation and creativity.

I remember sitting with our team, and I said well, how bluntly do we put this to top management in the Forest Service. We decided to try to reflect the tone of the comments we got from the field and not try to filter it through. It was probably the first time the leaders of the Forest Service got blunt feedback in an organized way from a broad representation of the Forest Service employees. There were a lot of good things said, but there were some negative things. So we met with chief and staff and laid it out to them. I figured maybe I'll get fired here, you know, for bringing bad news. I remember Tom Nelson just got red in the face. He was the deputy chief for national forests. He reacted strongly. He said you've gone out there and invited the negative comments and put it together and he said it's worthless! I was the one who had to stand up to Tom and say Tom, this feedback to you has both positive and negative. We tried to reflect in a balanced way the tenor of the troops out there as we got it. But Tom really got mad. But he was the only one. I remember John McGuire, I mean he was very chiefly. He heard all of those negative comments as well as the positive and he said well, it's good to know how the troops feel. It's obvious we've got some things going on in the Forest Service that they either don't understand or are truly unhappy about. We need to deal with this. Here was the chief taking it very calmly and in stride and saying this is valuable, and here is Tom Nelson red in the face, angry that we would bring such bad news to him. I got off on track a bit. Max wasn't on the team but I was Chet Shields' assistant leader, and he was off dealing with issues, so I got stuck with much of the job of running the team. Max was on the steering committee and took a very active role. So that's how I got probably best acquainted with Max.

HKS: My guesswork. Max sees a vacancy, he looks around to see who's available. Some are too old, some are this, some are that, but he knew who you were, and a chief may not know very well all that many people.

FDR: At the time I was selected associate chief, the Forest Service was suffering from even-age management in top management. When you looked around at Max and Doug and the deputy chiefs…

HKS: I mean, who else would have been likely candidates? Regional foresters or only deputies? Who would be the "normal" candidates?

FDR: There was me and Lamar Beasley who were about the same age. Lamar was a couple of years older than I was. Lamar and I were the only people in that very top management group that were going to be around for another generation. And, of course, the regional foresters. Doug's predecessor was Rex Ressler, who came from a regional forester's job to the associate deputy chief. I never talked to Max and Doug about that, but I know enough about the considerations that went into it that my age (I was forty-two at the time), assuming I'd work to fifty-five, I still had thirteen years ahead of me. All of the other top management there other than Lamar weren't going to be around in fifteen years hence or thirteen years hence. So I'm sure age was a big factor for me in getting that job. It had to be; I mean, if I was in Max's job that would have been a major consideration. Plus I'd worked with John Crowell and Secretary Lyng on Mount St. Helens, and they knew me. So I was a known quantity to them, which was a big help

because the chief doesn't make that decision; the chief just recommends to the secretary of agriculture who goes into these jobs.

HKS: Does anyone in Congress care about these things that you touch base with? There's no such thing as a confirmation hearing, I understand, but still you wouldn't want to get sideways with the chairman of the appropriations committee or something.

FDR: You would think that would be the case, but it isn't. I don't know who the secretary of agriculture touches base with before he names a chief. An associate chief is more an internal job. I mean, Congress looks at the chief. It doesn't necessarily put that much priority on the associate chief. I know it was the case with me; keep it an inside job, don't let politics start playing on it. Because once you start notifying Congress that you're about to make a change in the associate chief or chief, all of a sudden they say well I've got a candidate for you to consider, or you know I've got this problem with the Forest Service, so let's make sure whoever you put in there understands the importance of the logging industry or the importance of the environmental community. I can't speak for this administration, but I would say up until now it has been an inside job and announce the decision rather than start taking the risk of politics entering the process.

Division of Responsibilities

HKS: So now you're associate chief. Did you and Max sit down and divide responsibilities or did that evolve issue by issue?

FDR: It kind of evolved. Max and I had a very good close working relationship and, of course, we knew each other. It wasn't like new people. I had observed how Doug and Max operated as a team. So I just fell into Doug's mode of operation, which I was familiar with.

HKS: Well, let me ask you this way. How did you know what it is you were supposed to do? Max must have given you some kind of directions. Something appeared in your in basket and this is your job. It's hard to imagine how this thing actually works.

FDR: Well, the job is so big you don't have to worry about what to do next. I mean it's there. First of all, Max traveled a lot. Max was a traveling chief. He loved to travel. And you need a presence of a chief at all times in the Forest Service, somebody who can speak for the agency. So a big part of the job is being chief when the chief's out of town traveling because in Washington things just constantly come up that have to be dealt with where a position has to be stated for the Forest Service. All the mail came through me, and I tried to lighten the workload on Max, so I signed most of the mail. I had to be sensitive to the things Max wanted his signature on because when the associate chief signs off, in effect that is the power of the chief's office.

HKS: So you signed your name? You didn't say on behalf of?

FDR: Well, no. Most letters came out and the type was Max Peterson, chief, and I'd sign F. Dale Robertson for Max. That's the way that works, so the chief can get to all of those big jobs. If you don't manage it you degenerate to spending all of your time doing routine stuff like signing mail, reading mail. When I was associate chief I reviewed all the mail that came to the chief's office for signature, and I probably signed 75 percent of it. But some was important enough to need R. Max Peterson's signature on it. Whether it was my signature or his, organizationally it didn't make any difference. There ought to be a little prestige to the chief's name so that when you see his name you take a second thought, maybe I'd better read this one. So I was sensitive of what to send on to him.

He and I spent quite a bit of time together. I would brief him on what he needed to know. Especially when he'd come back from a trip I would sit down and brief him on what happened. The chief's schedule is so busy. There's more demand just for meetings than the chief has time to do. I took a lot of those meetings, and we kind of worked it out with our secretaries in the front office about which meetings I would take to ease the burden on Max. So the associate chief, to a large extent, is doing the lesser jobs of the chief's work like signing mail, conducting meetings, meeting with people of lesser importance to free up the chief to be the chief everybody expects him to be, thinking about big things, dealing with Congress. So I did all of that. I was a good staff person to Max, in other words, helping to take the administrative load off of him. I'd had experience with that dealing with Phil Thornton as his administrative assistant. I had the power to also sign that helped me take a lot of the load off him.

The other big thing is testimony on the Hill. There are a lot of hearings that require the chief's presence and in some cases the secretary or the political appointees. The secretary and assistant secretary only feel comfortable with certain people up there representing the administration because when you testify before Congress it is not a Forest Service position. You are representing the administration's position, and so the administration's political appointees have to feel comfortable with whoever is representing them. So the associate chief takes a heavy load in testimony before Congress. And, of course, before you go up there to testify there's a lot of things you have to get worked out. You've got to get coordinated with the secretary's office, OMB, and other agencies. You've got to get your own staff lined up when they're at odds with what you've got to say politically. That's a big job coordinating that. Of course, Legislative Affairs takes care of a lot of that, but the man who talks has to be comfortable with what's being said. So then Max would delegate. Max liked to travel. Max liked to give speeches. He would get over committed and every once in awhile he'd just come in to me and say Dale, we've got to talk about schedules, and he'd go through his calendar. He'd say I've got a speech here and a speech here, you know, in the West or all over the country. He'd say now I don't think I've got time for those, so he would just dump speech engagements on me, and I'd have to go give these speeches that he'd committed to. But again, if a chief and an associate chief are going to be effective, it's important that the audience out there be willing to accept the associate chief as the chief and not feel slighted when the chief said he would come but then didn't. So you really do have to work on the reputation and the image of the associate chief so that that person can step in at any time and truly be chief.

HKS: You pretty well answered the question before I asked it. So the division of labor wasn't along functional lines, like Dale, you do timber and wildlife and I'll do the other things?

FDR: No, no, it was a constant state of flux depending on the workload, travel, and time available. I never will forget one time. Max would frequently get tripped up on his schedules, and we had some important meeting going on where I was with him. I don't remember what it was. But Max had scheduled a briefing for somebody over in the department, which I wasn't aware of. So the time for the briefing came, and the meeting that we were in already was important, and Max couldn't just get up and leave. So he says Dale, here's my notes and there's a flip chart, would you go give my briefing and it started three minutes ago. I didn't even know the topic. I reviewed the notes and the flip charts as I walked across the archway to the department to give my briefing. Max kind of used me that way. In that case had to brief somebody on a subject I hadn't reviewed before, but fortunately his flip charts made sense and the audience never knew that I was going through the flip charts the first time that they were going through it.

HKS: When you go from a position of relative focus to one that covers everything you find out that there's a lot about the agency you never really understood very well before. What were your biggest surprises?

FDR: Either fortunately or unfortunately most Forest Service employees get into a specialty sometime or the other during their career ladder. I was one of those guys that never had a specialist job. I was a line officer, a staff assistant to a deputy chief, and a management analyst looking at the whole Forest Service. In my whole thirty-three years with the Forest Service I always had a generalist job and many of those jobs were looking at the Forest Service as a whole. Whether it was the reorganization study I was doing, the management analyses I did, working in programs and legislation, or the duties I did as a line officer, I was always dealing with the whole works. I guess the one I'd never had much experience with was research, but I was very knowledgeable of the research organization by the time I became associate chief.

HKS: My perception is that research is not particularly controversial. There aren't major policy issues. Is that naïve? Is research something you don't have to master in order to be able to handle it?

Pilot Projects

FDR: There is a big deal with research. Max and I finally hit that head on because it was a problem from the beginning between research and national forest administration. Research just viewed the national forests as one of many clients. They were doing research for forestry as a whole. Quite frankly, some of the researchers used that to ignore or not focus on real pressing problems that the national forests were having. Even Bob Buckman, who was the deputy chief at that time, thought that the national forests were sometimes too influential in determining what research priorities were.

Max and I sat down one day and said you know, part of our contribution to the Forest Service has got to be to get research more responsive to the needs of our land managers over in the national forests. So I spent a lot of time on that. Scientists have review boards and all of that, and we started putting national forest folks on the review board for scientists over Buckman's objections. But it was a good way to communicate to scientists, you know, we have this specific problem and we are not getting the research we need to address this problem over in national forest management. That was one of the issues I took on, and I continued it as chief, to make research more responsive to the needs of the national forests than they historically had been. Research tended to be we're kind of our own organization and we're doing great things for the big world out there not just other parts of the Forest Service, which is true.

The other big issue that I really took on and that I kind of got a reputation in the Forest Service for as well as outside the Forest Service, was the Pilot Study Program. This goes back to my class in American University on how to free up our people, how to get the most out of our people in terms of contributing to what we're trying to accomplish in the Forest Service. So I started this with Max's blessing but it was my idea, this Pilot Study approach where we freed people up as much as possible. Just stay out of jail, don't do anything illegal but all policy matters of our own making and procedures are up for grabs if it is not helping you get your job done. What's important is to get your job done in the most efficient best way you can, be legal, and don't get us in trouble somehow.

HKS: Give me an example of a Pilot Program that worked. Are you talking about timber sales?

FDR: Yes, timber sales. The Forest Service has absolutely the most comprehensive budget, complicated budget of anybody. Even though we had a three-billion-dollar budget, it was all allocated out in little pots of money, thousands of them. By the time you get that all allocated down through your organization and it gets to the ground where the poor district ranger has all of these targets and objectives he has to meet (or she, should say he or she now), the ranger is faced with a hundred little pots of money and the instructions don't violate, don't overspend any, and don't under spend any. It is a helluva problem in the Forest Service. The two frequently don't match. We're actually forcing our people to be dishonest, which got us in trouble later because in order to get all these jobs done they would sometimes not spend their money as allocated. I mean, they would work on one job but charge it to a pot that was unrelated to it in order to get the total job done.

HKS: Is Congress the big stumbling block in this?

FDR: They are a big stumbling block, but the Forest Service over time has created its own problems with that because each staff person like those in Washington wants their little pot of money. Even fisheries wants it subdivided into anadromous fish and other fish. So from a program management standpoint you know how much money's been spent on it and you keep account of it, but when it gets down to the poor ranger you've got an unworkable situation. One ranger described it to me one time. I think I was associate chief then when he said, you know, I just feel like there's a big funnel sitting on

top of my head and everybody in Washington is crapping in it and it's all coming down. And there was some truth to that.

I knew through my upbringing in the Forest Service this was the most frustrating thing our field people were dealing with. So on these pilot units what I basically did, I freed them up on the budget. I said maintain the main appropriation integrity, but don't worry about the little pots of money under the main appropriation. Focus on the job to get done and spend the money and charge it as long as you don't overspend your gross amount. Stay within your budget but don't worry about all these little pots. Focus on getting the job done rather than focusing on spending all these little pots down to the last penny. And wow, that just hit the Forest Service like a dynamite. Somebody up there understands the frustration we're having down here. Well, I couldn't do that with the whole Forest Service because I was going to get crossways with Congress at the time. We gave them what we called the big bucket approach to the money and the job to be done, and you focus on getting the job done and let the finances float as long as you stay within your total amount. Before it would be like telling your wife, here's how much money we've got to spend this month but only spend a hundred and six dollars on food and forty-five dollars on utilities. I mean it's so frustrating.

Then under the pilot test I asked them to come forward, I asked the field people, gave them freedom to say what is it that's getting in the way of your doing your job in the most effective, efficient way you can do. And boy, did we get truckloads of requests from these things. A lot of them were something that Washington Office staff held very dear to their heart in terms of managing their program. So I brought them back and I sent them to the deputy chiefs. Now only the associate chief could have done this. Nobody else could have done it other than the chief. I'd send these requests and I'd say, now remember this is a pilot program. We're just dealing with these particular units. The rest of the Forest Service is still doing it the traditional way. Let's waiver this. I told all the deputy chiefs when in doubt, waiver it and I want to waiver everything. I want to error on the side of waivering these requirements and free people up to do their jobs. Well, I'd get all these comments back. Oh, we can't do that. Finally I took the bull by the horns and I said unless you can explain to me in three minutes why this is just going to be so detrimental to the Forest Service, I'm going to approve it. Because I was the only one that had the power to approve it, and I approved 99 percent of them, many over the objections of deputy chiefs and staff directors. The field people were so happy and they were saying you know, finally the Forest Service is responsive. It was a real hit in the Forest Service.

HKS: Were there many problems where it was too much latitude and the people couldn't actually handle it, or did it work pretty well?

FDR: It worked very well. We finally got in trouble on the budget that caused a serious problem. We had to pull back because it gave them too much freedom and they didn't use it wisely in the budget. We violated some budget laws, which got me in serious trouble, but we worked our way through that.

HKS: I can see where Congress cares about the budget but how about OMB? Do they care that much about the specifics or just the dollar amount?

FDR: Just the dollar amount. OMB is a pencil-pushing outfit that wants to save money. It's the president's budget office, so they're trying to make sure the president's priorities get reflected in the budget. I went over and I briefed the secretary and he said go for it, chief. This was Secretary Lyng. He says I can identify with what you're saying on this, and I had his support. I went to OMB, I briefed them, I got fairly good support over there. So it wasn't like I was acting independent. I mean I did my homework with my political superiors. So eventually we used that to rewrite the management charter of the Forest Service. Again, I think my three-hour session back in American University in 1969 had a little to do with my thinking. We did revamp the management philosophy of the Forest Service around that. Obviously, when I went Forest Service wide I couldn't give them as much latitude as I did the pilot units. We had to pull it in within reason, but we did rewrite the management charter around that concept.

HKS: You mentioned you had some reluctance at the Washington Office, but seems like the regions would also care. Everyone's losing control.

FDR: The regions had regional staff directors that were worried about that as well as Washington staff directors. I even got accused that I'd never been a staff director, which I hadn't, at the regional or Washington Office level, but we became too staff oriented. Staff looking at their program were getting too influential in shaping what was happening on the ground, whereas, you had these poor line officers out there trying to put it all together and make things happen. It did strengthen the hands of the line officers and weaken the hands of the program staff people. You don't want to go one way or the other, it's a proper balance because line officers can get out of bounds probably quicker than a staff person can. So it's a constant juggling and balancing of those two. So that was another project I took on as associate chief and I spent probably, I don't know, 10 or 15 percent of my time on it. My objective was changing the organizational culture.

Consent Decree

HKS: Everyone I've talked to comments about the extraordinary difficulty of this period, reduction in force but to have to hire more people. You've got the competing forces of balancing the budget or reducing the deficit at the very least, but you've also got to hire people you don't currently have on staff, women and minorities plus the other specialties. Was that an issue that you dealt with directly? Who was handling that during Max's time?

FDR: Well, Max and I both worked on that.

HKS: I suppose chief and staff, you'd meet everyday and you'd talk about the problems.

FDR: Yes. Max and I both worked on that. A big, big issue when I was associate chief, and I spent some time on that, was the consent decree for women in Region 5. That got nasty. We were under court orders to do certain things and our California folks--it just applied to the state of California--had a court order, which was very serious business. They were not following the letter of the order, and all of a sudden the judge got mad.

Max and I up until that point were letting the regional forester and station director in California handle that. The judge made some outrageous comments like if he was chief of the Forest Service he'd fire the regional forester in Region 5 because he wasn't doing the job. So that kind of caught my attention. I got much more involved with that consent decree and women because we had quotas. Quotas were straight out mandated by the judge in the consent decree on women in California. So I spent quite a bit of time on that, and we forced a lot of women into positions in Region 5 where there obviously were more experienced men available for the job. But we had quotas we had to meet. The judge was threatening to haul the regional forester to court and fire him if he could. That created a lot of dissention in Region 5, men versus women. So I was involved in a lot of those decisions. I look around at the Forest Service today and there's a lot of the women out of California that we forced into those positions prematurely, based on the historical Forest Service way of doing business, that are now leaders of the Forest Service in very key positions.

I had some rough times even with some men out in Region 5. I mean if you're sitting there in California as a man competing for these positions and having career aspirations and all of a sudden a young woman with a lot less experience than you have gets the job you wanted or becomes your boss, it begins to create ill will and morale problems. We had a tough situation there in California. California probably was one of the worst regions to have done that with because of firefighting. Region 5 prided themselves as the best firefighting force in the Forest Service, and they had a take-that-hill mentality. The idea that we would put some women into key fire positions out there, it caused problems.

HKS: If you're a talented woman you have job options, and the Forest Service is not on very many of their lists at that time. Do you go out into colleges and recruit? I mean what's the mechanism in actually doing this?

FDR: Actually there have been a lot of women since the '60s to come through forestry schools or natural resource schools. But we did hire some people outside the natural resource area in order to do that. And you know, I sympathized with those women. I mean how would you like to be an inexperienced woman in a man's world and start supervising some old Forest Service employees who had been around a long time. We were putting them in some difficult spots. But we finally met our quota, and the judge dismissed the lawsuit.

We were transferring women. We were putting pressure on all of our regional foresters and station directors to hire more women and minorities. They'd go out and recruit these women, you know, bright women that had a great future, and then we'd pluck them off and send them to California to meet our quota. So I had an uprising there with my other regional foresters about plucking out their women that they'd worked so hard to recruit. It was just a very disruptive thing in the Forest Service all the way around. It was true that the Forest Service was basically a man's world for most of its history. Women were not in influential positions. This was kind of a forcing mechanism because we got into court with a judge order. It's kind of like, you know, make up for lost time in a hurry. So as disruptive as it was, today in the Forest Service we have a lot of very talented, experienced women that went through that program that had their feet to the fire, and they are very good today because of that. So the Forest Service is in a lot better position

today. But we certainly would not have chosen to have gone through it that quick in that painful of a way.

HKS: Is Congress and OMB sympathetic at budget time when you've got to reduce the workforce but you've got to be able to hire people? Then there are also civil service regulations.

FDR: That's our job to figure out how to do that because when hiring minorities and women you assume that they're going to be productive just as though you had hired a white man. So that never bought you any budget or higher ceilings from OMB.

SAF also had a problem sorting out diversity. And, of course, I was coming on pretty strong. We were going to hire minorities and diversify the Forest Service. So they invited me over to the headquarters at SAF to meet with the council to talk about diversity and what my plans were and what I was doing. So I went over and just laid it out the best I could of where the Forest Service was, why we were trying to diversify the Forest Service. The traditional sources of recruitment like the forestry schools were not producing the minorities that I had to have, and I was looking elsewhere to find highly qualified minorities. Of course, like everything else in SAF, about half the council was with me and about half wasn't. I remember the first question after I got through talking was chief, do you really think these minorities can ever do the job. I mean that was an indication right there that at least part of SAF was very old guard. The other part was very progressive, but they've always got that split, and it was a problem.

HKS: Well, the SAF historically has made feel unwelcome the non-silviculture aspects. There were major controversies they were involved in. They tried to get rid of Park Service foresters because they weren't real foresters. They made range managers, game managers feel unwelcome, and they went off and founded their own professional organizations. Now SAF is trying to get them all back, but they're well established. But you go to the records of the Range Management Society, and they formed because SAF kicked them out. It's a strange world.

FDR: Well, you know the history of this better than anybody but it was the foresters in the Forest Service that really got the Wilderness Society started and a lot of these things that later forestry tended to reject.

HKS: It seems to me that the Forest Service has achieved a reasonable diversity of the workforce. Are there better decisions made, is the Forest Service better managed and doing a better job, or is it just accommodating a social requirement? We've gone through a period of our history where what used to be standard is no longer tolerated. I'm not talking about disciplines now, I'm talking about women, minorities, handicapped people who have different perceptions of the world. Do they make the Forest Service a better place?

FDR: I think they do, but that's not to degrade the people who came before us. What you have is a much broader perspective of things and a much broader number of considerations that are being interjected into the process, and decisions reflect that. What you used to have in the Forest Service was a bunch of experienced people that came up

through the ranks, knew history, had the experience to back them up. And so the old Forest Service probably made decisions that better reflected experience but was slighted on being sensitive to broader perspectives outside the framework of the decision makers. So we've traded experience being brought to bear on decisions for broader sensitivities and considerations by a broader group of people that think differently but are short on experience to our decision-making process. There's a tradeoff there.

When you look at the situation, there was no choice. The Forest Service, being a government agency responsible to the American people, has to reflect the needs and the views of all of the American people. If you've just got a bunch of white guys sitting up there, as broad minded as we may think we are, we don't truly know or reflect the needs and the sentiments and the feelings and desires of the African Americans, the Hispanics, the American Indians, and the Asian people. In the early days if we needed a hydrologist we'd take a forester that knew a little bit about water and made him a hydrologist. Well, strong on experience, didn't know much about hydrology. Same principle here; you can't take a white person--a European American like you and me--and somehow think that we know and can reflect the concerns of all of America. It's a little arrogant to think you can because some of these people just don't have the same values that run common to us European-oriented Americans. We're getting fuzzed up decisions because of that, in the view of maybe us European Americans, maybe in view of some forestry faculty and deans. But it is more reflective of society as a whole, which is where a government agency has got to be. If you're a private company you'll know whether you're doing well or not by whether your product sells or not. The Forest Service doesn't get that feedback on whether they're making a profit by selling whatever they're producing out there, so you have to take a more democratic approach to things and be all-inclusive and reflect the needs of all of the Americans.

HKS: You mentioned forestry deans a couple of times, and I've done a little work on the history of forestry education. Forestry deans are like law school deans and business school deans who judge the success of their programs by the employability of their graduates. This is a wild generalization but it's a fair assumption. And women became very employable, and so the recruitment of women into forestry education was very pragmatic for the deans. But one can question whether or not forestry ought to be measured by how many twenty-two-year-old graduates get jobs. Maybe there's more to forestry than that first job. Anything else about major issues while you were associate you'd like to have on record?

Timber Sale Buyout

FDR: Oh, the big one, the buyout of timber sales. That was one of my issues as associate chief. Max was involved and knew what was going on, and I was briefing him. When major policy decision time came up, Max and I would sit down. I carried the ball on that, and it was the biggest, most complex issue I had ever dealt with.

HKS: You probably worked with George Leonard during that time.

FDR: Yes. George was timber staff director and I was associate chief. I didn't know George very well until I got to be associate chief. But George and I worked together on that. After two or three meetings with George Leonard, I kind of stood back in awe. I said, you know, this is about the most knowledgeable guy I've ever met in the Forest Service, and he's a straight thinker. I mean, he's got logic and he's articulate, and probably people wonder why he became associate chief. But George is truly one of the outstanding people that's ever worked for the Forest Service in terms of his brainpower and his knowledge. I mean I don't know of anybody in the history of the Forest Service more knowledgeable than George is. He's just good. Usually when you see people working together there's a history, and I learned to appreciate George Leonard when I was associate chief when he was director of timber management and the buyout thing was one of the big issues. The market fell out on the timber industry, and they had bid up all of these timber sales, especially on the West Coast, to ridiculous prices.

HKS: What does that say about the wisdom of capitalists and free markets, they're supposed to really know what's going on?

FDR: Yes. We were in high inflation. During that Carter period of time inflation was running 10 percent or so and was even more for lumber. So the timber industry made a massive mistake in how they predicted the future, but they were assuming inflation would go on forever. I sold some of those tree sales as supervisor on the Mount Hood. They were paying five, six, seven hundred dollars a thousand board feet. I remember taking some people out to Bull Run watershed. I didn't mention that earlier. The Bull Run was one of my big issues as the supervisor of Mount Hood. There were three big Douglas firs--huge--and I prided myself in telling people that I took to the Bull Run, I just sold a timber sale with trees like this and these three trees are paying my salary this year as supervisor of the Mount Hood. As a supervisor you're only worth three trees but I was getting six, seven, eight hundred dollars a thousand.

Then the bottom fell out of the market for the lumber, and we were going to bankrupt all of the little guys in the Northwest. It was largely in Region 5 and Region 6, some in Region 1. We were facing the bankrupting of all of those small, medium size timber companies. They were going to have to default on their timber sales because they were going to lose big bucks just to harvest their timber. John Crowell came out of the timber industry--Louisiana Pacific, the biggest timber purchaser on the national forests--and became our assistant secretary, and John knew those guys. I mean, he was one of them, and I admired him so much because I worked with him a lot on this issue. He knew the game. He knew the timber industry and he was tough on them. You would be proud to hear some of the things John Crowell was saying. He says we cannot let the timber industry take advantage of this on the threat of bankruptcy. We've got to do something to give them relief, but boy we need to be stingy. Most people don't know this, but going through that buyout legislation we would have been greatly handicapped without having John Crowell as our assistant secretary who knew the timber industry well. I can say in all honesty, John Crowell looked out for the public interest on that and was not trying to give any special favors to his old friends in the timber industry. To this day I have great admiration for John in dealing with that issue, and I dealt with him almost on a daily basis with it.

We did finally end up with some legislative relief where we would take back part of their timber sales but old John, he made it a tough deal for industry. Give them a chance to survive but don't give them anything. So that was really a tough issue, and I went all the way through that issue with John, had several meetings with the timber industry, I testified on the Hill. In fact, it was such a big issue that when we testified on the Hill Secretary Dick Lyng, secretary of agriculture, was our chief spokesman. The decision was made that the secretary and I would go up and represent the administration on the buyout legislation. So that's where I got well acquainted with Dick Lyng, who finally ended up appointing me chief. He and I went up together. He gave the prepared statement and then turned it over to me to answer questions. That was a hot issue, really a hot issue. Who knows, Secretary Lyng might have formed his opinion about me at that meeting based on how well I did or didn't do in withstanding the tough questioning and in answering the questions before that committee on buyout legislation. That's one of the toughest issues the Forest Service faced. They'd never dealt with it before and haven't dealt with it since.

HKS: How realistic or reasonable was Congress? Was it strictly political?

FDR: You had a lot of leadership there from people like Senator Hatfield. Hatfield took a strong leadership role. I think the Congress understood that if we stuck with our contracts we were going to bankrupt the little guys. To Congress' benefit I don't think they were too concerned about the big guys, you know, the Weyerhaeusers. Weyerhaeuser doesn't buy much timber anyway, but the Louisiana Pacifics and the Boise Cascades do. Everybody was concerned that we were going to bankrupt all the little guys, and in the end there was not going to be anybody left but the big guys.

HKS: I was surprised that this happened in that I had some general sense that there are escalator clauses, de-escalator clauses, that deal with this. First of all, are there clauses in the standard contract for reasonable changes?

FDR: Yes. We were dealing with six, seven, eight hundred dollar contracts per thousand board feet that was worth a hundred or two hundred dollars, and that little band for escalation--we'd never faced anything like that before--didn't help too much.

HKS: Did this come as a surprise? Were people predicting hey, we're selling this timber too high and the balloon is going to bust .

FDR: Well, we were just kind of going along, I think. The housing market was booming. There was a high demand for lumber. Congress kept appropriating more dollars to put up more timber sales to respond to our economic situation at the time in the late '70s. I know when I was out on the Mount Hood National Forest pointing out here's three trees that's bringing to us my salary as forest supervisor this year, down deep I knew something was haywire. I knew I was worth more than three trees for a year's salary. But I was like everybody else, I mean the momentum was there. It would have been difficult for the Forest Service to have said to Congress and to the nation that we're sorry about this huge demand for housing and the need for lumber. We think it's going to be a problem and you're paying too much. So I think everybody was just going along on the momentum.

President Carter tended to be fairly environmentally friendly, but even Carter directed the Forest Service to increase its timber sales in response to this economic problem.

HKS: Well, go back to the Organic Act, 1897; you sell timber based upon the appraised value and you have a bid, a public auction. That's part of Forest Service culture and part of Forest Service statutes from the very beginning. You had the authority not to sell timber to protect multiple use, but did you have the authority available not to sell timber because it was bid too high?

FDR: Well, it would have been hard because we had budgets approved, congressional direction and appropriation, we'll produce so much timber. We had a directive from President Carter to increase the timber sales on the national forests to try to get control of inflation. The big problem then was inflation, how do we control it. Well, you don't control inflation by suppressing supply. You control inflation by increasing supply. So inflation was the big factor.

HKS: I bought a house, 17 percent mortgage. That was what was going on then.

FDR: And that was the crisis and that was what was governing everybody and everybody was pushing the Forest Service. Congress: get more lumber on the market.

HKS: So how was the issue resolved? Was there new legislation that gave you authority and all the rest?

FDR: It kind of was a compromise. I don't remember all the details. At one time I could have cited it to you, but that was many years ago. But it permitted companies to give back without penalty a certain number of their timber sales, and there was an upper limit which really hurt the big guys that had a lot of timber sales. But it took care of most of the medium size and small guys because they could then give back to the government without penalty our timber sales.

HKS: And that legislation is still on the books and is still a mechanism, or it was one time only?

FDR: No, it was a one-time fix and there were some deadlines. I'd have to say government rose to the occasion, and I was in position to know because no one was more involved in that than me. We had a crisis on our hands and the administration, the Forest Service, and the Congress together rose to the occasion. I mean there was a lot of gnashing of the teeth but, we rose to the occasion and did what I think was right for the circumstances we were in. So I'd have to give the government as a whole kind of an A on dealing with that issue. So government can work.

HKS: Where was the environmental community in all of this?

FDR: The environmental community was either quiet on it or supportive. That was one of the times where industry and the environmentalists were together. Environmentalists didn't want the trees cut and the roads built and the timber guys didn't want to go bankrupt, and both required the same action.

HKS: It must have been some difficult times for industry, their philosophy was being challenged. Too much government and all the rest, and they were like Iaccoca wanting government backing of the loan to Chrysler.

FDR: Yes. I used to meet with them where they were demanding I make more timber sales, and a few years later the same people were saying please get me out of these timber sales so I don't go bankrupt. Well, if you played that scenario out, we would have gone after them for damages. A seven hundred dollar thousand board feet that was worth a hundred, we would assess them six hundred dollars damages, and we would have gone after their assets, you know, in the normal way you do things. The government would have eventually ended up owning these sawmills and logging companies, and that's not good public policy. It's the last thing the Forest Service wants to do is own the timber industry.

HKS: That would be a problem all right. Are there any other issues you'd like to talk about in the context of when you were associate chief?

FDR: Well that's the ones that come to mind as special. A lot of the associate chief's job is to do the chief's jobs that he decides that he doesn't want to do. Just the day-to-day running of the Forest Service, a lot of that falls on the head of the associate chief. So there's not a lot of time to take up on major issues, so I think those are, at least from my memory, the major ones.

Transition from Carter to Reagan

HKS: Characterize the transition between Carter and Reagan. Reagan gets elected in November, and so there's a three-month period you know that there's going to be some shifts. Do you work with transition teams directly to brief them? What's the process by which the new administration takes over, especially one bringing a big change philosophically?

FDR: Now at that time when there was a change I was down in the organization. I think I was probably staff assistant or maybe I was associate deputy chief. But I was involved in that, and here's what normally happens. You know you're going to have a lot of new political appointees coming in. I mean they sweep out the old, and the new ones come dribbling in based on when they get confirmed by the Senate. We prepare briefing books, and I was very much involved in that between the Carter and the Reagan administrations. I was involved in preparing the outline for the briefing book, at least me and a few other people. We went to chief and staff and said okay, we need to put together the briefing book, here's fifteen or twenty topics that we need to include. And chief and staff obviously have a lot of ideas themselves, and so we developed the outline first. We also talked about the campaign, what was said in the campaign about natural resources and forestry and what their goals were. We would include in there what we thought the Forest Service could do to help them carry out their campaign promises. In other words, we're

trying to be relevant within our bounds to help the new administration. Then we would assign to various staff people the topics to prepare the briefing papers.

The briefing papers would come in and some would be way too long and you'd edit them. I'd work with the staff to change them and get them the way that I thought or the staff team thought they ought to be. Then we put that together and then we sent that out to the chief and staff, and they reviewed it and made comments. We got their feedback and then we finally put together the briefing books. So when our assistant secretary arrived, we had a briefing book on his desk about what the Forest Service was all about, what kind of issues we had going on, what had been our position on those issues. Then there was a major section, what we can do to help you, the new administration, to carry out your campaign promises.

Doug MacCleery is a very knowledgeable, intellectual sort of guy. I mean he has a wonderful brainpower and he was a staff person for NFPA at the time John Crowell was nominated to be assistant secretary. So John latched on to Doug MacCleery, and Doug knew more of the details than perhaps anybody in industry. So Doug and John Crowell worked together during that transition, getting him prepared for his confirmation hearings. I'm sure Doug gave him his perspective on what the Forest Service said about the issues. I don't know how well they knew each other before, but Doug really gained John Crowell's confidence as somebody that really knew what he was talking about and was very analytical about it. And John Crowell was a fairly analytical sort of guy, and so it ended up then that he hired Doug as the deputy assistant secretary. And, of course, Doug's in the Forest Service now. I've always admired Doug's knowledge and analytical capabilities and a fairly broad-gauge sort of guy. So he was really helpful to John Crowell.

HKS: I remember seeing references to Doug MacCleery testifying in Congress, so he probably represented Crowell on occasion.

FDR: Yes, he did.

Selection as Chief

HKS: What do you know about your selection as chief, the process? You were associate, so you were to the outsider a logical contender for the position. I don't know how the process works and apparently there is no set pattern from administration to administration how the chief is selected. Do you know how this happened? Max is getting ready to retire. He's reached the magic age of sixty-two or whatever the traditional age is.

FDR: I think a big factor was, you mentioned it earlier, that we typically change chiefs about two years before the end of an administration. So that was almost exactly two years. Let me go back and talk about when Ed Cliff was selected because I did get a little insight on that. One time Orville Freeman called me up. He was the secretary of agriculture during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. He called me up one day; I knew who he was but I'd never interacted with him. He said chief, can we go out to

lunch. I said sure. So we had a wonderful lunch. He took me out to the Cosmos Club or somewhere there. Really what he wanted was a Smokey Bear for his grandchild. I said Mr. Secretary, I'll get you a Smokey Bear. So I bought a Smokey Bear out of my own pocket and sent it to him, and he was forever happy that his grandchild had a nice Smokey Bear. But anyway, over lunch he wanted to know how things were going, how things had changed because Orville always had a deep interest in the Forest Service. I mean, he liked the Forest Service.

He said you know, he said I appointed Ed Cliff as chief, and he proceeded to explain to me how he arrived at the decision to appoint Ed Cliff. He said there were some really good people. It really got down to Ed Crafts and Ed Cliff. He said both were wonderful guys, and he said he asked them both to write a little essay on why they ought to be chief and what their vision was of what they would do as chief. He said he talked to both of them and just had this gut feeling that Ed Cliff was a chief. Cliff just came across so down-to-earth and what he said impressed Orville as, you know, a forestry leader, a forester, a man of the land. It sounded like he based that decision choosing between the two guys on just the gut feeling that Ed Cliff was chiefly.

HKS: They certainly were very different human beings. I didn't know Cliff very well but I knew Ed Crafts fairly well. Ed Crafts was on the board of directors of the Forest History Society, and I had various reasons to meet with him. I was sitting at dinner with McArdle in 1975. I remember the date only because it was the hundredth anniversary of AFA. Ed Crafts was given an award from AFA. He was up getting his award, and Mac leans over to me and says that guy would have been total disaster as chief because industry hates his guts. He said you can't have a chief when industry hates his guts. I suspect Ed Cliff is a much warmer person than Ed Crafts, much warmer person.

FDR: Ed Cliff, I knew him very well. Like I mentioned before, I used to ride the bus with him when I was GS-9 and he took time with me. He was like Ronald Reagan except not nearly as articulate. You just related to him as your father or your grandfather. He gave you a warm, fuzzy feeling. And Secretary Freeman was describing that to me. It affected him the same way. Cliff replaced McArdle. I'm speculating now that McArdle sat down with Freeman and said you know, I've got two or three candidates, and Freeman took a personal interest in not only interviewing them but asking them to write a short essay about their vision of what they would do as chief. I thought that was kind of interesting that the secretary of agriculture personally got involved and decided who was going to be the next chief.

In my case I think George Dunlop was a key player. George was a very dynamic individual and had lots of ideas, and when he came on board he and I worked together a lot. In fact, I'd had a lot of philosophical discussions with George because he's a big idea guy and very innovative, creative. So George and I hit it off, and he was the assistant secretary. The time had come to change the chiefs, and George was a very strong supporter of me because he and I got acquainted mostly during these big philosophical discussions. George initiated the action to change chiefs. Max did not initiate it, although Max knew we were in the timeframe that something had to be done. Of course, George was looking forward to the new administration coming in, in two years, and needed somebody that was young enough to be around for a while. So George initiated the action

and talked to Secretary Lyng and he was talking to me. They talked to me before they talked to Max. Then they talked to Max and, of course, Max agreed that the timing was right although Max hadn't initiated it. They said Dale is our choice. The other key guy was Peter Meyers. It was George Dunlop and Peter Meyers, who both Max and I had a great relationship with. Remember, he was the guy who caused all the fury as the political head of the Soil Conservation Service, moved over to be our assistant secretary and then moved up to be deputy. So it was a very close-knit group. I would say it was between George Dunlop, Peter Meyers, and Dick Lyng. They decided the time is right, Dale is the guy we want as our next chief, and they just did it.

HKS: Pretty straightforward.

FDR: Yes. When I became chief, I'd been around awhile. I'd been associate chief for four years. Incidentally, I haven't been the longest tenured chief, but I did count up one time, and I think I have the most tenure in the history of the Forest Service of the combination of the associate chief-chief. I was chief seven years and I was associate four years so I had eleven years there in the top spot. I think Ed Cliff is the longest tenured chief with ten years. I got just slight seven years but I had the four to add so. And most of the chiefs have not come from the associate chiefs. In fact, it's very unusual. Maybe just me and one other person ever became chief out of the associate chief job.

HKS: McGuire did. But you're right, it is unusual.

FDR: If he was there he was there only a short period of time.

HKS: The associate position wasn't filled for quite a while. They did away with that.

FDR: They did away with it. Before 1960 they had national forests split in two deputies, one for the resources and one for all these other things like fire and engineering and lands and those things. The 1960 study, the McKenzie study, recommended that they combine the national forests all under one deputy, which they did. Art Greeley was one of the two previous deputies for national forests and Ed Cliff was the other. As I recall, Ed Cliff took over all of national forests and Art Greeley got elevated up to the associate chief. So Art, there was not a predecessor. I mean, there was a big gap between Art as associate chief, and I don't know when the previous one was.

HKS: Earle Clapp was the last one.

FDR: Okay. How big of a gap was that?

HKS: He was associate chief, and then Silcox died in '39, and he was made acting chief. Because he had openly bucked FDR's reorganization plan, he stayed acting chief until '43 when Watts came in and then he retired. There wasn't an associate chief from 1943 on until Greeley. That's quite a time spread.

I suppose the process of selecting the chief has to be fairly confidential otherwise politics--people angling for the job, members of Congress and so forth.

FDR: Exactly, we talked about that before. On the one hand you'd like to consult, on the other hand you don't want the input from the political process.

HKS: How about the selection of George Leonard? Was that a logical selection?

FDR: Yes. That was looked at in conjunction with me and, of course, you had George Dunlop and Peter Meyers as well as Dick Lyng, the secretary. Remember, George and I had worked with Peter Meyers and especially Secretary Lyng on buyout. I mean, there were sessions where George was a key guy. George would end up in the White House, and he'd go with Lyng. Everybody knew if you wanted somebody that knew what was going on it was George. I was involved in that, but George was, too. I'd actually gone up on the Hill and testified, Secretary Lyng and I together, on that buyout legislation. Lyng knew me and he knew George. So it was kind of a package deal. It wasn't like I looked around at all my options and decided to go with George. I was asked by George Dunlop, and he said we very much would like to have George Leonard as the associate chief and do you have any objections. I said no. I said George is a great guy and he'd make a great associate chief and if I had my total freedom to look at everybody, George certainly would be one of my top candidates as well. I said that's fine with me. We were a package deal from the secretary's office because they knew both of us.

HKS: No doubt George is one of those guys that's good at whatever he does, but was he desirable in part because of his timber orientation and his strong relationship with industry? He knew that side, and that was what they wanted?

FDR: I think that was a factor. I mean, everybody saw George as much broader than that, but the Republicans--remember, I was in the Reagan administration--wanted to make sure the Forest Service didn't lose touch with that aspect of our job. I would just say that was a factor. I'm sure in their thinking, in top management we want somebody that knows the timber business and can deal with that. So I would say it was a factor, but it had to be more than that. I mean, I would have objected if George was a narrow timber guy. It was nice that he was a broad gauge guy plus had that.

Division of Labor

HKS: The division of labor, was the relationship you had with George the same basically as between you and Max, or did George have more authority? I don't know how to articulate. There's a perception I've had that George Leonard had more authority, more influence than any other associate ever had in the history of the organization except under Pinchot when Overton Price was the associate. Price actually ran the agency when Pinchot was off in the Philippines with Taft or something. I thought the relationship you and George had was as co-equals. You were the chief, but you were really co-equal.

FDR: That was by design. I think what George and I did is we took it another level or two higher than even Max and I had. Max and I had a good relationship and I think interacted well. First of all, I had complete confidence in George. George and I from day one sorted that out that, you know, this job is bigger than both of us put together to start with. We

need to first communicate with each other, which we did. George and I talked every day that we were in the office. And we need to be able to speak for each other and we shouldn't be a constraining force on this organization. In other words, if one of us is out of the office or traveling and decisions need to be made, whoever's in the office is going to make that decision. So George and I really did try to pretty much just say we only got one job here the size of which is bigger than two of us, and we substituted for each other. We need to respect each other's decision and the rest of the outfit needs to know that we speak with a single voice. So if I make a decision that George would have made a little different, we're going to support it. I'm going to support you, George, if you make a decision that I would've made a little different. There were a few occasions George made decisions I would have made a little different if I had been there, but I supported those decisions as though they were mine. And I'm sure George would say the same thing, that I made some decisions when he was out of town or somewhere else that he would have made a little different. But George and I were one, and I think we came across that way.

George and I did kind of get crossways a couple of times on an issue and we knew it, but we decided to kind of let it run. It was on below-cost timber sales. I met with some folks on below-cost timber sales and George would meet with them, and they were getting two different messages and that was a complex issue. So that's the only occasion I can remember that George and I gave a little bit of a conflicting message to the organization on below-cost timber sales. He and I discussed that and we said well, let's just kind of let these two trains of thought run, because they were important to which way we would go. But other than that little situation George and I tried to act as one. Far as I was concerned he was chief when I wasn't available. We reinforced each other. We talked a lot of things out. We didn't try to catch each other by surprise. I think we came across to the organization that way as well, and hence your comment that perhaps he was the most powerful associate chief or influential associate chief in the history of the Forest Service. My own personal philosophy in managerial style is I don't worry about my authority versus others' or protecting my turf. I just want the right decisions made regardless of where it comes from. So I had a managerial style that permitted George to really blossom and, you know, become a giant in the Forest Service.

HKS: Obviously the agency gets used to this situation, but I'm sitting there in the Washington Office and I need someone's signature on this, and you're both there. How do I know who to go to? I mean, you are different people and so on and so forth. I asked George the same question, and he said whoever was there was the person you went to. One day George was there, next day you're there and you're talking to different people each time you go up. He said well, there's some shopping around going on, people figure they'd get a better deal out of Dale than out of George or vice versa. But from your vantage point, it really wasn't an impediment to communications, people the next layer down weren't puzzled by the process?

FDR: I think they knew that either one of us would do. Like George said, they may have done a little shopping around, but they knew George's signature was just as good as my signature, especially internally.

HKS: There are no legal requirements that the chief's signature literally has to be on a document? George, in law, had the same authority as you did, there were no exceptions?

FDR: A lot of things had to be signed by the chief, but our delegation of authority said the associate chief was the same as the chief. I mean that's what associate means, that you're all one.

HKS: He said that your job descriptions were very much the same, except for issues of national security. There were a few things the chief did that the associate didn't do. What national security responsibility did you have?

FDR: There's a lot of things I can't tell you about that, but I can talk in general. I did have the highest secret clearance in government, which George didn't have. So there were some things I could get involved in that he couldn't. In government there's something called continuation of government program. If government becomes dysfunctional--we get bombed out by the Soviet Union, which during my period of time was a big deal--there was a whole ad hoc organization set up to move out of Washington, D.C., ahead of a crisis that would be prepared to take over the government should the political leaders be dysfunctional.

HKS: I see what you're getting to.

FDR: I was on that select team of a small group of people that if there was any thought that we might get bombed out this team would go to a secret location and be prepared to run the government. That took some of my time. I don't know if it's still in existence since the Soviet Union is no longer the threat it used to be. I was proud of the federal government in thinking ahead to emergency situations.

HKS: I remember we had very minimal training, but because of the Forest Service radio network the western third of the United States was within communications. This was 1960 before satellites and all the rest. The only instruction that stuck in my mind is if you get back to your pickup at five in the afternoon, and you call in and nobody answers, go to plan B. We had a special frequency. We never had any test of it, but we were told vaguely what to do.

FDR: I would frequently disappear for two or three days and nobody knew where I was, except maybe George and my secretary. But we were off doing exercises and these were intense. We'd go through scenarios of likely hits on the United States and what kind of damage would be done with these nuclear bombs and what kind of problems we'd have. We played out that whole scenario and, as a group of people assuming the president and Congress were no longer operational, how we would respond to this and run the country from the government's standpoint. So these were intense exercises, very educational.

A Typical Day

HKS: I'm sure they were. I know there's no such thing as a typical day, but describe what it's like to be chief. With disruptions no matter how carefully you plan your day, that's not the day that unfolds. You get up in the morning, you go to work, what happens?

FDR: Let me tell you what it isn't like, the myth that most field employees think about the chief. They probably think the chief is our leader up there, he's sitting at his desk and he's thinking about the big picture and plotting strategy, what's our best future and really thinking things through and spending a lot of time about the future of the Forest Service.

The truth of the matter is the chief doesn't have time to do any of that. So what the field people think the chief does is--after all, what in the world is there to do in D.C., there's no fires to fight, no trees to mark, and no garbage to clean up--just think, right. The truth of the matter is it's a hectic pace, hectic job, and everybody thinks they own the chief. The Congress thinks they own the chief so you've got five hundred and thirty-five members of Congress who think they can, and they can demand your time by picking up the phone. The administration thinks they own the chief, and they do. You're their man representing government and representing their philosophy. And the interest groups are constantly interacting with you and demanding something, demanding your time. You have all of these, plus the public, which can trigger action that takes the chief's time by calling a Congressman or calling the administration. You know what the stupid thing the Forest Service is doing now out here in Sedona, Arizona. And that will trigger the congressman picking up the phone or they'll call the administration. This is a great example. Hope you don't mind diverging here.

HKS: Not at all.

FDR: I was sitting in my office one day, and I got the call from the White House. Normally the White House will go through the secretary, and the secretary to assistant secretary to me. But in this case the White House was so upset they just called me direct. They said chief, what in the hell are you doing over there. I said well, right now I'm sitting at my desk doing some paperwork.

HKS: Who is this that called, anybody we'd know?

FDR: No, it would have been a fairly high level staff guy in the White House. The timber industry had gone to the White House, and during the Reagan administration and Bush administration the timber industry had fairly easy access to the White House. Whereas, I think with this administration the environmentalists have fairly easy access and the timber industry doesn't.

A new thing in the Forest Service and it's centered right here in Sedona as much as anywhere is the spiritual values of the forest. It's obvious that a lot of the American people when they are out in the forest sense some kind of a spiritual value, and this is really important to them. So a group of my researchers at the Rocky Mountain experiment station was holding a conference or a research symposium on just what is the spiritual value of the forest, trying to identify it, and then trying to figure out how does the Forest Service take this abstract spiritual value that people feel but you can't put your hands on it and incorporate it into their management of the forest. That's a big thing here in Sedona with the New Agers. The timber industry had gotten hold of this and found out that the Forest Service was having a big conference on how to incorporate spiritual values

into our multiple use concept, not realizing it was a bunch of researchers doing some research kind of thinking. And that was what got the White House so upset.

Here I was, I had a day planned on my calendar, that one phone call disrupted my life for about three or four hours. I had to deal with that issue. I didn't even know what was going on, and that's the other problem. A lot of these political appointees new to government think the chief should know everything. Well, here's their biggest issue in the Forest Service and the chief of the Forest Service doesn't even know about it. I told them I don't know what you're talking about. I'll have to find out and get back with you. So I spent two or three hours on that and talked to my researchers. Researchers kind of have a mind of their own. They don't like any kind of managerial interference with their research, much less political influence. So I negotiated with Research, and what we finally decided to do was go ahead with the conference the way it was but we'd change the name of it. They had spiritual in the name of it, and we agreed to call it some mundane stuff so the title of the symposium that would not scare anybody. So that's how we resolved it. I got back to the White House and I said I understand your concern and the timber industry's concern about this but I said first of all, it's a group of researchers, it's not a group of managerial people about to incorporate this into our philosophy of managing the forest. And secondly, this is now a conference on, and I don't remember what it was. Anyway, it was mundane and so everybody was happy. But that's how one phone call from a timber industry guy who may not have deliberately known what he was doing disrupted the chief's schedule for three or four hours that day and became my first priority. There's just lots of phone calls like that. Now to follow up on that story, it's kind of interesting. A few years later I moved to Sedona. This is kind of the capital of New Agers. I mean there are people giving spiritual tours of the forest here. It's big business.

HKS: I see that: spiritual reading, eighteen dollars. They have signs around town.

FDR: This is the center of it. I went to a meeting, Friends of the Forest. I'd been here about a month, so they introduced me as the ex-chief of the Forest Service. I got up and made a few comments. Sure enough, one of these spiritual gurus was in the audience, and he came up to me and started to lecture me. He says the most important value of the forest is the spiritual value and the Forest Service doesn't even recognize this. He said the Forest Service has a blind spot to this most important value of the forest. I said oh no, we don't. I said we're right in line with this thinking. I said we've even had a big symposium on just trying to get a handle around the spiritual values of the forest, which he didn't know. He said really? I said yes. I said I can even get you a document that talks about the spiritual values of the forest. Would you do that? He said I never realized that. So I had to eat crow. I came back home the next day and I called the researcher who works in Fort Collins, Colorado, that was handling this symposium. I said do you remember that symposium that we had a few years ago that I had to help you rename. He laughed and he says yes, I remember that. I said do you have a document summarizing the symposium. He says yes, I've got that. I said well I badly need that now. I said I need to give it to some of these New Agers in Sedona. He just laughed, and I told him the story. I said I want you to know that I really bragged on the Forest Service that they were really with it on these spiritual values of the forest. He and I had a big laugh about it. But now the New Agers here are happy that the Forest Service recognizes these values.

HKS: So this issue goes far beyond religious sites for Indian tribes like around Santa Fe and so forth?

FDR: Yes. Vortexes are big deals here. You know what a vortex is?

HKS: No.

FDR: There's one right here, if you're feeling kind of funny you're in the swirl of this vortex energy right now. This little red rock hill here about two blocks away is one of the main vortexes in Sedona, and this is where energy evolves up out of the earth and swirls around and has a lot of spiritual values. If you get kind of tired during your stay here I'll take you up there and it will get you recharged and keep you going for six months. But vortexes are a big thing here, and there's a lot of Indian culture here and Indian stories and medicine wheels is a big deal here. And it's a thriving business. I mean a lot of people are making money on spiritual tours of the forest here. I digressed, but that was kind of an interesting story.

If you're going to be effective as an agency head in Washington, D.C., you have to do a lot of innovative, creative things. You cannot go back there kind of being a bureaucrat without taking risks and be successful. The best you can ever hope to be in D.C. would be mediocre, and that'd be on your best days if you didn't take calculated risks every day. I had this phrase I said occasionally that if I wasn't willing to be fired every day I came to work I wasn't doing my job as chief, because the system will eat you up and it will just grind an agency down. It will grind your programs and budget down. You've got to understand the full scope of the process, which is kind of irrational at times, and play it to the hilt if you're going to have a viable and robust agency with a budget and programs to back it up. Otherwise, the system will just grind you down, you and your agency and your programs and your budget.

HKS: Sort of a Darwinian government.

FDR: If anybody needs to be an entrepreneur it's the chief of the Forest Service with a willingness to be fired. I was a risk taker, and I think most people who know me would say I took a lot of calculated risks that a lot of other people wouldn't have taken. You can be a caretaker of the Forest Service but you can't move the Forest Service forward without being an entrepreneur and calculated risk taker.

HKS: I'm sure you guys have to spend a large amount of energy to get even a small thing through, and then a key member of the committee is sick that day. The whole thing falls apart and you've got to start all over again. A lot of patience, timing.

FDR: I would have to say my best friend in Congress was Senator McClure of Idaho. The environmentalists hated him, and he was very sympathetic with the timber industry and the mining industry, the grazing industry. When the Republicans were in charge of the Congress he was my sub-committee appropriation chairman. So he was the most powerful guy. He also was very influential over on the substantive legislative side. He had his arms around the Forest Service in the Senate. He and I became, I would say, friends, and he and I plotted a lot together. He consulted with me, also gave me

directions. You go back and say who's responsible for the budget being as big as it is for the Forest Service, and it's just like old Jesse Helms going up and making his statements about the Endowment of the Arts which eventually got translated into millions of dollars for the Forest Service budget. I'll expound on Senator Helms later.

Senator McClure deserves a lot of the credit, first of all having the personal interest in the Forest Service. Today it's hard to get a member of Congress personally interested in the details of the Forest Service and fighting for you with the other members of Congress and being very effective at it. Even though Senator McClure was very sympathetic and strong on the timber and the grazing and the mining, he also was strongly supportive of the recreation program, the trails programs, and the fish and wildlife. I convinced him that, you know, the future of the Forest Service depended on true multiple use, and I'm so proud of him. I mean he was right there on the ball right when I needed him every time. And you've got to have a few members of Congress like that. You can also grind down as an agency with inattention to details if you don't have a Senator McClure watching out for you up there in such a key position. We were his favorite agency, too, and rightly so. I mean, look at the state of Idaho, and the Forest Service is a big part of that state.

HKS: Right, what, 40 percent of the state is national forest? Something like that.

FDR: If the Forest Service is successful in a state like Idaho, it's going to make the member's congressional delegation look good. If we're screwing up and the people are unhappy with us, it just causes all kinds of problems for the congressional delegation. So there is that natural potential alliance between the Forest Service and congressional delegations because everybody wants the federal government to look good and let them take credit for it. They don't want to be screwing around with a bunch of issues and constituents, you know, complaining to them about all the terrible things the Forest Service is doing. So the chief has to capitalize on that.

HKS: The state's rights notion is that the western states aren't going to be pushed around by Washington. I imagine it really helps the local senator to be able to say that I'm looking out for my state and those guys have to talk to me first before they act out here. When we were talking about a so-called typical day of a chief, what time did you go to work in the morning? I mean you need secretarial support. You want to talk to other people. You don't work an eight-hour day, or do you do a lot of work at home?

FDR: At home. Washington is not an early town. The Hill doesn't get started 'til nine o'clock or so. Fortunately I was a morning person. I would say on a typical day, at least three or four days of the week I would get up at four or five o'clock in the morning, and I'm mentally my best in the morning. I would go through briefing books. I would sort through my calendar for the day, the meetings I was going to have and I'd get in my own mind my thoughts lined up, what I had going for me, where I was vulnerable. So I strategized in the mornings. Then I came to work at normal time, but what nobody knew is I had already thought my day through before I got to work. The chief has tremendous reading material, and I spent a lot of my Saturdays and Sundays and nights just reading stuff. It was a seven-day-a-week job.

My wife always said, I don't see how you can do it and keep your energy levels up. But again, if you're going to move forward and make change and make progress it takes time and energy and thinking power, strategy. Of course, my staff would give me a lot of strategy, but in the end when you're facing a congressman or a committee or interest group you have to have whatever strategy internalized in your own head. I found that there was a tremendous expectation in Washington that the chief know what was going on. You cannot go to these key meetings with key people and say a few nice words, make an opening statement and say now I have my timber staff or my recreation staff and he'll talk about this subject. It's a turnoff in Washington. It's probably a prestige sort of thing. The chief has got to be on top of, if not all the details, the basic principles, the basic outline, the basic strategy. The only way you do that is to spend a tremendous amount of time just you, your brain, either thinking or reading material.

HKS: Did people respect your privacy? Did the press call you at ten o'clock at night at home, or senators?

FDR: Yes. There's no respect in Washington for that. Washington prides itself on chewing up and spitting out people and demanding whatever they want from you. It is a tough town.

HKS: I asked McGuire that question, and he responded there was on occasion ten o'clock at night some member of Congress or some senator would call, had been drinking too much and wanted to know wasn't there a Forest Service lodge. He wanted to go on vacation so he wanted the chief to sign him up for next Tuesday or some such thing. Someone was in the room, and he wanted to show off to his buddy he could make the chief of the Forest Service dance if he pulled the string or something. You have to have a lot of sand in your gizzard, I guess, to be an agency head nowadays and probably it's always been that way, a matter of degree.

FDR: It's always been that way except today the Forest Service is so visible, so controversial. See, when you're not controversial, you can go along without getting people's attention and demanding your time. But as things get more controversial and you get more political, more people will get involved, more people demanding the Congress either do something about the Forest Service that they're unhappy about or get the Forest Service more money to do more. The population of people and demands on your time just keep getting bigger and bigger and bigger. It is on a one-way trend steadily up.

HKS: I suppose. You read in Pinchot's diaries he's walking down the street in Washington and he bumps into the secretary of agriculture, and they chat. I don't know how often a secretary walks around town now. I mean it was a much smaller town, a simpler time.

FDR: Now they have limousines and chauffeurs.

The chief's job is probably is the most hectic job in the Forest Service because so many people demand his time and have the power to demand it. You seldom make it through a day as you have scheduled it. Going back to the associate chief-chief relationship, why

it's so important to have an associate chief is because you just can't let this phone call disrupt four hours of meetings or whatever the chief had scheduled. Those things have to go on. So a lot of times George would get sidetracked. I would take his scheduled meetings. He would take my scheduled meetings. I would take his appointments. He would take my appointments. To have any kind of a semblance of order in the chief's office, you have to have that setup or you'd be in constant disruption.

What drives the Forest Service, what drives the thinking, are staff people and rightly so. I mean, these people have time to sit down and think things through, and a lot of your time as chief is spent getting briefed by your staff people. Basically what staff is supposed to do is say, here's an issue or an opportunity and we've thought this thing through, here are the alternatives and chief, here's how we think you ought to go and we want you to sign off on that and let's go. Or the chief says that doesn't sound right and sends them back to the drawing board. The chief has limited time to do creative thinking. It's more making judgments and then putting your support behind the creative, innovative thinking that your staff people do for you. Now the chief frequently sees an opportunity, and I did this a lot. I would kind of see an opportunity or something we needed to do and I would call my deputy chiefs in and say let's spend some time on this. But other than me just kind of identifying the opportunity or the issue, I sat back and waited until people that did have time to think about it could come back to me. Lots of time spent with your people.

Dealing with Congress

FDR: Budgeting. I probably took budgeting as serious as any chief has ever taken it because big decisions get made in budget. It determines your priorities. It determines where the Forest Service effort is going to be spent. I spent a lot of time on budgeting, and George did too. I don't want to call it a heavy hand, but he and I were a force to deal with in determining what the Forest Service budget was and the shape of it. We had to because we had to submit our budget to the secretary of agriculture and his budget officer. Who did they expect to come to explain, the chief and the associate chief. I had to know that budget to explain to the secretary. Of course, we'd send our budget over in paper form first. The secretary's budget officer would analyze it and brief the secretary and the assistant secretary. Then they'd call the chief over, and that was standard operating practice with all the agency heads in agriculture, and there was interaction. The secretary would say well, why are you spending the money on this or you're proposing x million dollar increase, why is that necessary. Or the secretary would say you know, I've been getting some bad feedback on your land acquisition program. Why are you doing so much land acquisition. The chief is on the firing line. You can't have a general relationship with your budget. You have to be specific because you're on the firing line, and how I answer those questions to the secretary and then later to OMB may mean millions of dollars to the Forest Service. Once we get the president's budget the chief is the main witness in the hearings before the Senate and House appropriations committees. Of course, you have members of Congress who have special interests, and then they've got staff people and they dig down into the details of the budget and ask you very detailed questions about your budget. The chief has to make some assumptions about how to make the Forest Service successful. The assumption in my mind was that one of

my most important jobs was to get as much resources in terms of dollars to my field people as possible. If I could get money to our field people, good things would happen. Or conversely, if our field people didn't have money, a lot of good things were not going to get done. So I took the budget very serious, and I spent a lot of time on that. I would take big briefing books home and work at night. I'm a morning person, so I'd frequently get up at four o'clock in the morning and go through briefing books or my testimony before the Hill. That took a lot of time.

HKS: Roughly how many people are there GS-14 and above in the Forest Service, a thousand or so?

FDR: Oh yes, all the forest supervisors, deputy forest supervisors, all the regional staffs and some of the sub-staff and all your key line officers. Gosh, I don't remember, but the chief makes all personnel selections for GS-14s and above. Again, if you don't have money and great people in place and those two together, you're not going to have a very successful Forest Service. Max didn't spend as much time as I did on the budget, but he probably spent as much or more time than I did on personnel selections.

HKS: When I interviewed the deputy chiefs of research, Buckman and others, they talked about their testimony to Congress and appropriations. Do you go over as a group, and you make a general statement and then the deputies respond to questions? What's the procedure there?

FDR: Well, the chief and the deputy chiefs all are lined up at the table facing the committee. The chief is the chief witness and does make the opening statement and answers all the questions that he has the knowledge to answer. Occasionally in the general question and answer, he will refer to a deputy. But then when they look at your research program, that's when we would turn to Buckman, and say Buckman would be the chief spokesman for the research program. The same was true for the State and Private deputy and the National Forest System deputy. But frequently they'd get into questions about relative priorities say between research and national forests, and only the chief could answer those questions. That was a big question during the Reagan administration. Research was always strongly supported. I mean research was good even for its own sake up until the Reagan administration and John Crowell came in. John Crowell had this philosophy that if research didn't have the payoff economically, don't do it. He was applied research oriented. He didn't go much for basic research. So John Crowell really for the first time in the history of the Forest Service took on the merits of research and what we were getting in return for our research results. And for the first time in the history of the Forest Service the research budget went down considerably, and Congress didn't like that and Buckman didn't like it. The appropriations committee knew what was going on, and so they would ask leading questions of Buckman, how come he's not asking for more money, why you're being cut. The chief simply had to step in and say we've looked at our overall priorities, because you've got to support the president's budget. The president cannot afford to have agency heads going up there ignoring their priorities in their budgets.

Tough situations. I remember one time Chairman Yates kept bearing down on him. Why didn't he need and want more money. Finally Buckman basically said yes, Mr. Chairman,

if it was left up to me I'd have more research money, but I have to look at the overall priorities of the Forest Service, and I didn't come out as well as I thought I should. That wasn't the exact wording but that was kind of what he said, and that's what the chairman wanted to hear him say, and then they'd turn around and increase the research budget. But the chief has to stand firm with the administration's position.

HKS: And is John Crowell sitting there during this time and he's throwing daggers at Buckman, or everyone knows the game?

FDR: No, everybody knows the game. We'd have two days of hearings, and John Crowell would frequently be there for the opening, for the first hour and then he'd leave. It's a big game.

HKS: The budget obviously is a big thing. How many other "important" hearings do you testify at? I realize there are ad hoc hearings where they want to find out something. You have a budget hearing, what else, legislative hearings?

FDR: Yes, on legislation; frequently they will request the chief to be the witness.

HKS: It's up to the committee to decide who the witness is?

FDR: No, it's up to us to decide. The typical request will come down, and they don't coordinate this with us. The Congress is on their own schedule, and they could care less about what the chief of the Forest Service's schedule is. They just send down a letter and say on August 25th we've scheduled a hearing on this piece of legislation and would you please submit your position and provide a witness. So that is a big decision to be made. To back up first to answer your question. But sometimes they will say on the 25th we have a hearing on this legislation and we request that the chief of the Forest Service be the witness. That's kind of rare, but occasionally it happens. That is a big decision that we make.

Every time we get a request we sit down usually in chief and staff, or did during my tenure, and decide. If it was high profile, there was an expectation from the chairman that the chief would be there, and I would take those hearings. The next level was George. Still high profile, they need an overall view of the Forest Service, and George would kind of be the second choice. If we were dealing with some specific issue like involving a national forest or national recreation area or a wilderness proposal or something like that, then we'd delegate that down to a deputy chief for national forests or his associate. We never got below associate deputy chiefs in testifying before Congress. So it would depend upon the scope of the issue, how technical it was, and a size up of who does the chairman expect up there. I mean, that takes a lot of time for Congress. When the chairman schedules a hearing, he or she normally expects a high profile person there and you try to meet those expectations.

HKS: Obviously Congress is a political institution, but can you make a general statement that they were competent people looking out for the welfare of the American people? Or is it strictly political, if you were representing the Reagan administration, the Democrats would shoot you down if they could

FDR: It's a mix of all of that. You really do have some true statesmen up there that are looking out for the big picture and the American people. But they've always got their home district or home state issues which they expect you to be responsive to. You have to respond to every congressional concern. But if you've got somebody on your committee that's shaping your budget or very influential in your legislation, and he calls you up and says chief, I've got a problem in my district or my home state, I have to admit we bust our butts to try to resolve that member of Congress' problem. Not that we don't try to do it elsewhere, but you put a special effort on those people.

Partisan politics does get involved in it, and that was really difficult during the Reagan administration. Now Max was the chief for six of the eight years and I was chief for two of the eight years of Reagan. But Max bore the brunt of that because the Reagan administration came in with Jim Watts, Ann Gorsuch of EPA, John Crowell with the Forest Service. Reagan had an agenda, and that was to put people in charge of these natural resource agencies and the environment that had a business attitude toward them and kind of shape them up. Almost the opposite of what we have right now, which Clinton-Gore has got people very sympathetic to the environmental end of things in charge of these agencies.

Max really caught the brunt of it during his time of being chief. Whereas, the year or two before he was up there taking one philosophical approach to some issues, all of a sudden Max's position hardened up and came more in line with the business interests to reflect the Reagan administration. Max had to do some quick shifting in his spoken word as a result of the change of the administration. And the Democrats, you know, took advantage of that to really pound back at the Reagan administration about their actually anti-environmental and pro-business approach to things. And so you always get that.

Now the nice thing about the chief of the Forest Service, although it tends to get more nasty all the time, is they understand the professional chief is in a professional job having to speak for the administration, and so they didn't level so much criticism at the chief personally but they would rightly say your political bosses down there are way off-base. We're not going to go along with what you propose or this sort of thing. You're always going to have that tension between Congress and the administration, and it is aggravated many fold like now when you have the administration under one party and the Congress under another party. I had that throughout my tenure as chief. Probably a lot of the Forest Service people now think we have an unusual situation with a Republican Congress and a Democratic administration and how tough that is, but most of us chiefs had that same situation. I had just the opposite. I had a Republican administration and a Democratic Congress. They're always lobbing barbs back and forth and trying to get political gain in the spoken word as well as action. The Forest Service gets caught up in that and it's a tough road to weave your way through.

HKS: You get to know certain members of Congress and senators very well, and you probably have one-to-one conversations with them.

FDR: Yes.

HKS: And they probably call you Dale or chief.

FDR: Yes.

HKS: Does a relationship ever evolve that you can call them by their first names? Are you really friends, or are they superior to you, and they can call you Dale but you can't call them Jim or something?

FDR: I had a lot of strong supporters in Congress and even some people that I considered friends. But I never let my guard down, and I called them senator or congressman so-and-so or Mr. Chairman or Chairman.

HKS: I can see you might take a member of Congress out on a horseback trip or fishing or canoeing trip.

FDR: I did that.

HKS: You're out really roughing it over a campfire, but still there's a hierarchy?

FDR: Well, you know, I probably got to the point where I could have called some of them by their first name, but I just played it safe in case I might have misjudged that. Bruce Vento, I took him on a horseback ride. I took him out a couple of times in the wilderness. He was my committee chairman for public lands on the interior committee. Bruce was a great guy, and he and I became friends, and I took him on a horseback ride in Virginia and overnight camping trip. I took him into the Bob Marshall Wilderness for two or three days, horseback ride, wilderness experience, camping out. I consider Bruce my friend, but I never called him Bruce. I always called him congressman. Now I could probably have gotten away with it and it would have been no problem, but I didn't take that chance.

HKS: You go to Congress, you have an appropriations hearing and an authorization hearing too? There are two hearings?

FDR: Yes.

HKS: And appropriations is tougher?

FDR: Well, there's kind of a three-step sequence. First you have to have the authorization for your program, which is the basic legislation. Usually legislation has some kind of a maximum authorization, you know, ten million dollars for this program or whatever. Then ten or fifteen years ago they interjected a second step, which was the budget committees. Before the appropriations committee ever gets a hold of it, it goes through the budget committee. So the authorizing committees would hold hearings and review your budget and ask you what you're going to do with this money and all the same questions, almost like an appropriation hearing. As a result the authorizing committee will make a recommendation to the budget committee and the appropriations committee. Finally the budget committee takes the big picture outlook and allocates a tentative amount to the appropriations committee, which then they have to allocate among the

various agencies. Then you go to the appropriation hearings. So budgeting is a yearlong process. There's no slack season.

Let me tell you a story about budgeting that probably few people understand. Bless old Jesse Helms, your senator. I mentioned him earlier. The budget makes strange bedfellows, and the Forest Service, you know, is in the interior appropriation. Guess who else was in there, the Endowment for the Arts. The Forest Service and the Park Service are competing with the Endowment for the Arts for the breakout of whatever our interior appropriation lump sum they get to work with. So they're a competitor of the Forest Service. Well, Chairman Yates, who was the chairman of our appropriations subcommittee from Chicago, was a big arts guy, and he loved the arts. He would always beef up the Endowment for the Arts appropriation at the expense of Forest Service and Park Service and BLM because we're all in the same appropriation bill. Bless old Jesse Helms. He got off on this pornography in the arts, you know, lambasted the Endowment for the Arts. From a selfish standpoint I was back there saying go Jesse, go Jesse!

Old Jesse was pretty influential in the Senate on his pornography and the arts problem. The Senate would just whack them and cut them down, you know, into half or something in part due to Jesse's urging. Jesse had a lot of the senators behind him, too, on what art is supposed to be and what it isn't supposed to be if the government is going to help finance it. So old Jesse would get the Senate appropriation for the Endowment for the Arts whacked way back, and then they'd go to conference and the Senate would play hardball with Yates and the House. They would cut Yates way back, and they'd come back about where they were before with the Endowment for the Arts and restore the money back to the Forest Service and the Park Service that he had taken out. Chairman Yates was so much a supporter of the arts that he paid a big price in dealing with the Jim McClures and the Hatfields of the world to get his money restored to the arts in terms of money for the Forest Service road program or timber program, which he didn't like. The Forest Service is hundreds of millions of dollars richer today because of the Endowment for the Arts and good old Jesse Helms and his colleagues playing politics with the budget process. Now doesn't that make strange bedfellows?

HKS: It really does.

FDR: Of course, I never said that to anybody but I was saying under my breath all the time when old Jesse would get up and make those rip-roaring speeches, I'd just keep saying go Jesse, go Jesse! Because I knew how that was all going to play out.

HKS: I didn't realize that interior has a pot of money, x billion dollars, and agencies compete within that amount. The idea of increasing overall appropriations to interior probably would be a very last resort.

FDR: No, those appropriation committees, in fact, if you read the paper they've got problems right now in that appropriations are exceeding their cap. They call them caps that they give each committee. So basically what the appropriations committee is doing now is just deciding how to allocate a lump sum to the various agencies, and so you have different competitors. The odd thing about the Forest Service is that in the budget process it starts out competing with other agriculture agencies in the Department of Agriculture.

Then it goes to OMB, and all of a sudden the Forest Service gets taken out of the agriculture budget and they start looking at interior. Then I take on some new competitors, interior agencies. When I get to the Hill it's all interior as your competitors not other agriculture agencies. You know the history of that better than anybody. The national forests used to be over in interior until 1905, and Congress has never changed. So the Forest Service has the blessing of reporting to two sets of committees, agriculture and interior, because Congress has never changed since 1905, and they don't want to give up responsibilities for the Forest Service. So we end up with the Forest Service having a dual workload in terms of committees to deal with. Now that's a plus in some ways. I've used the agriculture committee to help me out with interior sometimes. But it's a big minus in that it occupies more of your time, more of your effort, just more people you've got to feed and care for and keep happy.

Dealing with the White House and OMB

HKS: I can see that. Russ Train told me a story about when he was head of CEQ. Nixon had a process that he would call each agency head, or at least some, directly to sit down with the president and negotiate for three pet projects without OMB involved. If they could convince the president they would get those three. So he spent a lot of time trying to pick and choose from his whole agenda of what three things he would want. Did that ever continue on to other presidents after Nixon?

FDR: I don't remember all the details. OMB is a powerful organization because they are an extension of the president, and they even order around and dictate to cabinet members. Since the cabinet officer reports to the president as well as OMB, I think all presidents have a kind of an appeal level that if a cabinet member feels so strongly about something that has been overruled by OMB he does have appeal rights to the president. Now that doesn't occur very often. Dick Lyng and President Reagan were big buddies from California. Seems like I remember Dick going to the president a couple of items. But basically cabinet officers and OMB work it out. Of course, that's a control on OMB, too, that they don't get too dictatorial with cabinet officers because the cabinet officer can always appeal to the president. That appeal process is open, but no cabinet officer wants to do that. I mean you've really got to get screwed by OMB and feel strongly about it before a cabinet officer is going to go appeal to the president. Now Nixon may have, according to Train, openly invited three projects. I mean, that could be a technique he used. But in government everything works on hardnosed negotiation arriving at a compromise to the maximum extent possible. I'm talking about within the administration. But only appealing things that really are dear to your heart, and you think you've got some chance of getting. In my case, I could appeal to the secretary if my assistant secretary screwed me too much in my opinion. There's always appeal level, but you don't want to use it very often.

HKS: You referred to a phone call you got from a White House staffer about the spiritual values of the forest. Did you have routine relationships with the White House or were they always ad hoc?

FDR: Ad hoc. They follow the chain of command traditionally. Now the White House will talk to the secretary's office, and the secretary will talk to the chief. That's the routine. The White House gets inexperienced people, too, and they don't always understand the hierarchy, so occasionally I would get the call direct from the White House.

I had a great relationship with Clayton Yeutter. He was my secretary of agriculture the first few years of Bush's administration. His wife even worked for me. She was a volunteer tree planter. So we had a great relationship. In the latter years of the Bush administration, Clayton was kind of the chief of staff for the president, and Clayton talked to me fairly often. I mean, if he had a Forest Service issue, since he and I had a personal relationship, he would just call me direct. That had its advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage is I had a secretary of agriculture at the time, Madigan, who didn't appreciate that, felt threatened by it, and had a managerial style of intimidation. Frequently after Clayton would talk to me, I'd have to back track through to bring everybody up to date in the secretary's office, and that was uncomfortable. So it's better that it follows the chain of command.

HKS: The public perception is that the president is elected to office and appoints people and knows what's going on, but you read sometimes they've never met a member of the cabinet before they're appointed.

FDR: After three years or so in the Reagan administration, there was a meeting at the White House that included--I forget the name but it was kind of a common story--the secretary of HUD. Reagan went up and introduced himself and said glad to meet you; and the secretary had been his cabinet officer for three years.

Dealing with Other Agencies, Institutions, Companies

HKS: I suppose that's true more than we could imagine. Did you have routine dealings with other agencies like BLM that had comparable responsibilities to make sure that you could be as compatible as possible?

FDR: Yes. I took the initiative. Of course, I'd been chief two years under Reagan and associate chief four years before that. When Bush took over I felt that we needed a closer working relationship with especially the three other land management agencies that managed a third of this nation; the Park Service, the BLM, and the Fish and Wildlife Service. Prior to the Bush administration, I would say we had interactions, periodic meetings, but it was kind of ad hoc, based on issues. I took it upon myself, since I was the only carryover of the natural resource agency heads from Reagan to Bush, to set up a more formalized meeting among the four of us. I put that on my agenda, and as soon as the head of the Park Service, the head of the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the head of BLM were announced by the Bush administration, I tried to be about their first phone call to welcome them to the administration. I made a basic pitch to all three guys, which they accepted. I just said we need to work together closer. We need to personally interact, us four heads, to set the pattern of cooperation for our staff working together. I would like

soon as you get on board to have a meeting with the four of us to talk about how we are going to cooperate in the Bush administration. All three of those guys said, great idea. Of course, what else would they say, I mean I was about their first phone call after they got announced they were going to be the new agency head. Two of them were coming from outside, and the other one was already in Washington.

We periodically met throughout the Bush administration, and our staff knew we were meeting. We set the tone for cooperation among the four agencies. We took about two or three field trips together where we met with our regional heads and spent a day or two going over the issues in that region and how we the agency heads could help the regional heads work together and solve issues they were facing. We took turns in hosting those meetings. We'd always meet with the governors and the key people in the state. They would usually have a banquet for us and it was kind of a big deal. I hosted the first in Oregon on the spotted owl. The Park Service hosted one in Alaska. I still remember Wally Hickel was the governor of Alaska, and he was the secretary of interior under Nixon and that was quite enlightening. Very knowledgeable guy, and he kind of lined the four of us out in his views of how the federal government was managing Alaska. We certainly got a very emphatic view from the governor of how we could improve our operations in Alaska, and some good points. BLM hosted one here in the Southwest. Fish and Wildlife Service hosted one in Wyoming as well. So there were five or six or seven of these joint meetings with the agencies. During the Bush administration, even though we got crossways on some things later, at least there were some good personal relationships among the four agency heads.

HKS: Since the four agencies have different statutes that govern it, is it almost impossible to really work together, or is it more of an informational exchange so you understand the constraints and opportunities the other agencies work under?

FDR: No, there's a lot of opportunities to work together, especially where you're divided by boundary lines on the land like the greater Yellowstone area. The big conflict is Fish and Wildlife Service in that they have program responsibilities in the form of the Endangered Species Act that has no boundaries. So with their mandates and requirements, especially the Endangered Species Act, they kind of roll all over the Park Service, the Forest Service, and the BLM, and that creates a lot of conflicts. But between the Park Service and BLM and the Forest Service, we have different legislation, statutory basis, but our responsibilities are kind of divided on a boundary line on the land. That provides great opportunities to coordinate activities across boundaries, and there's not the programmatic conflicts like you have with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

HKS: When you wanted to know what the lumber industry or the environmentalists thought about something, is there a source you went to? Did you go to the associations or did you go to a lead company or the Sierra Club?

FDR: It's kind of obvious, but occasionally I would call people if I wasn't quite sure. As mean as Washington is and the great gnashing of teeth back there, there is a fairly good working relationship among people. I once made a speech to the rangers out here in Region 3. When I moved out here, I met the ranger over at Camp Verde, and he said chief, the one thing I remember you telling us at this rangers meeting--he said we were all

worried about all the conflict and why you folks back in Washington can't get it together--and he said you made one statement that I still remember: don't worry about Washington because most of what we do is all for show for the rest of you. And there's a lot of truth to that. A lot of what goes on in Washington is for show for the rest of the people. So in spite of how Washington comes across to the American people, there's a lot of personal relationships and interactions. People know each other and they talk and communicate a lot more than the American people out here or even government employees like a ranger in Camp Verde thinks we do.

There was a lot of interaction in Washington among the interest groups. Usually the interest groups, if they're doing their job and they're very good back there, the lobbyists, they know what's on the plate and the agenda for the Forest Service. They know what we're dealing with. They would usually call me. I didn't have to call them so much. They'd usually call me and say now chief, I want you to understand here's where we come from or this is what we think about this. The mark of a good lobbyist is don't depend on the bureaucrat to call you, you call them and let them know what they'd better do. So there's a lot of interactions. I would have to say I started out with very good relationships with all the interest groups. I went around and talked to a lot of them, had breakfast or lunch with some, but toward the end of my tenure issues got so polarized over the spotted owl and old growth and wilderness that I think the environmental groups kind of decided that they had more to gain by being an adversary to the Forest Service than trying to cooperate with us. It was a strategic decision they made not due to their disliking me or the Forest Service, it was what strategy will best advance our agenda. And the strategic decision they made was probably the right one if your objective is to advance your agenda over your competitors out here--play hardball and be tough and don't cooperate.

HKS: I suppose it depends upon who's in the White House, how they feel, if they want to talk to you, or if they want to talk to the White House. That changes administration to administration.

FDR: Yes. The timber industry and the commodity economic groups had free access to the Reagan administration. They did not give the environmentalists the time of the day. Bush came along and tried to change that. He tried to be more balanced. You know he campaigned among many other things, I will be an environmental president. Bush really reached out and tried to establish rapport and contact and relationships with the environmental groups, which had been shut out during the Reagan administration. But he was not successful at that. By that time the environmental groups were in the ideological hardball mode because if you're going to cooperate with somebody that means you have to compromise, and they were in no compromising mood. In spite of what I think was a major effort by the Bush administration to reach out to the environmental groups, things had been hardened. Their relationships had hardened to such a point that they didn't give Bush a chance. Bush finally washed his hands of the environmental groups. Now you've got just the opposite. With Al Gore, the darling of the environmental groups, it's just switched. They have ready access to the White House. They can cause, just as timber industry could cause, the White House to call me to straighten me out. Now the environmental groups can call the White House to straighten out the chief on their issues. I doubt the timber industry is very influential or really gets much more than the time of

the day from this administration. The Forest Service is caught up in this. All of a sudden the people who are pulling the strings that influence you, not all of a sudden but over time, has changed from timber industry to the environmental groups. The Forest Service has to be pretty light on its feet.

Dealing with the Regions and Stations

HKS: I can see that. The Forest Service prides itself that decentralization is part of the culture and folklore. Kaufman's book deals with how the agency holds itself together but is still decentralized. How decentralized is it? You deal with the stations and the regions. Do you ever deal much forest by forest or is it always basically chain of command?

FDR: I always tried to respect the chain of command. I would travel a lot; chiefs travel a lot. You asked me what a typical day of the chief was. I neglected to talk about it, but I think I mentioned that with Max. But you know the chief probably spends at least a third of his time, at least Max and I did, traveling and giving speeches and interacting with the folks out in the country. So I did interact with a lot of supervisors. I would go to forest supervisors meetings that the regional forester would have. I would come visit national forests and interact with employees, but that was more just getting acquainted, getting feedback, telling them what was going on. I would never violate regional foresters' prerogatives of telling the supervisors what to do. Now I might go to the regional forester and say while I was on the Coconino National Forest I found some things that kind of disturbed me that people told me about, and give him my thoughts. But you have a dysfunctional organization if it ignores the basic chain of command.

HKS: But the regional forester wouldn't necessarily accompany you and always be at your side when you were meeting the forest supervisors?

FDR: Sometimes and sometimes not. There would always be somebody from the regional office. You know regional foresters have got tight schedules, too, so he would either join me or somebody on his staff would usually be with me.

HKS: McArdle had the legend of knowing everyone's name in the agency. He talked about that. He had a list of ten thousand names and he reviewed them. Everyone believed, secretaries on up, when Mac stopped by the office he'd say how is your husband and all these names. It must be quite a chore to remember the names of people. You recognize them but you meet so many people so briefly.

FDR: It had to be a lot smaller outfit during his days. That's a nice gesture, and I admire McArdle for doing that, but unless you're a genius with a photographic memory and decide that's a priority of yours, that would be impossible today.

HKS: It may not have been true, but people believed it.

FDR: You lose a lot when you get big, and the Forest Service at least during my tenure was a three billion dollar organization with over thirty thousand permanent employees and then another fifteen thousand seasonal employees. So we were big business.

HKS: You referred to already the transition from Reagan to Bush, and that the other three agency heads were all political appointees. They change with the administration. They're really not a whole lot different if it's a change from Republican to Democrat or Reagan to Bush?

FDR: Same generic process. There's this mating dance which you hope ends up in a successful marriage when new political bosses come in with a new administration. Career folks like the chief of the Forest Service, which is kind of unique being career, but you're trying to impress them that you're a good outfit, that we got a lot that we can contribute to the administration, helping them carry out their goals and their philosophy and their campaign promises. So it's kind of a mating dance and you know who's in charge, it's the new political bosses. You're trying to go through a mating dance and hopefully end up with a successful marriage there rather than a divorce in the very beginning. There's always a critical period of time until you get to know your new political bosses and they have confidence in you, you the career folks.

Transition from Bush to Clinton

HKS: The transition from Bush to Clinton; the environment was a pretty prominent issue during the campaign because of Al Gore's book and all of that. So Clinton is elected in November. Did you have pre-inauguration meetings with the Clinton staff? What expectations did you have?

FDR: I need to start earlier. First of all, the night that Clinton announced Al Gore as his running mate for vice president I knew I was gone if they were elected. I knew at that point my days were numbered if Al Gore got to be vice president. And here's why. Al Gore was kind of the leader of a group of environmentally oriented senators that I had a lot of run-ins with. I mean, I was always in conflict with them. Gore and Senator Worth from Colorado and Fowler from Georgia, Kennedy from Massachusetts, and there were a few others, made a run at our budget almost every year on the floor of the Senate to try to drastically reduce our timber program and our roads program. And I don't know if you followed the history of that, but the Forest Service budget was usually on the floor of the Senate for at least a day and sometimes two days with bitter debates about these environmental issues. Gore was the leader of that, or a leader. I had to scramble, I mean I had to call every friend I ever had in the Senate for those showdown votes to win on the floor of the Senate, and these were bipartisan. Especially I had the westerners and most of the southerners behind me, and I'd made a lot of calls to both Democrat senators and Republican senators. We would defeat Gore and his bunch, sometimes fifty-one forty-nine, fifty-two forty-eight. I mean, it was close. I defeated Al Gore and his band of environmentalists. I shouldn't say that, but I helped gather up the votes with some personal phone calls to especially the western senators. One of the guys I could always count on was Senator Domenici of Arizona. He was a Democrat, but he was a good

friend of mine and he would help me rally the Democrats because Gore and all this small group of environmental senators were all Democrats. There was kind of bad blood between me and Gore and that group of senators except for Worth. Senator Worth and I would talk. Even though we'd disagree, we would talk and have friendly discussions. But Gore, that never happened.

HKS: Did you testify to any of Gore's committee hearings?

FDR: No, Gore was not on any of the committees dealing with us.

HKS: His book struck me as being mainly a summary of committee hearings and oversight trips. I don't know if you had any involvement with Senator Gore as a senator.

FDR: I'd met with him a time or two on Tennessee issues, but he was after changing the Forest Service. He wanted to drastically reduce our timber sale road program. That was the big issue. I always beat him. Senator McClure was a dear friend of mine and he and I would strategize and figure out how to beat Gore and his small band of extreme environmental senators. So I did that and Gore always kind of gave me credit for defeating him even though, you know, the guys that really did it were Domenici and Senator McClure, Senator Hatfield, Senator Stevens. You know, those were the leaders that were gathering up the votes, but I was working with them and Gore knew that. So Gore and I never had a good relationship. So the night Clinton said I have selected Al Gore to be my running mate I said I'm gone.

I wouldn't have been an effective chief if I had let Gore just run over the Forest Service as kind of an insignificant senator up there and override what about fifty-one members of the Senate didn't want and was not in line with where the administration was. I mean, I had some obligation to protect my budget and the position of the administration. I think in the history of chiefs surviving change of administration, that's kind of important history that the guy that probably I had the most problems with in the Senate in trying to protect the Forest Service budget became my boss, and that never works out. So my days were numbered and I knew that. But we went ahead and did the normal thing, the briefing books. I went ahead and acted like I was going to be chief during the Clinton administration. I put up a good front knowing full well what was going to happen to me when the time was right. We were as helpful to the administration as possible. The briefing books talked about how our programs tied in with the philosophy of the administration, what we can do.

In my opinion Clinton on the environment is a fairly balanced guy. His record in Arkansas shows that he's a fairly balanced guy on the environment. But basically what he has done is delegate to Al Gore the running of the natural resource agencies. Clinton's just along for the ride. Gore is the guy calling the shots. So we went through the normal process. We were in the height of the spotted owl issue. In the campaign Clinton said you know, if you elect me president I'll straighten the spotted owl thing out. He had the big meeting out in Portland. I was invited to go to that as a participant but that was just a courtesy thing. Espy was our secretary. We prepared briefing books for him. In fact, the guy who sat down personally with Espy to tell him about the kinds of things he ought to do when he got on board with agriculture was a good friend of mine. He even asked me

to prepare me the briefing notes for Espy on the Forest Service. I even did that. Espy never knew that.

I'd worked with the 1890s black land grant schools, which we ought to talk about at some point, and Espy was very closely tied in with those. The presidents of the 1890s rallied around me, and Espy was their friend and said that Robertson's a good guy, don't dare get rid of him. Espy was a good guy, but he wasn't very strong. I mean, he was basically carrying out Gore's orders, which, you know, that's the way things are. He didn't handle it very well, and he really didn't talk to me about replacing me. He went to the Hill and testified that he was going to have to change the leadership of the Forest Service, and he was just following Gore's orders. Espy really never faced up to me, but Lyons, the assistant secretary, finally told me one day we're going to have to change chiefs. I said I knew that and there's no problem here. I mean, I faced reality. It was a bigger deal the way Espy handled it than it really should have been, because any chief knows the realities. When the guy you battled and beat so often in the floor of the Senate becomes your boss, I mean there's no question what's going to happen. It's just a matter of how it unfolds.

HKS: Those of us watching it, the process seemed so mean minded and demeaning to you. Change chiefs, but why go through this three-month public hanging sort of thing? It just seemed outrageous to us watching.

FDR: I had a lot of support on the Hill, you know. I had a lot of friends up there, and they were worried about that. One friend I had was Senator Pryor from Arkansas, who was the president's best friend in the Senate. They were worried about him. I know the strategy they had and Clinton has a history of this. Clinton has a history of treating his friends terrible. When he wants to get rid of them or do something he doesn't back them up. So they felt the need, because I had a lot of members of Congress that were very supportive of me including some Democrats, they felt the need to degrade me. They said these were serious problems with the Forest Service and with this chief, in order to rationalize what they did. They didn't have to do that. They just didn't want to deal with me face to face. What I was expecting was that Secretary Espy would come down and say to me, chief you're part of the Reagan-Bush administration, you represent some things that this administration wants to change about the Forest Service, and we just feel we need to do that with a new guy. I would have said, I agree, let's get on with it. But they just didn't quite know how to handle it and it got sloppy and personal.

HKS: Well, Max was on the DG, the Forest Service telecommunications system, appealing to Lyons for the whole world to see. It was getting kind of dramatic. I don't know how much of that you saw.

FDR: I didn't see any of it.

HKS: This is a sensitive issue, but I'd like to have you comment to the extent that you can about the selection of Thomas as your successor and the fact that he wasn't Senior Executive Service. That's really what Max was concerned about, the politicizing of the chief's office. What was the feeling in chief and staff meetings? You must have talked from time to time about what was going on. It must have been awkward.

FDR: I didn't talk too much. George and I knew what was going on. Now George didn't know if he was going to get axed or not, but seems like I told George one time, George, you and I are together. You're gone when I am, and it turned out that way. He wasn't sure whether he was going to be gone or not, but I knew he was gone too. George and I kind of knew what was going on, but you know, rumors were rampant. We didn't talk too much about that in chief and staff. It wasn't something I felt I needed to do.

HKS: Did you talk to Jack Thomas any time during this process? Did he call you and say, I've been offered the job and what's going on?

FDR: No, everything was fairly secret. All you had to go on was rumors. First of all, Jack and I had a good relationship. He's a world class scientist with a world class reputation as a scientist, and I'd kind of put him in the spotlight. I had to personally call Jack to persuade him to head up the spotted owl scientific team, to look and decide what we were going to do. Jack didn't want to do that initially, and I talked him into it. I remember the conversation. He says I'm an elk guy, eastern Oregon guy, you know. I don't know too much about spotted owls. I said, I know but I've got to capitalize on your reputation as a scientist; we need somebody with your reputation to head the spotted owl team. So that decision I made really put Jack in the spotlight, which if I hadn't done that he probably wouldn't have surfaced as the next candidate for chief. Jack and I had talked, when I was chief, on the spotted owl but there was no communication between Jack and me once they asked him if he'd be chief, and they told him not to talk about it. So Jack was handicapped, and I didn't feel comfortable in saying hey Jack, have they talked to you about being chief. That night it took me about three seconds in my mind when Clinton says Al Gore is my running mate to know that I'm gone. So there was no surprises on my part. It was just kind of how they fumbled it and played it out.

HKS: You've observed in the other agencies where every time they change the president they change the agency heads, and you saw how those agencies operate. Do you care to speculate on the future of the Forest Service if this continues? That if say George Bush gets elected this next time around, the current chief will be out and replaced by a Bush appointee and then so on and so forth. It'll be like the other agencies. The Forest Service has prided itself on professional leadership for generations. Is it a significant loss, or is it just a new way of doing business?

FDR: The Forest Service is more political now. I mean, when you have an agency as involved and as controversial as the Forest Service with all the interest groups, which get reflected in the political parties, it's so high profile. It's just the way it's going to be from now on, I think. I don't see how you can avoid it. The current chief, as getting so closely aligned with Al Gore, even closer than I got to the Bush-Reagan administration, that if the Republicans come in I think he's going to be facing the same future I faced. The Forest Service is kind of carrying out the Al Gore agenda, and that is not sitting well with the Republicans.

HKS: Politicizing the chief's office may bring someone from outside who doesn't know anything about the agency. Can you imagine being chief and coming out of the business world? A lot of managerial experience, you know how to deal with people, how to judge

talent, but you don't understand the programs. So you delegate it to your technical staff. That model work okay probably?

FDR: Oh, it would be kind of like the stock market. It would have a lot of volatility. Can I start back? First of all, Jack Ward Thomas was a friend of mine and his heart was in the right place, and he was very knowledgeable of the resource areas. He was really strong in some areas but really had very little experience in managerial aspects of trying to run the Forest Service. But Jack Ward Thomas wore green underwear. I mean, he was loyal to the old Forest Service, to the people in the Forest Service, and I was not disappointed in him being the new chief. Any chief has some weaknesses and some strengths. The Forest Service has a lot of strengths with people that are strong where you're weak. I was not disappointed because he did bring probably what was needed at the time, a world class reputation for scientific forestry as opposed to politics. I didn't stay close to things, but I think even Jack pretty soon got fed up with the political aspects of the Forest Service, and decided that wasn't what was making him happy in life. I think he had a few run-ins with the administration.

HKS: It seemed apparent to us watching that he was by nature an outspoken person. He became more outspoken as he went along, and you figure somewhere he was crossing a threshold where he couldn't stay chief and talk like that.

FDR: Yes. I know Jack well and there's not a more truthful, honest, outspoken guy, and that went over well with the troops. It did not go over well in Washington sometimes. But even the Republicans liked Jack's outspoken manner. I mean, when Jack went on the Hill, he had the reputation we're speaking with Jack, we're not looking at a mouthpiece in the form of Jack from the administration. That's what I think got Jack in trouble with the administration. I believe the current chief is more viewed now, and that's a change from Jack, as a spokesman for Al Gore and more political than perhaps any chief has ever been. It's going to especially set up the situation where changing parties is going to result in a change of chiefs.

HKS: Supposing that Espy and McGinty and Gore had called you in to a meeting. You sat on one side of the table, they were on the other and they handed you the Gore agenda. You looked at it and said, I can do it. Could you have been comfortable as chief if you stayed on?

FDR: No, no, I could not. I've thought about that, too. Even if Gore and I had not kind of had this bad blood between us, I would not have lasted long with that administration anyway from the agenda standpoint. The environmental groups and their philosophy are calling the shots in the Forest Service now. Environmental groups have got a lot of good points, but it needs moderating just like any group and that moderation I don't think is occurring.

1890s Schools

HKS: You said you wanted to talk about the 1890s schools. This might be a good place to bring it up because my understanding is during your last months as a government employee you worked a lot on that. So explain what that is.

FDR: How much do you know about the 1890s? Maybe for the record I ought to go back and explain that a little.

HKS: They're traditionally black schools. That's 100 percent of my knowledge.

FDR: The first schools were the land grant universities and aimed at educating people in agriculture and home economics. A lot of them were A&Ms, which was mechanical and agriculture. But in the South in the beginning they would not admit black students. The land grant colleges came into being somewhere in the 1860s, and thirty years later they still were not admitting black students in the South. So there was the 1890 legislation which said, well rather than dictate to the existing land grant universities that they'll accept blacks, we'll just set up another set of land grant universities for blacks. So 1890s schools are the black land grant universities in the South.

They have pretty much the same function as the 1860 land grant schools, educating rural kids in agriculture and all these other things. Over the years the 1860 land grants just kept getting stronger and better, and the 1890 black universities were kind of struggling. They struggled all those years. So when the diversity issue came along that government needed to diversify their workforce, here sat the Department of Agriculture, which was one of the worst. I mean, we were mostly white males, in spite of the fact we had eleven or twelve black land grant universities supposedly producing graduates in our field that we should be recruiting from. The black land grant universities always kind of had an inferiority complex, you know, that they weren't getting their fair share, and there was a lot of truth to that. The Department of Agriculture had over the years been a party to strengthening the 1862 land grant universities because we had all these research grants. Who could put forth the best most high-powered scientists to work on these things? So all of our research money, our agriculture money, just kept flowing to the 1862 schools. They kept getting stronger. Agriculture kept flowing money to them, and the 1890 black land grant universities were kind of drying up.

Secretary Lyng, soon after I became chief, really came out with a strong statement about how we must diversify our workforce in the Department of Agriculture. We have an unacceptable situation. He said one of the initiatives is we're going to really focus on the 1890 land grant black universities, and we're going to start recruiting heavily out of those schools to staff our positions. Everybody was worried. The 1862 land grants were going to get their feelings hurt, and they did somewhat. They resisted this a bit. The first action we took was a big conference down in Atlanta where Secretary Lyng invited all of the agency heads and two or three people from each agency, the 1890 land grant university presidents, their deans of agriculture, some of their agriculture faculty and their dean of business administration, the areas where we recruited heavily out of. It was kind of interesting.

We really didn't know those folks, which kind of stated the situation, we hardly know each other. And agriculture people got up and made a lot of speeches. We had a slide

program, which was well done, showing people in agriculture at work. Guess how many minorities were in that show. Zero. We agriculture folks were so proud of that slide program because it was professionally done and we just got immediate negative reaction. Not a black face in your slide program. That's an indication you don't have blacks in very many positions of agriculture, you're not even sensitive in putting together a slide program to show the black audience that you have blacks working in the Department of Agriculture. Really hurt some agriculture people's feelings. But it was a really good conference and we had a lot of interaction, got acquainted, we came up with action plans. I have to admit the 1890s kind of had a woe-is-us attitude and how agriculture had been neglecting them and that they needed USDA as their partner to strengthen the 1890s schools. A lot of truth to that except they kind of overplayed it perhaps, but they made their point.

So Secretary Lyng and Peter Meyers, our deputy secretary, huddled with the agency heads. Peter Meyers took the lead and he said from this day forward we're going to take the message from the 1890s schools serious, and we're going to do something about this. He said I'm going to set up a task force with five agency heads and five presidents of the 1890s. First of all, he told the agency heads I expect them to be bold and come forward with some programs and actions where we can strengthen these schools and be partners with them, even if it creates some political flack with the 1862s because we've just got to face up to the 1862 land grant university schools and say you're great schools, but you're not producing the product we want in USDA. And that's true. We found out black students tend to go to black schools and the 1862 land grants weren't attracting very many blacks. So he said we've just got to toughen up and face those 1862 land grant schools and say unless you're producing the products we want in USDA, which includes minorities, we're going elsewhere to do our recruiting. I was really proud of that rather strong statement.

Well, here I was sitting there in that meeting and I was saying yeah, let's do that because all of us agency heads are under pressure. It wasn't a problem of finding minorities, the problem was finding minorities who were well qualified and really top notch people. So after the meeting, Peter Meyers walked up to me and here I was chief of the Forest Service and he says Dale, I want you to head the task force. I want you in charge of this. He said the Forest Service is the biggest agency in the department, you've got the most influence and I want you to take this job. You tell me what you need from me and Secretary Lyng, and we're going to make this successful. You do whatever you've got to do to make a difference here. I took my charge seriously, and so I headed up that task force. It was five agency heads or assistant heads and five college presidents.

The first meeting was over at the black land grant university in southern Maryland. The black presidents came prepared for the speech and they started on woe-is-us, the same old dance about how they'd been mistreated and neglected in agriculture. They were still in the mode that they had a problem, not we're trying to solve something. So I stopped the presidents. I said whoa, we've heard that story in Atlanta. The Agriculture Department's got the message. From this point forward we are your partners, and we are going to help you be successful. You represent a tremendous opportunity. You need to stand tall. You need to have self-confidence. Agriculture will stand beside you, and we're going to recruit your graduates. We're going to do what it takes to strengthen your programs and

we need to shift thinking. It really set those presidents back. I mean, no had ever told them that before. I wouldn't even let them finish their speech about this woe-is-us.

They got over that, and they had a big reception for us that night in the president's back yard. One by one the presidents came up to me and said you know, you're right. Long as we keep thinking we're not very good we're not going to be very good. You got our commitment, we're going to stand tall, have self-confidence, move forward. I kept talking about opportunities with them. So from that point on they actually introduced me as the opportunity guy. I remember the guy at Delaware State introduced me a lot of times, and he said I've learned one thing about the chief. You don't talk about problems. You talk about opportunities and challenges and what we're going to do about them. So I really felt good about that, and we went on and had a very successful program.

We went to Congress and we got authority for capacity building grants, which we gave to these universities. And capacity building meant building capacity, not just trying to do research on some plant. So we got millions of dollars for that. We got that out to them. They were so happy and pleased about that. Each of us agencies put up scholarship money. I went to Congress. I got authorization in my appropriation bill for scholarships for minorities, and all the agencies did. I think I provided three or four scholarships for blacks, full ride. Again though, the requirement was they had to get an A student out of high school, top notch, you know, the top black they could find. We set aside a lot of our summer seasonal jobs, all agencies did. We recruited in a massive way out of the 1890s, again, at the expense of the other schools. So we hired a lot of their students in the summertime. I had them all over the Forest Service. We finally evolved into centers of excellence.

I was reporting direct to the secretary on this, and the secretary made it clear to the other agency heads that I was in charge. So I had a lot of meetings with my counterparts, other agency heads, and basically the secretary told them in a nice way, Dale's in charge of this program, you guys get with it and you cooperate with this task force. So all I had to do was meet with them and say we need scholarships, I need summer jobs, I need these capacity building grants.

The last project I worked on, which was successful, we called the center of excellence. You look at your key recruiting areas, like in our case natural resource people, the veterinarian folks and soil conservation, all of that. I expect each agency head to survey these land grant universities, select the one that has the best core program producing graduates in your field, and we're going to make that a center of excellence and make them as competitive as we can with the 1862 land grants. So all the agency heads did that. We selected Alabama A&M because they had a forestry school, non-accredited. We went down and looked at it and, if you compared it to Duke or North Carolina State, there was no comparison. But we pumped money into them. We made grants. I sent people to give guest lectures. I gave scholarships for forestry students. Fortunately I had a research lab there on the campus, and a lot of the students started working for us part-time in our research program. Scholarships were a big thing. We really built up Alabama A&M's forestry school where they were at least producing graduates that were getting exposed to the kinds of things we wanted them to get exposed to. Basically, we hired all of their graduates. I remember one meeting I had down there at Auburn. The dean showed up,

and he was suspicious of what I was doing. But he took it really well. He went through the program, and I told him the same thing the secretary of agriculture told us. Unless Auburn is producing high quality minorities, we're going to go elsewhere recruiting those. I mean, we have to go where the product is. Each of the agencies started what they called a center of excellence, you know, at one of the schools. Just happened Alabama A&M was ours, and I think that was very successful. At least we got what we were looking for. We strengthened the 1890s. We were getting graduates and we were getting the top blacks that we could find.

Alabama A&M fired their president who I was acquainted with. I can't remember names. They brought in this guy that keeps running for president, Keyes, the black Republican from Maryland, as the interim president. I had lunch with the president, and then at the graduation ceremony they decided to give me an honorary doctorate degree from Alabama A&M. So that was kind of interesting. But anyway, they were some of my best friends.

When we had our task force meetings, we shifted it around from one school to another, and over the years I was at most of them. That was a big deal when we came to campus. They'd have a big reception for us. We'd have lunch with music playing and even had Miss America at one of them. Remember the Miss America who was black from Missouri? She came to one of our meetings and entertained us. Again, it was just the Department of Agriculture showing them some attention and that they were important. That was what it was all about. Each of the agencies had to designate a person working pretty much full-time on this program to work with us. We would meet and make decisions. I'd clear with the secretary what we wanted to do. I always got what I wanted from him. Then we had staff in each agency to reach out and implement it in all the agencies in agriculture. It was kind of a unique way to get things done in the Department of Agriculture, but it shows what you can do when you have the secretary saying this we shall do and we shall show results. In the normal process, we'd hire somebody at the secretary's level to run the program. But he asked, in this case, the chief of the Forest Service to do it. So my last three or four years in agriculture, I probably spent at least 10 percent of my time on that program.

HKS: My assumption is that Secretary Espy would have been supportive of these activities.

FDR: He was. As I mentioned earlier, the black university presidents rallied around me, and they communicated with Espy, you know. Do whatever you want to with the Department of Agriculture but Dale Robertson's our man, keep him. But that was not enough to overcome the Gore thing. My staff dug up an old receipt by Gifford Pinchot where he had made I think a hundred dollar contribution to Tuskegee University. And Tuskegee was so proud of that that here's the first chief of the Forest Service made a donation, was involved in Tuskegee, and here's the current chief as our man, you know.

HKS: I'm editing Pinchot's diaries. The Tuskegee people had lunch at his home. So that's probably the time he gave the hundred bucks in 1943 or '44.

FDR: I made my closing speech after I left the Forest Service. They invited me to their meeting to thank me for my special effort to make them feel good, make them feel proud, and rallying the Department of Agriculture as their partner. I mean, we really succeeded in that. They gave me all these words of praise and thanks when I left. Then I got up and made my speech, and I meant it, too. I kind of built upon the Gifford Pinchot speech, you know, where he said I was a governor a time or two but I was a forester all of the time. I was sincere. I said I've done a lot of things in my life, you know, and I ticked off a few chiefs of the Forest Service and all of that, but I said the one thing that I'm probably most proud of is I've been a part of making a difference, of bringing the 1890 black land universities into the mainstream with agriculture and made you a true partner and helped you be strong. I said I'm really proud of that. That's one of the things I'm most proud of. You don't get many chances in life to make a big difference like that, correct some ills of the past, and I took advantage of my position as chief of the Forest Service to do that, and it has made a big difference. It was related to being the chief of the Forest Service, but most people would look at that and say that was a side issue, not the main thrust of the Forest Service, but it really was the main thrust of the Forest Service. If we're going to diversify you just don't get warm bodies. You go after trained, educated people and the best you can find, and you just don't sit here waiting for it to happen.

HKS: In view of the rather large amount of time that took, I guess that put more on George's plate, too.

FDR: Yes, it did.

HKS: Fascinating story to see how that all turns out. In some sense government-wide there were all sorts of minority recruitment programs going.

FDR: Yes. One of the things that made this so successful is that agriculture had a legislative relationship with these land grant universities, the same as we had with the 1860s. We got a new assistant secretary for administration who was a Cuban American. She looked at what we were doing with the black universities, and she said we need to do the same thing with the predominately Hispanic schools. There are some universities around that have predominately Hispanic students, and so she tried to duplicate this. It never really got off the ground, in part because the Department of Agriculture didn't have this legislative relationship where you could do lots of things like scholarships and capacity building grants. Really it was mainly a game of talk with them. Then we also have several Indian schools, mainly community colleges, where they're predominately Indian. I started with my four agency heads that I talked about earlier, BLM, Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Forest Service. Natural resource management is a natural choice for Indians, and so we started trying to do the same thing with the Indian schools. Again, that never really got off the ground, in part because we didn't have the secretary of agriculture making it clear to all or the secretary of the interior making clear to all the agency heads this is something we're going to do. And we didn't have that legislative authorization to work with those schools like we had with the blacks because we could implement almost any kind of an idea with them.

HKS: When a school like that at Flagstaff comes up with a substantial educational program for Indians in forestry, my assumption is there's some federal money involved,

but the Forest Service was not involved in those kinds of educational programs? N.C. State had one, too.

FDR: We may have, but we didn't have the authority to provide scholarships for the Indians like we did for the blacks under the land grant. Of course, we got special authority to work with the 1890 land grant universities including scholarships. Congress was very supportive of this. I went up and briefed members of Congress and the committees. A lot of the members were from the southern states. They were worried, too, about the survivability and the strength of these black universities. So it was kind of a win-win situation. But the key to the whole thing was that land grant status and everything that brought with it.

Traditional Forestry Hits the Wall

HKS: That covers my general questions, and we have this substantial list of specific topics. Some of it you've referred to from time to time. You wrote to me with some suggestions. One of the things you said that I was impressed by was that traditional forestry had "hit the wall." You've alluded to that. Clearcutting can no longer be a conventional way. Articulate that hitting the wall, because I don't think that was generally accepted by forestry at the time you became chief.

FDR: Traditional forestry no longer would fly in the federal government; a lot of things came together. First of all, the clearcutting issue. Regardless of how much we foresters thought that was good scientific forestry, and it was in our limited way of looking at things, it was not selling to the American people. It looked like abuse of the land. But the real driver on this was the Endangered Species Act and the hammer that that had. The environmental groups had that all figured out, and they used the hammer through the courts.

There was a lot of debate over whether a species was endangered or not and all of that, I mean there were those side debates, but you couldn't overlook the conclusion that multiple use management forestry that the Forest Service was practicing was creating endangered species. In other words, we weren't reflecting the needs of all of the species in our overall management. That had been a long process, but we got to the point during my tenure as chief where it really came to a head--basically said your form of forestry, Mr. Forest Service, is too limited. You are not providing the habitat and the survival of all of the species. The National Forest Management Act basically said we were to manage the national forests for all viable populations of all species, and obviously we were falling short on that.

The environmental groups, once they started drastically increasing the designation of endangered species, that's a trigger, all of a sudden you have to look at your management practices and how you're managing the land to see how you're specifically affecting these endangered species. The Forest Service wasn't in charge of that. I mean, we had to submit these reports to the Fish and Wildlife Service, and you had pure biologists looking at our plan and how we said it would affect these species, and they were beginning to

disagree with our foresters and biologists. Then even if we got it through the Fish and Wildlife Service, we would end up in court.

The other thing that happened during my administration as chief, although it started during Max's term, was judicializing forestry. I mean, all of a sudden our routine decisions got before a judge who normally had a legal background and was procedurally oriented, whereas forestry as we were practicing it was an art and a science. When it got to the judge it was straight-line procedural logic, no leeway for the art of the forestry. Our case record in court, case law, was horrible. We were losing almost all of our cases, and of course the way the legal system is set up in this country you build up case law which is used as precedent. Forestry as the Forest Service had been practicing it under multiple use forestry, as being taught in the forestry schools, wasn't meeting the test. We were slowly grinding to a halt, which I called "hit the wall."

We had to have a new concept because the demands of the Endangered Species Act as interpreted by the courts was a much broader dimension than our limited view of forestry. I gave the forestry school deans that speech one time, and I got mixed reactions. I told them that the forestry they were teaching my employees was not broad enough to meet my needs of managing the national forests. I got some negative reaction and some positive reaction, too. So we had to come up with a new concept. It's kind of like the DDT story. We didn't look at a lot of alternatives to DDT because it solved all of our problems until all of a sudden we had adverse effects, and we didn't have any alternatives. But fortunately we had some farsighted people.

Jerry Franklin had this New Forestry concept, and that was the only thing that was on the table. I started grabbing onto it because I knew I had to get a new and broader concept. There was a lot of debate in the Forest Service about New Forestry and all of that. Here was this scientist out there promoting New Forestry, and here was Buckman, deputy chief for research, he said oh, that's irrelevant. But Jerry's idea was the only thing we had on the table, and I knew the Forest Service had to jump to a bigger, broader concept. So I kind of embraced New Forestry to the disappointment of people like Buckman and some other people. New Forestry evolved into New Perspectives. You familiar with that?

HKS: Yes.

FDR: Well, the Congress was getting involved in this, so I had a congressional hearing. Basically the purpose of the hearing was chief, what in the hell are you going to do about all these problems you got with endangered species? My creative staff put this testimony together, and the basic point was we're taking a bigger, broader, new perspective of the forest, and we called this the New Perspectives program, and it did kind of represent what I thought we needed to do. But I didn't particularly like New Perspectives. I was sensitive to traditional forestry. I was part of the forestry community. I didn't want to alienate SAF and forestry deans and the timber industry because I'd gone off on some wild environmental program. I said to staff, I like what you've written here, but I don't know about this New Perspectives. I said I don't particularly relate to that. They said well, what term would you like to use. And I said, I don't have another term. I had to testify the next morning, and I said if I don't come up with a new term overnight we'll just call this New Perspectives. I thought about it overnight and I couldn't come up with a better idea, so

the next day I went to the Congress and I said yes, we've got problems with endangered species and we have to change our way of thinking to take a broader view of the forest and manage it for all of these goods and values. One of the key values is wildlife and making sure we maintain the viability of all species and give special priority to the endangered species. Our new program we're calling New Perspectives. So thus it was born.

New Perspectives was--since we didn't have any alternatives to traditional multiple use forestry--kind of a pilot test. Get your scientists together with your local land managers, and let's pilot test some alternative ways of managing the forest and harvesting timber at the same time so that we do provide for these other values in the broadest sense. We went along with New Perspectives for two or three years, and some really neat things happened. I mean, all the regions got involved and probably more so than in the history of the Forest Service. The scientists and our land managers out on the ground talking about how we could manage this forest different and provide for all of these other values and still harvest timber. You probably know a lot of that. They were giving me feedback, I was going to the field, I was looking at this stuff, and it was pretty impressive. I kept describing New Perspectives as kind of a pilot test, trial program, where we're learning things. You had to go through that, and then the clearcutting issue was part of that.

Senator Pryor from Arkansas was on my back about the Ouachita National Forest, and I had been a ranger on the Ouachita, and I couldn't disagree with what he was telling me. Weyerhaeuser had bought up Dierks, and Dierks was in and among and surrounding the Ouachita National Forest. Weyerhaeuser was practicing intensive industrial forestry to the utmost. I mean, they were doing a great job of forestry, but it was in a limited sense, industrial forestry. They were clearcutting, planting plantations, and the people of Arkansas just really got upset about that. In the meantime, Weyerhaeuser was trying to tell them how good of forestry it was. On the Ouachita National Forest, we were a little better but right up next to them and we were doing our clearcutting too. We were doing more landscape design and more things but nevertheless, we were clearcutting on the Ouachita and the natives were mad. Senator Pryor was on my case. He was writing me. He was calling me. He was saying we have a problem in Arkansas, and we got to do something about clearcutting. I couldn't get Senator Pryor off my back. In the meantime, my people in Region 8 were kind of sticking with the clearcut issue, you know, we don't want to change. Finally, I said to Senator Pryor, why don't you and I go down to Arkansas and look at the situation and see what we can do about this. He said okay. He said this is a serious problem, and I'm not going to let loose of it. So Senator Pryor and I went to Arkansas. That's my home state. I was a ranger in the Ouachita. I had the regional forester, Jack Alcott, and the forest supervisor with me. In the meantime the Ouachita National Forest had done some very creative, very good things on New Perspectives with all these pilot projects. And we had a great researcher down there, Jim Baker. You know Jim Baker?

HKS: No.

FDR: He's the expert on uneven age management. Jim Baker and I are classmates, we graduated together from Arkansas A&M. Under New Perspectives he had been up there working almost full-time with the Ouachita National Forest on pilot testing different

ways of harvesting timber and managing the forest. So Senator Pryor and I and the researcher and regional forester and the forest supervisor and the local ranger traveled around that day on the forest and looked at these New Perspectives projects, and the senator kind of liked them. He said this looks okay. He says why can't you do this all over the forest. Why do you have to go out there and make these ugly clearcuts. Well, you know, that was a good question. My scientist helped design those partial cuts, and the ranger said, I like this.

Pryor just wouldn't let me off the hook. He said I want to keep harvesting timber on the Ouachita, but you're making a mess of it here with all these clearcuts and the natives are restless, my constituents. We had a picnic lunch together, and he kept pushing me. Chief, what are we going to do about this. I'd already talked to the regional forester and the supervisor, and I said one option is we've got this New Perspectives pilot program. We could just designate the whole Ouachita National Forest as a New Perspectives project. They said yes, we could do that. I finally proposed that to Senator Pryor over the picnic lunch. I said Senator, you like what we're doing under New Perspectives. You don't think that's offensive from a visual standpoint, and we're getting good feedback from the locals we're working with here. I said what if I designate the whole Ouachita National Forest as a New Perspectives demonstration forest. He says does that mean we wouldn't do anymore clearcutting? I said yes, we'll do the kinds of things you saw today. We may experiment with some other different approaches. He said that would be just absolutely wonderful. He says that's what I want.

I don't know if you followed that story or not but, boy, it created a lot of controversy. He went back and put out a news release, met with chief, and no more clearcutting on the Ouachita. Boy, Weyerhaeuser and the state forester and all the industry in the South says what in the world is this new chief doing. But we designated the whole Ouachita as a demonstration New Perspectives national forest and it was wonderful. I put Jim Baker up there full-time, working day in and day out with our rangers and managers, and it was a success story.

But I had problems back in Washington. I had industry and folks all over my back about giving up clearcutting on the Ouachita National Forest. And Ouachita, you've probably been there, it's not like coastal plain country. It's beautiful mountains, and we were putting square clearcuts up there on the side of the hill. Oh, the other problem I had, some other members of Congress who had clearcutting issues saw what Senator Pryor had done with me so I started getting all kinds of invitations. I remember a congressman from Illinois called me up and he said want you to go with me to the Shawnee National Forest. He said, I'd like you to do the same thing on the Shawnee that we did on the Ouachita. He said that makes a lot of sense. I got out of that because I could just see every member of Congress, you know, parading me through their district on their national forest and getting that kind of a decision out of me and taking credit for it, how we changed the Forest Service. It was a jam I got myself in, but I mean what do you do. You can't just stick with what you've been doing and saying the tradition is the right way and we're just going to continue doing the traditional stuff.

Rio Conference and Ecosystem Management

FDR: Let me finish this story. I told this congressman from Illinois, I said I'm working on the bigger picture, and the whole Forest Service and the Shawnee National Forest will be a part of that. I don't want to do anymore piecemeal demonstration. It was getting toward the end of my tenure. It was the last year of Bush and this is an interesting story, which a lot of people don't know. Remember the Rio Conference, the earth conference in Rio?

HKS: Yes.

FDR: One of the friends I'd made during the Bush administration was the administrator of EPA, Bill Reilly. Remember Bill Reilly?

HKS: Yes.

FDR: Well, I knew Bill before he became administrator of EPA. He was with some organization.

HKS: World Wildlife, something like that.

FDR: Yes, something like that. Bill and I had talked, so we knew each other, and Bill was kind of an environmentalist. He was as much of an environmentalist as the Bush administration had, so he fell out of favor with the Sununus of the world and others. I think the administration felt Bill was not part of the team at times. Bill was really trying to do the best job he knew how to do. Well, Bill and I gravitated together, and we'd have lunch once in awhile. The administrator of EPA is actually considered a cabinet member because they're an independent agency. So we were privileged to have lunch at the White House. He'd invite me over and we'd have lunch at the White House. I know if Sununu walked around and saw the chief of the Forest Service and administrator of EPA having lunch together he'd say something bad is up.

Let me put a statement in here for context. The chief may know what he wants to do from a major policy standpoint, but you have to work the process in Washington to get support from the political establishment, both Congress and your political bosses. You can't just decide someday to announce the end of clearcutting. You've got to have the president with you and certain members of Congress, the secretary of agriculture and a lot of other people. So just because I had concluded that we had to get away from clearcutting as a standard practice, it was a long ways to go before you could get an official position on that.

So Bill Reilly and I had talked and I remember Bill was on the clearcutting issue. He would say Dale, explain to me why it is essential for you do all this clearcutting. He said, I don't have it quite straight in my mind. I had a lot of kind of heart-to-heart discussions with Bill because he was trying to understand, but my explanations weren't all that convincing. I was very forthright with him and said, you know there are problems here, Bill, and I'm experimenting with some alternatives, and I told him about New

Perspectives. By that time we'd kind of evolved from New Perspectives to ecosystem management, and it was the thinking in the Forest Service at the time that ecosystem management would replace the multiple use management concept as a much broader framework which would fit the issues that we were dealing with. Now we could explain how we were taking care of endangered species under the ecosystem management approach. That thinking was progressive, and Bill and I had talked about that a little bit. The Rio Conference came along, and Bill was sent down to be the spokesman for the U.S., the official spokesman at the Rio Conference. The environmentalists decided to make a big show out of that, and they were down there holding press conferences to embarrass the United States in front of all the other countries about we weren't protecting our old growth forest, we were not protecting our endangered species, we were clearcutting and forever losing our forests with clearcutting. Even Al Gore went down there, which didn't sit too well with me and a lot of other people, and held a press conference. He and Worth, the senator from Colorado, lambasting the United States about what terrible forestry practices we had in this country. It was aimed at embarrassing the Bush administration in Rio in front of the world, and Al Gore was the leader of that.

Well, Bill Reilly got in a terrible fix, and he was just getting beat up badly. Bush was going to go down the final day of the Rio Conference. Again, personal relationships are important. By this time Clayton Yeutter, my good friend, my former secretary of agriculture boss, was chief of staff, and he was handling the correspondence and the telephone calls between Reilly in Rio and the president. Finally Reilly says we're going to get embarrassed. The president's going to get terribly embarrassed if he doesn't come down here and talk about the great things we're going to do. Reilly said, lets talk to the chief, see what we can come up with, because this was about three days before Bush was to arrive in Rio. Clayton Yeutter called me up, and he said we've got to prepare a speech for Bush in Rio. He says Bill Reilly's getting beat up bad, and he said Al Gore and a bunch of senators and environmental groups down there are holding press conferences and they're trying to embarrass this administration. He said can you give me a statement to eliminate clearcutting that the president can announce in Rio.

Boy, lights went on you know. There was my chance to get the official policy. I said sure, Clayton. I said I need to word that so that we're talking about eliminating clearcutting as a standard practice, but there would be some exceptions. He said oh yes, we understand that, but the president badly needs to just say we're not going to do any more clearcutting as a standard practice on the national forests. I said you got it, but I said one other thing. I said I'd like for the president to announce a new policy of ecosystem management for the national forests. He said what, what is that. I said ecosystem management. He said I don't understand that, and he said the president doesn't understand it. He said tell me about it. So I had about five minutes to explain to Clayton Yeutter on the phone what ecosystem management was. He said well, all that sounds really good. I said it is good. I said the president ought to announce that, too. He said well, here's what you do, and this was late in the afternoon, he says by eight o'clock in the morning you fax me over a letter announcing a policy change on clearcutting and ecosystem management as the policy for the national forests. I said you've got it. So I came home.

At this point I didn't have much time to work with staff, and I was familiar enough with it, and I knew what kind of terms the president needed to use, so I worked 'til about ten o'clock. I went to bed. I got up at three o'clock. I drafted this statement as a policy, we would not use clearcutting as a standard practice, and we were adopting ecosystem management as the official policy for the future management of the national forests. I fired that over to Clayton Yeutter first thing in the morning, and he looked at it and read it and made a few changes in it. He said, you know, this sounds pretty good. He said, I think this will make the president look pretty good. I said it will, it's a winner. I said, he's going to get a little flack here in the United States from the timber industry probably. He said well, we're dealing with this international crisis right now and the reputation of this administration and the reputation of the United States. So he said let me check with Bush, make sure he wants to do this. And so he went in and talked to President Bush and told him here's what we think you ought to say in Rio. I had all those nice words in there, you know, that sounded good, and Bush said that really sounds good. So Clayton called me back and he said it's a go, but he said now we haven't decided what we're going to put in the speech and how we're going to announce this thing in the United States. So I prepared the famous letter of June 26, 1993, I believe, making the official announcement.

The secretary of agriculture was not in the loop. I mean, I was dealing directly with Clayton Yeutter on this. I already didn't have a very good relationship with Secretary Madigan at the time, who was always kind of irritated with mine and Clayton Yeutter's relationship, so I had to figure out how to work this through. John Beuter was my acting assistant secretary, and I went over and I sat down and I laid this in front of him. I laid it all out, and I said John, we're on a fast time schedule here and this is what we need to say. John fiddled with it a little bit. John was pretty perceptive. He said you know, we've got to make a major change. We're just driving this multiple use thing too far, and we're losing the battle. So John was sympathetic. He made a few changes in the letter. He said how are we going to deal with Secretary Madigan on this. I said well, I don't know any other way to do it than just go down and knock on his door and sit down and talk to him. His public relations guy I'd worked a lot with, and so I asked him to be in our meeting with Madigan. Actually we didn't meet with Madigan, we met with his aide and went through this, and he says what is this ecosystems stuff! He said he never heard of it! John Beuter and I did our best to explain ecosystem management. He said well, I hope we don't get any words like that in the press, you know, headlines with the words ecosystem management. The public relations guy for Madigan said don't worry because clearcutting will be the newspaper headline. The Forest Service stops clearcutting. That'll be the headlines. It didn't do me well with the secretary, but nevertheless his aide reluctantly said okay, we've got to do it, let's go with it.

I got it back to Yeutter. Yeutter said in the meantime the president and I have talked about this and, I really admired Bush and Yeutter for this, we decided that since you are the chief forester of the United States and this is a lot of technical stuff, that you ought to announce it in the United States. Bush will go then immediately thereafter and incorporate it and announce it in his speech in Rio. So that's what we did. Man, we leaked that thing to the press. We mailed it out. I sent it to every major news organization I could. At the same time I sent it to field people because I was catching my field people a little bit by surprise, although they knew it was all in the making. They didn't know it was going to be rolled out this way. Sure enough the *Washington Post* came up with big

headlines the next day, "ecosystems." I knew Madigan's aide was just going to come out of his seat because he wanted "clearcutting" as the headline. Well, it had clearcutting as a secondary article, but ecosystems was the main thing.

Anyway, that all rolled out and industry, man, my phone was ringing again from industry, what in the world are you doing, chief. Of course, I caught them by surprise. I caught everybody by surprise. But it was my one chance to get a major policy decision with the president's signature and settle all of the debate. So Bush went down there and incorporated it in his speech in Rio, that we're changing major policies in managing our national forests. We're not going to use clearcutting. We're going to adopt ecosystem management. That's how all of that rolled out, which is kind of exciting. Again, Clayton Yeutter played a key role in that. If it hadn't been for mine and Clayton's close working relationship, if I hadn't done some pre work…. I didn't know it was going to fold out this way, but if Bill Reilly and I hadn't communicated, and when Bill Reilly was down there under the gun saying help, get the chief to say we're not going to do anymore clearcutting, you know, any one of those things could have kept this from being official policy during the Bush administration. Now, when the Clinton-Gore team came in that was right in line with their thinking. They would have just adopted it, but that was really something to get it through the Republican administration.

Secretary Madigan

HKS: Would you like to talk about Mr. Madigan in a more general way?

FDR: Madigan was a different kind of guy. I was dealing with a secretary like no other chief had ever dealt with. First of all, Madigan's managerial style was to kind of be a bully and intimidate. That's how he got attention and got you to do what he wanted you to do. It wasn't just with me. He dealt with all the agency heads that way. Every secretary of agriculture that I know anything about was proud to have the Forest Service as part of their department and was willing to go to bat to keep the Forest Service. You know, it's been a historical thing, which you know more about than anybody else, whether the Forest Service should be in interior or agriculture. The person that's prevented that from ever being too serious has probably always been the secretary of agriculture, saying I want the Forest Service. It's appropriately placed in agriculture and it fits within our agriculture mission. Every secretary of agriculture up to Madigan really has always gone to bat for the Forest Service.

Well, Madigan came in, and I'm not so sure but he wasn't surprised to find out that the Forest Service was under his jurisdiction. He never was very comfortable with us. The Forest Service is kind of a rambunctious organization. We're all over the United States, and there's always issues coming up to the Congress. Madigan did not have a framework to have a tolerance for little things happening. He thought that I sat over there controlling the whole Forest Service and these little matters that would appear in the press. I don't know where he got all of this press stuff, but he would read this stuff about how the Forest Service is doing a terrible job of managing or else the chief would be on top of that issue. He shouldn't let that happen. He didn't understand how big we were and how

much was going on. If the Forest Service was managed the best way it possibly could be managed, there was still going to be all of these issues coming up. So he was constantly on my back, chief, why are you letting this happen. In most of the cases I didn't even know what he was talking about. I'd just have to say Mr. Secretary, I'm not familiar with that issue, and I'll check it out and get back with you. Then he'd accuse me of not knowing what was going on in the Forest Service. But that was his intimidating managerial style. I talked to the other agency heads and they were having the same problems with him. But I never will forget one day I walked into his office on some issue, it wasn't a big thing. And I always remember Secretary Madigan just looking me in the eye and he said chief, you're nothing but a problem to me and this department. Why don't you just take you and your organization and go to the Interior Department where you belong. He said I don't need you over here.

HKS: That's pretty blunt.

FDR: I don't think any secretary of agriculture has ever wanted to get rid of the Forest Service. If they had of, there's many times in the past that we would have been gone. I mean it's the secretary that says no. So I often thought about that. I was dealing with a non-supportive secretary of agriculture for the Forest Service during my last year or so. I'd gone from Secretary Lyng, who was so supportive. I mean, he was just like my father, always saying chief, I'm here to help you. How can I help you? In fact, he said chief, if you ever get in trouble that I can help, come talk to me. Then Yeutter followed him, was a tremendous supporter. Didn't know much about the Forest Service but learned to like us and was proud of the Forest Service. Then you go to a guy like Madigan. It was kind of a shock. But in the end I just recognized Madigan for what he was, with an intimidating managerial style. He was insecure. He didn't have a tolerance for the normal controversies that go on in the Forest Service. I was running the Forest Service there without support of the secretary my last year or year and a half, which was very tough because I couldn't get into any battles and count on the secretary backing me up. So if there's ever any question about the importance of the secretary of agriculture to the state of the Forest Service, I can tell them I've seen it both ways and it makes a big difference.

HKS: Certainly in dealings with Congress.

FDR: He came from Congress and he had a lot of buddies up there. The story of my tenure as chief would not be complete without talking about that. It wasn't a personal thing. I mean, he just came in that way.

HKS: He must have had some credentials or otherwise Bush wouldn't have named him.

FDR: He was from Illinois, and they were redistricting. Illinois lost a congressman, and he was going to have to go up against the minority leader in the Congress who was from Peoria, Illinois. We had two prominent Republicans, one the minority leader in the House, who were going to have to compete for one district. They had to find a place for one of them, and I think that was the prime rationale why he came over. He was on the agriculture committee, but he was all dealing with agricultural aspects of the department.

John Sununu

HKS: Back to ecosystem management. Nothing would have happened with Sununu.

FDR: Wouldn't have happened. Sununu would have told me chief, get back to your business of clearcutting down there.

HKS: Well, there was a debate in the press whether or not Bush even ought to go to Rio.

FDR: Yes. Well, I think part of the decision was he had something meaningful to announce, and it involved the Forest Service on ecosystem management. He didn't even know what it was, but he was announcing it. Well, we got off on forestry hit the wall. Traditional multiple use management of the national forests hit the wall. We were just stymied, we weren't going any further, we were being shut down. We had to have a bigger, broader concept that encompassed a bigger picture of all the values of the forest, and ecosystem management is what we settled on. Now the Forest Service has a workable concept that may not be successful, but at a least that conceptual idea that they're working with is broad enough to deal with almost any issue that comes up. Whereas, the old multiple use concept wasn't broad enough.

We needed a new conceptual framework that was broader than the multiple use management conceptual framework. More appropriately, we were trying to move to an ecosystem management conceptual framework in the management of the national forests to better encompass and get a circle around all the things we were being asked by law, and by the courts, and by what we ought to be doing in the management of the resources on the national forests.

HKS: When you read about what's going on in the press you don't really know how accurate that is and who they've talked to and so on and so forth. It's good to get this on tape. Two points I want to follow up on. I think we ought to spend a minute or two on John Sununu and his significance to the agency. I mean, in the politics of forest management, he obviously was a significant player. Maybe chiefs of staff are always significant players to the Forest Service.

FDR: They are.

HKS: But he was more of a problem than most chiefs of staff?

FDR: He didn't get involved that much except for the spotted owl. First of all, John Sununu knew the Forest Service pretty well, you know. He was the governor of New Hampshire. The White Mountain National Forest is the pride of New Hampshire. When you're a governor of a small state like New Hampshire or Vermont, you know everything going on in the state. I think he came in very knowledgeable of the Forest Service primarily from the White Mountain National Forest and was supportive of the Forest Service. I would say he never really got too involved in Forest Service matters until the spotted owl came along. I got crossways with him on the spotted owl because we had the court decision, and that's really where I got crossways with him.

Then we had the Jack Ward Thomas report on the spotted owl, which basically concluded that our old strategy for protecting the spotted owl was not adequate and that we needed larger areas for the spotted owl to interact and breed and survive as a viable population. These little one thousand or two thousand, I don't remember, little spotted owl habitat areas that we had put systematically throughout the forest did not provide enough habitat for the owls to interact and breed and survive over the long term. That was what I saw as Jack Ward Thomas' and his committee's report, that we needed to go to bigger areas. There probably was some misunderstanding but, in the meantime, we were shut down by the judge. We couldn't do anything. I'm trying to make progress and get out of the hole I was in. I recommended that we at least adopt initially the Jack Ward Thomas report, and then we prepare an environmental statement on that. I mean I couldn't just go from a scientific report to a policy of the Forest Service. You can take a scientific report, go through the NEPA process, environmental statement, look at alternatives, public involvement, and then reach a policy decision. So once the Jack Ward Thomas report came out--I mean that was big news--I went up to the Hill, and even Jack went up. We had hearings trying to explain it to particularly the northwest member delegations. His report was quite controversial. Everybody saw the impact that that was going to have on timber production in the Pacific Northwest.

My staff came up with this strategy of how to deal with the Jack Ward Thomas report, which I then started talking about on the Hill. We would tentatively adopt it and manage our forests according to the Jack Ward Thomas report in the interim until we could go through the NEPA process and go from scientific report to a policy. Senator Gorton from Washington got so upset at me, he got so mad that the chief of the Forest Service would give credence to the Jack Ward Thomas report, rather than come out saying that's just a bunch of weird scientists that don't understand reality. He got really upset that I was tentatively supporting the Jack Ward Thomas report and those big spotted owl management areas that Jack and his team had recommended, which I was open minded on and was willing to accept to get me out of the hole until we could look at all the alternatives.

The senator went to John Sununu, and he got John Sununu really upset. The chief forester of the United States should know better than to throw in with a bunch of scientists and their crazy ideas and throw so many people out of work and have such a significant impact on the economy of the Pacific Northwest. So Sununu really got involved in that. Fortunately Clayton Yeutter, my secretary of agriculture, and I had a very good relationship. Sununu got so mad he called over to Clayton, he says fire the chief! We've got to get him out of there! This guy is not helping us at all. Fortunately Yeutter stood up to him, he said you know the chief works for me and I know Dale and he's a pretty good guy. I'm not going to fire him. But he said we'll have some discussions over here and see what we can do. That was the big blowup with Sununu.

Later somebody leaked to me, I don't know who, a confidential memo that Senator Gorton was very upset about the Jack Ward Thomas report, but he was also playing politics. It was confidential to John Sununu from Senator Gorton saying we can play politics out of this. This is such a devastating report to the state of Washington. This is going to turn the working people against the Democrats and, you know, it was a partisan

deal that we can make progress in the state of Washington in having more Republicans from this state. We can use this spotted owl as a campaign issue. I then got suspicious of Gorton because he was playing politics. But it was not only politics, he was literally mad that somebody would impact the people of those small towns and the state of Washington the way that this decision was going to impact.

That was my only run-in with Sununu when he wanted me to be fired over halfway embracing Jack Ward Thomas. It didn't help that BLM--even though I had a great relationship with Cy Jamison, who was the director of BLM with the O & C lands in Oregon, which were equally impacted by Jack Ward Thomas, he really took up Gorton's campaign. He came out very critical of Jack Ward Thomas and his team saying that it was unrealistic, that they didn't care about people, and BLM was going to stand up for the people and the workers of Oregon. That really complicated things here with BLM. That's what Sununu wanted me to do, too, and I wouldn't do it as chief. If he'd had his way I'd have been fired. They did decide to take--and Sununu, I'm sure, was involved in this--the spotted owl decision out of my hands. The secretary said, I'll personally handle this. Clayton Yeutter was trying to protect me because it was getting dirty and vicious. But I did attend some of the meetings. Clayton had some meetings without me, and then he would usually bring me in. He always briefed me. I had a good relationship with Clayton, and he was trying to protect me.

I remember one of the first meetings on the spotted owl. This young guy showed up and introduced himself, and his last name was Sununu. Later I asked, who is this Sununu kid, he was probably twenty years old. They said oh, that's John's son. So we had John's son working on that small group of people that was trying to sort through the spotted owl. I showed you the picture with Bush and me at the barbecue in South Dakota. Well, Sununu was on that trip, and so while Bush was fishing and we were standing around, the Forest Service crew, cooking the hamburgers, Sununu and I had a conversation. He walked up very friendly to me and said well, how's things going, chief. So I told him how things were going and I mentioned the spotted owl. I said John, we are not winning the spotted owl battle, and we're just getting deeper in a hole on this. He just kind of smiled and said well, just hang in there tough, chief, and went on. So it wasn't a personal thing. Senator Gorton got mad, got him mad, and he reacted very strongly.

HKS: But then he was out shortly after that, right? Something about travel…

FDR: He went to New York, according to the press, in a government car for a dental appointment.

HKS: Some major crime like that, yes.

FDR: Yes. But Sununu was a tough guy. It wasn't just the Forest Service. Chief of staffs have to be tough. Sununu was a powerful and very smart guy. I mean he was tremendously intelligent. But chief of staffs usually get in trouble because they do have to wield a strong stick and sooner or later most of them either get tired out and quit, or something happens to them that they don't make it through the year. But that was a good thing because eventually things evolved. Clayton Yeutter finally ended up kind of in that position.

HKS: But that did make a difference in the way things played out. If Sununu had stayed on, the Rio conference situation would have been a lot different.

FDR: Oh, absolutely. What would have happened on ecosystem management because, you know, as I explained kind of the evolution of it through New Perspectives and trying to solve problems the Forest Service mentality had gotten to ecosystem management. BLM hadn't, but we had. So what would have happened if John Sununu had been there, we had not gotten the ecosystem management policy with presidential approval. The Clinton-Gore administration would have come in--and I mean that was right down their line of thinking--and they would have embraced it, and they did embrace it. In fact, they embraced it like it was their idea, even though the previous president had officially said this is our policy and I had issued a policy statement. But the Clinton-Gore team really embraced that. Of course, they brought Jack Ward Thomas in, and Jack was a big supporter and probably understood it as well or better than anybody else in the whole world. So it would have gotten there anyway when they came into power.

HKS: Yes. We left the reader hanging when you were characterizing the relationship you had with George. You agreed on most things but one thing you didn't agree upon was below-cost timber sales. Then we went onto something else. Do you want to lay out the differences?

FDR: There was a period of time there that George and I had different ways of thinking, and the staff picked up on it. I guess George and I confused the staff on where we were. It was no big deal. George and I were kind of marching down together on below-cost timber sales, and at one point George and I went different ways for a short period of time. Then we came back together, and we confused the staff. That's the one incident I can remember that the staff got a little confused on below-cost timber sales.

HKS: Because it would have mattered who they talked to in that situation.

FDR: George and I quickly picked up on what was going on. He and I kind of discussed it and we decided to let it run for a little bit. Controversy and different points of view, I mean that's good as long as you finally corral it. So of all the seven years George and I worked together that was the one little incident I remember. It didn't last long, maybe a couple of weeks or so. George and I got together and ironed it out and called the staff in and said, George and I are not split, we don't have different views on that. This is where we are now. But I think it kind of surprised our staff because I think George and I presented a united front.

With the previous team, Max Peterson and Doug Lietz, it was fairly well known in staff that those two guys had different views on a lot of things. I was aware of that, and George was, too. I don't mean to say Doug and Max had a problem. I mean, they're two different individuals, you know. You don't want the associate chief to not have a mind of his own, and there needs to be an expression of those thoughts. The associate chief needs to influence the chief, say look chief, I don't quite come out where you do on this. Let's talk about it. Of course, the chief ultimately has the power to say no, Mr. Associate, I've heard what you've got to say and this is the way we're going. Even with my relationship

with Max, sometimes I would have different viewpoints from Max. How I handled it was to go in and say Max, let's talk further about this subject. I have some either new views or some maybe a little different than you, and we'd talk it out and resolve it. George and I were very sensitive to that. You'd have to ask the staff people, but other than that one little incident on below-cost timber sales I don't know of any time that the staff could have said the chief's office is speaking with two tongues. It was no big deal.

Endangered Species Act

HKS: Earlier you made a statement that the Endangered Species Act was a hammer that drove what happened. That was pretty dramatic vocabulary you used. I'm not sure what more there is to say about the Endangered Species Act. Give it a shot.

FDR: I think in the slow ways in which the Forest Service evolves over time, the Forest Service would have eventually gotten to where it is now at least with what I was talking about moving from the multiple use management framework to the broader ecosystem management framework. I would have predicted we would have gotten there eventually, but it would have been a long time delay. But it was the Endangered Species Act that really backed us into the corner. The management was being shut down because it had teeth. All of a sudden you had the Fish and Wildlife Service over reviewing our plans and our decisions as to whether we were going to jeopardize the future of the species and whether we were adversely impacting the habitat of critical species. They even had a court decision, I believe down in Texas somewhere, that if you kill an endangered species, an animal, due to screwing up its habitat, that's unlawful taking. So the Endangered Species Act really had teeth in it. Under the old multiple use management framework we recognized conflict. That was part of the whole idea of multiple use management. We recognized conflict, but let's come together and see what tradeoffs we can make here to reach a balanced decision.

Tradeoffs are not in the vocabulary of the Endangered Species Act. Everything is pretty cut and dried. Yes or no, this action will adversely affect the future viability of this species and yes or no, this action will adversely affect critical habitat for the species. If the answers to those two questions are yes, there's no tradeoffs. You just back off and do what you've got to do to satisfy that. The endangered species drove an arrow through the heart of multiple use management as it had evolved and as it was known in the Forest Service and was practiced in the Forest Service of dealing with conflict by dealing with tradeoffs and arriving at a balanced decision for the maximum benefit to everybody and move forward. The Endangered Species Act chopped off the tradeoff aspect of multiple use management.

Of course, the environmental groups were very shrewd in recognizing that, going to court, and the judges taking a fairly I would say conservative interpretation of the Endangered Species Act. They didn't deal with tradeoffs very well, and things were kind of a straight line procedural logic based on scientific evidence. The judges were very fearful of uncertainty, and in case of uncertainty we have hundreds of judges' decisions going back to the Forest Service. Well, here's some uncertainty. You didn't study that.

You've got to go back and analyze all these other things before you can make that decision. When you put all that together, the law, the shifting of some of the responsibility for the final decision on yes or no to the Fish and Wildlife, which were a group of fisheries and wildlife biologists who didn't relate to this multiple use tradeoff concept the Forest Service had used for fifty years or however long, it just really knocked that thing off track.

HKS: Endangered Species Act was 1973. The 1976 National Forest Management Act, which reaffirmed multiple use, also has a biodiversity section in it, although that specific language is not used. Is Congress speaking with forked tongue here? What's the relationship between the Endangered Species Act and the biological diversity section of National Forest Management Act?

FDR: When you get right down to the bottom line, it's assuming endangered species as part of your diversity, and you can argue that there's consistency there. But laws always have inconsistencies in them. Laws are a product of a political process. It's almost like multiple use management. There's a lot of tradeoffs and you reach a compromise. Congress never goes through a rigorous analysis like the judges are going through now and have been going through, on what the law says, and procedural logic, and how it all ties together with tight logic. Laws are just a bundle of concerns that get lumped together in a piece of legislation, and in the end Congress' objective is to compromise whatever you have to do to make it pass, and in order to get the votes it has a lot of compromises. It is almost unusual to have a law that doesn't have internal inconsistencies in it. And the National Forest Management Act certainly has its share. But that's the way the system works. You expect the poor bureaucrat downtown to somehow make it all work, and we could have made it all work.

The Forest Service was making it all work, but not to the satisfaction of a lot of people. The only way you can ever implement the National Forest Management Act is to have this flexibility to adapt, adjust, fit, and make things work, come together when you're out here on a piece of land. But like the Endangered Species Act and even the National Forest Management Act, the judges don't look at it that way. Management flexibility has kind of been taken out of it and now you've got a legal, rigorous, analytical process with straight line logic with not a lot of discretion on balancing. I mean, we're losing the balancing act. When they passed the National Forest Management Act people fully expected the Forest Service to continue a significant timber program, continue the grazing program, continue the mining activities, in other words, the commodity-driven land-disturbing type activities. I don't think Congress ever felt they were knocking that in the head significantly by including all of this biological diversity and all these other things. In fact, Bumpers probably thought he'd kind of eliminated clearcutting, but industry got in there with that qualifying language, and as far as I can tell the Forest Service never adjusted the clearcutting thing much. Well, there was on size and those sorts of things, but the basic idea whether we were going to have clearcutting or not as a standard timber harvesting method, it never slowed the Forest Service down. It did on size and distribution and those sort of things.

HKS: What I remember is that all the special interest groups publicly at least were generally satisfied with it. If you read *Sierra* magazine or National Forest Products

Association output, it was a useful law and it solved some problems and let's go on with life.

FDR: That's a sure sign there's a lot of internal conflicts and inconsistencies in there that's going to be the poor old Forest Service try to work out to meet different expectations from the various groups.

Judicialized Decision Making

HKS: You mentioned earlier about court decisions, and the topic here is land management litigation. Judges you characterized as being procedurally oriented. They can't really deal with the technical issues on clearcutting, but they can see if your forest plan A,B,C follows the rules. You want to talk more about that?

FDR: Well, a term I'd like to use is we judicialized the decision-making process on land management.

HKS: Okay, judicialized.

FDR: That's a good term. I mean, our decision-making process moved away from the tradition of resource managers out on the ground with professional knowledge making a lot of professional judgments and not documenting them. Some things we land managers or foresters just know, but foresters aren't very good at describing these judgments that they make in land management in detailed form. All of a sudden our land managers were still out there trying to make these decisions, but they had an interdisciplinary team. We had court cases that specified the kinds of considerations that had to be made. Things had to be quantified, and in the end, even before I left, almost one of our main clients was the judge. We had so many of our decisions appealed. We kept asking, will this pass the judicial test. That has really gotten engrained in the Forest Service now, and there's really no choice long as we've got the system we have--look at our decision the way a judge looks at it and put everything in there that the judge thinks ought to be considered for him to say, or her, yes, this is judicially procedurally correct decision. We judicialized and proceduralized what used to be what we foresters in the old days would go out and do with pride, saying this is my professional judgment about how we ought to do this. It doesn't amount to much anymore. I mean, you may have these professional judgments, but you've got to document it, detail it, proceduralize it, and judicialize that decision.

HKS: The increasingly prescriptive laws give a lot more handles for the legal issues to work on too.

FDR: Yes. There is no such thing as a neutral procedure. Anytime you've got a procedure in law it's going to create problems. Congress, some members, they know that, but they want to be an active player. How do they be active and influential, well, they put more details in the laws. In fact, the Forest Service could never get back to what many of us knew, at least in my earlier and mid year career. We prided ourselves on being a productive organization, efficient organization, at least for government. I frequently

heard the concept the Forest Service is the Marine Corps of the civilian branch. We were good in terms of producing.

The Forest Service now is so tied up through what I'm calling judicializing the land management process that it can no longer be efficient. The American public would be shocked to learn what it costs the Forest Service to make what really appears like a rather simple, straightforward decision, and that was a big part of our problem with below-cost timber sales. Timber sales that used to at least break even or be profitable, now we're just spending enormous amounts of money, again, back to this judicializing our process and all the things you've got to do to produce a quality timber sale. Some of those things may be improving the quality of the timber sales. Some of those things may even say don't go with this timber sale that we otherwise would. But by and large, in my opinion, it hasn't improved much. I mean, basically the same decisions being made are back to the old professional judgment on these simple things, simple land management decisions. But it just drove the cost of our timber sales sky high, you know, whereas maybe a forester and an engineer in your days could go out and make the timber sale, now we have a hydrologist, a soil scientist, landscape architect, a wildlife biologist, and a fisheries biologist. I mean, your cost just quadruples, and what do you have, below-cost timber sales.

HKS: It must also, I think I asked it before, lead to a centralization process. The district rangers cannot cope with this, doesn't have the technical staff available to make these decisions. It's got to be at a higher level than it used to be.

FDR: By law now you have to bring the interdisciplinary skills. I mean, NEPA requires an interdisciplinary approach, and the Forest Service has struggled. With a limited budget, how do you bring these interdisciplinary skills to bear on these decisions, and you can't afford them at the ranger districts, a lot of them. So you have had a big growth in staff at the supervisor's office of these specialists who spend a lot of their time actually working out here for the ranger, providing that interdisciplinary skill that is needed on all these decisions that are made. The ranger district no longer is a self-sufficient organization like the old days.

HKS: Rent for headquarters would go up a lot, too, because they have a lot more offices.

FDR: Yes. Look at every supervisor's office and you really look at where the Forest Service has grown the most, at least when I was chief, the supervisor's office. People always argued about how much we get down to the ground and how much goes in administrative overhead. I had to keep arguing that well, these rapidly growing supervisor's offices really are people working on the ground, which was in part true. But anytime you centralize planning, you can't have a national plan or an RPA plan without it influencing things, and higher level management making some policy decisions about programs or whatever, which then become constraining factors on this ranger out here. It's like the ranger told me one time. That RPA and regional plans were part of the crap that came through the funnel on top of his head.

America's Great Outdoors Initiative

HKS: That's a very graphic statement. You suggested a couple of topics you'd like to talk about, so let's deal with those. America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

FDR: We'd gone through RPA while I was associate chief, and there were some things that I knew I wanted to do as chief. It was very evident to me that the two programs that had the most public support in the Forest Service were Fish and Wildlife and Outdoor Recreation. It was evident to me that we were slighting those programs budgetwise, prioritywise, and they just weren't a full partner with our timber program in terms of status. One of the things I did when I became chief was to make a decision and say we are going to beef up and make Fish and Wildlife and Outdoor Recreation a much stronger program, that this is where the bulk of the American people are, and this is where the bulk of American people are going to judge whether we're a very good outfit or not. It's not going to be how many trees we cut, although there were constituents out there that judged our effectiveness by that, too. So I made a major push in Fish and Wildlife and Outdoor Recreation when I became chief and publicly said we're going to do some things.

I put together a task force headed by Zane Smith about how we can greatly expand Outdoor Recreation on the national forest. Zane and his crew did a wonderful job, and came up with a report. There was a big meeting up in Wisconsin. Zane handled it, and I was supposed to be there with all the interest groups, a lot of the environmental groups, all the recreation groups. Unfortunately, I didn't go because the day before the meeting started my mother died, so I had to go to the funeral and I missed the meeting. Zane came up with some wonderful ideas how the Forest Service could be innovative, creative, and move forward with our recreation program.

A big deal on that was partnerships. There were a lot of volunteer groups out here as well as other people that ought to be helping us with the recreation job. So a big thing on this was outdoor recreation partners, and I went to Congress and I got authority for challenge cost shared grants and recreation. If there was some recreation project that the local people wanted or local groups wanted, we would put in 50 percent of the cost of doing that if they would come forward with the other 50 percent. It was called challenge cost share, and that's been a wonderful program. I put a lot of money in that, and I remember sitting down with Peter Meyers in budget meetings. He said chief, how are we going to know you're going to match this. I remember telling Peter Meyers I said I will do the unheard of thing in government. I will return this money to the treasury if I can't get at least a fifty-fifty match from the outside for these recreation projects. Well, and it started, it was kind of a pilot test thing and I had proposals come in the first year.

I only had something like ten million bucks, and I had proposals for more than fifty-fifty match, I don't know, ten times that. It really started kind of a campaign, people coming in and wanting this challenge cost share money to do these recreation projects. It overwhelmed us, and it was a wonderful idea that caught on like wildfire. By the time I left the chief's office, we had built this thing up to, I don't know how many, forty, fifty,

eighty million bucks. It was a big program, which then we were doubling through contributions. So that was called recreation partnerships.

The Forest Service had this hang up about we wanted the concessionaires and people to come in and provide a recreation service to the public, but by God, they better not make a dime off of us. I changed that. I turned that around. I said it's okay for the private sector, you know, here's the timber industry making a living off of buying trees and logging, why shouldn't our recreation partners, our guides and outfitters and all of these people, why shouldn't they make a profit. Why are we worried about that. So I made a major change in policy there in thinking in the Forest Service and I put in our policy something, it's okay for our recreation partners, and we expect them to make a reasonable profit in providing outdoor recreation service to the American people using the national forests. That set off a lot of innovation, creativity out here. I still had a lot of people complaining about that. Somehow there's something dirty about people making a living off the national forests, yet it's been accepted practice. It's okay for the logger. But anyway, that was a major change and so we really beefed up and made great progress in Outdoor Recreation and actually became a leader.

I got OMB involved. They gave me extra money. By the time Bush came on board, we had prepared a nice brochure on recreation strategy of the Forest Service. Nice colorful brochure that described all the things I'm talking to you about. And I got that to Derrick Crandall. Derrick's with the American Recreation Coalition. It was during the Bush-Dukasis campaign, and Derrik said get me the first copy of that, just right off the press. He said I'll get it in Bush's briefing papers, and he did. It was a nice colorful brochure, easy to read. And we got that in Bush's briefing book. He read it and he latched on to it, and throughout the Bush presidency he kept asking questions about how are we doing in our Outdoor Recreation Program, and he embraced it. Again, that's one of those little incidents that at the right time we came out with a colorful brochure about our new recreation strategy in the Forest Service, having a key contact with Derrick Crandall, who was in with the campaign people for Bush, and got it into his briefing book. The president was one of the first people to read our entire brochure and then remembered that through his tenure as president. So our recreation budget just took off.

Sheldon Coleman--of Coleman Company, which sells lanterns, tents--was a great outdoorsman and recreationist. He had died and in his honor they created the Coleman Great Outdoor Recreation Award, and this was to go to the person who the Recreation Coalition felt made the most contribution to outdoor recreation this year, and I was the first recipient. It was a black tie dinner affair with a lot of members of Congress and really a big deal. I'll show you what I got. It was this Stuben glass. [Dale showing the glass.] But this is Stuben glass and that's something I'm most proud of. "Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award, June 20, 1989." Bush was such a supporter and he was in there helping the Forest Service and he was beefing up our budget and he was out talking about great outdoors. He was a fisherman, and we took him camping. You saw the pictures where we had him in South Dakota fishing--he got the second award. We got these two great outdoors awards off of this recreation strategy from the Forest Service between me and the president. But he only got one duck and I got two ducks. I've been on the judging committee several years, and this year Senator Chaffee from Rhode Island got it. The governor of Colorado was one, and the director of Fish and Wildlife was

another recipient, and a senator from Louisiana got it. Pretty high-powered people, so I'm really proud of being the first and helping Bush be the second. That's the recreation story.

We did the same thing with Fish and Wildlife. Started this challenge cost share program and we started, we had a program called Rise to the Future, fish your national forest. We helped organize all of these groups around various species. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, we had a big hand in that. There's an antelope group. There's a grouse group. We helped organize those. We worked with Ducks Unlimited and all of those folks, and we got the wildlife program going. I'm not a fisherman, you know. My fishing is growing up in Arkansas with a little cane pole trying to catch perch and catfish. But the fisherman group were so proud of what we were doing and happy and contributing money. They gave me the Fisherman of the Year Award. I got that award for, again, the great work that the Forest Service was doing in the fisheries program. And my fellow awardees on that again are Curt Gowdy and I don't know who the others are. Trout Unlimited gave me the Conservationist of the Year Award one year for that, and it wasn't just me, it was the efforts of the Forest Service, and how do they show their appreciation. They give the chief an award, but it's really your people out there doing a great job. But I did have a hand in it when I became chief, saying we are slighting Fish and Wildlife and Recreation, and these are programs we simply got to beef up and get on par with our other programs.

Of course, the timber industry was always looking at me with a suspicious eye, and I kept saying you know, I don't see this adversely affecting the timber program in any significant degree. I said we may have to do some things around the boundaries here to make some adjustments, but I kept assuring them that we could have a better recreation fish and wildlife program and still carry on a timber program. Now they probably think I misjudged that today, but it really wasn't these programs of elk habitat and these sorts of things. It's these endangered species that's really knocked the timber program in the head. So that's the story on all of that.

HKS: The concept of partnerships. That, in my mind, was a Reagan philosophy. When he came in, government works in partnership with the people. Did you have partnerships with counties and municipalities, too, or was it basically private sectors or individuals and groups?

FDR: It was everybody. One time they showed me a list. We had thousands of partnerships and they were everywhere, cities, counties, a lot of volunteer groups, conservation groups. It helped that was in line with the Reagan administration, but it was one I felt very strongly about and one I personally kind of interjected into the Forest Service. That's the nice thing about being chief. You know a lot of people have a lot of different ideas. When you're chief, you have an idea, at least you have a good chance of doing something about it, and that was one of them, partnerships.

HKS: Was there any conflict at all with the Fish and Wildlife Service over funding? They said wait, that's what we do.

FDR: The more priority we put on Fish and Wildlife and the more habitat improvement work we did, you know, the happier they were with us. I do remember the director of the

Park Service, an old guy, Reagan's buddy, by the name of William Penn Mott. Reagan brought in his buddy who was the head of California state parks when he was governor. We came out with our beautiful brochure, and we had the most beautiful pictures of people recreating on the national forests. That brochure was such that you'd thought when you're out on the national forests recreating you'd died and gone to heaven. I mean our people really did a magnificent job on that brochure. Well, we sent some copies to our sister agencies. I got feedback that when the director of the Park Service brought it to a staff meeting one day with all of his key staff. He said I want to show you what the Forest Service just come out with and started thumbing through it. He says why can't the Park Service do something like this. I think then that program identified the Forest Service as the recreation leader in the federal government, and in the view of Bush, in the view of OMB, and in the view of Congress. At the same time we were coming out promoting outdoor recreation, saying come and visit your national forests, and welcoming the public to the national forests, the Park Service was talking about we've got too many visitors that's loving the parks to death and they were coming out with a negative message. At the same time we were coming on like gangbusters with a positive message. It clearly put us in the eyes of the Washington establishment as the leader in outdoor recreation. So I'm really proud of that.

Forest Service Budget Promotion

HKS: Another of your proposed topics is growth in Forest Service budget and the use of interest groups to promote and lobby for Forest Service programs. It's kind of a long title.

FDR: That was something else I started in the Forest Service. See, I'd been around Washington. Washington's big and complex and most people never figure it out, even some presidents at times. But I'd been associate chief for four years and before that I'd been in Washington in and out, so I kind of knew what made that town tick. I had experienced firsthand the influence of lobbyists. The lobbyists are very influential in Washington.

When the president sends the budget to the Hill, there's briefings to let everybody know what's in the budget. In the Forest Service when you get through OMB you always have some programs cut, some of which are popular. So I collected money from my deputy chiefs, seems like fifty dollars apiece, and I threw my share in there, and we held a big party. We did that every year I was chief when the budget went up, and we invited all the interest groups in Washington that dealt with natural resources to come in. The environmental groups were sitting there beside the timber industry folks, and I personally conducted these briefings because I knew my budget. I had big flip charts. The way I enticed them there is a free lunch afterwards. That's what I used the fifty dollars for. We brought in dozens of pizzas and we had dessert and we had coffee and cokes and stuff like that. It was very popular; I mean, I filled my conference room every year.

I spent about an hour going in detail over the budget that the president had just submitted to the Hill, and what was in it, what wasn't in it, what programs had been cut, what programs had been beefed up. I usually spent about thirty minutes on that and then

answered questions. Of course, when somebody's program got cut, how come that got cut? So everybody knew what was going on, and I gave the administration's philosophy of why this program was cut or this program was increased, and then answered all their questions so that when they left that room they knew exactly what was in the Forest Service budget. Then we prepared a nice briefing package for them, you know, the key issues of the budget, handed it out. They went back to their office. I didn't have to tell them go to work on the Hill. Then we'd go up to my office where we had the book signing and George's office, and we'd spread out our feast of pizza and whatever else and had a big lunch. I did that and interacted with all the interest groups, and then I would follow up with some. If my fish and wildlife program was hurt somewhere, I'd follow up with the National Wildlife Federation or some of those groups and say you really need to go to work on this on the Hill. To the extent I could I armed the lobbyists, and at times gave them suggestions on a one-to-one basis where some priorities were for them on our budget. I think they did a wonderful job. You know, there'd be some people that we were fighting it out in the court or in the press, but when it came to our budget we were together because everybody was wanting the Forest Service to have a bigger budget in their program. It gave me at least one time a year to get all the people together that sometimes didn't get along and have their attention on something that was very important, followed by a little social occasion.

I believe that was one of the most successful things I did. I believe that resulted in additional millions of dollars a year in the Forest Service budget. It gave me a chance to have a sense of presence in front of all these lobbyists. So that's what that topic is all about, and that was kind of an innovation I did when I became chief. I carried that on every year as long as I was chief. I don't know if they're doing it anymore or not.

HKS: The Natural Resources Council of America is sort of a meeting ground for people of diverse views. People get together that have a common interest in issues but they don't agree upon what the issues are? Did you speak before that group on a regular basis?

FDR: No, I did not. Now they were invited to my budget meeting, but I never went over there. They were next to SAF, and they had this young guy that used to work for the Forest Service in charge of renewable resources. Anyway, no, I did not go over there. I don't think they were very effective. If they were it wasn't visible to me.

HKS: My assessment of them is that they were very good in earlier years, and then something else took their place and their budget declined and they stopped their newsletters and so forth. I guess they're still around.

FDR: I don't know. I think that was one of the innovations in government. It was kind of unheard of that a government agency would invite a large group in to get briefed on the budget and serve them lunch. I didn't have any money for it, so I just hit my deputy chiefs up. They'd kind of put their hands on their hip pocket when they saw me coming about a month before this meeting because they knew I was asking for money.

HKS: There's a law that officially bans lobbying by agencies. What is lobbying? It seems to me you're almost borderline there because Congress certainly knows where this guy came from if he heard from you that you need more money for that program.

FDR: Those are real professionals, the lobbyists back there. They're experienced. They know all the rules. We have an obligation in government to communicate, to provide information, so there was no problem in me having a meeting of the concerned interests to explain the budget. If I'd stood up there and said now, I'm unhappy with this line item and I'd like for you to lobby for it, I'd been violating some laws. I was astute enough not to say those kinds of things. I just said, here's the facts folks. I answered their questions, gave them rationale on why programs went up or went down, which were coming in our budget explanatory notes. Now, what I did later with phone calls on a personal basis with some of these interest groups could be viewed as a violation of law, when I gave them ideas and suggestions about where some of my priorities were. Of course, I never talked to the environmental groups about the timber. I was talking to the fish and wildlife folks about fish and wildlife programs. And it's a matter of trust and acquaintance. I mean, I just wouldn't have done that with anybody. It was people that I knew that I could trust that they weren't going to go up on the Hill and leave the impression they're lobbying for the chief. They're lobbying for their program because that's what they get paid for. If they're a fish and wildlife group they want to see that fish and wildlife programs are fairly treated in the budget process. There was common interest, same with the recreation groups and the timber groups. You know, NFPA wouldn't have lasted long in D.C. if they weren't effective in upping the timber sale program for the Forest Service when it went through the Congress.

Cultural Diversity

HKS: Cultural diversity. Philosophically I think it's a great idea. People ought to be selected and rewarded based upon ability and performance, and it's long overdue and all of that. What's the significance to the agency, other than at long last redressing this long unfairness of our society? Are there benefits other than that to the agency?

FDR: The benefits are you are broadening the perspective and values of the people in the Forest Service. I talked some about this earlier. For most of the Forest Service history we have been a bunch of white guys of European origin that have managed the Forest Service, shaped the Forest Service, made the decisions, and marched us through time. They've been very good people. But every group of people have some blind spots, and I think the Forest Service has been somewhat a victim--like any other group would have been--of the blind spots that we European Americans tend to have when we think.

The Indians have a different way of thinking. They have a different set of values. I'm talking about the American Indians. European Americans tend to have a sense of timing. We see end objectives and we're very logical normally in defining a path to get there with time schedules and time constraints and, you know, the old efficiency model. The Native Americans don't go by time schedules, and that is a major contrast. The Native Americans are not so direct like we European Americans. If we don't like something that was said, we tend to say "I disagree, that's not the way I see it." The Native Americans don't tend to deal with things that bluntly to your face. We European Americans tend to, not all of us, be outspoken. We bring attention to ourselves with whatever we have to say.

The Native Americans are not so outspoken. They kind of sit there and listen. They do not have the sense of timing that we European Americans have. They have to think about things for a while, kind of let it evolve. I'm using the Native Americans, but there are also some cultural values and different characteristics that are different with the Orientals, the Hispanics, and the African Americans. So as good as we European Americans are, we have some blind spots as it relates to these values.

America is truly a multi-cultural country. In the state of California soon European Americans are going to be a minority. If we as an agency are going to truly represent the needs and expectations of all of the Americans, the Forest Service as well as every other agency has got to be sensitive to these other values and other ways of thinking that the American people have. Now you've got two ways to go about that. You can take us European Americans and train us and sensitize us and try to make us understand and modify our values to be broader, or you can diversify your workforce and bring those values in as part of the team. I believe the latter way is the right way to go. I believe that's what we've got to do.

During my period of time as chief we had enough of these minority groups that they were getting quite active and actually demanding, we want to be an influential part of this organization. They looked at top management, and we all looked like people like you and me. So they formed groups. The Hispanics formed a group. I forgot what they called it. The African Americans formed a group. The Asians formed a group. Again, the Indians didn't, again because of their culture.

I met with them and I think we talked about partnerships with the Hispanics. They brought a lot of suggestions on how the Forest Service could broaden its perspective to make it so that they would be more comfortable in the Forest Service as an organization, and that the Forest Service was making decisions that were sensitive to and reflective of some of their values. One of the things they suggested, and I did, was to have a representative at chief and staff. I had women. Women are coming on strong in the Forest Service, so you didn't have to worry too much about women. Women were fairly well represented. But I brought on an African American, a Hispanic, an Asian, and a handicapped and added them to chief and staff. They were my highest ranking, say GS-14s or 15s down in the organization, but I gave them a part-time job, attend all of our chief and staff meetings, participate with us as an interim measure until we could actually get minorities in some of the top management positions, which the Forest Service has now done.

I went to the Region 3 leadership meeting in March and talked to them. I was pleasantly surprised. There are several women forest supervisors. There are a lot of Hispanic forest supervisors in Arizona and New Mexico. The regional forester is a black lady and did a wonderful job. One of the big issues in this region is up at the Grand Canyon where we were making a land exchange. They call it Grand Canyon Village or something where we are exchanging two hundred and eighty-two acres of national forest land next to the Grand Canyon for a lot of other land here in Arizona. The whole idea is you go to Grand Canyon and there's no services up there other than a little town. They want a mass transit system and there are not places for people to park their cars.

Yesterday at my luncheon meeting, I had the director of the Museum of Northern Arizona there who was going to have a part of the interpretive program up at this new place at the Grand Canyon, and he was at the meeting where Ellie Towns announced our Forest Service decision. He says Dale, I want to tell you, I have never seen a government employee that performed so well as your regional forester. She was so professional, so sincere, and just came across so well. He said even though it was controversial, she had the groups with her and there was no doubt in anybody's mind that the Forest Service was making the best professional decision that they could make, looking out for all of our best interests for the Grand Canyon. He says it was one of the best performances I've ever seen by a government employee. Now talk about performance, here is a black woman, she's a lawyer, our regional forester in Region 3 performing so well in that situation. I mean that was one test of her.

HKS: She was an attorney, so she came into the Forest Service at a fairly high level, probably.

FDR: Yes, she did.

HKS: As part of a recruitment program.

FDR: Yes. I don't know when she came in, but both Max and I during his tenure, and I continued it, accepted the fact we have to diversify. If we're going to diversify let's find the best talent we can find in the minorities. We weren't just looking for warm bodies. We were looking for talent, and she was one of those people that came in under this program that Max and I had of searching the nation as a whole for the best talent we could find.

That was a long answer, Pete, to your question. First of all, there's no choice but to diversify when you have a diversified American people. The minority people of this country are rising up and demanding their rights, their respect. I don't know that they're demanding special privileges as much as they're demanding equal opportunity. The more I dealt with minority groups, and I've dealt with a lot of them, respect keeps coming into their vocabulary. They want to be respected. You and I may be of unique European-American origin, but we tend to not be, especially men, as sensitive to other people as we should and be respectful of them in a way that they expect us to be respectful of them.

HKS: Essentially all the statutes that govern the Forest Service are of European-American origin. Essentially all the case law precedent is European American. Do you sense any inefficiencies of adjusting that trajectory with the new way of following the law because different kinds of regs are coming out and so forth because of this diverse workforce? Or is it melding together about as efficiently as it did the other way?

FDR: No, nothing goes smooth. It's jerky. Anytime you're involved in change that involves cultural change, it is slow, painful, and never a very smooth process. Nevertheless, it's a process you've got to go through. So again back to what the Forest Service has gained and what it's lost. I think you could say that historically the Forest Service decisions by and large have been made by managers who were long on experience, long on good judgment and being able to put decisions in perspective and tie

back to the land. It may have been short on some of these blind spots, and we've given up some of that. I think if you look at the Washington Office today, for example, you'll see a lot of nontraditional people in jobs that are not grounded in natural resource management on the ground, and you lose something on that. The Forest Service is losing some of that. It's a tradeoff. How do you balance it? I worry about some of the decisions the Forest Service is making because of that now.

HKS: The United States is a big place, a very complicated ecosystem. If you've never been there and seen what it's like, it's very hard to visualize the problem the supervisor's having out in Oregon or wherever it is. You need that experience.

FDR: Yes. You know, that was one of the basic tenets of Gifford Pinchot and his people and the culture of the Forest Service. We're losing some of that. I shouldn't say we, I mean I'm six years into another life, but we have a new Forest Service today, and we should. The Forest Service should constantly evolve. The old-timers like me are always going to say they're moving in directions too fast or maybe ways they shouldn't be moving into. You've got to pay attention to old-timers because they've got a lot of wisdom and experience. But also they're not up to date and with it, in terms of the current situation that's moving so fast. Now I'm one of those old-timers, six years past, and since I retired from the Forest Service I have not tried to keep up with it. I've got another life now, and the Forest Service is not part of my life. Consequently, I don't spend much time at all trying to keep up with things. Now my predecessor, Max Peterson, is just the opposite. He kept working in that same environment. Max probably to this day knows a lot of the details of what's going on in the Forest Service. That's not a priority of mine or something I choose to spend my time on.

HKS: So as a courtesy, the agency doesn't send you briefing papers and so on?

Mike Dombeck

FDR: No. The only contact I've had with the Washington Office was Jack Ward Thomas. The day he decided to resign he called me and he said just as a matter of information I want you to know that I'm resigning today. I wasn't here to take the phone call, so he just left it on my answering machine. As a courtesy I want you to know, he said, the administration and I aren't seeing eye to eye on some things, and I've decided to leave. Mike Dombeck, when I was chief Mike was my head fisheries biologist in the Washington Office.

HKS: Oh, I didn't realize that.

FDR: Yes. When Cy Jamison came in as the director of BLM during the Bush administration, somebody had given Cy some advice that BLM was short on scientific or professional credibility. As part of his action to compensate for that, he offered Mike Dombeck the job of being his special assistant, I think as a scientific advisor or something, I don't know what name he gave it. I remember Mike coming into me and he says chief, Cy Jamison wants me to come to work as his special assistant in BLM. He

said I don't want to leave the Forest Service, what's your advice. Mike was an outstanding guy and I said, I'll tell you what, Mike, as bad as we need you, BLM needs you worse because they do not have the depth of professional scientific people like yourself that we have. So I said I advise you to go take that job, and if you're unhappy and it doesn't work out I'll take you back in the Forest Service any day. He said well, that's what I needed to hear. So Mike heads off to BLM and worked for Cy for the four years that Cy was director of BLM. Then the new administration came in and they hire this guy who's a Hispanic, and who's now the mayor of Albuquerque, as the BLM director. He got crossways and he resigned within the first year of the Clinton administration. So BLM was without an agency head, and in the meantime Mike had moved up to be a special assistant to the assistant secretary for lands and minerals in interior. They moved Mike down to replace the guy they actually fired before he resigned. So he was director of the BLM then for a few years before they selected him as the new chief. So that's kind of the history of Dombeck. You'll hear Mike once in awhile tell the same story I'm telling you that the chief told him before he went to BLM that he could come back anytime he was unhappy, so he said I'm back.

Law Enforcement

HKS: That's a good story. Law enforcement. In my brief tenure in the Forest Service we worried about losing a few Christmas trees and farmers stealing a few cedar logs for fence posts, but during your time as chief law enforcement was a major program.

FDR: Yes.

HKS: And I guess it's fair to say that TV interview you had, I can't remember what it was, on law enforcement, it was controversial. The guy kind of beat you up.

FDR: Well, yes.

HKS: What do you want to say about law enforcement, because it's a puzzle. George told me some things about it.

FDR: When we got into the marijuana growing on the national forests we got into law enforcement in a big way. We calculated once that in the state of California the value of the marijuana grown on the national forests exceeded the value of the timber harvested in California that year. I mean, it was big business. So because of the marijuana there was a big problem, and it was serious. We significantly beefed up our law enforcement. We brought on some real professionals that were very serious about their job but working for forest supervisors who tend to have this multiple use framework of resolving conflict by making tradeoffs and balancing decisions. Law enforcement folks didn't relate to that at all. They were kind of like these special investigators of the president. I mean they had tunnel vision. I'm talking in general.

Some of my forest supervisors got crossways, they didn't quite understand that, and so before I knew it some of my law enforcement folks were investigating their own boss on

some of these timber things. And there were some timber problems out there. I very well remember one supervisor came in and talked to me and he was Hispanic. He says chief, these law enforcement people are picking on me. He kind of framed it as it was discrimination against Hispanics. I was shocked about that, and I said well, who are these law enforcement officers. He grinned, and he says they are my own.

There had been some timber cut that shouldn't have been on some timber sales. The timber sale contract provides for some penalties for cutting unauthorized trees, and the supervisor had done what the Forest Service had traditionally done for years--sitting down with the timber operator, working it out, and making them pay the penalties for the timber he cut that he shouldn't have. The law enforcement folks wanted to send that timber operator to jail, you know, prosecute. I mean, we got into those conflicts.

It was a discipline that had kind of straight-line tunnel logic. Your objective in life is to hunt down criminals and get them convicted and sent to jail if that's what needs to be done. It created a lot of problems, and some of my supervisors kind of got in trouble on this. I don't know that they were doing anything that the Forest Service hadn't always been doing, especially on timber harvesting. We had to have a separate organization for law enforcement. Law enforcement people have to have their own chain of command. They can't report to a manager. And boy, did this upset my forest supervisors, and I fought it too. I mean, I went to the Hill and testified against that. I said the law enforcement folks need to be part of the team out here, not a separate group investigating. I said if we've got a crime, they need to pursue it, but they need to work under the overall umbrella of the forest supervisor and the team.

We had enough examples of supervisors doing some things they shouldn't have done and that that got to Congress, and they actually passed an amendment or a rider to my appropriation. I had to set up law enforcement as a separate organization with law enforcement people reporting to law enforcement people. My forest supervisors just thought I sold them down the drain on that, but I didn't. I mean, I was there fighting for them, and I lost the battle. How can you go to Congress and fight that when you actually have a few isolated incidents of supervisors not doing what they should have done and those isolated instances being portrayed in Washington as what's prevailing through the whole Forest Service. Anyway, I got beat down on that and over my objection and with almost an uprising from my supervisors because law enforcement folks are separate now. Then they kind of took a life of their own.

I made some statements that got into the press that the Forest Service does not want to get into a police state situation where we're suspicious of every person that puts a foot on the national forests, and of our own people. Yet that's what your real highly professional law enforcement people do for a living, and I worried about that a lot. There's the ranger inviting the public to come and use and visit and enjoy your national forest, but we've got the law enforcement guys running around suspicious of them that they're going to do something they shouldn't do. I even used the word, the last thing I ever wanted was for the Forest Service to degenerate into a police state type organization, which the press picked up on. It probably dramatized it but it did reflect my concern of law enforcement being the out-front philosophy of the Forest Service, and a lot of people that were dealing with the public. So it became a big problem, but we kind of worked through that, and

unless they changed it back since I left, the law enforcement folks have a straight-line chain of command.

HKS: A friend of mine in Seattle sent me this Sunday supplement. It's a rather extensive article of July 1998. Jack Thomas is still chief. The title is "Who Killed the Timber Theft Task Force?" It says that Weyerhaeuser has been involved. Did that friendship involve spiking of a timber theft investigative unit, might have embarrassed both the Northwest timber giant and the Forest Service. Now this is journalism at work, but the problem has continued. I mean, there's a sense in the article that the chief's been holding back.

FDR: You and I talked earlier about Jack Ward Thomas becoming chief. I had my problems there, too, but here we were taking Jack Ward Thomas with very little managerial experience, no experience in dealing with law enforcement, all of a sudden becoming chief of the Forest Service and the chief law enforcement reports to the chief directly. I'm sure Jack said this is not why I became chief to deal with all these law enforcement problems. I probably didn't handle it very well either, but I could see Jack just being thrown in the lion's den there on his first day almost. The law enforcement officer coming to him and saying, I work for you now and we got all these problems. I initiated that timber theft task force because we did have a problem. We've always had a problem. There's always been trees stolen off the national forests. It's like having a Safeway store with nobody around a big part of the day. I put together that task force and it was still in operation when I left the Forest Service focusing on a timber and log accountability and how to prevent theft. That TV program had a logger, some young guy. I'm sure he wasn't a regular guy. He made some statement, you know, these trees are here just for the taking. The Forest Service don't care, I don't see them, I just cut these trees. Is that the one you saw?

HKS: Yes.

FDR: That had to be a put up deal. No logger in his right mind even if he was doing that would admit it on national TV. That was a framed up deal, I'm sure. When the American people see that the criminal says, no problem, I cut all these trees I want. The Forest Service doesn't care and they're here for my taking, I mean, you've got a political issue. But I had already initiated that timber task force, and I don't know how it got disposed of. I mean, that article's after my time.

HKS: Yes. According to the article, Thomas pulled the plug on it. Said it wasn't meeting Forest Service needs, and the Forest Service stops programs all the time. This happens to be a program that we're stopping right now. But that's a good story for Seattle.

FDR: Jack Ward is probably being affected by his blind spot not having been experienced at dealing with the press. Even if it wasn't a worthy program, you don't leave the impression that stealing trees is not worthy of pursuing.

HKS: The article is full of innuendo. There's not necessarily literally a payoff from Weyerhaeuser to the chief, but there are reasons to maintain this relationship with Weyerhaeuser.

FDR: Again, I told the forest supervisors in Region 3 in March that they are facing the most difficult managerial job ever faced by any generation of Forest Service managers, in managing all of these people with such diverse training and values and disciplines and all of that. Today's forest supervisors, if they are not the very best managers of people and know how to get people of such diversity working together as a team, you've got a poor performance situation on our national forests. In other words, used to be the Forest Service could stand a mediocre or less than mediocre ranger or supervisor. You had enough people around them to kind of compensate for them so that you still had a good operation going. Today with this diversity our supervisors and rangers really need to be top-notch managers to deal with all these people and try to bring them together into a team.

Internal Dissention

HKS: Maybe this is the time to ask you to comment on *Inner Voice* and the sort of feedback from supervisors that was printed up in the National Forest Products Association newsletter. It was a public letter to you from forest supervisors. The agency was openly questioning the Washington Office, which was unheard of not very many years ago. Is that all part of the same cultural diversity, a new way of looking at the institution?

FDR: It's all part of that package. Quite frankly, a lot of the people we recruited were environmentalists, and a lot of them were members of the Sierra Club or the Wilderness Society. The Forest Service is a sieve now in terms of information getting out to the interest groups. When you get a group of people like that, a guy like Jeff DeBonis can evolve as a leader. We were off to the races with a new organization; I think he called it Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics. These were people that did not agree with our timber program and the way we were managing the national forests and were voicing internally a lot of the criticism of the Forest Service that we were hearing externally from the environmental groups.

I think that was an inevitable thing. We are openly recruiting from American society. I keep saying we. I need to say the Forest Service. I'm no longer a part of it. But when you open up recruitment as wide as the Forest Service has to bring new Forest Service people on board, you're basically bringing into the Forest Service that diversity that exists out there not only with minorities but with environmental attitudes as well. And so when the bottom of the organization starts bringing all this diversity up, and the Forest Service is still managing, in their view, in the past--it's hard for the Forest Service to change because in Washington you're rooted in the past, you know. You've got members of Congress dealing with your budget and laws on the books, and it's easier for people down in your organization to think of changes you ought to make than the policy makers like the chief can bring about in Washington. Inevitably, maybe not the thinking, but the management of the Forest Service can't help but be somewhat behind the current thinking going on out here among the employees. So that was kind of inevitable.

The forest supervisors thing in Region 1, that was a difficult thing and that did a lot of damage to me in Washington, a lot of damage to my reputation. I went out and sat down and talked to the forest supervisors in Montana and Idaho, Region 1, after that happened. But you know they made some remarks like chief, we're out of control. And there are not more damaging words that can be said about an organization in Washington, D.C. than you're out of control.

HKS: Did you have a sense it was one or two who used the language, and everyone else went along with it?

FDR: Exactly. I went out and had a session with all the supervisors. What happened was, one supervisor wrote the letter. He was a good guy, but he didn't understand the damage he was doing to the Forest Service when he did it. And there was concern. I mean, I don't want to underplay that. There was real concern that we were cutting too much timber and we weren't paying enough attention to ecological values. I had a strategy, and I was trying to maintain the timber sale program and beef up recreation, fish and, wildlife. But a lot of the field employees were feeling we needed to cut the timber program, and I wasn't in any position to do that in Washington with the climate. You know, working for a Republican administration and members of Congress being very supportive, especially the western members, of maintaining the timber sale program, the economy of local communities and all of that. I was making changes as fast as I could without pushing it so fast I wasn't going to be successful.

But the field people were getting impatient, and what was coming out of that letter is impatience. We need to make some adjustments in our timber sale program. The guy that wrote the letter used some of those words. He didn't realize when he said chief, we're out of control that he was going to damage my reputation in Washington and damage the reputation of the Forest Service as badly as it did. The other supervisors just signed on, as you said. They thought they were sending a message to the chief, and that's all right to say that to the chief. But somebody decided to leak it to the press. In fact, it got to the press about the time it got to me, and I was shocked they even knew about it. My attitude was I got the letter, I put it in my desk and I said well, I'll schedule a meeting. I'll go out to Region 1 in the next few months and we'll sit down and talk about this and see if we can satisfy their concerns. And I eventually did that, but that did a lot of damage.

I went out to the supervisors. We had a heart-to-heart talk, and several of them said God, we regret that, chief. I told them this letter has done more to damage the reputation of the Forest Service back in Washington with influential people than anything we've done. They all apologized and said we had no idea it would do that. What can we do to right it? I said once the horse is out of the barn we just have to let it run and deal with it as it comes.

HKS: Had they been working with the regional forester and were dissatisfied with that response, so went to the chief? Or did they just say, skip the regional forester, we'll go straight to the chief?

John Mumma

FDR: We had John Mumma as regional forester, and he was a problem. I suspect he knew about it. I suspect he even encouraged it.

HKS: But normally they would go to the regional forester and say there's something wrong, and he'd handle it at that level.

FDR: Any other regional forester I would have had at that time would have recognized the significance and how impactful those words are going to be and would have probably stopped it, but that didn't happen in Region 1.

HKS: Do you want to put on the record the John Mumma situation? It received a lot of publicity and a lot about innuendo about your motivations on timber cut and all the rest of it. It was during the national forest centennial, and you were at Glenwood Springs, Colorado, when that all broke in the press.

FDR: It wasn't then I don't think.

HKS: I remember Gary Cargill introducing you and saying I'm sure glad to be here, is anyone else glad to be here. There were a lot of jokes going on, so in my mind it was at that time, but whatever. The press got a hold of that, and it wasn't attractively presented, I'll put it that way.

FDR: No. Things were coming down around my ears in Region 1. I had even forest supervisors call up and telling me chief, you've got to do something out here. We got to have a change in leadership. So there was a lot of unhappiness in the ranks in Region 1, which was getting back to me. There was a lot of whistle blower complaints against John. The congressional delegation was all over my back about what was going on in Region 1. It wasn't personal about John, but I was just having to spend an inordinate amount of my time dealing with the congressional delegation about problems that were going on there. I like John, I appointed him regional forester. I wouldn't say friends, but we were colleagues and had a good relationship. But it got unbearable for me in Region 1, and it was coming from all directions.

I decided that we needed to make a change in leadership there, which I did. We decided that John deserved a face-to-face discussion, although John and I had had some discussions on things about Region 1. George went out to see him, and that didn't go too well. I don't know if George talked about that or not. The feedback I got from George is John just left the meeting, wouldn't talk to him when we had real problems in Region 1. I think the reason it blew up is John resisted, and he was doing a lot of things to try to rally people around him. It almost became him versus the chief, and it just deteriorated from there. So looking back, we needed to make a change in the leadership of the region. George and I made the effort to sit down with John, but John wasn't cooperative. In retrospect we'd have probably handled that a lot differently, but you never know when one of these things is going to blow up on you, especially when you have an uncooperative key guy in the Forest Service who's stirring it up. I really think John

thought he could gather or generate the public support behind him that would tell the chief to reverse his decision. What John didn't know is a lot of his own people weren't supporting him.

HKS: It surprises me there aren't more examples of that. There probably are but didn't get to the press. Regional foresters are people of achievement and ambition, and they're used to being successful and listened to.

FDR: I didn't do anything every other chief hadn't done and that is conclude that you got a problem and you're going to make some personnel changes. The Forest Service has been fairly dictatorial I would say in the history of our agency in making needed changes. I didn't do anything any other chief hadn't done before me, but they'd never had an uncooperating regional forester before. I felt bad about that. You never like to hurt people or hurt their families, but one thing the chief does have to do is look out for the best interests of the Forest Service. In my situation I thought I was making a decision for the best interest of the Forest Service, and still believe it was. But John got hurt in the process, and he made it worse. Part of a manager's job is you have to make tough personnel decisions, and I learned a long time ago that if you let personal relationships interfere with good decisions you're going to screw up the outfit. The last thing you can have is you and a bunch of your supporting buddies in the top management of the Forest Service because the rest of the organization sees that.

HKS: Let's use that conceptually as an issue of decentralization. You've got telephone and you've got computer E-mails or DG message systems, and annual performance reviews. Is this the case where something broke so fast that these normal checks and balances just weren't put in place quickly enough? Because certainly during annual performance review, I don't know about salary rewards for performance, but you would think if you sat down with him every year and say well John, we've got these problems and I can't give you an increase this year, there would be a real message there. That generally is adequate, right?

FDR: That happened. John's performance ratings for two years truly reflected mine and George's size up of what was going on. So John knew that mine and George's opinion and view of the performance of the region was not up to par, and those were discussed with him during the performance ratings.

HKS: He's in the Senior Executive Service. Can you fire someone, actually terminate their employment with the government?

FDR: You can transfer them.

HKS: What do you do when you have a problem situation like that?

FDR: The Senior Executive Service is very flexible. The one thing you buy in when you join the Senior Executive Service is that you can be transferred. There used to be a ten-day advance notice, but I think they advanced that to thirty days. But the whole idea of Senior Executive Service is that flexibility to move people around. So you buy in with

that when you sign on with the Senior Executive Service. John just didn't want to abide by it.

HKS: Does the chief have authority to actually terminate a member of the Senior Executive Service, or is that a secretarial decision?

FDR: Oh that's the secretary's decision. You can't fire senior executives except for a reason. There's got to be fraud or poor performance, but you can transfer them around. Now John made out like this was congressional pressure, and it was true. I mean, the congressional delegation was on my back all the time about the performance and what was going on in Region 1. It never got down to them telling me or asking me to remove John, but they were dealing with the substance of the thing. But John made out like I did that because of political pressure. I'd have to admit the congressional delegation from Idaho and Montana was all over my back on what was going on in Region 1, but they dealt with it more on the merits of what was happening, as opposed to the person in charge, although there were some remarks at times pretty critical of John. But I was getting it, it was consistent, it was coming from many directions.

HKS: So as a practical matter, if someone is not performing the way you feel they ought to be, your real option is a transfer?

FDR: Yes, and that's what we offered John.

HKS: I think even though they won't admit it, that's usually what happens generally in the private sector. There are not very many vice presidents that are canned. If they've been there thirty-two years, there's a loyalty to the corporation. I know there are exceptions to this, but institutions behave that way.

FDR: I read the *Wall Street Journal* every day, and when people leave the private sector they always say, decided to pursue other interests.

Chaining

HKS: Yesterday I was driving north of Flagstaff. Those are old stumps that I saw. It's hard to tell how old anything is out here in the desert country.

FDR: Yes, but that happened a long time ago. I think that that happened in the early '70s. I've seen some of it. But it was controversial, and it was an effort to increase forage for grazing. Did a lot of it up in northern New Mexico on the Santa Fe and the Carson national forests. There was a problem there with all those Spanish American little grazing allotments and trying to graze it, and over the years the juniper and pinyon pine had filled in and there was a lot less grass there. This region got involved in it in a fairly big way up in northern New Mexico to try to help out those little Spanish American grazing permitees.

HKS: Is that a climate change or fire exclusion? What caused that extension of the juniper into grazed lands? Or was it always juniper, and they wanted to expand the grazing lands?

FDR: I think juniper filled in and started reducing the grass, and so they were trying to get it back to meadows and all grass in places. I've seen some of that up on the Carson National Forest near Taos. But I never really got involved in that much. We did some of it my early career out in Oregon on the manzanita brush. Manzanita is stiff, and you can get rid of that stuff by pulling a huge chain behind two cats. In my first job in the Forest Service, we were doing chaining of manzanita and planting ponderosa pine behind it.

HKS: That wouldn't be acceptable now, right?

FDR: No.

HKS: That's too destructive of ecosystems and habitat?

FDR: Yes.

Resources Planning Act

HKS: Is RPA still an effective law? George was saying something about a new report to Congress. It's done away with the reporting requirement of RPA as I understood him. RPA has had a controversial career. A lot of criticism by Resources for the Future types and university professors. Largely economists think it's not useful or is improperly handled. I'm not quite sure what the criticism is, but do you want to comment on RPA? Was it worth it?

FDR: I can't comment on the latest developments over the last six years. The first RPA, as crude as it was--I don't know if crude is the right word or not, but it was kind of put together in a hurry, and it resulted in increased budgets for the Forest Service. So there was a big payoff on the first one. The second one was coming to a head about the time the Reagan administration and John Crowell came in. I remember talking to John Crowell. I don't remember all the details, but I think we'd had the draft out and were ready to go final. I remember saying to John, this is an important document. Of course, John was familiar with it. It influenced the future direction of programs in the Forest Service and our budget. So John took that seriously. I think we had at the time something like eleven or twelve billion board feet of timber proposed in the draft RPA.

I remember the first speech I ever heard him make, is we've got to make the national forests more productive. More productive in John's mind was more timber. John was familiar with high-yield intensive industrial forestry, and he thought the Forest Service and the national forests were not productive. One of his goals was to make the national forests more productive, so he got a hold of that RPA and talked about eighteen to nineteen to twenty billion board feet in that. Actually, some of our problems today, I think, are a result of John Crowell pushing the Forest Service to really be a timber

agency. Although we never got there, John was talking about using that RPA to boost us up to eighteen to twenty billion board feet. I don't remember how it all came out. Seems like it got moderated a lot. But that was John's initial direction. So in some ways it was a detriment because the RPA is a secretary's program. The statement of policy is a presidential statement of policy. So all of a sudden it provides a neat mechanism to elevate Forest Service decisions and direction up to make a clean cut decision like John was trying to make on our timber program. Then the statement of policy gets to the president and gets sometimes all haywire, you know.

RPA, basically, is a neutral mechanism to elevate your whole life up to the political level, and if you've got sympathetic political leaders that are in line with Forest Service thinking it's terrific. If you've got political leaders not sympathetic with Forest Service thinking, it gives them a handle to make some drastic changes. I believe that was the second RPA, which got moderated later. The Forest Service is still living with that reputation out there that we are a timber outfit trying to increase the timber production on the national forests. I think Aristotle once said, each extreme begets the other extreme. I trace some of the extremism now on the environmental end of things as a reaction to that extreme that John Crowell was trying to put into that second RPA. Of course, during the negotiations we got it moderated eventually. The third RPA, I was chief and I found it very helpful. I personally took a hand in a lot of the policy decisions in there and the direction it went, and I worked with OMB and the secretary's office. So that third RPA pretty well reflected my philosophy as chief. I got this partnership concept built into it.

I got the fish and wildlife and the recreation sections really boosted up in the third RPA. The only way I got that through OMB was by saying I'm going to get these partnerships to help pay for it. I won them over and they were supportive. So I really felt good about the third RPA, which came in seems like about the middle of my tenure. It reflected my philosophy and righted a lot of things that the previous RPA had gotten off track a bit due to John Crowell's influence. Before I left the chief's office my last year of two, we were working on what would have been the fourth RPA, if I've got my numbers right here. It was kind of fizzling out and I couldn't get any interest. In fact, I had nine months with the Clinton-Gore administration, and I really couldn't get their interest in it. I don't know what's happened since then, but it reached its peak in that third RPA, although it was the first RPA under John McGuire that got us the biggest increase in the Forest Service budget.

HKS: Were there numbers available, when John Crowell comes in and says we want to kick the cut way up, of the biological capacity of the one hundred and ninety-one million acres to produce that much timber and still maintain reasonable safeguards of other uses? I mean, could it have been done? Could you say no that's not technically possible or yes, we could do it? There's a big but, obviously.

FDR: Well, it was those buts that finally got the thing moderated. Max and I talked about that because Max was our lead guy on that. I was involved in it. It was a long drawn-out process to moderate John Crowell, and even after we got him moderated, you'll see in that third RPA that timber harvests were up quite a bit. I don't remember all the numbers. Biological capacity, yes. That's where he was coming from. But consistent with our other resource needs, no. And that's what we had to keep hammering away at John to back him

off. But he got the eighteen, seems like it was eighteen billion, from looking at the biological capability to grow wood on the national forests. The biological capability was up there around eighteen to twenty, if you manage it like say Weyerhaeuser manages. Max and I both knew that was a mistake, and John and the Reagan administration were tough customers. I don't want to say anything bad about John because he was a great guy and I like John, he was personable. But John had his line of thinking and his thoughts, which he brought to the job, and he didn't back off or moderate easily.

HKS: Another thought I would have had, would the market absorb that much without harming the private sector.

FDR: Yes.

HKS: But anyway, it didn't happen. But it was also happening that Jim Watts was making his statements and causing a lot of concern, and EPA had problems. In the context of what the Reagan administration was doing with natural resources, it probably amplified.

FDR: John was part of the strategy. EPA, Jim Watts, and John Crowell of the Forest Service. The Reagan administration came in with an agenda. I've worked with a lot of administrations, and I would have to say the Reagan administration appointees by and large came out of business, private sector, were by and large experienced managers. They came in with an agenda, and they knew how to get things done. In contrast, I'd say the Carter administration were largely a bunch of lobbyists and a lot of coming out of the environmental groups that had never managed anything in their life. I mean, they didn't know how to manage, and the Clinton administration is somewhat that way, too. They've recruited a lot of people out of the interest groups or people that do not have managerial experience in running an organization and setting objectives and getting things done. But the Reagan administration was a ten on a scale of one to ten in hiring managers that knew how to get things done and had an agenda and was very persistent in accomplishing that agenda. John Crowell was a part of that.

HKS: If you go to the library there's a lot of books, a dozen or so at least, by political scientists on the Reagan administration. The consensus seems to be that the Reagan administration delivered more campaign promises than any other presidency.

FDR: I agree with that.

HKS: They did what they said they'd do if they were elected. And if you believe in democracy, that's sort of the way it's supposed to work.

FDR: I agree with that. You know, the Reagan administration was very, very good in terms of its ability to manage the federal government.

HKS: Interesting. My sense was Nixon was pretty good at knowing how government worked. I mean, he had some flaws we don't need to talk about, but he came in with better managerial skills than most presidents.

FDR: It's kind of a Republican-Democrat thing. The Republicans tend to recruit experienced managers out of the business world, and the Democrats by and large tend to recruit out of the interest groups, the lobbyists, the various organizations that do not have managerial experience. That's why I think the democratic administration tends to be disorganized, not very well disciplined. I'm sure President Clinton, the last thing he wanted to be the first item on his platter was gays in the military. He had somebody sympathetic to the gay issue on his staff who decided well, now we're in power, let's do something about the gays in the military. I'm sure Clinton didn't make that decision.

HKS: Young people.

FDR: Yes. You get a bunch of inexperienced young people in key jobs that don't know what they don't know. I've just got the Clinton and the Carter administration to compare to. Of course, I worked under the Reagan administration, which was very efficient and had just the opposite kind of political appointees.

HKS: It's interesting because the image of the president himself was not someone who was closely attuned to the specifics of what was going on, but he had good people, right?

FDR: That's one thing about Reagan. I don't know what he called them but he had that close-knit group of people around him that made all the personnel selections and set the pattern.

Forest Health

HKS: Let burn policy, forest health, what is there to say about that other than it's another tough one?

FDR: Well, it's kind of hard to convince the American people that fire is good after you'd taught them, and Smokey had been around a long time, that fire is bad. But I think the Forest Service has done a pretty good job making that change in their own mind as well as communicating to the public. Quite frankly, environmental groups have rallied around that and helped in communicating that fire is part of the ecosystem and needs to be part of forest management. Especially in natural resource management because of the long timeframes, even though you've got a little flaw in your management, you can rock along with that flaw a long, long time before it finally becomes a big issue with you, and that's the way it is with fire. I mean, we were gradually building up the biomass in the forest and we never saw that. It was just creeping up on us over fifty or seventy-five years until all of a sudden some ecologists and fire people started portraying a different vision of what's happening to us that caused us to have to make a major change in our philosophy. Actually, I think that's gone pretty well.

The big problem is how do you do all this burning now. I mean, you have developments and structures and smoke and air pollution. The one forest type that needs it the worst way is the ponderosa pine. The Colorado plateau here is the largest ponderosa pine forest in the world. The Coconino is doing a lot of prescribed burning, but we always get a

drown drift of the wind down off the Colorado plateau at night and so they smoke us up once in awhile and people complain here. I think Coconino has done a good job. They've had newspaper articles and all of that. People kind of understand why we need it, but people talk to me because I'm ex-chief. They say but do they have to smoke up Sedona. It's okay as long as the smoke goes somewhere else. So it's a horrendous job in implementing this thing, but nevertheless we're trying to play catch-up on ecosystem management here.

HKS: I'm not trying to find fault, but look back at this accumulating problem. The fuel load is increasing, and it seems so obvious now. Is there a deficiency in the way the research arm of the Forest Service has perceived problems? They are the technical experts that ought to have been out wandering around that had the skill to see this, and they weren't bound to fire control philosophy. Was that probably the weak link?

FDR: The logical place for the idea to originate from would be our research scientists saying hey, things aren't right here, you're building toward a long-term problem. And I suspect some of them were. I don't know how all that came about, but I'm sure it probably did come from our scientists and our fire ecologists. But I don't know the history of all of that.

HKS: Keith Arnold was deputy for research.

FDR: Yes. I know Keith.

HKS: He comes out of a fire background and did his doctoral dissertation on fire control and all that. He brought up in chief and staff that there should be prescribed burning in wilderness areas, that we need to reintroduce fire into the wilderness areas at a time when we can control it rather than waiting 'til the lighting strikes. He said in the chief and staff that went nowhere, absolutely. Next item on the agenda, that was it. Now, of course, it's fashionable to talk like that.

Wilderness

FDR: We talked about blind spots in the Forest Service. Wilderness has been a blind spot in the Forest Service. I don't know why. It may have been because the early days in the Forest Service, we were the father of wilderness. We're the ones, Leopold, you know, and I forgot the other guy's name in recreation.

HKS: Arthur Carhart.

FDR: Yes. We developed the rationale, the philosophy for wilderness, but somewhere along the line wilderness became a threat to multiple use management. Earlier I said as a JF, a speech I heard from my regional forester, Herb Stone. The one thing I remember is we have to control this wilderness thing because it's infringing on our multiple use management prerogatives. Somewhere along the line the Forest Service developed a negative, I wouldn't say a negative attitude, but it certainly wasn't a positive attitude

toward wilderness, even though we were the father of it. Part of it was the Forest Service could see the potential threat of wilderness engulfing large parts of the national forests, and losing flexibility for managing those forest lands for multiple use management. I ran into this as chief. I had some retirees making cutting, critical remarks about me and my wilderness philosophy. They developed the pure concept that in wilderness nature was to take its course; man wasn't to interfere with it. It was the pure concept not only managing it but the pure concept in designating what ought to be wilderness. Down deep, if you could find out that the pure concept was used as a defense mechanism to limit the amount of area going into wilderness.

HKS: At the back end of the parking lot of the hotel where I'm staying here is a barbwire fence. There's a sign that says, wilderness area. Is that legally a wilderness area right in town?

FDR: Yes. That's wilderness. All around Sedona is wilderness. We're surrounded by wilderness.

HKS: And it wouldn't have met the purity test of a generation ago.

FDR: No. The Forest Service carried forward with the purity concept of wilderness to the point of being ridiculous, in my opinion, in spite of the fact every time I went to Congress to testify we'd get beat up. You guys are not realistic. The outfitters and guides, that's big business in the wilderness. The outfitters wanted to have a semi-permanent camp during the season so that every week or whenever they'd bring their guests through the wilderness they had their camp and some things set up back there, very primitive. Then in the winter they didn't want to have to carry everything out and carry it back in the next spring. What they were going to leave back there in almost all cases was going to be covered with ten feet of snow during the winter anyway. I really got crossways on that. The outfitters and guides came in and talked to me and said you're making life miserable for us in the wilderness areas. You need to change the policy to be more reasonable.

I worked with the folks and, man, I was fighting a one-man battle in the Forest Service. But like I said earlier, it's kind of nice to be chief. You can fight one-man battles in the Forest Service if you're chief and bring about change. So I got the policy changed to be more reasonable in terms of what these outfitters could leave in camp over the season and what they could leave there over the wintertime. I had some retirees that had worked on the purity concept of wilderness back in the '60s. I mean, they got on a campaign, especially Bill Warf in Region 1, about the chief sold us down the drain. He doesn't understand wilderness. He's making these ridiculous decisions, no respect for wilderness. It said a lot about where the Forest Service had been in wilderness management, and we were actually developing an impractical concept there from a management standpoint. We were letting especially our purity concept to limit the amount of wilderness spill over into our management after we got it.

HKS: Statute says something like "man is a visitor who does not remain." It's language like that and that's what they're pointing to. You're letting these people remain in there.

FDR: I'm letting them "remain" some minimum facilities this week because they're going to be bringing in some guests the next week. They did not want to take it down each week, put it back up and all of that. It was not practical. Of course, wilderness maybe isn't supposed to be so practical.

There was another issue I got involved in. Max got caught up in the issue, and I finally met with the EPA director and resolved it because even Max was taking a hard line. EPA was doing water samples. I can't remember all the details, it was a nationwide water sample of the quality of water. They wanted to do water sampling in a lot of the lakes in the wilderness areas. EPA came in with some really remote areas. There was something about a timing situation between a water sample and analyzing it from a technical standpoint, so they wanted to use helicopters to go in to do water samples on selected lakes. We really got crossways and old Max was holding tough. Finally the EPA administrator and I got together--and I was associate chief--and he says you know, you guys are just ridiculous. Don't you have any flexibility? We finally just took it lake by lake, and I said you tell me which lake you have a technical problem on timing to get a water sample until you can actually test it out in a lab and all of that. So we narrowed it down to a very few lakes, and I finally agreed to let them do certain lakes. Then I had to go in and tell Max what I did. I thought Max would say, why did you go do that. Max was just relieved to get out of the situation by that time because it was in the papers, and we were being painted as being inflexible.

HKS: Was Ruckelshaus back as EPA administrator by that time?

FDR: No, it was a guy from Georgia, the guy that I met with. He was really a good guy. I know he was a southerner and he was from Georgia. Can't remember his name. Anyway, it was the same mentality that Keith Arnold was running up against in chief and staff. I introduced more flexibility into wilderness management than had ever been there before. But I want to tell you, it didn't bother me that much, but it didn't come without controversy from Forest Service employees and especially retirees.

HKS: Keith used an example, and it would tie in with exactly with what you're saying. Somewhere in the West somebody fell and was seriously hurt, and the ranger refused helicopter evacuation. The person didn't die, but was in great pain for three days on a mule back coming out the natural way. That was his example, that's not practical management of a public resource.

FDR: A lot of the wilderness problems the Forest Service has, it deserves them. There was this peak, I got a T-shirt, they gave me a T-shirt. An eighty-year-old woman who was crippled, and in her lifetime she had climbed this peak in a wilderness area in California eighty times or something like that. They'd worked--she was a really popular person--to name the peak after her.

HKS: Was it Shirley Sargent maybe? She was in a chair and did a lot of work in Yosemite.

FDR: I forget what forest but it was south of Yosemite. By this time she was eighty years old, she was crippled, and she couldn't walk, and they were naming this peak after her.

Even the local congressman was going to be there. It was a big deal dedicating this peak in this wilderness in honor of this lady. Well, she couldn't get there, and boy, the Forest Service was just adamant. They wanted to take her in a helicopter. You cannot take this woman back there to dedicate the peak in her honor even though a congressional delegation was involved. So I said why not. Well, helicopters aren't allowed in the wilderness. I said let's get the Wilderness Act out and read it. There is a provision that you can use mechanized equipment for necessary administrative purposes if you've got to fight a fire or something. So I said as far as I'm concerned this is administrative purpose. It is necessary to get the lady back there who this peak is going to be named after. She's the star of the show, and we're a part of the dedication ceremony, but we're withholding the star. So there was a case I had to override everybody. There was nobody fighting it except the Forest Service people and this mentality they walked around with.

HKS: The Wilderness Society, they weren't saying hey, you can't?

FDR: No, they were a big part of the dedication. They probably were instrumental in getting this peak named after her. I don't know, the gal was probably a member. The environmental groups aren't hung up with practical decisions. They weren't hung up on this water sampling on these lakes. It's the Forest Service internally can't agree. But anyway, that was one of my frustrations and if anything as chief, unless it's been reversed, I widened the flexibility to deal realistically with some things in wilderness management. Knowing all along you've got to be very conservative, but there comes a time you can get too conservative and be impractical, even illogical.

HKS: Someone who comes from outside of the agency as part of the cultural diversity doesn't mind saying, why can't we do this. So you get the question asked at lower and lower levels, if they haven't gone through the screening process.

FDR: If they haven't gone through the indoctrination process that Kaufman so eloquently described in his forest ranger book. One thing I remember about Kaufman was the Forest Service does such a great job at indoctrination and training of their people, which my classmates at American University in 1970 said was manipulation and brainwashing. You could throw a problem in the front of different groups of Forest Service people, and inevitably they came to the same conclusion. We had group thinking.

Portland Timber Summit

HKS: The Portland timber summit, I don't know how important it is. It was a political campaign promise that Clinton made. I watched it on closed circuit TV. There's a video tape of it around.

FDR: I was there in the audience. I think I was asked as kind of a courtesy. I didn't participate in it, didn't get involved in the planning of it or anything.

HKS: George said that you bumped into Clinton during a break, and apparently Clinton knew who you were, he saw you and said why aren't you at the table?

FDR: Yes. I was in the audience, and I'd never met Clinton but he knew who I was. I was from Arkansas. Remember, my name was all over the papers of Arkansas when I and Senator Pryor decided we were going to designate the whole Ouachita National Forest as a pilot test unit under New Perspectives. And I'm a native of Arkansas. I've been covered. The press was very kind to me in Arkansas. One of their native sons had become this important guy called the chief of the Forest Service. So I was well known in Arkansas, although Clinton's younger than me so he and I never really crossed paths. One thing the governors of Arkansas do is they present an Arkansas Traveler's Award to people they want to honor. Clinton, although it wasn't in person, he gave me an Arkansas Traveler Award. I didn't frame it but it's somewhere in my drawers, signed by Governor Clinton. So he knew who I was.

I walked up to him as he was walking around shaking hands. I congratulated him on his job because I thought he did a good job in conducting that forum. I said I'm Dale Robertson, chief of the Forest Service. He said, oh yeah, I know you, Dale. He said, we should have had you up here helping us out, and was very friendly. That was the first time I really made physical contact and talked with him. I guess it was really the only time. My problem was not Clinton. I believe that probably, you never know, if there was somebody else as vice president that wasn't an extreme environmentalist and that I had had rough dealings with before, I think the odds would have been that things might have turned out differently for me. I might have had a chance to continue as chief. Because Clinton, his record in Arkansas, he's a fairly balanced guy on the environment. Now Gore gives him briefing papers and words and sometimes he speaks like Gore. It's the Gore doings there.

HKS: Other than the publicity and the fulfilling of a campaign promise, did anything of substance come out of the summit?

FDR: We had the Jack Ward Thomas report. Of course, all that happened under the Bush administration. So by the time the Clinton administration came on board, Jack Ward Thomas had it pretty well sorted out. Now they did go back and revamp it, make it even more environmentally oriented toward the owls and the wildlife afterwards. But basically the solution that the Clinton administration came up with was formulated under the Bush administration and Jack Ward Thomas' work. That was all done way before Clinton-Gore came on board. So they ran with it, took credit for it, expanded it somewhat, and that became the decision on the spotted owl.

HKS: I want to make sure that these are your words, not mine. If the timber summit hadn't happened, probably the spotted owl issue would have been resolved roughly the same way? The momentum was in place?

FDR: Yes. I mean the Forest Service had shaped a solution before Clinton was ever elected. I almost got fired over that when Sununu didn't like the solution. To be accurate on it, they did reassemble another team, but again Jack Ward Thomas headed it up after that, and they did revamp it somewhat. The guts of it were there in Jack Ward Thomas' original report, and that's what made Jack Ward Thomas chief.

You know, it's odd how things play out, but I had to personally talk to Jack Ward to take on the team leadership for the spotted owl scientific committee, which he didn't want to do because he knew what a terrible job it was. His wife had cancer, and it was a terrible situation for Jack. But Jack took it on, and that was what elevated Jack up to very high visibility. I think the strategy of the Clinton administration is we want to show that we are doing the right thing with the spotted owl and that we're going to make the Forest Service more scientific, ecologically-oriented than under those bad Republicans, going all the way back to Reagan, who had timber on their mind. How better show that than to appoint Jack Ward Thomas, the chief guy on the spotted owl that had the worldwide reputation of a scientist to show there was a new Forest Service with a different perspective. And I respect that. It was probably as good a move as they could have made with Jack there because Jack brought a lot of credibility to the Forest Service.

HKS: You mentioned that Clinton, his administration is not together. There's a lot of loose cannons floating around.

FDR: Especially in the beginning.

HKS: He was criticized by his own White House staff for wasting his time with the timber summit. The next day he went on to Vancouver to meet with the Soviets. That's front-page news. He was wasting his energy on things of no consequence, this staffer said, such as a timber summit. I thought, who is this guy just writing off Washington and Oregon as insignificant. Of course, the press loved this. This is a nice headline.

FDR: Clinton made that promise in his campaign. Part of the problem was, and I talked about that earlier, is BLM and the Forest Service got crossways on the Jack Ward Thomas report. Remember, I said I embraced it to the extent I could short of getting fired, and almost got fired over embracing it to the point I did. Cy Jamison, director of BLM, was out lambasting Jack Ward Thomas and the report. And that was all under the Bush administration. I heard Clinton on one of his campaign promises, he articulated fairly well. He said we have two agencies that are fighting, the Forest Service and the BLM. They don't agree on the spotted owl. He says, when I get to be president, if you elect me president, I'll solve that conflict that you've got between BLM and the Forest Service. I'll go to the Northwest. He was very specific of what he would do if he was elected president. He was knowledgeable enough to know that BLM was out lambasting Jack Ward Thomas and this whole silly idea of setting aside forest for spotted owls.

Clinton has a history of forestry. He was governor of the state of Arkansas at age thirty-two or something like that. He took on the timber industry. He didn't like clearcutting, and he tried to stop that as a governor. The timber industry really was a big part of voting him out of office. You know he didn't win reelection after his first term, and a big part of that was the clearcutting issue in Arkansas and him upsetting the timber folks, all the people that are concerned about forest management. To Clinton's credit, he's a re-bounder, you know, the comeback kid.

During the next two years after he was voted out of office, he went around and made amends with a lot of the industry folks in Arkansas over that clearcutting issue that he had alienated them over. Then he was elected the next time around. So Clinton didn't

come to this without considerable knowledge of forestry, since forestry is a big industry in the state. He always made peace with the timber industry. I mean, he learned his lesson the first go-around. If you just had Clinton, I think you'd have a fairly balanced program in natural resources. He's delegating, in my opinion, to Gore. Gore's got the lead, and Gore is not balanced in my opinion.

HKS: I was going to ask you earlier when you were characterizing Al Gore as a senator, how he had a power base in Tennessee. Tennessee doesn't strike me as a state that's particularly environmentalist. I mean, they have all the big dams and reservoirs. Who votes for a Gore? Obviously, a lot of people routinely in Tennessee. Is it the urban vote that he gets?

FDR: I don't know about Tennessee politics, but I'm sure the people in Tennessee didn't know a lot of the things he was doing on the environmental end of things because you're right, Tennessee is not a Pacific Northwest. But Senator McClure and I have talked a lot about him because we had to deal with him. I'd plot strategy with Senator McClure on how to win our votes on the floor of the Senate. Again, it was Gore, Fowler of Georgia, Worth from Colorado, and Kennedy from Massachusetts. Those were the four guys that were always coming after the Forest Service budget. So I've plotted strategy with McClure on how to defeat them on the floor of the Senate, and probably Gore knew that. I shouldn't speak out of school, but some of my dealings in the Senate led me to believe that Gore is kind of flaky. I mean, he will tell you what you want to hear. Maybe all politicians do that. But down deep he's somewhere else, and I've seen that on a couple of occasions. But I've seen a lot of politicians do that.

HKS: They emphasize what the audience wants to hear.

FDR: I'm sure he's very good. He'd have to be dealing with folks back home. Of course, his father was senator. The Gore family is a legend in Tennessee. A good example is he went to the tobacco industry and talked about how as a kid he was a tobacco farmer and he was one of them. He took a lot of campaign funds from the tobacco industry, and then made the speech he did at the convention the first time about his sister dying, almost in tears. I mean, that was phony stuff. Most politicians are phony to some degree, and they have to be to be successful, if success means re-election.

HKS: I heard Gore speak in Boston, and about half of his presentation was Al Gore jokes. Anyway, we'll see how he plays out against Mr. Bush.

FDR: Gore doesn't come across as a friendly guy. I mean, Reagan and Clinton get up there and you relate to them. I think part of Reagan's success, even if you disagreed with him, as a lot of people did, it was kind of like your grandfather up there. Clinton is so smooth he's kind of like your best buddy, and he uses this down-home language. Gore just doesn't have that much charisma. He's an intellectual, but he sure doesn't have much personality and charisma. Of course, Clinton is very intellectual, too. I mean, he's a brilliant guy.

International Experiences

HKS: I don't know how important they are to the story, but you have listed on your resume your international experiences and special assignments. Would you like to pick out some of those and talk about them as the kinds of things the chief does, or are they not really that important to understanding the agency?

FDR: Well, they're probably not all that important. I was just trying to be comprehensive here. I did go to Rome to be the U.S. representative for two of the forestry meetings at the FAO. That was kind of a neat experience interacting with your counterparts around the world. I remember one experience. For some reason the Brazilians were madder than hell at the United States, and we foresters were a congenial group of people, courteous, respectful, but the Brazilians were mad at the United States for, I don't remember all the problems. It wasn't their forester in Brazil, it was their permanent staff at FAO who on the first morning came in and lambasted the United States about all the terrible things we were doing. I was shocked, you know, and that was kind of a new experience for me. Here I am in an international meeting and we get lambasted by a Brazilian. After he got through, the moderator turned to me and said, you have anything to say, Mr. Robertson? I can't remember all the things I said there, but it put me on the spot. I think I said something about obviously there's a lot of different viewpoints in the world about how things are going and there is another side to what our friend from Brazil had to say about us, I hope to talk about some of those things during this meeting. But anyway, that was kind of a unique experience.

And then we had this former senator from New Jersey, the old gal who smoked a pipe. She was rambunctious and made a lot of speeches. She had been appointed to be the U.S. head staff person, FAO in Rome. She had quite a reputation over in Rome and here, too. She came in and made this rip-roaring speech and was very emphatic, and then left me to answer all the questions. At one of those meetings, I went there twice, the West German chief wanted me to come to Germany, and he invited me over. Germany was having a big acid rain problem. We were doing a lot of research in acid rain, and he wanted to show me the acid rain problems in Germany. So I did. Jerry Sesco and I went over as a result of that, spent a week in Germany and talked to their researchers and had a good interaction.

Kind of a neat story. When I was a deputy supervisor on the Mount Hood I had a bunch of Germans come through on a trip and all I knew was their leader was named Alex, Von Dam something. I worked with Alex on getting this tour put together on the Mount Hood for about twenty or twenty-five Germans. I got well acquainted with Alex, and I hadn't seen Alex since. So we spent a couple of days in Bonn. The West German chief explained to me about German forestry and all of that. We took off and spent the rest of the time traveling around the country. Well, first night out we spent in this castle; the bed I slept in was fifteen hundred years old. I remember that. It was a neat old castle. The German forestry chief briefed me on who lived at the castle. I'm getting ahead of the story, but it was Alex. All I knew him by was Alex, but he was a baron to the West German chief. He was Baron Alexander Von Dam whatever. He says, he's a key guy here in West Germany. The West Germany chief was getting me primed to pay the proper respects to Baron Alex. So the West German chief and his wife and Mary Jane

and I went. As we drove up old Alex came bouncing out, and he and the West German chief exchanged greetings in a very formal way, you know, called him baron. Old Alex then turned to me and he introduced me, and Alex recognized me and I recognized him. I said hi, Alex, how are you doing. He said great, Dale, good to have you! And the West German chief was just flabbergasted. Here he'd gone through this very long formal greeting with Baron So-and-So and Alex and I just called each other Dale and Alex. That was kind of an interesting story.

HKS: The agency especially through research does a lot of international work, IUFRO and all the rest. The chief sort of breaks the ice and goes to plenary sessions and opens the door for the Bob Buckmans of the world to go over there?

FDR: No, the Bob Buckmans can make their own way. I would sometimes go along but not often. They pretty well handled that. Another interesting experience, I also went to the Latin American Forestry Commission meeting. FAO is divided into regions and there's North America and Latin America. I went down to Peru one time representing the United States. It was all the Latin American chiefs, and I was there and Germany had a representative there for some reason, some of the European countries. There were about twenty-five of us, and the president of Peru came and talked to us, opened up the session and made one of his political speeches. I later shook his hand and talked to him. He was educated in this country like a lot of the Latin Americans. So we had our first day meeting, and about three o'clock that afternoon there was an explosion, terrorist, which Lima, Peru, has quite frequently. All the lights were out, and we were in this dark room. It was just darker than pitch in there without any outside lighting, so the Peruvian guy said everybody go home, come back tomorrow morning. We'll have the lights fixed. That was Monday afternoon. The German forester and I showed up right on time the next day, again it's this cultural thing, and nobody was there but us. It was obvious they hadn't done anything to fix the lights. We went back to our motel, and it was a day or two before they ever got around to even thinking about fixing it, and we finally got back on Friday. I roamed around Lima, Peru, for three days just sightseeing, while they took their time to fix the electricity and get us back in operation. So we had an opening and an ending, then everybody shook hands and said good-bye and what a great meeting it was, you know. But that's how the Latin Americans are.

Puerto Rico had a secretary of natural resources, a lady named Hilda. Boy, she was a fireball. In Puerto Rico, you know, we have the Institute of Tropical Forestry and the Caribbean National Forest, so a lot of our research on tropical forests is in Puerto Rico. In a way Puerto Rico is kind of our steppingstone to the tropical forest in Brazil and the rest of South America. I took Hilda, she's got a Spanish last name, with me as part of the U.S. delegation. And what time we did have, I mean she was real energetic. She was the only woman at the meeting, but the Latin American forestry chiefs were very respectful of her and were kind of impressed that the United States had a woman in such high position. Anyway, she is a dynamic speaker, enthusiastic, pounds the table, and impressed everybody, and I got well acquainted with Hilda. Well, the other day I was on the Internet. Occasionally I get over into the Forest Service news, and guess who is the new associate chief of the Forest Service. Hilda. They've reorganized since my time, but it sounds like from the news release that Hilda now is the second person in charge of the Forest Service. That was just last month. I don't know if you know her.

HKS: No.

FDR: She's the Puerto Rican that I went to Peru with and I'll tell you, she is dynamic and enthusiastic. I don't know how she's going to mesh with the Forest Service culture, but she's dynamic and enthusiastic.

HKS: I'd heard that the associate chief's job had been essentially abolished.

FDR: Yes. They are using titles now that I don't quite understand. When Mike came in he wanted a chief operating officer, and that was the guy he brought with him from Time Warner who's now gone. I don't quite understand it, and I really haven't tried to figure it out. I've got more enjoyable things to do, but the press release sounded like Hilda was right there in that old job.

HKS: That's intriguing. I wonder when they will have the first woman chief. I thought it was going to be before now.

FDR: Well, we had Elizabeth Estell.

HKS: I figured that she was going to be the next chief after you, but obviously not.

FDR: She was a candidate. Jack Ward Thomas would have probably never surfaced if he hadn't had that spotted owl assignment. If it hadn't been for such high visibility there for Jack Ward and making a statement for the future direction of the Forest Service, I think Elizabeth would have been a prime candidate. Lyons did interview her for the job, but it was sewed up from the beginning with Jack Ward Thomas.

HKS: A small point perhaps, but George brought it up and he got a kick out of it. You refused to use a computer while you were chief. Is that true?

FDR: I didn't refuse to use it. I simply didn't have time to mess around with it. You have to sort out how you want to spend your time and this e-mail stuff can just eat your time up. I started out reading all the e-mails and being responsive to people who sent me e-mails. That was eating up a couple of hours of my time a day, and I finally concluded I had more important things to do. I used e-mail when I was associate chief, but by the time I'd gotten to be chief I decided that wasn't my priority. You probably understand how e-mail can eat up your time, especially the chief, because what I found out was if people knew the chief was reading the e-mails, everybody would just flood you. It's our chance to tell the chief something. Sue, my administrative assistant, would periodically print out all of my e-mails, and I'd take them home and I'd go through them. I would shorthand answer them, which I could do in thirty seconds as opposed to three or four minutes fiddling around on the computer. She would then answer the e-mail for me based on my notes. So I got the reputation, which I think was good, no need waste your time sending the chief a lot of e-mails because he's not sitting there at his computer reading them. Although I would eventually get around to answering them with Sue. As chief you have to be very sensitive to your time and how you spend it, and you have to take advantage of that position to be as influential in the organization as you can. I concluded

sitting there two hours a day or whatever reading and answering e-mails was not where I should be spending my time to be most influential in shaping the future of the Forest Service.

Life After the Forest Service

HKS: You said earlier that the Forest Service is no longer a part of your life. What is your life?

FDR: When I left the chief's job I was still relatively young. I was fifty-three years old, and it was a major point in my life whether to continue working. I even had a couple of senators ask me to come up and work for them. Senator Burns from Montana was on our appropriations committee, and he was a good friend of mine. I remember him calling me up and says Dale, that would really be great if you would come up and work for me. I said well, I've had about all the government I can stand, senator. He said well, I can understand that. I toyed around with a second career. The more Mary Jane and I talked I said I've worked my whole life, and I do have other interests, and I'd like to enjoy the rest of my life. I'd come through here and liked Sedona, and I brought Mary Jane out, and we had bought a lot. Our ultimate goal was to come to Sedona to retire. It was just a matter of did I work a few more years. We came out to Sedona and looked around and stayed where you're staying, we felt so good. We concluded why should I work anymore. Let's just enjoy life. We'd lived in our Washington house for fifteen years. I spent the first three or four months painting it and fixing it up and getting it on the market and came out and bought this house.

Number one priority is my physical fitness or health. I'd gained some weight--you don't have time as chief to exercise--so we joined the health spa. I put high priority on my physical fitness. I go down and work the spa machines three times a week. I take aerobics class twice a week. Sometimes go down and take the swim class. The health spa and a priority on my physical fitness takes a lot of my time. I am volunteering, and I've gotten deeper in that than I wanted to.

Region 3 did a very creative thing, and they organized a Friends of the Forest here in Sedona, and they have one in Tucson. There are about two hundred and fifty members of that, mainly retirees. Our job is to help the Forest Service get their job done, and we even have members of Friends of the Forest manning the telephone and the front desk at the ranger station. We have a trail crew, and I'm on the trail crew. We have a great old guy as the leader of the trail crew. He's a retired Park Service guy who worked on trails in the Park Service. So here I am chief of the Forest Service as a crew member working for the Park Service. We work every Friday on the trail crew, and I probably get out there two or three Fridays a month, just a bunch of us retirees working on the trails, building trails, maintaining trails. I enjoy that. It's physical exercise, and we call ourselves rather than youth at risk, we're seniors at risk. It's a highly educated group of people, and we have a great time together. So that's one day a week.

We have a Sedona cultural park. That was what I was working on yesterday. You're familiar with Wolf Trap. It's kind of a Wolf Trap operation here, and we are now building the amphitheater, which include the grassy knolls, which will have the capacity of about five thousand people. We've been working to get the big city culture here. We've got the Arizona Ballet, the opera, the dance groups out of Los Angeles, and we have jazz on the rocks. So Sedona is going to become quite a cultural center with our Wolf Trap type operations. We've raised about nine million dollars. It's a private non-profit, and the lady I left you yesterday to go have lunch with, Georgia Frontiere, owns the St. Louis Rams. She came in about a year ago and said how much more money do you need to finish the amphitheater, and she donated over a million dollars to finish it. So we're under construction. I'm very deeply involved in the cultural park in getting that going.

We have a traffic problem here in Sedona, and I'm working a lot on getting a shuttle bus service going or mass transit for Sedona. It's the fun projects and hands-on. I stay out of the ranger's hair. I talk to him once in awhile. When I first came to town people unhappy with the Forest Service would say what can we do about this stupid thing the Forest Service is doing or something. I'd say, don't come talk to me, go see the ranger. Mary Jane and I take a lot of trips around the West, and we have no schedule. Sedona is kind of a New Age capital, and I have a lot of New Age friends, so I kind of joke with them and use their language sometimes. But the ultimate state of happiness is just being. If you can arrive at just being, you've arrived. That means you live in the moment, you forget the past, you don't worry about the future, you just enjoy the moment doing what you feel most like doing at the moment. That's just being. So I kid people, saying that in Sedona we are just being. But there's some truth to that.

HKS: Oh, sure.

FDR: Some people are cut out for retirement to have a great life, enjoy their life, and other people aren't. Max Peterson just has to work.

HKS: And work hard.

FDR: And work hard. I mean, that's how he gets his jollies out of life. I made a deliberate choice to just enjoy life and do what is most enjoyable to me everyday.

I did have an exciting job prospect. There was a company called Delaware North, and they were looking for a guy to run their recreation program. They have the concessionary operation at Yosemite. Also at Niagara Falls and the Kennedy Space Center. They also have the concessions for most of the baseball parks around the country, and they own the hockey team in Boston. A major growth area for them was to expand their concessionary operations on public lands like Yosemite. Just the other day they bought the Babbitt, the stores that you saw up at Grand Canyon. Anyway, they're headquartered in Buffalo, New York, and I flew back and interviewed with the owner and all of those people and they were interested in me taking on this job of expanding their concessionary operations on public lands, which I had an interest in. It would have been kind of nice to have Yosemite and Niagara Falls and the space center and the Grand Canyon and all these. But I said I just moved to Sedona, and I'm not going to move to Buffalo. The owner said well, I don't

know that that would be necessary but I'd like you back in Buffalo. I said well, we'd better just part company here because I'm not moving to Buffalo. So that got me to my point of moving to Sedona. It's a resort town, lots of things going on and it's intellectually stimulating. We've got a lot of diversity in this town. That's how I chose to spend the rest of my life, here just having fun.

HKS: You've already answered it, but you haven't felt that the knowledge and experience and talent you obviously have is now going to be wasted?

FDR: I'm using it here locally. I understand government probably about as well as anybody, and I understand the problems with it. There's a lot of grant money out there, and we're trying to get this mass transit system going in Sedona. Well, I found this pot of money in the Arizona Department of Transportation. It's lottery money allocated to mass transit. It's just sitting down there in Phoenix. Our city transportation folks didn't know about it. Nobody knew about it, and here we are struggling to try to get a transportation system, not having any money, on a shoestring. So I rounded up the transportation guy and some other people and I helped them fill out their grant application. So we're getting thirty-eight thousand dollars coming to Sedona just for the asking and going through the paperwork and telling them how we would spend the money. I don't mind using my knowledge and experience to help out in my local area, but I have no ambitions. Max is also a wealth of experience and knowledge that he's putting to good use, and he's put it to good use for many years after chief. I mean, it'd be nice, but I don't feel compelled to do that. I've made my contribution through hard work, and I'm ready to play and enjoy.

HKS: How about doing things like serving on the SAF Council and those forestry volunteer activities?

FDR: I guess that would be okay, but with me sitting out here in Sedona I don't know that I would add a lot to the council. I could bring a wealth of experience, but that's about all I could bring. Council members have broader responsibilities than just coming to meetings and relaying their experience to whatever decision they're discussing. I do not want to get into a situation where I'm traveling a lot, getting on airplanes. I mean, I got sick of that. Airports were kind of my second home for seven or ten years, and I just don't want to get back into that situation. And I've come to Sedona and I have said no, no, no, no. That's my standard answer.

I did help a guy campaign for city council and he won, got the most votes. Got my picture in the paper with me saying, this is the best man. So he had a celebration party when he got elected to city council, and they're non-paying jobs you know. So several of the key people in Sedona came up to me and they said Dale, have you ever thought about …. I didn't let them finish. I said no! They were going to ask me to think about the city council. I said yes, I've thought about it, and the answer is no, and I'm not changing my mind so don't talk to me anymore about it. I've basically given that speech to a lot of people, but I did agree to do the cultural park because the cultural park owns fifty acres. I looked at the board of directors and there's a lot of artists on that board as well as executives out of the private sector. So there was something I could really contribute to, and I'm spending all the time I want to spend on that. Maybe I'm a little selfish, but you

only have one life, and there comes some point that you want to just enjoy life and do what you want to do, and I've reached that point.

HKS: I'm not quite to that point yet. I've still got a few books I want to get out of the way, but at some point fairly soon I'm going to be an activist in a town, population of seven thousand, Oak Island, North Carolina. They need people on committees and commissions and that kind of stuff. I look forward to it.

FDR: What I've found out is this town is basically run on volunteers, and they'll run you to death, Pete. Learn to say no, be choosy, otherwise you'll end up with a full-time job again. If you want to pay attention to your physical fitness like I do, that takes a big chunk of your time. A lot of days I get up late, sleep 'til I wake up, drink coffee. I read the *Wall Street Journal*. I read the *Arizona Republic*, have breakfast, go down to the spa at about nine-thirty, ten o'clock, work out, come home about noon, have lunch, take a nap. By the time I get through with my nap, it is two-thirty and I've got about three hours left to do something. That's kind of many a days for me--just being!

It's important for every person to get over any guilt feelings of not working, and you have to jump that hurdle. It took me about a day or two, although I toyed with a second career. But you've got to get over that, that you're important as an individual. Your happiness and what you want to do is the most important thing in the world for you and Gail or me and Mary Jane. There are so many people out there that will rob your time if you'll just let them. So one of my criteria, don't do anything I don't enjoy, and I enjoy the cultural park.

HKS: Let's join our wives on the house tour. Sounds like they're having a lot of fun. Thank you very much for a great interview.

F. Dale Robertson

Background

- Born: Denmark, Arkansas, July 17,1940.

Education

- Bachelor of Science in Forestry, University of Arkansas, 1961.
- Master's in Public Administration, American University, 1970.

Experience

33 years with U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, starting in 1961 at the lowest level (GS-2) and rising to the Chief of the Forest Service in 1987, after 26 years with the agency.

Key positions held in Forest Service:

- 1987-1993 - Chief
- 1982-1987 - Associate Chief (#2 position)
- 1981-1982 - Associate Deputy Chief, Programs & Legislation
- 1976-1980 - Supervisor, Mt. Hood National Forest, Portland, OR
- 1974-1976 - Supervisor, Siuslaw National Forest, Corvallis, OR
- 1968-1973 - Management Analyst, Chief's Office, Washington, DC
- 1966-1968 - Ranger, Choctaw District, Ouachita National Forest, Arkansas
- 1964-1966 - Assistant Ranger, Tenaha District, Sabine National Forest, Texas

International Experience

- Represented U.S. government at two United Nations Food and Agriculture Organizations (FAO) Committee of Forestry meetings in Rome with other forestry heads from around the world.
- Represented U.S. government at three FAO North American Forestry Committee meetings with Canada and Mexico. Hosted one of the meetings in United States as Chairman.
- Represented U.S. government at FAO Latin American Forestry Committee meeting in Peru.
- Other foreign travel included forestry trips to Germany, Japan, Israel, Honduras, Mexico, Indonesia, Brazil, and Canada, including discussions with top forestry officials and political leaders.

Special Assignments

- 1988-1993 - Chairman, Joint U.S. Department of Agriculture/1890 Black Land-Grant Colleges and Universities Task Force, aimed at increasing the number of African-Americans and minorities in agriculture and forestry.
- 1988-1993 - Member, Board of Directors, Federal Quality Institute, aimed at implementing total quality management in the federal government.

Honors and Awards

- 1993 - Sport Fishing Institute "Fisherman of the Year" for outstanding leadership in improving fishing opportunities in America's national forests.
- 1993 - Tuskegee University "President's Distinguished Service Award" for outstanding contributions to the area of forest education.
- 1993 - Senior Executive Association recognition "with admiration and respect for outstanding career executive leadership for success in meeting the challenge of change."
- 1991 - Honorary Doctorate of Science, Alabama A&M University
- 1989 - American Recreation Coalition first recipient of the Sheldon Coleman "Great Outdoors Award" for promoting outdoor recreation in America.
- 1989 - American Rivers "River Conservationist of the Year" in recognition of leadership in planning for the protection of rivers in America's National Forests.
- 1989 - Recreation Vehicle Industry Association "National Service Award" for leadership in expanding outdoor recreation opportunities through the Scenic Byways program.
- 1988 - Distinguished Service Award by President Reagan--the highest ranking award for senior executives in the U.S. government.
- 1988 - Trout Unlimited "Conservationist of the Year" in recognition of the "Rise to the future" program in fisheries conservation.

Harold K. Steen

Education

- B.S.F., University of Washington, 1957.
- M.F., University of Washington, 1962.
- Ph.D., University of Washington, 1969.

Employment

- Forest History Society, Santa Cruz, CA; Durham, NC, 1969-1997.
- U.S. Forest and Range Experiment Station, Portland, OR, 1962-1965.
- U.S. Forest Service, Snoqualmie National Forest, 1957-1958.

Faculty Appointments

- Lecturer in Environmental Studies, University of North Carolina, Wilmington, 1999 to date.
- Adjunct Professor of Forestry/History, Duke University, 1984-1999.
- Lecturer, Environmental Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz, 1970-1984.

Major Publications

- *The U.S. Forest Service: A History*, University of Washington Press, 1976, 1977, 1991.
- *History of Sustained Yield Forestry*, Forest History Society, 1983.
- *Changing Tropical Forests: Historical Perspectives on Today's Challenges in Central and South America*, Forest History Society, 1991.
- *Forest Service Research: Finding Answers to Conservation's Questions*, Forest History Society, 1998.
- *Forest and Wildlife Science in America: A History*, Forest History Society, 1999.

Professional Accomplishments

- Editorial Board, Environmental Review, 1976-1986.
- Consulting Editor, Journal of Environmental Education, 1973-1983.
- Chairman, Forest History Working Group, Society of American Foresters, 1974-1978.
- Sierra Club History Committee, 1976-1986.
- Chairman, Forest History Group, IUFRO, 1986-1995.
- Expert Witness, Department of Justice, 1976-present.

Honors and Awards

- Phi Alpha Theta (History); Sigma Xi (Science); Xi Sigma Pi (Forestry).
- Distinguished Service Award, American Forestry Association, 1995.
- Distinguished Achievement Award, University of Washington College of Forest Resources Alumni Association, 1996.
- Distinguished Service Award, IUFRO, 1998.
- Certificate of Appreciation, USDA Forest Service, 1999.
- Special Commendation, U.S. Department of Justice, 1999.