

The oral histories of Dale Robertson, Chief of the Forest Service from 1987 to 1993 and his Associate Chief George Leonard were completed this past year by Harold K. Steen. The Forest History Society does not normally conduct oral histories at the same time for both positions, but in this case, it was a special opportunity, since they both entered and exited their leadership positions together. They had such a close working relationship that to interview one without the other would have been negligent. This excerpt is their story on how ecosystem management was adopted by the Forest Service and what it meant to the agency in the early 1990's. The full oral histories are available from the Forest History Society.

TRADITIONAL FORESTRY HITS THE WALL

*EXCERPT OF INTERVIEW WITH F. DALE ROBERTSON
(AUGUST 12–14, 1999)*

Harold K. Steen (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.

F. Dale Robertson (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

**BASED ON INTERVIEWS BY HAROLD K. STEEN WITH
F. DALE ROBERTSON AND GEORGE M. LEONARD**

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 [R. Max Peterson] 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. 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. 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



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F. Dale Robertson.



U.S. FOREST SERVICE PHOTO

George M. Leonard.

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 were 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.

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. 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 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.

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 had 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 the Ouachita, 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 Sununu 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 interested in 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



In 1992, Dale Robertson announced that the U.S. Forest Service would be adopting ecosystem management as its approach to managing for multiple use on the National Forests.

we're going to do. Reilly said, let's 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. 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



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Dale Robertson (right), Chief of the U.S. Forest Service from 1987 to 1993 and George M. Leonard (left), his Associate Chief, entered and exited their leadership positions together.

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 title, 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. 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.

EXCERPT OF INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE M. LEONARD (MARCH 8–10, 1999)

NEW PERSPECTIVES/ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

HKS: There are different labels. I'm not sure I know them all, because they change rather quickly. To my observation, they started during Dale's administration: New Perspectives, ecosystem management. The vocabulary was shifting. So talk about this shift. How much of a shift really is it, or is it just a recognition that a lot of this stuff was always done, but you never really put it in that kind of a package before? It's a kind of a loose question, but work your way through it as best you can.

George M. Leonard (GML): Ed Cliff had talked about ecosystem management and whatnot as the way to get on with the job. Throughout the '60s, '70s, and most of the '80s, there was a working consensus on what the purposes for the national forest should be. There were a lot of people that had other ideas. Some people thought we ought to have a lot more managed as wilderness than we were, but there was a working consensus in the Congress that the national forests ought to be producing wood for the public. It would be awfully nice if you could do that without putting cutting in front of everybody;

it would be nice if we could put all of the timber sales on the back side of the hill; and it would be nice if you didn't have to build roads to do it. But if you have to, go ahead and do it, because we need the wood. As a result of concerns about clearcutting in the early '70s, we began to talk about alternatives to clearcutting, using shelterwood, other systems . . . and in fact, we provided direction to the field to reduce the amount of clearcutting that was done. We had some substantial shifts in the '70s of cutting methods. We launched major efforts to develop the silvicultural knowledge and skills within the timber organization to carry on alternative harvest methods. We had major training programs for silviculture. And of course, during the '70s as we implemented NEPA, we had brought in this whole batch of other disciplines—the wildlife biologists, and the hydrologists, and whatnot—who were beginning to bring other ideas.

As we went through the '80s, even though we were making some changes and beginning to recognize these things, there was still a perception with many people in the agency that we were still doing the same old thing, the job was simply to get out the cut. Outside the agency, it was apparent that the consensus on

what the national forests ought to do was breaking down, and while there were still individual members of Congress that were pushing hard to get out the cut, their ability to brush aside challenges by putting a rider in the bill or something was being diminished. It became pretty apparent that if we were going to get on with the job, we had to change the thinking, change the way people inside the Forest Service thought about that management job. Not that we were going to stop doing something, but change the way we looked at it.

The term “ecosystem management” was beginning to become part of the jargon, it was kind of an ill-defined term. But we needed to have a way to communicate to the organization the fact that we needed to do things differently, we needed to be more sensitive to the little critters. We’d always paid a lot of attention to the game species, but a lot less attention to the other values, the non-commodity values of the forest. We coined the term “New Perspectives” as a way of trying to communicate the idea that we wanted people to look at the forest differently. Not reinvent the world, but to look at it in the broader sense. So New Perspectives was just that. We will try to look at that forest, not as just a timber production vehicle, but as a broad ecosystem that produced a whole range of values, and we’re going to pay attention to the whole range of values. We launched a series of demonstration projects and encouraged people to test different approaches to carrying out timber sales and other activities that would reflect this broader approach.

The term “New Perspectives” did not catch on outside the agency. So over time, we decided that we would use what was then the current buzz word, which was “ecosystem management.” Ecosystem management had the benefit that almost everybody was in favor of it. It had the drawback that nobody really knew what it meant. When I talked ecosystem management to the Forest Service people, I was trying to convey that same thing that we had in New Perspectives. Let’s look at the forest in a broader sense, look at the full [with emphasis] range of values and try to deal with that full range of values. Didn’t mean that everything was equal. Didn’t mean that these little nuances were just as important as getting out the cut. But it would mean that we would try to be aware, and make our decisions with as full an understanding of their impacts, and with as much attention to other values as possible. One of the major things that developed, and which still in my mind is an issue that the agency has to address, is that there were people within the agency and without who tried to define ecosystem management as an objective. The objective was ecosystem management, and that implied a certain type of management.

The approach that Dale and I took was that ecosystem management was the approach that we were going to take to implementing multiple use on the national forest. One of the differences between a public and a private agency is that a public organization like the Forest Service doesn’t get to define its purposes. That’s done in statute. The law says we’re going to manage the national forest for multiple use. So that’s our challenge. Ecosystem management is the approach that we use. What that says, that in carrying out the timber job, we’re going to pay attention to the impacts of doing that timber job with attention to the full range of resources, at least as we understand them.

At least in my definition, ecosystem management expresses the viewpoint that we ought to be dealing with all the elements of the forest, and with our complete understanding of the forest, when we make decisions with regard to what we’re doing. We shouldn’t only be concerned with whether we can regenerate a stand of timber. We shouldn’t be only concerned with the game species. We ought to understand the full spectrum. I don’t accept the concept that ecosystem management defines a system of management. I think it defines an approach to management that is equally applicable.

I think that Weyerhaeuser, in practicing industrial forestry, can use an ecosystem management approach, just as the Forest Service, in implementing multiple use management on the national forests, can use an ecosystem management approach. I think over time we’ll end up coming closer to defining ecosystem management. Historically, when you talk about multiple use, it has had different meanings to different people. I think that’s frankly one of the benefits of that term, because it can cover a range and it allows the evolution of management on the national forest. That’s one of the geniuses of the thing; that multiple use management today doesn’t mean the same thing as multiple use management did in 1960 when the act passed, in terms of the combination of uses and how they’re approached. Well the same thing is true with ecosystem management. When we talk about our understanding of the relationships, you know, that’s going to change over time. And when we’re talking about ecosystem management twenty or thirty years from now, I think it’ll define a different approach to management than what we’re thinking of today.

HKS: Does Congress give you a bit more money each year because you are doing a broader range of things?

GML: Congress likes to appropriate money for things that they understand and recognize and for which there is constituency. And there is a constituency for the wood that comes off the national forest; there’s a constituency for certain of the recreation uses; there is a constituency for wildlife. The constituency for just the good things is much weaker. If you ask somebody, they’ll say, “Oh yeah, we want the national forest to produce clean water.” But there is nobody lobbying on the Hill for money to maintain clean water, or to maintain soils, and whatnot. To the extent that people understand that implementation of ecosystem management is essential to get on with the job of managing timber, or on with the job of producing fish and wildlife, or recreation, then there’s a kind of a sideboard constituency that’s supporting it. I don’t think that the Forest Service will compete well against all the other demands for the federal budget—social programs, and defense,—for just the general concept of ecosystem management on the national forest. You’d like to think that Congress would do it just because it’s a good idea, but the demands for federal programs are so high, that unless there is a constituency of people that are specifically pushing for it, it’s not going to be adequately funded. You may get some token thing. I think that at least at the current time, you’re not going to get funding for just a general view of doing good things on the national forest.