

THE NEW US FOREST SERVICE

WORKING DRAFT Jocko Burks (5/3/10)

GIVEN: The US Forest Service was created to provide products, water, recreation and employment for its citizens in perpetuity.
(Pinchot)

STATUS:

- harvesting very limited

- resulting in:

excessive growth that supports wildfires

little income to USFS budget

major reduction to our forest economy
(loss of direct and indirect jobs)

purchase of wood products off shore

DESIRED: restructuring to meet original goal will:

- restore jobs lost in forest product industry
- reduce CO2 input from fires
- capture CO2 in healthy forests
- move from general budget to self supporting
- improve global health by not supporting logging in countries with lax environmental laws

THE FIX: Four key components:

- 1) "Share the forest equitably" (between all users from Wilderness to Maximum utilization)
 - keep each existing forest and divide the acreage into the following major uses:
 - 20% wilderness style management
 - 20% maximize income

10% buffer area between the first two
50% long term rotations best for forest

- Trades/adjustments of target percentages, between Forests, can be made at the Region level

2) "Manage with local control"

- The Forest will be managed by the Forest Supervisor assisted by his or her deputies who represent key specialties such as forest management, wildlife, recreation, etc..
(local choice)
- This management team will prepare short term and long range plans based on the goals set by their Forest Board
- The Forest Board will be composed of appointees or representatives from:
the Governor of any State with 20% or more of land within the Forest boundry

the County Executive of any County with
20% or more of land within the Forest

two appointees representing towns or
cities within or adjoining the Forest.
These positions will rotate between
other towns or cities on a three year
basis

the closest Forestry College/School

a major environmental/preservationist
group

a forest products industry association

two additional seats as requested by the
Forest Supervisor and approved by the
Board

- the goal of each **Forest Team** and Board is that their Forest should be self supporting from the income and fees generated including prorated shares to support the Regional and National management and a portion of Research

3) "Transparent and Professional Planning"

- The Forest Board will set the Forest Goals, meet regularly with the Forest Team, approve budgets and plans prepared by the Forest Team
- Board/Team meetings will be open to the public will and encourage input and participation in the planning and management process.
- The Forest Team will prepare and keep updated a rolling 5, 10 and 50 year plan for the Forest
- These plans will be subject to appeal for 90 days following approval by the Forest Board, Appeals can only be made by a person or organization that participated in the planning process and provided input information or recommendations to the plan under appeal

- The appeal process will be established and managed by the Regional Forester using input from the all the Forest Boards and Teams from the Forests in the Region.
- The Forest Team will establish Forest personnel and employment policies for their Forest

4) "Freedom from micro/minority Management"

- the current Forest System, after millions of hours of management planning and use of current research data has been emasculated by the use of the Courts spring-boarding off other Federal Laws to stop planned and approved management plans from being implemented
- the Forest Teams and Boards shall diligently prepare the plans for their Forest that will meet their local, Regional and National goals and include the SPIRIT of other Federal Laws.

- BUT once the plans have been prepared, subject to public participation, approved and been through the appeal process (if used) they will be legally immune from law suites or other legal forms of action designed to halt or interfere with the Forest Plan
- Persons or organizations unhappy with a Forest Plan are free to participate and bring their logic and arguments to the next round of continuous planning by the Forest Teams and Boards

Some other comments/suggestions:

- Regional and National Staff head counts should be limited to a fixed percentage of the number of personnel working at the National Forest level
- Regional organization should be tasked to provide/assist the Forests in meeting their goals particularly by performing tasks/jobs that reduce costs by economy of scale

- The National organization should exist primarily to interface with the Congress, coordinate with other Agencies and lobby for their Forests and Regions. One half of National funding shall be from Forest Income and the other half from Congress
- Funding for Forest Research should come from a percentage of the individual Forest incomes and a special Congressional Budget via the Department of Agriculture
- A phase-in period should be established to move from Federal funding to income earned funding, say reduce the Federal support budget by 10% a year for 10 years