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REPORT ON A PROPOSAL TO ABOLISH CERTAIN REGIONAL OFFICES AND TO CONSOLIDATE AND CHANGE REGIONAL BOUNDARIES OF THE FOREST SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, SOIL CONSERVATION, AND FORESTRY

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

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FOREWORD

On April 24, 1973 Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz announced that the Forest Service would—

—Adjust its regional organization to fit within the 10 standard Federal regional structure required by the Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President.

—Close three regional offices for National Forest Administration located at Missoula, Montana; Ogden, Utah and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

—Close two Forest Service Experiment Station offices at Ogden, Utah and Asheville, North Carolina.

—The office closings would affect some 1,000 employees.

A month earlier, on March 27, 1973, Senators Mansfield, Metcalf and Moss had discussed on the floor of the Senate their concerns that such a move was imminent. There was apparently no attempt by any agent of the Executive Branch to discuss these proposals with officials of affected States, and while rumors abounded there was no dialogue between local decision makers and OMB and other Federal officials. Thus, shortly after April 24, when the plan was announced, public reaction began to come in, first to the Senators and Congressmen in the four States where these five offices were located, and then to the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry. During early May the Senators from Montana, Utah and New Mexico were active in presenting their views of concern directly to President Nixon in person, and in writing, to Secretary of Agriculture Butz and to other officials of his Department and the Office of Management and Budget.

This latter office on May 4, 1973 took the position that "There seems to be little inclination in the Department of Agriculture or in OMB to reopen this decision so recently announced."

The House Committee on Appropriations, acting on the Budget for the Forest Service for Fiscal year 1974, added funds for some programs and wrote in a prohibition on the proposal to close these 5 offices and abolish the Regions they serve. The Senate Committee on Appropriations has heard testimony on a similar request and has the matter under advisement. (Note: It is possible that by the time this Report is printed, a decision will have been made by the Senate Subcommittee.)

The Senators from the principally affected regions requested the Chairman of this Committee to hold a hearing on the matter. It was their position that if the proposal had substantial merit, while it should be held in abeyance until this fact became established, they would be ultimately willing to be persuaded by solid facts. In addition, to aid the Committee they had dispatched a series of letters requesting such facts of the Department of Agriculture as early as May

8, 1973, and had asked the General Accounting Office to examine the premises and conclusions on which the proposal rested.

Separately, on May 10, 1973 Senators Sparkman and Tower introduced S. 1775, the "Wood Supply and National Forest Lands Investment Act of 1973." On June 14, Senator Hatfield introduced S. 1996, "The American Forestry Act of 1973." Both bills had some earlier history with certain elements in each having been given consideration in the Congress but not being enacted. S. 1775, because of its nature was first referred to the Committee on Banking and Currency with the proviso that when and if reported it would be referred to this Committee. That Committee reported the subjects dealing with log exports generally and the balance of the bill was referred to this Committee.

In connection with S. 517 dealing with farm legislation, the Committee considered some amendments dealing with the Forest Service. Those dealing with Farm Forestry were included in the bill that finally emerged (S. 1888) and those dealing with National Forest Administration were withdrawn in favor of detailed consideration.

Earlier in 1973, as a result of impoundment of Forest Service funds, the Committee received numerous adverse reactions as to the effect this action would have on Forest Service programs, how it would diminish revenues to the Federal Treasury and the sharing of revenues with States and counties containing National Forest lands and resources.

The Subcommittee on Environment, Soil Conservation and Forestry, therefore, scheduled hearings on June 26 and 27, 1973, to examine in detail the issues posed by closing five long established regional offices and to begin exploration of the bills and other issues before it.

At about the same time as the hearings, reports were received that the Administration would submit a legislative proposal to create a Department of Energy and Natural Resources. Its form as to the land managing agencies was reported to be essentially the same as an earlier proposal received during the 92d Congress. It was submitted to the Congress on June 29, and its format as to the land managing agencies does not appear to differ substantially from the version submitted in the prior Congress.

The most recent in a series of timber task forces was "The President's Panel on Timber and the Environment". First announced by the President on June 19, 1970, the appointment of members did not occur until September 2, 1971. It consists of five members: Fredrick A. Seaton, Chairman; Stephen H. Spurr, Marion Clauson, Ralph D. Hodges, Jr., and Donald J. Zinn. The panel was scheduled to report by July 1, 1972 and later by December 31, 1972. However, as of July 6, 1973 when the record of this hearing was initially closed the report had not yet been released.

The subcommittee held 2 full days of hearings as scheduled on June 26 and 27, 1973. There were more than 50 congressional and public witnesses. Discussion covered the full gamut with various witnesses assigning their own priority to the issues.

The subcommittee concluded that it would be premature to act on the legislation before it. However, as to the issue of Forest Service reorganization, the concept and applicability of the "urban-social service" originated 10 Standard Federal Regions and Headquarters to "rural-resource" agencies and the funding of Forest Service programs, it was concluded that a report and recommendations would be useful and constructive. The subcommittee received assistance in drafting this report from Robert E. Wolf and Elmer Shaw of the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Should there be one set of 10 Standard Regions with Standard Headquarters Cities prescribed for all Federal agencies and to which all Federal agencies shall conform, and if so, how should this be prescribed? The concept of a single set of Standard Regions and Headquarters rests on the notion that absolute uniform national structure will lead to the best coordination and delivery of services. The present plan originated in the Executive branch of government as a concept designed for and to be applicable to five agencies concerned with delivering social services—the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the Department of Labor, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Small Business Administration and the Office of Economic Opportunity. The number of Regions designated, 10, seems reasonable at first glance but they vary greatly in size and population concentration. The designation of regions appears to be based upon urban social program service delivery.

There are 760 million acres of Federal land in the Nation and over 700 million acres are in the Western States. The reorganization plan admits only three Standard Federal Regions for the entire West, including Alaska. It locates the headquarters cities on the periphery of the vast body of Federal lands.

The majority of the subcommittee notes that the standard Federal Region/Headquarters city concept has not been enacted into law even for the "urban-social" agencies; has never been explored with this Committee or other Committees concerned with "rural-resource" programs; has not been explored with State and rural local governments or with the organizations and groups of private citizens that have long been cooperators with the Federal agencies in the promotion of sound and effective use and protection of the Nation's environment and natural resources. The Committee concluded:

—The issue of "standard regions and headquarters" is important and significant enough that if they are to be prescribed it should be done under a law that prescribes standards, achieves the optimum degree of rationalization, coordination and decentralization, and recognizes the central mission of each agency's type of mission.

—It would be unlikely if a plan conceived for delivery of social programs to people would fit "rural-natural resource" programs—and the evidence before the subcommittee indicates that the current standard regions might disrupt the administration of the National Forests and Forest Research programs.

—It would be a proper exercise of Congressional responsibility to forbid the Executive from expending funds for abolishing, changing, or consolidating established regional boundaries and headquarters for the "rural-resource" agencies pending the enactment by Congress of a law that gives the Executive clear authority to implement such a policy.

—There is little doubt among the members of the majority of the subcommittee that the services of the several agencies that manage resources could be more effectively delivered to the public and to the land. A number of improvements would be of value. Regional office consolidation ranks rather low in the light of the testimony presented by the Department of Agriculture as it relates to the Forest Service.

—The subcommittee is prepared to cooperate with the Executive and with the other Committees of the Congress to consider legislation that proposes standards and guides for more effective decentralization of "rural-resource" agency programs and improved coordination of policy and program.

—Prudence indicates that structures for operation of programs that have long existed and have been tested should not be changed for light and transient reasons. There has been no clamor from the public, nor the presentation of any evidence that the present organization of the Region of the Forest Service contributes to or creates irrational, uncoordinated, centralized operations and thus adversely affects the ability of the Forest Service to fulfill its mission.

—The Committee on Appropriations, taking due note of the fact that the proposed closing of Forest Service Regions and Regional offices is not grounded on a specific law directing that this be done, should expressly prohibit the expenditure of funds appropriated to effect such a plan, until it has been approved by Congress.

—The Executive should consult with those organizations that are concerned with "rural-resource" programs and explore the nature of a standard Region and headquarters structure to determine whether such a program is needed. A definitive legislative proposal should then be made to the Congress.

2. The National Forest System encompasses 187,000,000 acres of Federal land and a gross area of 225,000,000 acres. A Washington, D.C. headquarters office provides central supervision which is exercised through 9 Regional offices. These in turn supervise 125 National Forests, which are subdivided into 692 Ranger Districts. Nineteen of the 50 States, all in the East (except for Texas and Hawaii) entered the Union with all public land within them as State land. In the other 39 States, as provided for in the Constitution, the land out of which they were formed was Federal territory. Thus when the Federal policy of setting up National Forests was enacted in 1891 the preponderance of remaining Federal land was in the 11 Western States, and Alaska. Here then is where 163,000,000 of the 187,000,000 acres of National Forests are located. In 1911, Congress broadened the authority for the National Forest system and authorized the acquisition of lands in other states. Today there are National Forest lands in 44 States and the territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

From 1891 to 1897 there was no provision in law for the management of the reserved Federal forests and from 1898–1905 administration, which was still in the Department of the Interior, was at a very low level and highly centralized. By then the system had grown to 85 National Forests and 85 million acres. In 1905 Congress trans-

ferred the administration of the Forests to the Department of Agriculture and under the dynamic leadership of Gifford Pinchot, who had headed the older Bureau of Forestry in Agriculture for President Theodore Roosevelt, a system of management was devised and put into operation. In 1908 six Western Regions were created and to this day the offices for these decentralized Regions have remained in their present location. As the Congress enacted new authority, the form of the organization was improved. An Alaska Region was created and three Eastern Regions set up taking the total to 10. In 1966 one of the Eastern Regions was combined with the remaining two to provide a total of nine Regions. In addition, as the programs for cooperation with States and local governments in forestry, fire control and other aspects of resources management were enacted, provision was made for a Division of State and Private Forestry, which except for Upper Darby, Pennsylvania office is housed with the Regional office for National Forest Administration. Research is organized among eight Regional offices which likewise have been stable in their existence and designed to serve not only the Federal need but equally the vast private forest resources.

The United States Forest Service has long been viewed by careful students of public administration as uniquely well organized and effective in the use of the money and the manpower that it is apportioned in the budget process. In its long history since 1905 it has been in the center of many public controversies on natural resources policy issues. It has come out of each such event with a public appreciation of the dedication that it has to carry out the laws of the United States as enacted, and its conformance to policies immediately whenever there appears to have been some deviation, no matter how small. Public administration analysts have noted that the Forest Service fashioned early in its operation not only a corps of high caliber, career service employees but also a system of decentralized management that rapidly and effectively translated lawful policy to effective on-the-ground achievements. The team of effective Regional offices, strategically located National Forest offices, and effective Ranger District offices has been a key factor in this success. Every agency with far-flung responsibilities and geographic dispersion is affected by centrifugal and centripetal forces that must always be kept in balance if policies are to be effectively secured. This is best done by constant attention to the need to modify both structure and policy and program on an evolutionary basis, testing experience, and a careful regard giving each level of command and operation guides for structure and management that are appropriate.

The majority of the subcommittee sets forth these observations because it is evident that those who are promoting the concept of an absolute system of 10 Standard Federal Regions with Standard Headquarters have charted a course that Senator Wallace Bennett described as a "Procrustean bed." The plan lacks flexibility where it is needed and prescribes rigidity when that would be destructive of true "standardization".

Given the preponderance of Federal land in the West, and the preponderance of National Forests in the West, it is difficult to conceive how a limit of 3 Western Regions for "rural-resource" programs can achieve their rationalization, coordination and decentralization.

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Over the years the Forest Service has adjusted Regional boundaries. At the National Forest level it has reduced the number from over 160 to 125. It has reduced the number of Ranger Districts from over 750 to 692. It has reduced the number of its Regions from 10 to 9. Through this entire period the acreage of the National Forest System has grown modestly and the uses and services of the National Forests have multiplied, in some cases at almost a geometric rate.

The majority of the subcommittee believes that the Regional offices now located at Missoula, Montana; Ogden, Utah; and Albuquerque, New Mexico; are located not only in the heart of the Intermountain West but also in cities related to the National Forests lands in each of the 3 Regions. A decision to close these offices and proceed with the Office of Management and Budget notion of standard regionalization would strip this vast area of essential Federal offices for these agencies and would pave the way for the transfer of the Regional offices of other related agencies in the same manner. Would three Regions and the three Regional offices prescribed in the OMB plan benefit the rationalization, coordination and decentralization of "rural-resource" Federal agencies in the West?

The majority of the subcommittee concluded that—

—no evidence was offered by the Executive Branch that supports this thesis.

—the Office of Management and Budget needs to review this issue most carefully, in terms of placing management personnel close to the natural resources to be managed.

—the questions that various Senators and Members of Congress posed in writing to the Department of Agriculture and before this subcommittee for consideration and reply by the Executive agencies deserve to be answered in full.

—The majority of the subcommittee will consider any facts on a positive basis in determining what action should be taken.

3. The testimony before the subcommittee and the data supplied show that workload on the National Forests has been expanding at a substantial rate in virtually every use. The National Forests have truly come of age as more and more Americans look to their 187,000,000 acres for clear water, stable soil conditions, a clean atmosphere, carefully managed plants and animals in order to provide a full measure of both commodity and non-commodity uses. The forest and range are important as wood producers, livestock forage sources, wildlife and fish habitat, water sources and watersheds and a wide variety of intensive and extensive recreational pursuits. These 187,000,000 acres of valuable national environment are not being as intensively managed as they should be to provide fully for these resources now and in the future.

There is little doubt that the cost of living and the cost of doing business has risen appreciably in this past decade and significantly these past few years. On a constant dollar basis the budgets for the Forest Service have not kept pace with this rise and the budget now before the Congress requests less money than was provided last year. Thus, in the face of inflation, less money will be available both in terms of current dollars and in terms of constant dollars the decline is even greater.

The *Program for the National Forests* which was started as a long term planning device by President Eisenhower, and amplified by President Kennedy, has been allowed to atrophy. At this critical juncture when the demands for the services and resources of the National Forests is climbing and the need for more attention to environmental needs is clear, there is no publically visible short or long term standard or guide for leadership in natural resource management. Each user group wants the National Forests to do more. The Forest Service recognizes that in many instances the lands it administers can produce more resources but to do so there must be the money and manpower as well as the long term commitment to achieve optimum levels of resource outputs in an environmentally sound manner under principles of multiple-use and sustained-yield.

The majority of the subcommittee concludes that:

—The Executive should prepare and submit to the Congress by Sept. 1, 1973 a supplemental appropriation request for the balance of FY 1974 that on a constant dollar basis and the current capability of the national forest lands, will enable the Forest Service to meet the opportunity to provide resources and services at current possible levels in an environmentally sound manner with the requirements of sustained-yield and multiple-use as provided by law. This request should only be tempered by overall Federal revenue expectations and the priority that adequate timber supply and other resources and services of the Forest Service should properly have within the total Federal Service framework.

—The Executive should reinstate the "Program for the National Forests" modernizing and updating it so that it is a plan to meet tomorrow's needs based upon the capabilities of the National Forest system and realization of the opportunity to expand the production of resources and services under principles of multiple-use and sustained-yield, again within reasonable and well-considered budgetary constraints.

—This plan should be presented to the Congress by January 1, 1974.

4. There is considerable interest in legislation that will better enable the Forest Service to effectively deliver the resources and services environmentally attainable from the National Forests. The lack of unanimity as to the utility of the legislation now before the Committee is not persuasive evidence that no legislation is needed or should be enacted. The wide divergence of views, however, indicates that further exploration is needed to fashion legislation that will come closer to meeting the mark.

The majority of the subcommittee concluded that:

—it will reopen the hearing record in order to afford interested parties to make a matter of public record any further views they may have on ways to develop a comprehensive legislative proposal.

—it will, at the appropriate time, hold further public hearings on means to more effectively secure the future benefits that the National Forest system can provide for the American people.

5. The President submitted to the Congress on June 29, 1973, a proposal to create a Department of Energy and Natural Resources. This legislation, if enacted would have far reaching effects on the Forest Service and the Soil Conservation Service. In the form presented it would even permit the President to abolish the Forest Service, once it was amalgamated into the proposed Department of Energy and Natural Resources. It has further ramifications that deserve the most careful attention by the Congress and by the subcommittee. Therefore the majority of the subcommittee concluded that:

—The Chairman should communicate to the Chairman of the Committee on Government Operations its interest and concern and request that at the appropriate time the portions of this proposal dealing with those agencies and Departments under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry be referred to it for its review and reaction.

—a copy of this report be forwarded to the Committee on Government Operations, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and the Committee on Public Works, in order that its concerns about the broader implications of a Department of Energy and Natural Resources will be widely apparent.

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CHAPTER 1: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FOREST SERVICE REGIONS

The "National Forests" were created in 1891 by an Act of Congress that authorized the Secretary of the Interior to designate public domain lands as Forest Reserves. The Secretary exercised this authority, calling the attention of the Congress to the need for legislation to permit the operation of these lands for the public benefit. In 1897 an Organic Act for the management of these lands was enacted by Congress.

In 1905 the Congress transferred the administration of these lands to the Secretary of Agriculture and their name was changed to National Forests. Expansion and adjustment continued. In 1911, the Congress enacted the Weeks Law which made the system of Federal forests "National". Up to this point all of the National Forests were composed of land that had always been a part of the Federal domain and thus all were in the "Western" public land states. Via purchase, and land exchanges, the National Forest system was expanded to 187,000,000 acres in 44 States and the Territory of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. It is composed of 160 million acres of original "public domain" land and 27 million acres of acquired lands. The only states that do not have Forest Service administered lands are Hawaii, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, although seven more states have less than 250,000 acres each of National Forest land.

From 1891 to 1897 there were no provisions in law for the management of these forests but Interior Department personnel did seek to protect them. In 1898 some management was begun and provisions were made for one or two people to supervise each forest as it was created. In 1905, when the system was designated "National Forest" and management placed in a Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture more intensive management was undertaken. In 1908 the Service was organized into six Regions. All of the lands supervised were then in the Western States; the system comprised 148 million acres and the need for decentralization was manifest. In 2 decades the National Forests grew from one Reserve of one million acres to 153 National Forests totalling 168 million acres. While the boundaries of the six original Regions have been modestly modified over the years, their essential form has remained the same and the headquarters for each has been in the same city. Alaska was made a Region in 1921.

The expansion of the system of National Forest into the East and South began in 1911 and Region seven was created. In 1929 and 1934, 2 additional "Eastern" Regions were created. In 1966 one of these "Eastern" Regions was abolished. Thus, today the Forest Service Regions for administering the National Forests total nine; the six original "Western" Regions, plus a Regional office in Atlanta and one in Milwaukee for the South and North, respectively, and an Alaska Regional office.

In addition over the years the Congress has enacted additional authority to the Forest Service to conduct programs of research on matters related to Forestry and other Natural Resources as well as a program of cooperation with the States and private individuals in forestry and forest fire control. The latter program is largely one of grants to States to assist them in programs of forestry on State and private land, while the former is a substantial program of research organized around field stations where extensive work is conducted. The State and Private Forestry program is managed out of the Regional offices used for National Forest Administration, except that the area generally embraced by Region 9 for National Forest Administration, which is located at Milwaukee, is serviced for State and Private Forestry out of Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. The Research function has 2 special units, the Institute of Tropical Forestry in Puerto Rico and a Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin. It has eight regular Regional offices, five of which are located in cities or metropolitan areas where National Forest Regions are also headquartered, and one is located in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, where the State and Private Forestry Region for the Northeastern Area is also located.

The Forest Service has grown over its life span into an agency with 3 distinct missions, National Forest Administration, State and Private Forestry cooperation, and Research, each of which is based upon duly enacted laws. It has exhibited relative stability in its structure since 1908. At that point a decision was made to decentralize. In the case of the National Forests the 187,000,000 acres are managed through 692 District Ranger Offices. These are the on-the-ground staff, and they each manage an area that averages about 270,000 acres or a bit over 400 square miles. On the average six Ranger Districts comprise a National Forest. The average Forest is about 1,500,000 acres. The average Region is made up of about 15 National Forests (Alaska has only two "National Forests". The nine Regions report to the Chief of the Forest Service. His office is organized and the "Regions" for the 3 functions of the service are modeled in a manner that conform for the purpose of supervision, inspection and management.

While the broad structure has remained stable, there have been constant on-going field-level changes that have reduced the number of National Forests and Ranger Districts.

The peak number of National Forests was attained in 1912 when there were 163 and the system totalled 163,000,000 acres. By 1934 when the 10th Region was created, the number of Forests had declined to 145. There had been numerous additions and eliminations from the National Forest system and expansion into the Eastern United States but the system's acreage stood at 163,000,000 acres. Since 1934 the system's acreage has grown to its present size. The number of National Forests grew to 160 by 1940, but since then, even though the acreage in the System has grown 25 million acres the number of National Forests has declined to the present 125.

The changes in the administration of the National Forest Administration system have been continual, they have been evolutionary rather than revolutionary and they have been geared to better on-the-ground delivery of services. Until just recently, the budgets for the Forest Service have generally been increasing in response to the growing demand for services. Thus the internal "consolidations" have not been for the purpose of accommodating reductions in personnel but rather to assure more effective management.

Since the current study was undertaken to abolish three major National Forest Administration Regions as well as two Research Regions, there have been major reductions in Forest Service personnel levels and budgets, including the impoundment of funds for various programs.

NATIONAL FOREST ADMINISTRATION REGIONS

In the main, the National Forest Regions conform to State boundaries, except where such conformance produces practical operating difficulties.

Region 10, Alaska. This is a single state region separated from the other states. It has two dedicated "National Forests" organized for management purposes into four "Areas," and subsidiary offices similar to Ranger Districts. The 20 million acres of National Forest in Alaska are located along the Southeast Coast. Adjacent and intermingled with them are two major Wildlife Refuges and a National Monument plus some Bureau of Land Management public land holdings.

Region 9, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland and Delaware plus all the Northeast States from Pennsylvania to Maine. This 19 state Region embraces an area roughly 1,500 miles long and 600 miles wide. Only 12 of the states have National Forests in them—17 with an acreage of about 11 million. The National Forests are on the rim of the Region. In the Northern portion of the "Lake States", Southern Missouri, along the Ohio River which forms much of the Region's Southern boundary. In the Appalachian headwaters of West Virginia, a unit in Northwest Pennsylvania on the Allegheny River, and two Forests in the Green Mountains of Vermont and the White Mountains of New Hampshire and Maine. Two thirds of the lands are in the Lake States and the Regional office is located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Region 8, a 13 State Region, encompassing the 11 states of the "South" plus Kentucky and Oklahoma. This Region has 33 National Forests which total 12 million acres. The Region encompasses an area about 1,700 miles long and 500 miles wide. However, since none of the National Forests in Texas extend beyond the 96th Meridian, the effective length of the Region is much smaller, about 900 miles. The Regional office is in Atlanta thus it is not over 600 miles to the farthest supervisors office.

Region 7, abolished 1966.

Region 6, Oregon, Washington (except the Northeastern corner) and a portion of Northern California. This essentially two State Region has 20 National Forests with 23 million acres, in an area about 450 miles long and 350 miles wide. The Regional headquarters is in Portland, Oregon, and centrally located.

Region 5, the State of California, plus a small portion of Oregon and Nevada. This 19 million acre Region is virtually all in one State, 800 miles long and 200 miles wide, with headquarters centrally located in San Francisco.

Region 4, contains all of Utah, virtually all of Nevada, the Western quarter of Wyoming and three-fifths of Idaho. Its 18 National Forests contain 33 million acres. Its headquarters are at Ogden, Utah, in the approximate center of the Region. The Region is about 800 miles long by 600 miles wide but the configuration of the forests makes it reasonably compact.

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Region 3 is a two state Region, Arizona and New Mexico, with headquarters at Albuquerque, New Mexico. It has 12 National Forests embracing 22 million acres in a 400 by 600 mile area. However, the effective length of the Region is about 350 miles based on the location of the Forests.

Region 2, contains all of Kansas and Nebraska, which contain virtually no National Forest land, all of South Dakota (except for a small piece in the Northwest), the Eastern three-fourths of Wyoming and virtually all of Colorado. It is a Region 700 miles wide and 600 miles long but from a practical standpoint it is less than 400 miles wide. It has 20 million acres in 17 National Forests, but 12 of these Forests with about 14 million acres are in Colorado. The Regional office is in Denver, which is East of the Continental Divide and on the "Eastern" edge of the Region, while most of the Forests are located West of the Divide.

Region 1, this embraces all of Montana, the Northern third of Idaho, North Dakota, the Northwestern tip of South Dakota and Wyoming (except that the portion embraced here is all in Yellowstone National Park), plus Northeastern Washington. The Region is 1,000 miles long and 300 miles wide, but the bulk of the National Forests are located in a 350 mile zone for which Missoula is the geographical center. The 16 National Forests in the region embrace 25 million acres of which 17 million acres are in Montana.

STATE LINES—REGIONAL BOUNDARIES

In general the present Forest Service Regions for National Forest Administration do conform to State lines, the deviations from this being for cause. There are presently 26 National Forests where the boundaries cross State lines. However, only seven situations involve deviations that required that the lines between Regions be adjusted. For example, the Manti-La Sal is mainly in Utah but due to a bend in the Colorado River it is logical that the Forest be placed in the Region which contains Utah. The proposed change will increase the number of inter-regional non-configurations from seven to 12, plus continue the balance of the 26 situations where Forests are located in two or more States. These variants are based upon natural topographic factors and in reality they seem to cause no problem in securing effective administration.

There are several situations where the present Forest Service Region embraces a substantial part of a State. Northern Idaho is in Region 1 as is a portion of South Dakota. Western Wyoming is in Region 4 based, again on the topography. The California-Oregon and California-Nevada variations are based upon topographic realities.

In the main the Forest Service Regions represent an effort to conform to State lines as Regional boundaries wherever feasible without adhering to them as an absolute must. The Region's vary in dimensions and the characteristic of the two "Eastern" Regions is that they are smallest in total National Forest area but are very large in overall dimensions. On the other hand the six "Western" Regions are, in fact, much more compact than even their gross boundaries would indicate.

There was no testimony to suggest that coordination with the States and local governments is inhibited by the present Regional structure.

CHAPTER 2: THE EXECUTIVE CONCEPT OF STANDARD FEDERAL REGIONS AND STANDARD FEDERAL HEADQUARTERS CITIES

On March 27, 1969, when President Nixon signed the Reorganization Act into law he issued a statement on his intention to establish ". . . common regional boundaries for agencies providing social services." He noted that this action however did not rest on the authority extended by the Reorganization Act. He said its purpose was to "make greater progress in our struggle against social problems." He said that "This instruction affects the Department of Labor; the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; the Department of Housing and Urban Development; the Office of Economic Opportunity; and the Small Business Administration." To reach this goal of better Federal working relations on common subjects he proposed that eight National Standard Regions be set up. The 50 states were to be divided into eight National Standard Regions, each with a designated headquarters city. The attached map shows the original designations.

The President set forth three headings for these changes, rationalization, coordination and decentralization, observing that they were "interdependent". The first point was that uniform boundaries for regions and regional office locations would assure coordinated actions.

The second proposed change was to expand the concept of Federal Regional Councils from the four cities where they were in operation (Atlanta, New York, Chicago and San Francisco) to all eight headquarters cities adding, Boston, Philadelphia, Dallas-Fort Worth, and Denver. For the five Departments and independent agencies covered this was supposed to promote a more cohesive Federal policy, eliminate friction and duplication, while assuring that the Federal government spoke with a single voice on issues involving social problems.

3. This was the systematic restructuring of domestic programs focusing on decentralization. The Director of the Office of Management and Budget was asked to join with nine agency heads to review the relation between centralized authority and field operations. In addition to the five named in the basic program the following four agencies were added; the Departments of Commerce, Justice, Transportation and Agriculture. Notably absent was the Department of the Interior, Atomic Energy Commission, the Corps of Engineers (Civil Function), Tennessee Valley Authority, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Council on Environmental Quality.

The review had three assignments as to each of the nine agencies:

1. Eliminate unnecessary steps in the delegation process
2. Develop organizational forms and administrative practices which will mesh more closely with those of all other departments, and

3. Give more day-by-day authority to those who are at lower levels in the administrative hierarchy.

Goals sought included:

—better, quicker decisions

—increased cooperation and coordination between Federal, State and local governments

—greater decision making power to local Federal officials.

Also announced at the same time was the establishment of an Urban Affairs Council and Office of Intergovernmental Relations so the Government can be advised on additional improvements in service systems.

The announcement said that "Further systematic instruction is on the way". President Nixon's views are summed up by the following portion of his statement:

> Again, this action is a concrete manifestation of a concern I expressed during the campaign: "Business learned long ago that decentralization was a means to better performance. It's time government learned the same lesson."
>
> The Federal Government has been assigned many new responsibilities in the last several decades, many of which it carries and many of which it fumbles.
>
> Many of the disappointments and frustrations of the last several years can be blamed on the fact that administrative performance has not kept pace with legislative promise.
>
> This situation must be changed. The actions I announce today are important steps toward achieving such changes. By rationalizing, coordinating, and decentralizing the systems through which government provides important social and economic services, we can begin at least to realize the hopes and dreams of those who created them.

On May 21 in the following statement President Nixon revised the number of Standard Regions to 10:

STATEMENT ON THE REALIGNMENT OF REGIONAL BOUNDARIES OF CERTAIN FEDERAL AGENCIES. MAY 21, 1969

On March 27 I announced a series of steps being taken to streamline the structure and processes of Federal agencies in the field. I am confident that these changes will greatly improve the effectiveness of Federal social and economic services.

The first of these actions was the establishment of a common pattern of regional boundaries and headquarters for the Department of Labor, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Office of Economic Opportunity, and the Small Business Administration.

Since the announcement we have met with congressional, State, and local interests from many areas of the country and received from them a great deal of valuable information on implementing this plan.

After considering this information, I have concluded that the level of Federal service which would be required of the planned subregional offices in Kansas City and Seattle warrants their elevation to full regional status.

Three other changes are desirable. With the establishment of the new Seattle region, it is appropriate to shift Idaho to that region from the Denver region. Also, after reviewing the situation, I have concluded that the States of North Carolina and Kentucky would be better served from Atlanta than from Philadelphia.

In summary, the new alignment for the regions is as follows:

Region I (Boston)—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont;

Region II (New York City)—New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands;

Region III (Philadelphia)—Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia;

Region IV (Atlanta)—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee;

Region V (*Chicago*)—Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin;

Region VI (*Dallas-Fort Worth*)—Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas;

Region VII (*Kansas City*)—Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska;

Region VIII (*Denver*)—Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming;

Region IX (*San Francisco*)—Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada;

Region X (*Seattle*)—Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

It is significant to note that the entire rationale upon which the concept rested was better delivery of social services. The "conservation" agencies and departments, especially those which manage the 750 million acres of Federal land were totally excluded in developing and planning the concept.

The concept of 10 Standard Federal Regions with Standard Headquarters Cities rests on the general authority of the President rather than a specific determination made in a law enacted by the Congress and signed by a President. There are no Executive Orders in the normal sense of the term, but there are the two statements by President Nixon announcing the concept. There are no Office of Management and Budget Circulars but there are a number of OMB memos from the Chairman of the "Federal Assistance Review (FAR) Steering Group to the Group." The Chairman is headquartered in OMB.

However on Jan. 23, 1969 President Nixon created by Executive Order 11452, the Council for Urban Affairs. His entire statement is brief and explains that it is related to the over 73 percent of the people who live in urban America.

5. Statement on Signing Executive Order Establishing the Council for Urban Affairs. January 23, 1969

THE ESTABLISHMENT of the President's Urban Affairs Council is an historic occasion in American Government. Half a century ago the census of 1920 revealed that a majority of Americans had come to live in cities. But only decades later did the American National Government begin to respond to this changed reality. By 1960, 70 percent of the population was urban and today probably 73 percent is.

For all this, the American National Government has responded to urban concerns in a haphazard, fragmented, and often woefully shortsighted manner (as when the great agricultural migrations from the rural South were allowed to take place with no adjustment or relocation arrangements whatever). What we have never had is a policy: coherent, consistent positions as to what the National Government would hope to see happen; what it will encourage, what it will discourage.

Having a policy in urban affairs is no more a guarantor of success than having one in foreign affairs. But it is a precondition of success. With the creation of the Urban Affairs Council we begin to establish that precondition; the formulation and implementation of a national urban policy.

NOTE: The Council for Urban Affairs was established by Executive Order 11452 of January 23, 1969.

A White House announcement concerning the creation and memberhsip of the Council is printed in the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (vol. 5, p. 161).

At a White House news briefing following the Council's first meeting Dr. Daniel P. Moynihan, Assistant to the President for Urban Affairs and Executive Secretary of the Council, announced the formation of nine subcommittees of the Council, each to be chaired by a Cabinet officer. Dr. Moynihan also announced the formation of an interim staff committee under the chairmanship of Budget Director Robert P. Mayo to work out plans for transition to a peacetime economy at the end of the Vietnam conflict.

The concept of Standard Federal Regions and Headquarters that came along in March 1969 is thus an outgrowth of the Urban Affairs Council. The Department of the Interior, which is a major Federal land manager, was not included in the initial Council while the Department of Agriculture was because of the role of the Council in surplus food and nutrition matters as they related to urban affairs. At a later date Interior was added because some of its programs do have urban service characteristics.

The data and facts on hand would indicate that while the concepts of standard regions and headquarters has some useful application in the social service area, the much more pervasive and fundamental idea that *all* Federal agencies shall conform to standard Federal regions and headquarters has not been rationally developed.

The Department of the Interior has taken a number of steps, at least on paper to conform to standard regions. It has made virtually no move to conform its headquarters. Over these past years it has

—Moved a Park Service Regional office from Richmond Va., to Atlanta, Ga. Virginia was placed in the Philadelphia Park Service Region, thus it was necessary to move the office to serve the balance of the South to a city in the Standard Region for the South.

—An office was opened in Denver for the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

—Not closed or consolidated regional or State offices.

—Permitted agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management which is "Western" based, and uses State Offices, was permitted to retain these offices. It merely designated certain persons to be the Federal Regional Council representative in 3 Western cities.

—OMB granted Interior permission to use Albuquerque, New Mexico, as a Regional Headquarters in lieu of Dallas, Texas, to use Portland, Oregon, instead of Seattle, Washington, and to use Omaha, Nebraska, instead of Kansas City, Missouri.

—In so far as the Committee is aware there was no coordination in the proposal to revise National Forest Regions with the Department of the Interior or in the context of a possible Department of Energy and Natural Resources.

THE PROCRUSTEAN BED

Senator Wallace Bennett used the story of the ancient Greek robber Procrustes to illustrate his concern for the concept of rigid, forced standardization.

Mr. Chairman, I can understand how a planner in an ivory tower can feel good about setting up a uniform pattern and forcing all federal agencies to conform. However, I am reminded of the story of the Procrustean bed whose owner stretched his short guests and cut off the extremities of his longer guests to fit it. I am not sure that this proposal is any wiser or more logical than that of Procrustes. The Forest Service is an operating agency related to the management of large land areas which cannot be moved or readjusted to fit any preconceived pattern.

The concept of these Standard regions is so firmly linked to urban situations that it cannot be said to provide a basis for meeting the tests that President Nixon outlined when the ideas of improved services was outlined in March 1969.

Out of the 2.3 billion acres that comprise our 50 States over three-quarters-of-a-billion are Federally owned. Over 700 million acres have always been Federal land and lie largely in the Western United States. There are over 50 million acres that have been acquired, most for programs with basic conservation goals.

Alaska stands distinct and different. It comprises our largest State, over 365 million acres and all but 11 million acres is still in Federal ownership. As a result of the Act admitting Alaska as a State and the more recent Alaska native claims Act, over 140 million acres will pass from Federal ownership, but Alaska will still remain over 60% Federal land for a considerable period.

Excluding Alaska (and Hawaii) the gross area of the 48 States is about 2.9 billion acres of which about 400 million acres is Federally owned. The 11 Western States are where the Federal lands are concentrated. They contain 753 million acres of which 360 million acres or 48% are Federal. Alaska is considered separately and currently 97% of its 365 million acres remains Federal. The other 38 States contain about 1.150 billion acres and average 4% Federal land, less than 50 million acres. The Standard Federal Region and Headquarters City concept has these effects:

1. It allocates three Regional offices to coordinate the management of 710 million acres of Federal land in an area that embraces 1.1 billion acres of land, while permitting seven Regional offices in an area with about 1.1 billion acres of land with less than 50 million acres of Federal land.

2. It detaches New Mexico from the "West" for purposes of coordination and assigns it to an office in Atlanta in the case of the Forest Service where none of the goals of coordination, decentralization of rationalization are likely to be secured.

3. It allocates six midwest States that average 3.3% Federal land into a "Region" where the Federal lands average 48%.

4. It prescribes a series of three western Regional offices in Denver, Seattle and San Francisco. The first is located east of the Rockies and is on the southern and eastern edge of the Federal lands in its "Region". When adjacent Region Seven is incorporated into it four States with less than 2 percent Federal lands are added. The San Francisco and Seattle locations are likewise on the western edge of their supervisory areas and the vast intermountain west which is heavily endowed with Federal lands is split and left devoid of essential coordinating and decentralizing organization.

It attaches Alaska to Federal Region 10, yet its needs and situation are so unique, its physical separation is so great, and its bulk of Federal lands is so overwhelming as to raise a serious question as to whether its needs can be rationalized, coordinated and decentralized from Seattle and Portland.

5. The OMB rule permits "Standard Federal Regions" to be combined. The result for conservation agencies has been to combine in various ways Regions I, II, III and V located in the North. Regions IV and VI in the South have been combined or separate. Region VII which is in the midwest may be thrown in with V to the East, VI to the South or VIII to the West. Regions IX and X may be separate or combined and X may be split. The result is that the "conservation" agencies have a hodge podge of possible regional combinations and a hodge podge of regional headquarters giving the semblance of coordination but not visible benefits.

6. Even if Federal acreage where the sole criteria, and it is not, the three "Regions" allotted to the West would be poorly balanced. Region VIII and IX would contain about 140 million acres each of Federal land while Region X would have over 430 million acres. However the workload and diversity of activities on the Federal lands in the several Western States varies tremendously, thus a number of measures are needed to equate management requirements.

CHAPTER 3: ISSUES PRESENTED TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

1. In Early 1969 President Nixon announced his intention that the social service agencies, Health, Education, and Welfare, Housing and Urban Development, Office of Equal Opportunity, Department of Labor and the Small Business Administration, should be organized into a network of 10 standard regions with each agency having its headquarters in a standard major city within that region.

—Are these "social service" regions logical for application to the land and natural resource administration agencies?

—Are standard regions designed for urban problems effective in meeting any or all rural area needs?

2. The 10 Standard Regions provide for only three Regions to cover 12 "Western" States plus Hawaii and Alaska and assign New Mexico to a Regional Office located as far away as Atlanta, Georgia. The Forest Service presently services the lands in these states from seven Regional offices.

—Can 3 Regional offices, located on the rim of the 700 million acres of Federal lands in the West adequately service them?

—Is it logical to attach New Mexico to an Atlanta Georgia Regional office?

—Is it logical to abolish 3 of the 7 "Western" Regions and thus increase the travel distance from the National Forests in 7 of the 12 "Western States?"

3. President Nixon has submitted to the Congress a proposal to create a Department of Energy and Natural Resources. As proposed it would give him broad authority to reorganize agencies, regions and field offices. There are presently five significant natural resource agencies that manage over 700 million acres of Federal land in the West. In an earlier submission on this same issue the proposal included a provision that the "urban-oriented social services" 10 Standard Federal Regions and Headquarters would be applied to a proposed Department of Natural Resources. Congress had numerous questions about many fundamental issues related to such a Department and did not accept President Nixon's proposal. The case for 10 "urban-oriented, social-service" conceived regions for natural resources programs has never been presented to the Congress for ratification.

—Should the Congress accept the premises without careful study and evaluation of the consequences?

—Should the Office of Management and Budget be permitted to administratively force Dept. of Agriculture and Interior compliance with "urban-social" regions for programs that are "rural-resource" oriented while the proposal for Natural Resources reorganization has not been affirmed by the Congress?

—Will a three standard region concept for the West result in the rationalization, coordination and decentralization of the Federal land and resource agencies in a new Department of Natural Resources?

4. On March 26, 1969, President Nixon outlined a goal of fiscal policy stating "To produce a budget that will stop inflation, we must cut expenditures while maintaining revenues. This will not be easy. Dealing with fundamentals never is." The long term "Program for the National Forests" has withered away. The proposed Forest Service budget for Fiscal year 1974 cuts expenditures in a manner that reduces both Federal revenues and revenue sharing with States and local governments. It cuts back on long term reforestation investments that will enhance future forest revenues and restore the productivity of 18 million acres of National Forest now producing well below its optimum output of timber for the future, watershed, wildlife and other values.

—Should there be a long term publicly available plan that charts the "Future of the National Forests"?

—Should budget cuts be proposed when they, in turn, reduce revenues—direct to the Federal Treasury and to State and local governments, as well as indirect revenues that offer the best basis for developing prosperous and vigorous rural economies and communities?

5. Legislation has been presented which would change some of the basic authorities governing the management of the National Forests and the basis for funding programs for the National Forests. The Administration opposes one bill in its entirety, it is studying a second bill. Witnesses spoke both in strong support and opposition to the first bill (S. 1775). On the second bill (S. 1996) witnesses did not shift their basic position but expressed their views with more moderation, even endorsing some of the concepts unique to that bill. There was general agreement among almost all witnesses that the administration of the National Forests should be enhanced and that possibly some modifications of the legislative charter would be useful. There was general agreement that the potential of the National Forests to produce fiber and forage, water, esthetically beneficial recreation, and make greater contributions to a sound environment basically exists, even though there is disagreement on ways and means as it relates to how the goal should be written in an organic act.

—Should the Committee undertake a revision of some of the authorities that govern the administration of the National Forests?

—If it does, what are the basic issues that would benefit by such action?

CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY OF STATEMENTS ON FOREST SERVICE REORGANIZATION

On June 26–27, 1973, the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, Subcommittee on Environment, Soil Conservation and Forestry held 2 full days of hearings on the proposed reorganization of Forest Service regional offices and on S. 1775 and S. 1996.

Statements of witnesses are summarized in order of their appearance.

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION

A. Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana

1. The proposed reorganization would be "unwise, ill-conceived, and ridiculous." It would "only diminish the effectiveness of an already embattled agency."

2. The order to implement the plan was given without consultation with the Congress. Even Members from the States most directly affected were not consulted or informed.

3. Questions by Members of Congress submitted to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Office of Management and Budget were not adequately answered.

4. "This plan is contrary to the intent of the Rural Development Act which establishes a preference . . . in federal office location for rural areas."

5. "Building up an even larger administrative monster in Denver, in addition to the one in Washington, D.C., is not going to simplify matters. Such action takes away more responsibility and action from local authority."

6. "The people of Denver and State officials have indicated they do not favor the consolidation in Denver."

7. "The proposed move of the Regional headquarters from Missoula would admittedly be a severe economic blow."

8. "Fragmenting the research facilities at Ogden between Colorado and Oregon will only compound the problem."

9. The day-to-day management of renewable resources cannot be done from afar.

10. "The plan will, undoubtedly, entail expenditure of considerable money."

11. Operation costs for travel, per diem, etc. would be greater for Regional personnel after the proposed consolidation.

12. "Reduced funds, fewer personnel, and unnecessary reorganization will bring chaos to the management of an extremely valuable natural resource. The multiple use concept will be cast aside and it will be full speed ahead for harvesting timber and nothing else—the consequences be damned."

RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, Senator Mansfield presented the following recommendations:

1. The Department of Agriculture and the Office of Management and Budget should be instructed to stop reorganization of the U.S. Forest Service.

2. The U.S. Forest Service should be exempted from Administrative personnel reductions.

3. This Committee should take no action on any pending legislation or proposal affecting the Department of Agriculture until this matter has been resolved once and for all.

4. The Senate Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations should cooperate in every way.

B. Senator Lee Metcalf of Montana

Senator Metcalf also opposed the consolidation for the same reasons as his colleague, and said:

1. "We know what the words 'renewable resources' mean. It therefore hits us hard when budget-balancing bureaucrats in Washington, most of whom wouldn't know a Montana pine from a Mississippi magnolia, treat this precious heritage as simply another column of figures."

2. "The successful farmer stays close to the soil. . . ."

"The same relationship must exist between the forests and the public stewards of those lands. Proper maintenance requires on-the-spot decisions by competent Forest Service personnel. Those decisions simply cannot be made effectively by far-off bureaucrats."

RECOMMENDATIONS

Senator Metcalf also recommended the four actions suggested by Senator Mansfield.

C. Senator Frank Moss of Utah

Senator Moss presented new arguments in opposition to the plan:

1. The OMB proposal for Forest Service reorganization does not tie in with the regional organization of the proposed Department of Natural Resources.

2. "We could not find *one* land management agency which conforms to the 10 Standard Federal Region concept, and not *one* agency that has all its regional headquarters in the principal designated city for the Standard Region. We could not find *one* agency where it would be easier for the Forest Service to work with others under the new set-up."

3. Under the OMB plan, Alaska does not conform. It is allowed to continue as a "region".

4. "In half of the 6 regions, the headquarters would not even be in established regional center cities."

5. "This leads me to the inevitable conclusion that the centralization in the 10 Standard Regions is not an organizational move. It is a

political move. . . ." "Overall, it will mean further centralization from the White House, through OMB."

6. Under the new plan, increased distance and span of control would work to a disadvantage.

7. The 1971 plan "was predicated upon *no reduction in personnel overall.*" . . . "However, since the plan was formulated in 1971, the Budget Appendix shows that the Administration has reduced overall staffing of the Forest Service by about 2,600 jobs."

RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to recommendations cited previously, Senator Moss said: ". . . Forest Service reorganization is inexorably tied in with the Department of Natural Resources reorganization, and the Administration is proceeding unilaterally to make decisions regarding the administration of our national forests which should be postponed and considered by the Congress as a part of the proposed DNR. We must not foreclose any options."

D. Senator Pete Domenici of New Mexico

In addition to arguments previously cited, the Senator made the following objections:

1. "I further know of no "appropriate advance public notice" or "appropriate opportunity for interested persons or groups to place before the Department of Agriculture their views" which is called for in Subsection 4 of Title 5 of the U.S. Code, Reorganization Plan for 1953, and which appears to me to govern in this matter."

2. In regard to moving regional headquarters from Albuquerque to Atlanta, Georgia, he expressed the belief that it would not be more economical to serve forests in New Mexico from the other side of the nation than from near at hand."

3. It is those employees who will be sacrified so glibly to this sort of mindless forcing who worry me the most. My own home town will bear the burden of one-fifth of the total number. What are working wives, whose husbands have jobs which keep them in the area, supposed to do? It is permissible to uproot people's lives if the end to be achieved is proportionate to that means. But I have yet to hear evidence which convinces me that is so in this instance."

RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to previous recommendations, Senator Domenici suggested: "At the very least, I feel we need a special commission, to include forest users, to examine it in detail before allowing it to be implemented."

E. Senator Joseph Montoya of New Mexico

(Statement submitted for the record)

1. "I wish to express my strong protest to the proposed reorganization of the Forest Service Regional System . . ."

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"It is proposed that New Mexico's Forest System, which alone has almost more National Forest lands than all of the other states in the proposed new region combined, be administered by an office which is approximately 1,400 miles away. . . ."

2. "It is my sincere belief that placing the forest management function in Atlanta can only cause isolation of New Mexican Forests and result in insensitivity to their peculiar needs."

RECOMMENDATIONS

None stated.

F. Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota

(Statement submitted to the Chairman)

1. "If I have, just now, a low level of confidence that the Administration has a sound and coordinated posture on conservation, I hope my bias will be appreciated."

". . . I fear for the future of our National Forests. I urge that we begin to wind the clock of forest conservation and start it moving ahead on time."

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. "I think we would be well advised to freeze such actions as the one proposed for the Forest Service on the basis that there is a difference between movement and action."

G. Congressman John Melcher of Montana

1. "An analysis prepared by the Congressional Research Service points out that the criteria upon which the reorganization plan is based are not criteria at all. They are, rather, a rationalization of management decisions already made—in this case quite clearly by the Office of Management and Budget."

2. "One forest supervisor told me that he might even accept a transfer back to a ranger position in order to stay in the Service under reorganization."

RECOMMENDATIONS

Congressman Melcher made no specific recommendations, but in closing, he said: "Regional reorganization should be stopped now, and forest consolidation plans carefully considered under the present regional structure before any are approved."

H. Congressman Dick Shoup of Montana

1. The proposed reorganization "makes a mockery of the President's goals of decentralization of government and return of government to the people."

2. "The Standard Regions were, I'm sure, conceived with human rather than natural resources in mind."

3. . . . "Our State Forester is such a specialist and while the bulk of State governmental functions operate out of Helena, the State has,

in its wisdom, located the State Forester in Missoula, in the forests. The federal government should do likewise."

4. . . . "I would suggest that the timing is incredibly bad."

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. "I ask you to help us keep the vital problem-solving and decision-making arm of the Forest Service in the field where it belongs."

I. Congressman Gunn McKay of Utah

1. "This move will result in a loss of $6 million a year to the economy of Ogden, and the loss of 350 families. Ogden is an area which will suffer from such a loss. This impact will be major".

2. "The proposed reorganization will create even wider variation in workload, from a low of 11 million acres to a high of *53 million* acres. Number of Forests administered will range from a low of 17 to a high of 38 !"

3. "Under reorganization boundaries, the forests of New Mexico will be administered from Atlanta, Georgia. I am hard pressed to think of two more distant or dissimilar areas."

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. "I am opposed to the Forest Service reorganization plan, and would urge my colleagues to act in opposition to it."

J. Congressman Wayne Owens of Utah

1. "Moves to force the Forest Service into an arbitrary standard regional organization . . . demonstrates again this Administration's insensitivity to the realities of people and resource policy needs in this country."

2. By a vote of 20 to 9, the Colorado Senate approved a memorial to Congress asking that plans be reconsidered which would force the relocation of an estimated 100 families into the Denver metropolitan area."

3. If the states involved—those who would ostensibly lose as well as those who would ostensibly gain—and the Forest Service, who I am sure are not in favor of this move, do not support the Administration's proposal, the only support would seem to flow from the centralized authority of the OMB and the White House.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. "I ask that this Committee reject the proposed reorganization of the Forest Service."

K. Congressman Manuel Lujan on New Mexico

1. "All in all, this proposal of the Forest Service strikes me as one of the least efficient, poorly thought out proposals I have heard of in a long time. I suggest that the individuals who thought this up go back

to the drawing board and come up with something that is a little more suited to the area, the people, and the circumstances involved."

L. Governor of Montana, Thomas L. Judge

1. "Missoula is the forestry capital of the Northwest. There are 13 federal and state agencies dealing with forestry located in the Missoula area. . . . The relocation will break up the close working relationship that has developed through the years among the state and federal agencies and private industry in regard to forestry matters."
2. "This is not the time to reduce, restrict and reorganize the Forest Service."
3. "The Regional Office employs approximately 450 people in the Missoula area, and as Governor I can assure you that we need these jobs in Montana."

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. "This Committee has the opportunity to prevent the Forest Service from being crippled."
2. The reorganization would tend to reduce the amount of federal timber made available for sale.

M. John R. Stevenson, Missoula Area Chamber of Commerce

1. "A recent study undertaken by the State of Montana reports that 51 percent of the personal income and 43 percent of the total employment in the eight counties of Western Montana are directly or indirectly attributable to the wood products industry."
2. "As recent as 1972, Region 1 required one man-hour to prepare for the sale of 7.53 thousand board-feet. Currently, one man-hour is needed for the sale of 4.68 thousand board-feet."
3. "The proposed plan for reorganizing the Forest Service would appear to be an unfortunate interjection of an effort to comply with a broad governmental expense-cutting mandate at a time when our National welfare demands a greater investment in forest management." . . . "It simply will not work in the administration of our National Forests."

RECOMMENDATIONS

None stated.

N. Spencer Smith, Citizens Committee on Natural Resources

1. "The Citizens Committee recommends that this Committee of the Senate and the Congress legislate, if necessary, continuance of the existing Forest Service organization and provide funds and personnel ceilings to enable its effective functioning."

O. Congressman Roy Taylor of North Carolina

1. "There is no apparent rationale for closing the Asheville office headquarters, other than to meet the requirements set forth in a general reorganization plan."
2. "Asheville still offers a comparatively low cost of living that favors it over other cities."

P. Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon

1. The Senate Subcommittee on Appropriations which handles Forest Service budget, "is considering language at this time to attach to the actual budget of the Forest Service to freeze that program, that reorganization as outlined by Senator Bennett."

2. If the Administration goes through with its proposal for a Department of Natural Resources, regional reorganization at this time would be premature, especially in Oregon.

3. When asked by Senator Aiken if he agreed "with the OMB that all federal regional services should be in standard federal cities such as Seattle," Senator Hatfield replied:

"No, I haven't found very much I can agree with OMB on in any subject. This is just another one, I think, that OMB shows that they are looking at things from a legislation point of view, not from the human point or from the resource point of view. And I think OMB is operating in a rarified atmosphere of unreality."

Q. Senator Wallace Bennett of Utah

1. "I oppose this action because I am convinced that the consolidation of the Forest Service will not increase its efficiency in forest management, but rather will hinder it."

2. "The Department of the Interior recognized this concept by making the Bureau of Reclamation exempt to the standard regionalization and allowed it to continue its regional offices based on watersheds and drainage basins."

3. "The Forest Service has failed to prove its case, but it appears that only legislative action will change its mind."

4. In regard to the reorganization plan, Senator Bennett drew this anology, "I am reminded of the story of the Procrustean bed whose owner stretched his short guests and cut off the extremities of his longer guests to fit it. I am not sure that this proposal is any wiser or more logical than that of Procrustes."

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. "I think only a strong representation of Congress, even to the point of legislation, will prevent it."

2. "I think the very existence of these hearings may be enough to accomplish what we hope to accomplish. If it doesn't, then certainly there should be legislation."

R. Floyd Iverson, Federal Research Committee of Utah

1. "We are unalterably opposed to the plan now in effect to force the Forest Service to adhere to the standard federal region concept."

S. Nicholas Kirkmire, Federal Timber Purchasers Association

1. ". . . we are deeply disturbed by the separation of the States of Arizona and New Mexico which will result if the reorganization is allowed to proceed as presently proposed."

2. "If national forests in Arizona and New Mexico are administered from Atlanta and San Francisco, and this is a conservative esti-

mate, a cost comparison shows the cost to industry for holding the same meetings in those cities will increase fivefold, or approximately $60,000, due to the need for air travel, overnight accommodations, and additional time."

T. William Towell, American Forestry Association

1. "I am fearful that this uniform regional reorganization is merely paving the way for something which I don't think would be good for the Forest Service and for the national forest of this country."
2. "I think the agency should have its own free hand of deciding its administrative needs and then deciding where it would best draw its boundaries, rather than trying to conform to some national system."

Cross Examination

Each witness was questioned by Senator Huddleston and others on the Committee. Among other things, they were asked if they supported the recommendations offered by Senator Mansfield. Not one of the witnesses who testified in opposition to the proposed regional reorganization objected to the 4 Mansfield recommendations. Some witnesses, (Metcalf, Moss, Domenici, Bennett, Smith) however, felt that perhaps even stronger measures should be taken; for example, the introduction of a resolution or legislation to specifically prohibit the reorganization of the U.S. Forest Service at this time.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR

J. Robert W. Long, Assistant Secretary for Conservation, Research, and Education, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Accompanied by John R. McGuire, Chief of the Forest Service, USDA

Secretary Long and Chief McGuire presented the Administration's arguments in favor of the reorganization plan, as announced by Secretary Butz on April 24, 1973.

1. "The decision to make these changes in Forest Service organization was not made in haste. Our study . . . was begun in early 1969 . . . in response to, and as a part of, the government-wide Federal Assistance Review program initiated by the President on March 25, 1969. . . ."
2. "The Department of Agriculture is determined to implement all the needed changes in a prompt and orderly manner."
3. There will be no disruption of continuing Forest Service programs."
4. ". . . Most of the opposition to this shift stems from a lack of understanding. . . ."
5. "Distinct differences in roles underscore the fact that the distance between the source of Regional Forester guidance and the National Forests is not a critical concern."
6. "Modern transportation and communication facilities make the new alignment entirely feasible in terms of direction, control, and Regional Office linkage to the field units."
7. "We have concluded that Forest Service regional boundaries need not be constrained to encompass specific geographic areas having

similar ecologic, geologic, social, economic or any other characteristic in order to achieve effective administration."

8. "More personnel will be available for assignment to National Forest Supervisor and Ranger District Offices. These personnel, who have been on Regional Foresters' staffs, will bring new depths of experience and expertise to our on-the-ground work units."

9. "Phasing out three Regional Offices and two Research Station headquarters will produce an estimated net annual saving in administrative overhead cost of about 10 million dollars."

10. The Standard Region concept will improve relationships between Federal agencies and the States. "No longer will there be situations where one State is served by two Forest Service Regional Offices."

11. "Most regional structures in the Federal government now conform to the Standard Regional boundaries." The Department of the Interior began the required realignment in August 1971.

12. . . . "Forest Service career employees have generally accepted the decision with their characteristic spirit of dedication to the Forest Service and its mission."

RECOMMENDATIONS

No changes in the plan were recommended.

Cross Examination

Following the presentation of the prepared statements, Secretary Long and Chief McGuire were questioned by Senators Huddleston and Helms. During the questioning, the following additional arguments supporting the Administration's position were brought out:

1. McGuire: "There will be about 570 positions freed for transfer to the National Forests and Ranger Districts as a result of this."

2. (In regard to the 2 Experimental Stations involved.)

McGuire: "The work units that carry on the studies dealing with watershed protection or protection against fire or pests or utilization of forest products is not disturbed by this proposal at all."

Long: "None of the research side is changed."

3. McGuire: "One of the factors that influenced the Forest Service at this particular point in time was that 1974 budget requests provided for some 1800 less permanent positions than provided in the current year's budget, and our problem is where to find these positions. It was obvious that the best place to take these cuts were in the overhead offices, in the regional offices, and in the Washington office and try to keep as much manpower as possible out there on the ground."

4. (Regarding the cost of implementing the National Environmental Policy Act.)

McGuire: "In recent years, the expenditures on this kind of activity have been doubled about every year. We now estimate around 26 or 28 million dollars is being spent."

5. McGuire: "We fully endorse what the President is trying to do in holding down Federal expenditures, and we have to do our part there."

Long: "There is something to be said for belt tightening, no matter what the organization might be."

6. (Regarding Experiment Station at Asheville, North Carolina.)

Senator Helms: "We are losing 34 positions and $400,000 a year?"

McGuire: "That is correct."

CHAPTER 5: THE EXPANDING WORKLOAD ON THE NATIONAL FORESTS

Data developed by the Forest Service at the Committee's request shows that over the past several years the number of personnel at the National Forest level, as well as at the Regional office level, has declined while the workload has been increasing. Budgets have also declined although all manner of inflationary factors have been operative rendering it unlikely to expect that increased efficiency has been able to overcome the twin effects of personnel and dollar cuts in Forest Service budgets. Receipts from the sale, lease and permitted use of the National Forests and their resources have shown a slight increase in the less remunerative areas such as grazing, recreation, and user fees, but these activities account for but about one-sixth of Forest Service revenues. Timber harvesting accounts for five-sixths of the revenue even though less than 50% of the National Forests are commercial timber lands. Much of the dollar increase in timber revenue, which is expected to run about $450 million in fiscal year 1973 is due to intensive competition for timber. In 1972 the timber revenue was $330 million, thus this last year represented a 36% increase although the volume of timber *cut* (which is more of a determinant of income than volume *sold*) rose only 6%. In fiscal year 1974 the forecast is that the volume of timber cut will drop from 12.5 billion board feet to 12 billion board feet or 4 percent while revenue will decline from $450 million to $397 million or 12%. The FY 1974 figures will reflect the impact of a decision to reduce timber prices by requiring that more roads be built by timber contractors with fewer roads to be constructed with appropriated funds. The extent to which this will cause the $53 million estimated reduction in revenue is not known. In any event the effect of this decision on income and payments to counties will be felt for several years as these contracts work themselves out.

Timber sales projected for FY 1974 are estimated to total 10.9 billion board feet as compared to 10.4 billion board feet in 1973 and 10.3 billion board feet in 1972.

In any event there are opportunities for the Forest Service to sell substantially more timber than is now possible under sustained yield constraints. The timber lands it manages are producing well below their optimum level of potential even on higher sites that contain the opportunity for intensive management. Reforestation and stand improvement investments have been well below needed levels and the budget projected for FY 1974 would not appreciably change the situation. Only by virtue of the authority under the Knutsen-Vandenberg Act to allocate revenue to reforestation and timber stand improvement on areas cut-over will it be possible to post some increases in these activities. There are currently 5.1 million acres in need of reforestation on the National Forests. If it is assumed the Knutsen-Vandenberg Funds will take care of areas currently cut it would take from 33 to 40 years to reforest this present backlog. However, since there are bound

to be unanticipated losses due to fires and disease this is a conservative estimate. In addition there are 13.4 million acres in need of stand improvement. In the past two fiscal years the rate of accomplishment with appropriated funds was about 200,000 acres a year. It would have taken two-thirds of a century to complete the job, and during this period many stands would pass to a stage where such work would be of no economic or silvicultural value. The proposed budget would cut the level of accomplishment to 108,000 acres a year and would lengthen out the time span to 125 years, further diluting the effort.

In total there are 18.5 million acres of commercial forest land in the National Forest System listed as needing either planting or stand improvement. Since the total commercial forest acreage for the system is barely 92 million acres this total indicates that a full 20% of the land is non-producing or producing new forests at a far lower rate of growth and quality than is readily possible. The rationale for a mode of management that plans only 80% efficiency and would delay securing the benefit of some activities for so long as that they would become unprofitable seems neither rational or coordinated. Over the past few years, as witnesses advised the Committee, there have been announcements of plans to sell more timber. As laudable as such a short term goal may be, it is clear as an absolute matter of law and long standing public policy that the timber resources of the National Forests have as one of their original purposes the promise "to furnish a continuous supply of timber for the use and necessities of citizens of the United States; . . ." (16 USC 475). One can search through the history of the administration of the National Forests and not find that this directive was intended to be used as a device for promulgating a strategy of shortages and a minimal level of attention to the needs of the future. In fact quite to the contrary special attention was and is to be paid to promoting the future forest and not to sacrificing the present forest for the future shortages.

In an attempt to reduce this 5-million acre reforestation backlog, Congress last year enacted Public Law 92–421, which on September 18, 1972 established the "Supplemental National Forest Reforestation Fund." The Act authorizes $65 million a year for the Fund for a 15-year period. The Act also calls for annual reports to the Congress.

As Senator Aiken pointed out during the hearings: "The only portion of the reforestation law which will be implemented is to submit to Congress a required report." The Forest Service Budget presentation for Fiscal year 1974 shows that not only has the Executive failed to respond to the direction authorized by this legislation but also has charted a course of doing less and requesting less money for reforestation and stand improvement.

Timber resource management—Reforestation and stand improvement

1972	[1, 3] $32,205,000
1973	[2, 3] 31,702,000
1974	23,136,000
Decrease	—8,566,000

[1] Includes $1,440,000 personnel savings applied to fighting forest fires.
[2] Includes $2,566,000 proposed for transfer to fighting forest fires and $175,000 travel reduction savings proposed for transfer to insect and disease control.
[3] For comparability, silvicultural examination is shown under *Sales administration and management* rather than as appropriated under *Reforestation and stand improvement.*

A decrease of $8,566,000 is proposed. This is a decrease of $5,825,000 from the program level planned for 1973 since $2,741,000 in the 1973 appropriation is proposed for use for fighting forest fires and insect and disease control work. The program for fiscal year 1974, compared with 1972 and 1973, follows:

[In thousands of dollars]

	1972	1973	1974	Decrease
Reforestation	17,591	19,386	16,429	2,957
Timber stand improvement	11,212	10,206	4,732	5,474
Genetic tree improvement	1,396	1,718	1,622	96
Nursery operation and development	566	392	353	39
Savings applied to fighting forest fires	1,440			
Total	32,205	31,702	23,136	8,566

The proposed reforestation and stand improvement program will contribute to the long-range goal of improving the total net growth and sustainable harvest volume on the National Forests. Growth resulting from this program will not only help to offset the decrease in available yield brought about by changes in land use but will also help to raise both the short-term and long-term sustainable harvests from National Forests. The reforestation program, utilizing funds authorized by the Knutsen-Vandenberg Act, is being accelerated in the amount of $2,821,000 to reforest cutover areas more promptly.

A decrease of $2,957,000 is proposed in reforestation. The increase of 21,820 acres shown in tabulation below is the net result of including 26,200 acres of site preparation for natural reseeding, a type of reforestation not included in the acreage in previous years, and a decrease of 4,380 acres of planting and seeding. The inclusion of site preparation for natural reseeding more accurately indicates the planned accomplishments.

The decrease of $5,474,000 in timber stand improvement will result in a program of 108,600 acres.

Genetic tree improvement is decreased $96,000, the net result of decreases in the East where first generation conifer seed orchard establishment has been essentially completed and increases in the West where the program is being expanded.

Nursery operation and development, covering minor betterment projects at the 12 existing nurseries in seven regions and operation of a seed extractory at Santa Fe, New Mexico, is decreased $39,000.

A comparison of proposed fiscal year 1974 outputs with fiscal years 1973 and 1972 follows:

	1972	1973 estimate	1974 estimate
Reforestation (acres)	109,367	131,480	153,300
Timber stand improvement (acres)	191,041	227,870	108,600
Genetic tree improvement (acres of seed orchards)	1,406	1,430	1,450
Nursery operation and development (number of nurseries)	12	12	12

The average annual growth increase from the total 153,300 acres to be reforested is estimated at 15.3 million cubic feet (approximately 77 million board feet).

The average annual growth increase from the total 108,600 acres to be treated by stand improvement measures is estimated at 5.4 million cubic feet (approximately 27.2 million board feet).

It is estimated that the total program will provide 314,000 man-days of employment to semi-skilled workers, generally in low-income rural areas.

An estimate of the acreage to be treated in each State is shown in Table 1 at the end of this section.

Another long standing use of the National Forests has been outdoor recreation. The Forest Service identifies at least 20 different major categories of recreational use. Since 1969 when recreational use passed the 160 million visits mark, the growth in recreation has continued unabated. In 1972 the total was 184 million, it passed 190 million in 1973 and is expected to come close to 200 million visits in 1974. Since 1972, recreation use will climb 7 percent while dollars allocated to "Recreation-public use" will decline slightly. When this situation is viewed against the impact of inflation there is a substantial reduction in this budget item despite a well documented increase in the use of the National Forests for every type of recreation. The three Forest Service Regions scheduled for abolishment under the OMB plan account for 50 million recreational visits or 25% of the total for the National Forests, another 25% occurs in California with the other 5 Regions accounting for the other half.

The 187 million acres of National Forest is exceedingly important as big game habitat. In 1969 the total harvest of big game from the National Forest was over 670,000 animals, including 562,000 deer and 71,000 elk. This harvest has been declining. In 1972 it was down to 583,000, a drop of 83,000. In 1972 a further decline was experienced as the harvest slid to 494,000 which is 176,000 under 1969 levels. The forecast for 1973 is for a further decline to 464,000 which will be 206,000 less than the 1969 level, a drop of over 30%. Forest Service Regions one, three and four, which are scheduled to be abolished, accounted for 46% of the 1971 game harvest on the National Forests. Although the 1973 harvest is forecast to decline from 271,000 animals to 236,000, these Regions will account for 51% of the 1973 harvest. The funding level for wildlife habitat management is at a modest level. The decline in wildlife harvest levels would indicate that opportunities for improved wildlife management are not being realized.

The National Forests contain an estimated 105,000,000 acres of range land. Most is grassland but a large portion is forested range. The National Forest Range is of particular importance in the 6 Western Regions. Livestock often graze on a base ranch for part of the year, then on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management and others, then move up to the National Forests for summer grazing. Over 16,000 ranchers hold permits to graze on the National Forests; they average about 200 head of stock per permittee and they secure about 2½ months of grazing per animal on the National Forests. Grazing management has important connotations for water quality, water yield, sediment and storm runoff and thus affects watershed conditions. Like any use, grazing affects plant cover and thus the ecological condition of the range. Regions one, three and four of the National Forest encompass 50% of the rangeland in the National Forests and

these lands provide 60% of the grazing to over 60% of the livestock grazed on the National Forests. Over the past three years grazing use has declined about 3% and in 1974 it is estimated that slightly less than 7.5 million animal units of grazing will be supplied to about 3.2 million livestock. The proposed budget for grazing management is also scheduled to decline by about three percent and given the influence of inflation the actual reduction is much greater.

The National Forests are traversed by a system of roads that make up a network of 200,000 miles plus a trail system of over 96,000 miles. Roads are added to the net work, and reconstructed by two methods. Funds are authorized and budgeted in order that the Forest Service may construct needed roads. In 1972 $130,000,000 was appropriated for the construction of roads and bridges. Roads are also secured by the Forest Service by reducing the appraised price for timber to be sold by the estimated cost of constructing roads to be built by the timber purchaser. In some cases these are temporary roads while in other cases they are roads that become a permanent part of the road system. In 1972 the price of timber was reduced by over $100,000,000 so that timber purchasers could build an estimated 6,500 miles of road. In 1973, as a result of impoundments of appropriated funds the Forest Service was allowed to expend only $55,000,000 for roads and bridges, a reduction in funds nearly 60%. On the other hand construction of roads using the revenue reduction device rose to an estimated $135,-000,000 and in FY 1974 it is estimated it will climb to over $142,000,000. While the Forest Service will have $75,000,00 for roads in 1974 it shows no miles of road construction. Actually this account is used for engineering support to design and supervise the construction of roads that will be built by timber purchasers under reduced timber appraised prices, general engineering support, and the payment of balances due on road contracts entered into in prior years, and contributions to timber purchaser road allowances in various situations where the cost of the road is inordinately high or bridge construction is also involved. Thus the OMB action has brought to a total standstill the program of Forest Service Road, bridge and trail construction and made the program totally dependent upon the reduction of timber prices to the government and supplemental aid to timber purchasers.

The estimated annual cost for road and trail maintenance on the National Forest Road and Trail system is approximately $50,000,000 a year. In 1972 the Forest Service allocated $29.1 million of appropriated funds to road maintenance and $5.0 million to trail maintenance. Timber revenue reductions for timber purchaser maintenance exceeded $14.6 million. In FY 1974 an estimated $30.9 million of appropriated funds will be allocated to road maintenance but trail maintenance will be reduced to $4.9 million. Timber prices will be reduced by $14.4 million for timber purchaser maintenance of logging roads. There is no indication that the above levels approach a degree of sufficiency to meet either present or future needs for the national forest transportation system.

A major and continuing high cost program is Forest Fire Protection and Fire Fighting. Increased uses of all sorts combined with the vagaries of the weather make wildfire control a complex and difficult challenge. Significant strides have been made each decade but the

problems are most difficult. 1970 was a most difficult fire year. There were nearly 15,000 fires which burned 520,000 acres doing damages estimated at over $11,000,000. The cost of protection was $54,000,000. In contrast in 1973 there were 14,154 fires (a slight reduction in number) and only 117,000 acres were burned over. Damages were estimated at $37,000,000. The cost of protection however was $81,000,000. This includes not only the cost to extinguish fires but all of the associated costs of fire readiness and prevention involving activities on 210,000,000 acres protected by the Forest Service.

There are no simple indices that demonstrate the cost effectiveness of fire prevention. For the last 3 years the average damage cost has been 190 percent of the cost of protection. However, if the fire prevention, readiness, and suppression effort were not as effective as it is, losses would far exceed costs. A particular problem has been the high incidence of wildfires in Southern California. In 1970 266,000 acres burned in that State the major portion of which were in the South. The damages totaled over $77,000,000 and the cost to protect and suppress for the Forest Service only were over $19,000,000. The Congress funds fire protection on a basis that permits the agency to come in for a supplemental appropriation for emergency fire fighting costs. In 1973 the regular costs were on the order of $38,000,000 and the special costs due to fighting fires required an additional supplemental appropriation of $58,000,000.

The projected "budget" based on an obligation basis for fiscal year 1974, exclusive of the Washington office cost (which is about $3,000,000), and Fire Fighting costs, and payments in-lieu of taxes to Counties, is about $607,000,000 compared to $632,000,000 in fiscal year 1973. The budget proposes to increase obligations from permanent accounts derived in the main from timber revenue reductions, such as brush disposal and reforestation on lands cut under timber contracts as provided for by the Knutsen-Vandenberg Act. In 1973 the obligations were about $49 million and in 1974 they will rise about $7 million dollars to $57 million. Likewise revenue reductions from timber sales which were $115 million in 1972 and rose to $148 million in 1973 will climb to $157 million, a jump of about $40 million in 2 years. The obligation of appropriated funds for roads and trails which was over $169,000,000 in 1972 and was $156,000,000 in 1973 will have declined to $109,000,000 in 1974, a drop of $60,000,000. The net result is a $20,000,000 overall decline in the road and trail program; a complete shift to a "no new starts" policy for roads and trails to be built with appropriated funds; and an added burden on timber revenues totalling $40 million with an adverse impact on counties revenues of $10 million dollars.

The Forest Land Management appropriation represents the heart of the operating funds for National Forest Administration. In 1973 it totalled $230 million and in 1974 it is projected to be $223 million. The only significant increase is for timber sales, up from $66.2 million in 1973 to $67.4 million in 1974. This compares with $60 million in 1972. Reforestation and stand improvement via appropriated funds, the money that can help eradicate the backlog of millions of acres in need of treatment, is however, to be substantially reduced. In 1972 $27.3 million was allocated to this work, $29.2 million in 1973; for 1974 it is to be slashed, under the proposed budget, to $22.6 million.

While the budget data excluded the payments in lieu of taxes in developing the program these payments represent a real cost to the Treasury and a real benefit to local governments. The main law (16 U.S.C. 500) provides that 25% of the revenues from the National Forests are to be paid to the counties situated in the Forest that earned the revenue. Payments thus vary widely among counties and they fluctuate with income. Timber accounts for about 95% of the income to which this mode of payment is applicable. The law also provides that money earned in one year (i.e. 1973) will not be paid until the next year (i.e. 1974). Thus actions that increase the drain on timber revenues are not felt at once by the counties that are in areas of heavy timber production from the National Forest. In 1973 total National Forest Revenues will be $460 million and payments to counties will reach a record $115 million in 1974. However, the revenue forecast for 1974 is $409 million and timber revenues are forecast to decline by $52 million to $387 million. Thus, payments to counties will decline a net $13 million dollars in 1975. However, due to the projected decline of $52 million in timber revenues the main impact will be felt directly in those counties with major national forest timber programs.

A PROGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL FORESTS

In 1960 following several years of extensive study by the Forest Service, Secretary Benson released upon approval of President Eisenhower a Program for the National Forests. This was the subject of an immediate Joint Senate Hearing by the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry and the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. The Congress was furnished with appropriate cost estimates along with an outline of the work to be accomplished over the decade ahead. In addition, the Senate Committee on Appropriations voted additional funds which were agreed to in the House and accepted by the President in order to launch an accelerated program of management and development at once.

In 1961, Secretary of Agriculture Freeman, acting under President Kennedy's direction, revised and broadened the program and for several years thereafter various National Forest activities were advanced. In the late 1960's the program increases slowed. Since 1969 no effort has been made to redo the program, up-date it or to present an alternative in the same comprehensive manner. The action taken by the Administration at the beginning of 1973 was one of impounding funds, both those increases ratified by the Congress as well as funds initially asked for in the President's budget and appropriated at that level

The result is that currently there is no publically visible short-term or long-term program for the National Forests, or a budgetary plan that the specific commodity using public, the general using public, or the affected States and local governments can use as a guide. Several of the key decisions have significant "revenue sharing" impacts on local governments. This is an area of special concern. The area within the boundaries of the National Forests equals about 10% of the United States. Over 40% of this land is within areas now experiencing economic distress according to information supplied to the Congress by the Dept. of Agriculture in connection with the proposed FY 1974 budget. The Department further observed "Proper management, de-

velopment and utilization of these lands are important factors in permanent improvement of these local economies." . . . Referring to the National Forests . . . "These resources offer the most favorable basis for developing prosperous and vigorous local economies and communities."

The Department observes that—

The economic importance of the National Forests and National Grasslands is evident when it is considered that:

—They produced a cash income in fiscal year 1972 of $350 million. 65 percent is credited to the Treasury, 25 percent to the States or counties in which lands are located, and 10 percent for construction and maintenance of roads and trails. There are the even greater economic values which result from the processing of end products derived from this utilization of National Forest timber, forage, and minerals. Recreation, wildlife and water result in important economic activity in local, State, and national economies. There are also important intangible values of water, recreation, and wildlife such as the esthetic enjoyment of natural beauty.

—The National Forests supplied 11.7 billion board feet of timber in fiscal year 1972 to the Nation's forest products industries. This is expected to increase to 12.2 billion board feet in 1973. Dependence of the forest products industries on National Forest timber continues to increase as the result of depletion of good quality timber on private lands. In some areas, the dependence of local industry on National Forest timber is almost 100 percent. Without this supply some small communities could not exist.

—About 3.3 million head of domestic livestock (mature animals) are grazed on the National Forests and Grasslands. In many local areas this is a major industry. Without such Federal rangelands the economic activity would be drastically curtailed from currently depressed levels.

—These lands provide protection to municipal water supplies for nearly all western cities and towns and many in the East, to irrigation water used on about 20 million acres of western lands, and to many streams with water power developments. They provide flood protection to thousands of acres of rich valley lands and help to prevent more rapid siltation of reservoirs and stream channels. A dependable water supply is an important prerequisite for economic and community development.

—They provide a habitat for a large part of the big game animal population, for birds, for millions of small game animals and furbearers, and for fish. Hunting and fishing constitute an important supplementary source of income for numerous communities, many of which are economically depressed.

—They provide opportunities for healthful outdoor recreation, with a minimum of restrictions. Outdoor recreation is an important source of supplementary income in most areas as well as providing recreational opportunities for local residents. In some relatively depressed communities it becomes even more important.

The direct revenues to the Treasury from the operation of the National Forests do not exceed operating expenses and investment costs and may never do so. However, the revenues generated for the economy, the large environmental benefits and the off-site benefits of pure water and clean air plus the esthetic benefits of the National Forests are so substantial in the public interest and welfare that the National Forests are truly a major National asset in every sense of that word. Funds expended for activities that will generate future revenues, such as reforestation, can enhance the actual cash flow ledger for these lands. Funds expended for watershed and wildlife work can help strengthen the rural economy of the Nation and produce benefits of direct benefit to urban America.

In order to secure these benefits now and in the future positive steps are needed to re-establish a long term Program for the National Forests and the means to assure a meaningful public input so that the Nation secure the social, esthetic and economic output that the people of the United States desire.

APPENDIX

U.S. Department of Agriculture—Forest Service to Adjust Regional Structure

Washington, April 24.—The Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, will adjust its regional organization to fit within the standard federal regional structure, Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz announced today.

Secretary Butz said the change in organization will require phasing out of regional offices at Missoula, Mont.; Albuquerque, N.M.; and Ogden, Utah; and experiment station headquarters at Ogden, Utah, and Asheville, N.C. Although these five headquarters offices will be discontinued, other Forest Service offices presently at these locations will remain in operation.

Some 1,000 employees will be affected by phasing out of the five offices. Every effort will be made to provide employment opportunities for these people elsewhere in the Forest Service organization, Secretary Butz said. The schedule for making the organizational adjustments will be developed by the Forest Service, he reported.

Secretary Butz said these actions will enable the Forest Service to improve its efficiency and effectiveness in carrying out its resource management, research and state and private forestry programs. One result, he said, would be to make more funds and manpower available for on-the-ground activities in the 155 national forests which contain 187 million acres.

In addition, he said, greater efforts can be diverted directly to research by reduction of the two experiment station headquarters, and the Forest Service's ability to work with state and local governments will be improved through closer coordination with the federal regional councils.

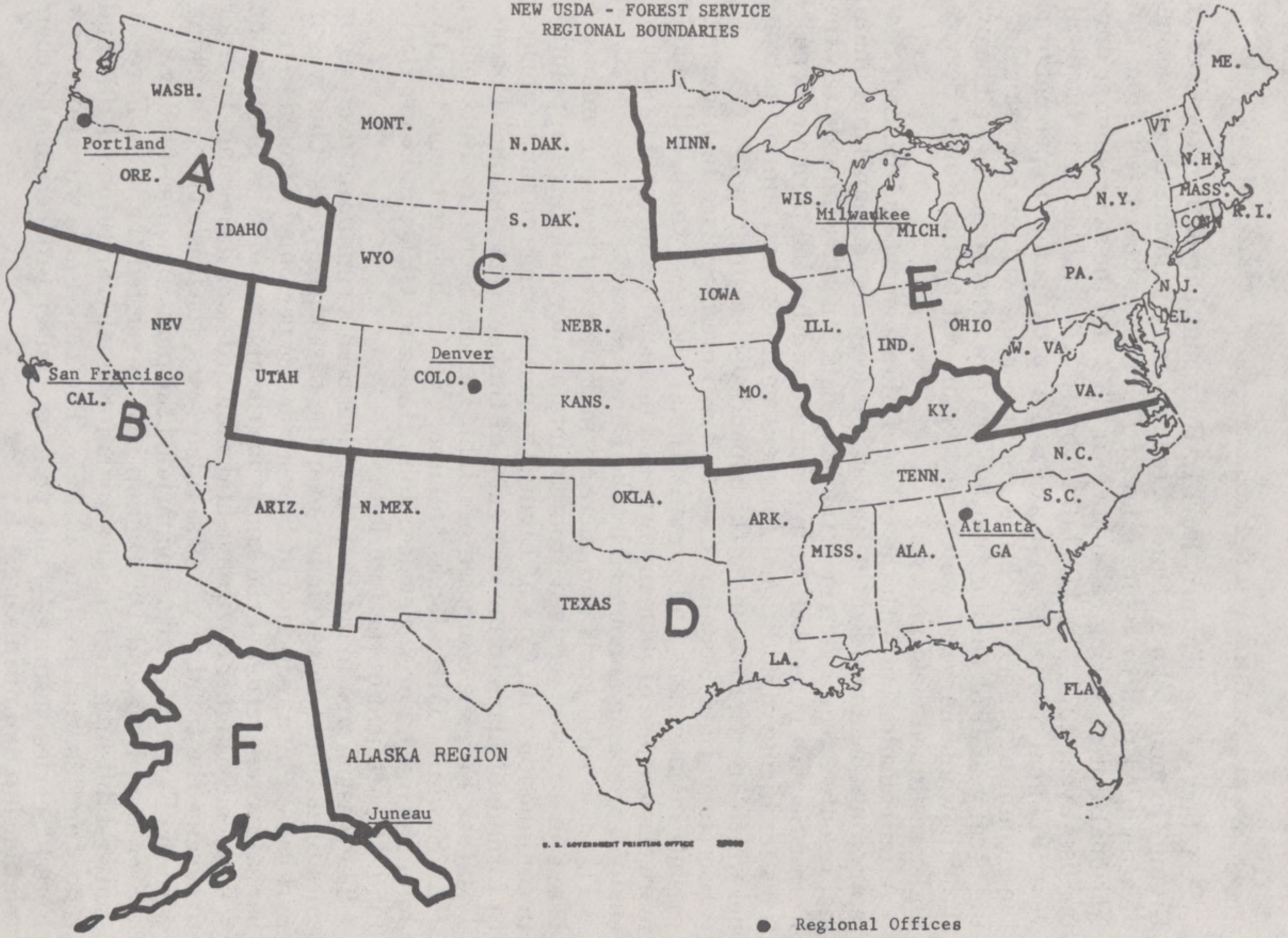
The present Forest Service organization includes nine national forest system regional offices, eight experiment station headquarters offices and two state and private area offices. With the change, the system will be realigned into six regions, six experiment stations and two state and private forestry areas.

Full regional office status will continue at Atlanta, Ga.; Milwaukee, Wis.; Denver, Colo.; San Francisco, Calif.; Portland, Ore.; and Juneau, Alaska. Experiment station headquarters will be continued at Upper Darby, Pa.; St. Paul, Minn.; New Orleans, La.; Ft. Collins, Colo.; Berkeley, Calif.; and Portland, Ore. The Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wis., and the Institute of Tropical Forestry in Puerto Rico will be maintained. The state and private area offices will remain at Upper Darby and Atlanta.

Secretary Butz said most other regional structures in the federal government now conform to the standard federal region concept, as a result of the government-wide effort directed by the Office of Management and Budget. He said the effort is geared to simplify and improve the ability of the federal government to provide service through conformance to the standard region concept.

Another factor considered in the decision, he said, is the review being made by all federal agencies to determine where expenditures can be reduced. In addition to regional changes, he said, the Forest Service's review will lead to national forest and ranger district headquarters consolidations, as well as changes in the agency's headquarters office in Washington, D.C.

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Economic Stabilization Program—Cost of Living Council

Secretary of Agriculture, Earl L. Butz, and Director of the Cost of Living Council, John T. Dunlop, today jointly announced completion of a detailed plan to assure sales of 11.8 billion board feet from the National Forest during calendar year 1973 and the same amount during fiscal year 1974. The 11.8 billion board feet established as the fiscal year 1974 goal represents an increase of approximately 10 percent over the amount of timber which the Forest Service will offer for sale during fiscal year 1973, ending June 30. The new sales goals are well below the "allowable harvest" which may be offered by the Forest Service under sustained yield policy.

After consultation with the Office of Management and Budget, Secretary Butz has provided the Forest Service with personnel and financial resources required to meet the new goals. Effective immediately the Forest Service personnel ceiling is increased by 450 permanent positions for hiring of additional foresters, engineers and support personnel which are required under the expanded sales program.

Secretary Butz has also directed the Forest Service to undertake various management and organizational changes which will enable more efficient use of its manpower and financial resources. The specific changes are being announced by the Forest Service.

The new sales goals and increase in Forest Service personnel are based on a report received from an interagency task force appointed, in conjunction with Cost of Living Council hearings on lumber prices, to formulate plans to increase sales of timber from National Forests. The Task Force is composed of: John Larson, Secretary Butz' office; John Sawhill, OMB; James McLane, COLC; Robert Long, USDA; John McGuire, Forest Service; John Busterud, CEQ; and Curt Berklund, Department of the Interior.

The Task Force found that there has been a significant decrease in sales of national forest timber over the past three years. This was in part caused by a reduction of Forest Service personnel devoted to timber sales preparation at the same time the amount of sales preparation work to meet higher environmental standards was increasing. In order to reverse the trend of the past three years, the Task Force, working with the Forest Service, recommended the plans announced today.

Secretary Butz and Dr. Dunlop have requested the Task Force to study establishing higher sales goals for fiscal year 1975 and 1976 and report on this work by June 30, 1973. The Task Force will also review Forest Service sustained yield policies, timber production and their relationship to multiple use.

Other Administration actions taken to reduce lumber prices include recent negotiations with the Japanese government to reduce imports of logs from the U.S. An agreement has been reached whereby Japanese log purchases from the U.S. will be reduced by eight percent in fiscal year 1974 from the levels of fiscal year 1972. This reduction reflects a decrease of approximately fifteen percent in U.S. log imports by the Japanese over the last half of calendar year 1973 compared to the same period last year.

The Department of Transportation, at the request of the Cost of Living Council, has also implemented several actions aimed at improving the utilization of scarce rail cars and their allocation between lumber and grain shipments.

U.S. Department of Agriculture—Forest Service Sets Timber Sales Boost, With Environmental Safeguards

Washington, May 29.—John R. McGuire, chief of the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, announced several changes in Forest Service timber sale procedures today.

He said these changes are being taken to assure increased productivity from the national forests, while at the same time providing further protection of the environment.

The changes being announced today were based on work of an interagency task force appointed in March by Earl L. Butz, secretary of Agriculture, and Dr. John T. Dunlop, director of the Cost of Living Council. The decision, as announced jointly today by the two, was that volume of timber sales from national forests would be raised to a level of 11.8 billion board feet for the 1973 calendar year, as well as for fiscal year 1974. Chief McGuire emphasized, however, that this figure is well within the annual allowable cut from national forests of over 13 billion board feet. The annual allowable cut is the figure that permits sustained yield management of timber resources in the national forests.

Secretary Butz reported earlier today that after consultation with the Office of Management and Budget, he had decided to provide the Forest Service with personnel and financial resources required to meet the new goals. Effective immediately, he said, the Forest Service personnel ceiling is increased by 450 permanent positions for additional foresters, engineers and support personnel which are required under the expanded sales program.

The Forest Service actions to be taken to meet the new goals, as announced today by Chief McGuire are:

1. Conversion from the present system of paying for Forest Service timber by log measurement to one in which payments are based on estimated volumes of timber determined in advance of the sale. This change will give the purchasers economic incentive to remove more of the timber from the woods than they do at the present time. Chief McGuire said that this change will be pursued actively and achieved throughout the Forest Service as soon as feasible.

2. Change in all timber sale contracts requiring that all timber designated in each contract be removed from the woods by the purchaser. This change, together with the change to lump-sum payments, will reduce the amount of debris left in the woods after logging, thereby effecting greater utilization of timber resources. This change is anticipated to take effect after rulemaking procedures are completed early this summer.

3. Simplifying procedures in preparing sales of dead and dying timber. The simplified procedures will lead to a reduction of costs in

the preparation of certain timber sales. These procedural changes are being put into effect immediately.

4. Delegation of additional authority to Forest Service supervisors to approve timber sales. The new authority, effective immediately, will reduce the amount of time, labor, and "red tape" involved in certain types of timber sales.

5. Shifting of certain engineering work on roads built in connection with timber sales from the federal government to timber purchasers. This shift was anticipated in developing the Forest fiscal year 1974 budget and will lead to savings of approximately $5 million in appropriated money. Shifting this work to timber purchasers will also enable Forest Service personnel to devote more time to sales preparation.

6. Utilization, where possible, of Army Corps of Engineer units to construct roads and bridges necessary for timber sales. Under this program the Army will assist the Forest Service by building certain key facilities on federal lands.

7. Submission to Congress of legislation to increase the value of timber, from the present $2,000 to $10,000, which can be offered for sale with less than 30 days advertisement. The increased value authority would allow the Forest Service to be more responsive in connection with sales of dead or dying timber.

McGuire said that these changes are designed to speed up the processing of timber sales and to enable Forest Service personnel to have additional time to design sales that meet high environmental standards.

Chronological Account of Forest Service's Proposed Reorganization

(As shown in files made available to the General Accounting Office by the Division of Administrative Management, U.S. Forest Service)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BOB—Bureau of the Budget.
Chief—Chief, U.S. Forest Service.
Dept.—U.S. Department of Agriculture.
Deputy Areas—NFS, S&PF, Research.
FAR—Federal Assistance Review.
FS—U.S. Forest Service.
FSR—Federal Standard Region(s).
GAO—U.S. General Accounting Office.
NFS—National Forest System.
OMB—Office of Management and Budget.
S&PF—State and Private Forestry.
USDA—U.S. Department of Agriculture.

March 27, 1969

The President asks that all Federal agencies making changes in their Field organization structures strive to achieve the ultimate goal of common regional boundaries and field office locations for all social

and economic programs requiring interagency or intergovernmental coordination.

March 27, 1969

A Presidential memorandum directing the Secretary of Agriculture to work in conjunction with the Bureau of the Budget to:

Review existing patterns of field establishments and delegation of authority,

Develop an action program toward greater decentralization of Federal programs for streamlining Federal assistance to States and communities and for improving interagency coordination, and

Bring decision-making closer to the non-Federal agencies directly responsible for delivery of services.

April 18, 1969

BOB established an Interagency Steering Group (FAR) to develop a work plan to achieve President's objectives.

May 6, 1969

Secretary of Agriculture charges the Department with the responsibility of conducting a review, and developing an action program to accomplish the President's objective set out in the March 27, 1969 memorandum.

May 16, 1969

Guidelines from the FAR staff are sent to agencies to aid them in developing short and long-range plans and an action program for decentralization and streamlining of Government services.

June 6, 1969

BOB staff paper citing the major topics for long-range study by the participating agencies. The paper states that regional organization patterns require study with emphasis on delegation, decentralization, and greater reliance on State and local governments.

June 13, 1969

FS memo asking each Deputy area to begin looking at specific areas which may be used in reporting long-range plans to the FAR.

June 17, 1969

BOB staff paper "A Concept of Decentralization" dealing mainly with the reaffirmation of the President's intent to place decision-making as close as possible to those directly responsible for delivering services.

July 18, 1969

Secretary USDA memo forwarding USDA Action Plan to FS and other USDA agencies. The Action Plan calls for conforming USDA field unit boundaries with those of the Federal Councils.

Agencies must submit (1) basis for existing boundaries (2) any changes in boundaries contemplated (3) whether the President's objectives are feasible for FS programs.

NOTE: Forest Service files made available to GAO did not contain any reply to the Secretary's July 18, 1969, letter.

September 1969–February 1971

Files made available to GAO by the FS Division of Administrative Management contained no data identifying FS action toward achieving reorganization during this period.

March 29, 1971

USDA Second Annual Report to FAR concerning USDA accomplishments toward conforming field unit boundaries with those of the Federal Regional Councils.

Conclusion: No mention of any action by FS to comply.

April 5, 1971

Internal USDA memo to files indicating the likelihood of increased pressure from OMB to encourage FS to conform to regional boundaries, but not much pressure at this time to conform to regional headquarters.

June 1971

OMB Second Annual Report to the President on Federal Assistance Review.

Conclusion: Under the category "Progress Toward Uniform Regional Boundaries"—USDA is not mentioned.

June 29, 1971

President encourages Federal agencies to give the highest priority to achieving the goals of the third year FAR program.

July 1, 1971

OMB study report relating progress to date in standardizing of Federal Regional Boundaries. In addition, OMB concludes that no significant evidence was found to support the idea that different standard regional boundaries are needed for natural resource agencies.

July 9, 1971

USDA request its agencies to develop meaningful third year FAR action plan to include determining the feasibility of conforming to the 10 Federal Regional boundaries.

July 15, 1971

FS agrees to re-examine its field organization to determine the feasibility of conforming to the Standard Regional Boundaries.

August 12, 1971

FS transmits FAR action plan to USDA, Plan identifies a project to study implementation of the Standard Region boundary concept and calls for determining:

The feasibility of conforming to the 10 Standard Region boundaries,

The impact of conforming in terms of economy and efficiency of delivery of program services,

The ways conforming could contribute to or detract from coordination with other Federal programs and States and local governments, and

The most feasible time for taking conformance action.

September 1971

Study plan developed to determine the feasibility of conformance to the 10 Standard Regional boundaries, included are:

1. Selection of study team.
2. Stages of the study.
3. Time and cost factors for the study.
4. Background information.
5. Overall action plan.
6. Procedures for conducting the study.
7. Objectives of the study.
8. Method of reaching objectives.
9. Assumptions.

September 9, 1971

OMB memorandum emphasizing the need to bring other domestic agencies (USDA etc.) into conformity with the Standard Federal Regions.

September 17, 1971

FS memo indicating that OMB has no objections to FS combining two or more standard regions as long as FS keeps the outer boundaries in line with the standard pattern; OMB spokesman informs FS that Alaska must be maintained as a separate region.

October 15, 1971

OMB urges FS to standardize boundaries,

OMB indicates that a movement to standardize regional headquarters is not necessary at this time,

FS presents five alternate boundary proposals to OMB for their review, and

OMB urges FS to conform now, before conformance is mandated through an executive order, thereby granting FS some leeway in selecting alternatives.

October 18, 1971

OMB's views on New Mexico's place in FS regional reorganization plans; OMB stated that splitting up Standard Region VI for any reason is not acceptable.

November 9, 1971

Preliminary study by the FS on the feasibility of conforming to the Federal Standard Region concept, included are:

1. Background information.
2. A list of assumptions.
3. Criteria for selecting feasible regional boundaries.
4. An analysis of the present boundary structure and feasible boundary alternatives.
5. Detailed analysis of 6 alternatives and a weighted ranking of each alternative in terms of desirability and cost savings.
6. Consideration of the impact on headquarters locations under each alternative.
7. An analysis of variations to the 6 alternatives if the FSR were split.

8. A summary of findings as to the advantages and disadvantages of strict conformance to or combining/subdividing of the FSR to meet FS needs.

9. Appendix containing:

(a) 10 alternatives not selected and reasons thereto

(b) the estimated personnel needs under the remaining alternatives

December 7, 1971

Letter from the Chief, FS to Regional Foresters, Directors, and Area Directors outlining alternative boundary arrangements affecting the States of Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, and Standard Region VII which includes Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa and Missouri.

Chief especially concerned that full implementation of the boundary pattern could have a serious impact on some present headquarters location. Also included is an analysis of these alternatives in terms of population, square miles, budget, man-years of employment, etc., as they relate to the Deputy areas.

December 21, 1972

OMB indicates that a directive is anticipated around January 1, 1972, requiring all agencies to conform to the standard boundaries by July 1, 1973.

January 27, 1972

As the result of some major problems in conforming to standard boundaries—impact on headquarters communities, disruption of personnel, and the political impact—Forest Service developed analysis of only changing regional boundaries in the East.

March 2, 1972

Region 4 Regional Forester letter to regional office employees on the reorganization situation; the FS states that the Chief has made it quite clear that he will neither propose, nor support substantial change which does not provide adequately for the welfare of the FS employees and/or which does not assure proper service to the public.

April 12, 1972

Chief informs the field that FS has reported to the Secretary, USDA, that it is not feasible for FS to conform to the Federal Standard Regions, therefore, standardization will not be pursued unless additional direction is given.

November 10, 1972

OMB status report as to what agencies have conformed to Federal Standard Regions; of the 44 structures yet to be reviewed, OMB cited 30 as being in USDA.

November 15, 1972

Letter from the Chief of Deputy Chiefs and Associate Deputy Chiefs relating that FS is under unusual pressure to, among other things, achieve Government reorganization; he identifies a need to reexamine alternatives for Government-wide reorganization and develop a positive action plan.

November 28, 1972

USDA personnel letter on subject of "Regional boundaries and geographical distribution of personnel," wherein USDA expresses its policy of bringing the field structure into greater conformance with the boundaries of the 10 Federal Regions.

December 14, 1972

Agenda and an outline of points for discussion at the Regional Forester and Directors meeting in Washington concerning Standard Regional boundaries; some of the highlights noted were:

Regional office consolidation is estimated to result in (1) at least 600 more people available for work at the Supervisors' Office and Ranger District levels, and (2) an annual cost savings of between $10 and $12 million.

December 14, 1972

FS update to November 1971 reorganization feasibility study.

(1) consideration of the two most viable alternatives and options in terms of cost, staffing, administration, workload, geographic considerations, and travel aspects

(2) a numerical measurement of the adverse consequences of eliminating Missoula, Ogden, and Albuquerque

December 1972 or January 1973

Assign project to Administrative Management and Personnel Management to (1) analyze effects (i.e. community, employee, costs of closing each office, etc.), in conforming to Standard Regions and (2) propose implementation schedule.

January 16, 1973

USDA Assistant Secretary for Administration cities, OMB listing of Agriculture agencies not yet conforming to Standard Region System (Forest Service included) and requests agencies to submit the current status of their plans to conform.

January 22, 1973

FS reply to Assistant Secretary's January 16, 1973 request.

Points made were:

Research program requires no particular administrative boundaries and some organization other than regional units would be desirable,

New regional structure could be achieved in a 3 to 5 year period depending on political opposition generated.

Disruption of program delivery systems and processes would be significant during phaseout operations,

Effect on morale of people being moved would be traumatic, and

One-time closing costs would be about $711 million.

The letter cited the following advantages of the reorganization:

1. Improved working relationships and coordination between FS and other Federal agencies,

2. Provide a more beneficial participation by the FS in Federal Regional Councils and Natural Resource Councils,

3. Improve working relationships with State governments, with no States being split between regions,

4. Reduce total personnel needs at regional office level, thus making more people available for work in the Forest Supervisor's Office and the Ranger District levels, and

5. Annual reprogrammable savings in NFS and S&PF after full implementation are estimated be $10 or $11 million.

March 7, 1973

USDA Assistant Secretary granted initial approval to FS regional organization plan of January 22, 1973, and requested a detailed conformance action plan and proposed timetable for implementing reorganization.

March 7, 1973

USDA Assistant Secretary requested FS to present solid justification for nonconformance of FS Research boundaries with Federal Standard regional boundaries.

March 7–14, 1973

FS developing implementation plan to accomplish reorganization in conformance with the Standard Region concept.

March 16, 1973

Chief and staff decision that there would be one set of Regional administrative boundaries for the Forest Service.

March 20, 1973

Chief's letter to Undersecretary USDA emphasizing the need for official USDA support of FS actions to reorganize.

Feeling that political opposition will make it difficult for FS to move ahead unilaterally with reorganization; therefore, USDA must stand behind FS during the implementation phase.

March 29, 1973

Regional Forester and Directors meeting on reorganization; the objectives were:

1. review status and timing of standard region conformance,

2. discuss political implications of standard region conformance,

3. discuss station and region participation in implementation, and

4. decide how fast FS can proceed with National Forest consolidation.

April 6, 1973

Detailed flowchart of FS implementation plan indicating milestone dates and accomplishments.

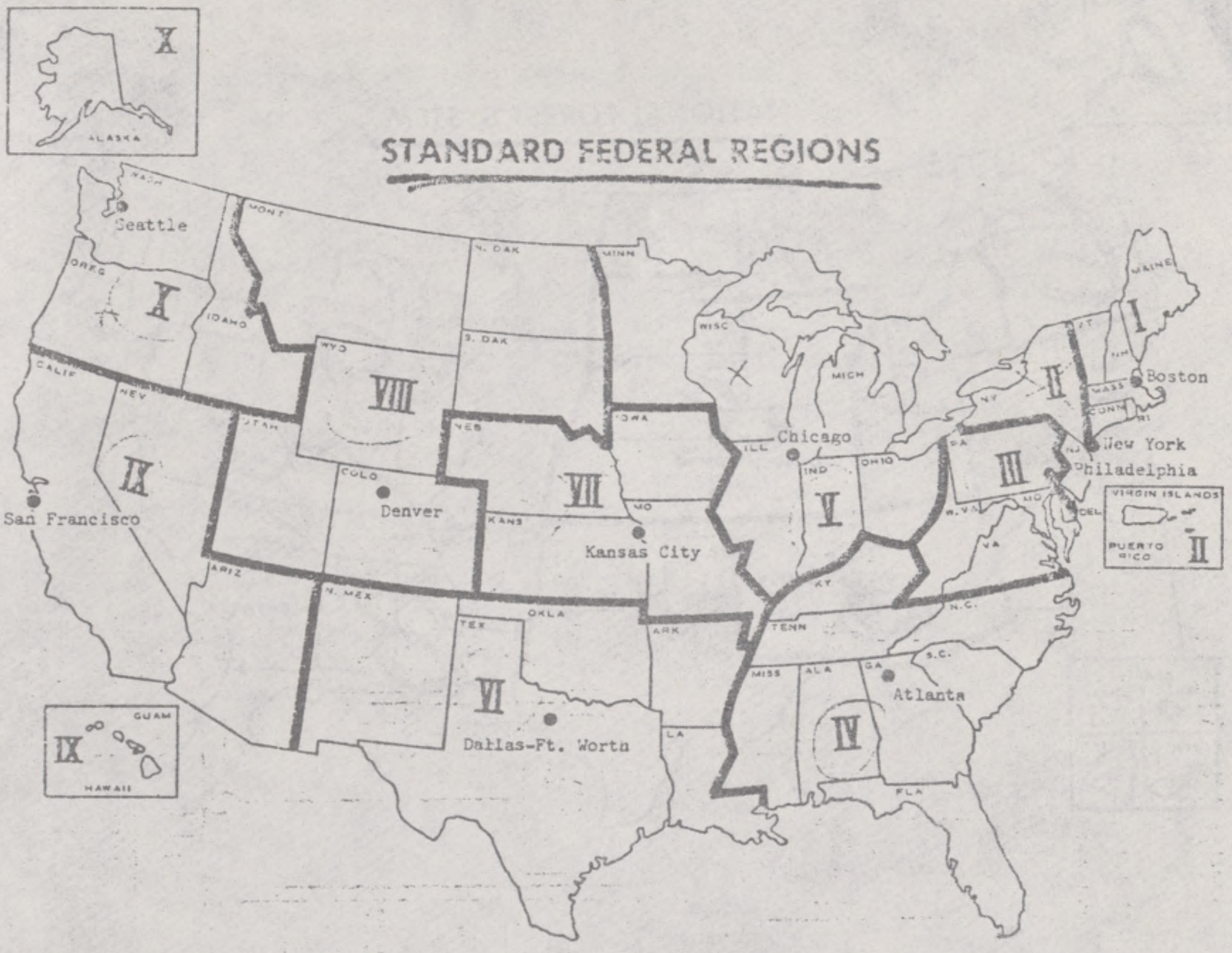
April 23, 1973

Undersecretary, USDA, directs FS to proceed with implementation of reorganization to provide for conformance by June 30, 1974.

April 24, 1973

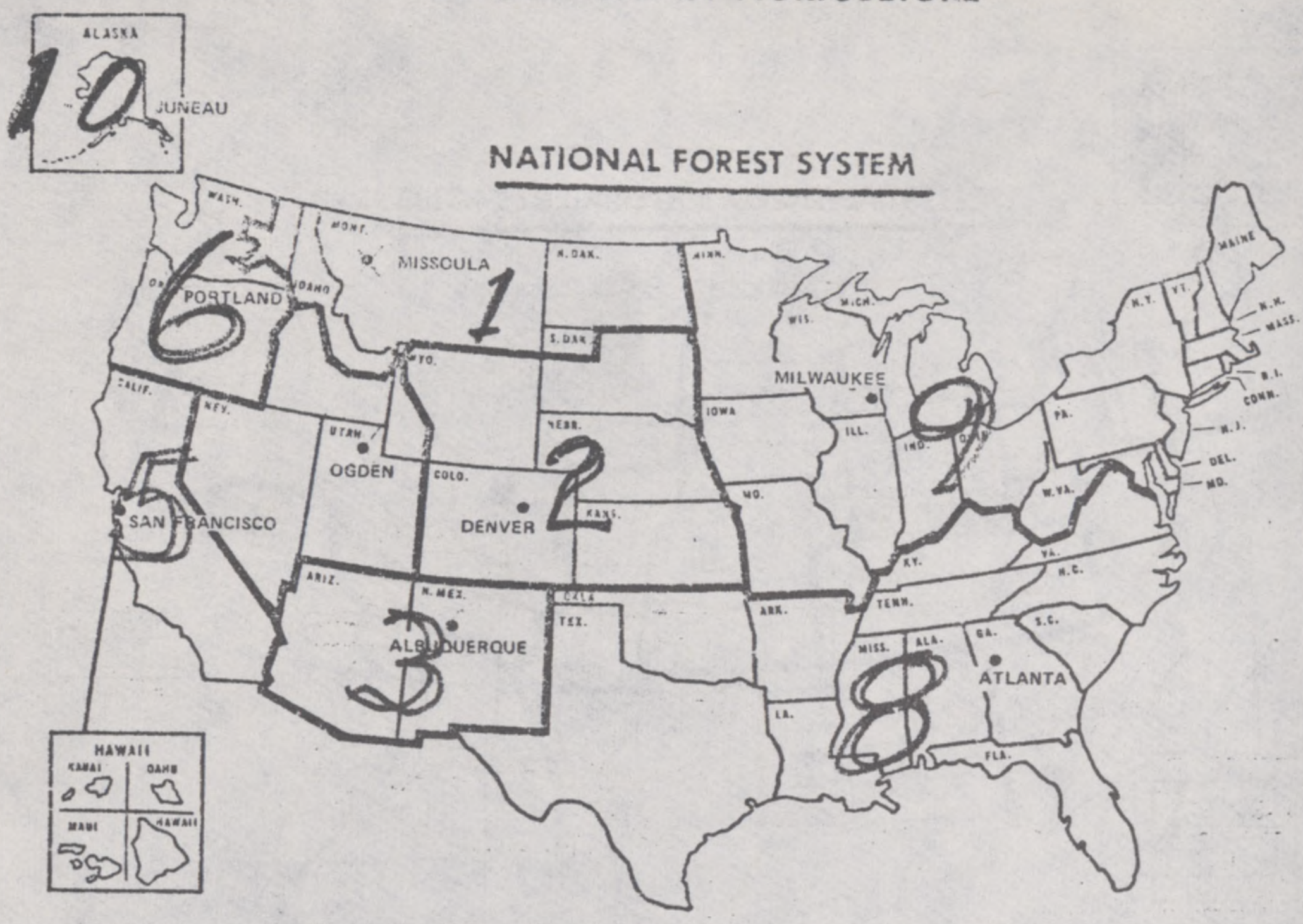
FS officially announces reorganization with a news release.

REGIONAL MAPS

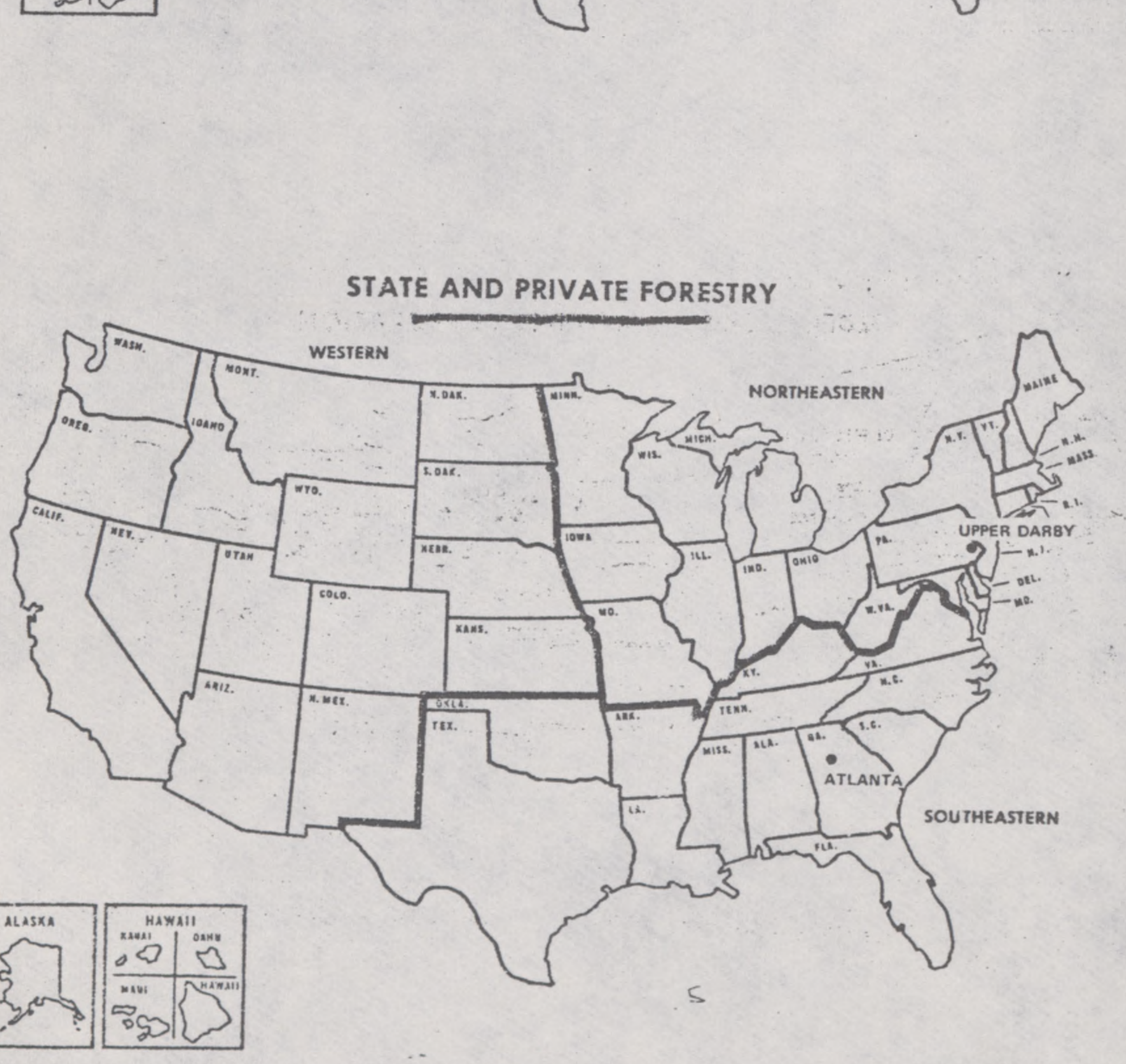


DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM



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