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THE NATIONAL FORESTS

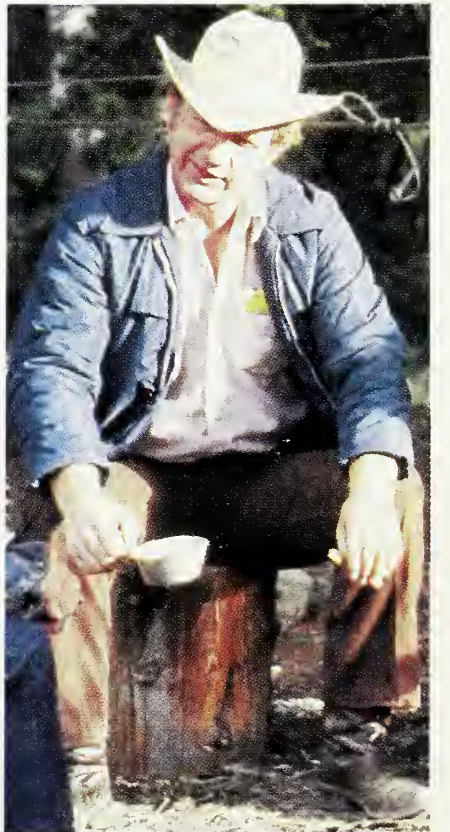
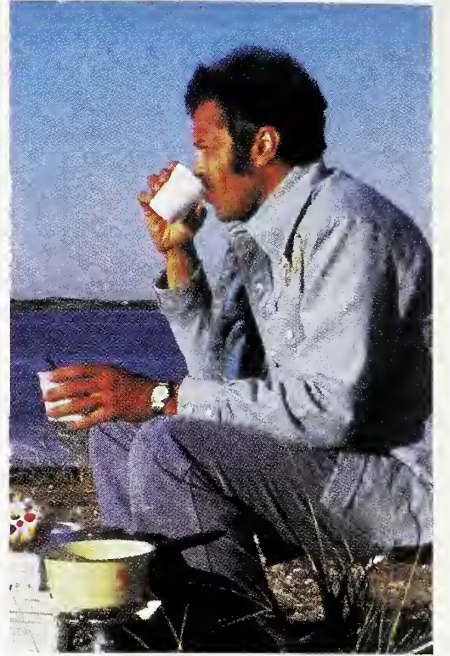
America's Great Outdoors

NATIONAL
RECREATION
STRATEGY

NOV 29 1989

USDA
BRARY







To the Men and Women of the Forest Service:

I am excited about our new Recreation Strategy! It's extraordinary in the way it opens up doors of opportunity for us in our thinking and in our work and for the Forest Service in the future.

First, the Recreation Strategy says a lot about our enthusiasm and commitment to meeting the growing outdoor recreation needs of the American people. It expresses our willingness to try out new ideas and new approaches.

Second, the Recreation Strategy is about working with other people. I like the partnership approach. I believe in it! Partners help us stretch Federal dollars so we can offer high-quality outdoor recreation. It challenges people to pitch in and help us out.

Third, the Recreation Strategy is about customers. Finding out who they are and where they are. Discovering new ones. Matching them up with the right recreation opportunities, at the right time and the right place.

Finally, the Recreation Strategy expresses a lot of faith, trust, and confidence in you—the men and women of the Forest Service—to free you up and encourage you to take some calculated risks, even to make some mistakes. This is based on my strong belief that it will all add up to the Forest Service doing a better job.

By 1990, I would like the Forest Service to be known as the people who routinely integrate land stewardship with superb customer service to strengthen and round out multiple-use management on the National Forests.

Use this Recreation Strategy to get us there. Stretch your thinking, move forward, do something different—or go on doing what is working now. Keep an open mind, and fill in the details according to needs, circumstances, and abilities.

You will quickly discover that this Strategy is a powerful tool to expand our boundaries and focus us squarely on caring for the land and serving people.

I invite you to join in my enthusiasm and begin exploring this challenging opportunity today!

F. Dale Robertson

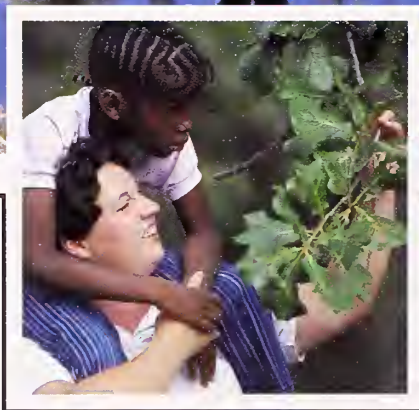
F. DALE ROBERTSON

Chief

Forest Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture







PREFACE

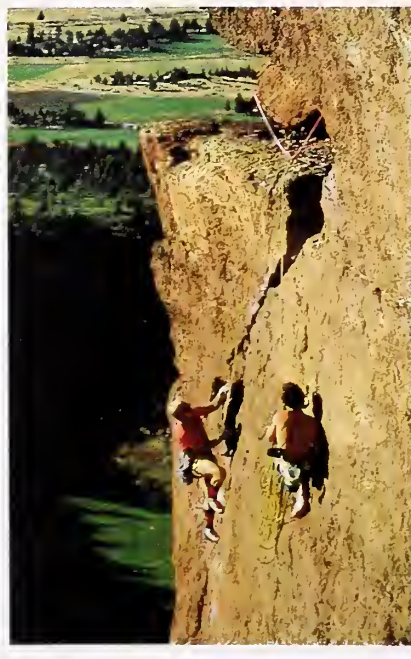
A LARGER VIEW

The National Forests are truly America's Great Outdoors! They are the prime outdoor recreation lands in the United States, making up about 8½ percent of this country. Already, more people recreate on the National Forests than anywhere else. Yet, the National Forests have not reached their full potential in meeting the growing outdoor recreation needs of the American people.

In developing the plans for managing the National Forests over the next 10 to 15 years, the Forest Service conducted the most comprehensive citizen participation effort ever attempted by a Federal agency. The American people sent a loud and clear message to the Forest Service:

Outdoor recreation is really important to us. We want more and better opportunities to enjoy the National Forests.

The challenge is to get the American people and their lands together in a way that best meets their growing and ever-changing outdoor recreation needs. We can anticipate a continuing tight budget situation over the next several years. But, we should not let that be an excuse for continuing the status quo—we can do better! With that in mind, how can we capitalize on the tremendous public interest and support for outdoor recreation as well as our own strong desire to be responsive to the people? It will require new and different thinking on the part of the Forest Service—and a lot of help from the outdoor recreation community, private sector, State and local government, and the people!



AN EXTRAORDINARY STEP

In the fall of 1987, 45 Forest Service men and women in 6 Commissions—Customers, Marketing, Partnerships, Recreation Setting, Services, and Technology—helped develop a new strategy for managing recreation on National Forests within the context of multiple-use management.

As part of the National Recreation Strategy Project, the Commissioners networked with hundreds of people inside and outside the Forest Service, wrote their reports, and capped their efforts with a public review of their work at the National Recreation Symposium at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, in November 1987.

The participants—representing the Forest Service and the outdoor recreation community—gave us some extraordinarily good advice.

They said, "The public's changing. Find out what the customer wants. Do what you know best, take care of what you have. Build on past good work." They said, "Get on with the job!"



THE NATIONAL RECREATION STRATEGY

WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT ISN'T

The Recreation Strategy is an effort to strengthen and round out the multiple-use management of the National Forests based on the new forest plans.

The Recreation Strategy is a conceptual framework aimed at finding creative and imaginative ways to take advantage of outdoor recreation opportunities on the National Forests by working with people.

It is neither a plan nor an action list. It should trigger your imagination and enthusiasm

for the many possibilities available on the National Forests.

This Strategy gives you the flexibility to go as far as you can go to reach the outdoor recreation potential of the National Forests. It doesn't dictate. It is your encouragement to search out new, rewarding outdoor recreation projects and see if you can put it all together with the help of others.

Its ultimate goal is customer satisfaction with more, high-quality recreation services. It doesn't set unnecessary constraints. It creates a supportive environment for you to better serve our customers. We want to show by our actions that we are people serving people.

This Strategy integrates ideas, opportunities, and events. It doesn't dominate other strategies. It is a powerful tool for combining vision with action and supports everything we stand for.





VENTURING INTO THE STRATEGY

As you think and act on the new concepts in the Strategy, consider what was learned at the National Recreation Symposium:

Our customers are changing. Find out who they are or might be, where they live, and what they want to experience on a visit to a National Forest. As you expand recreation opportunities, do not overlook those kinds of recreation that our National Forests can best provide. Match the people and the place for customer satisfaction.

Be sensitive to the significance of settings and places on the National Forests and how they affect people's experiences.

Build on forest plans, other Forest Service programs, and past good work.

Look for funding sources outside the Federal budget. We want to implement the Strategy through positive change, without being dependent on a lot more Federal dollars.

Modernize facilities. Design quality recreation opportunities. Provide interpretation and environmental education. Showcase special places National Forests have to offer.

Open up opportunities for recognizing our professionals in recreation. Look at job classification and career ladders to make it easier for talented new people to join the Forest Service and have rewarding careers.

Nurture and rely on strong, fruitful partnerships. Build upon the success of the Challenge Cost-Sharing Program, and expand it as far as you can.

And now, suspend your doubts. Turn your thoughts to success, and fulfill them with the opportunities inherent on the National Forests through the Recreation Strategy.







CREATING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

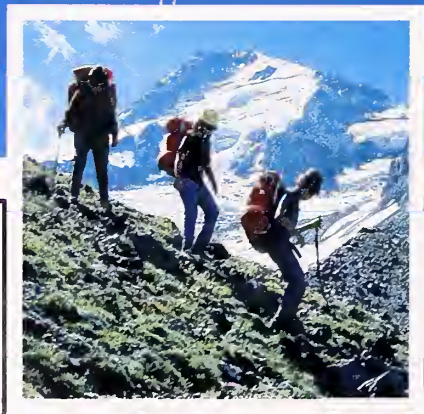
In all our actions, customer satisfaction will be a prime goal. It will receive attention equal to that given to good land stewardship.

- Listen to our customers and partners and communicate with them. Seek out their ideas and thoughts on how we could do a better job together.
- Provide interpretation, information, and environmental education as an important part

of outdoor recreation. Promote a better understanding of the long-term compatibility of people living in harmony with nature.

- Promote an outdoor ethic among all users.
- Provide outdoor recreation opportunities to all the people, strengthening our service to urban residents, ethnic minorities, the disabled and disadvantaged, and the elderly and the young.
- Promote tourism and recreational activities that will help build strong, diversified rural economies and improve the quality of life in rural communities.
- Identify human resource development needs, and match them with recreation resource management opportunities.







FORGING PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships will be the preferred way by which we provide better customer service and expand the recreational opportunities on the National Forests.

- Through partnership arrangements, encourage, establish, and sustain a diverse and balanced range of recreational services and facilities on the National Forests.
- Seek partnerships with outdoor recreation and user groups to help develop or maintain recreation facilities for their use.
- Seek partnerships with other recreation providers—Federal, State, local, and private sector—to define complementary roles that best serve the customer.
- Seek partnerships with groups representing ethnic minorities, the elderly, the disabled, the economically disadvantaged, and youth.
- Test innovative ideas through partnership demonstration projects.
- Build upon the diversity and experience of our existing permit partners as a basis for innovation and change. Adopt mutual coopera-

tion, respect, and collaboration as our standard for partnership relations.

- Give each other and our partners the encouragement, flexibility, and incentive they need to unleash their creative energy to provide quality recreation on the National Forests.
- Leverage limited Federal dollars by attracting outside funding and support from potential partners to get the total recreation job done. Build upon successful experiences with the Challenge Cost-Share Program.

The Wildlife and Fish Challenge Cost-Share Program set off a “prairie fire of local action” when it leaped from 75 initial partnerships in 1986 to over 200 by the end of 1987, more than doubling Federal dollars for habitat improvement. This success ignited national attention and support!

In 1988, Congress appropriated \$500,000 for a Challenge Cost-Share pilot for recreation projects, earmarking \$100,000 for the Tonto National Forest and designating \$400,000 for the best proposals submitted by the National Forests and partners. Thirty high-priority rec-

reation projects were selected from over 120 proposals.

The contribution from the partners to the 1988 Recreation Challenge Cost-Share Pilot is \$908,000, nearly two matching dollars for every Federal dollar, boosting the total value of the proposals to \$1,408,000. Outstanding results!

The Forest Service joins an excellent mix of partners. They are local, county, State and Federal government, private interest groups, senior citizens, disabled youth, correction facility inmates, high schools, colleges, universities, utility companies, recreation industry, timber operators, interpretive associations, and private businesses.

The projects will provide barrier-free access to recreation facilities, improved hiking trails, rehabilitated and modernized campgrounds, interpretive signing, summer youth employment in recreation site operation and maintenance, vegetation management for scenic resources, renovation of historical buildings for interpretation, and the production of a video on river safety.

Based on this success, the President’s 1989 budget proposes to direct \$3,000,000 to Challenge Cost-Share projects—a bold initiative to invite even more partners to join us!







PURSuing EXCELLENCE

We will be intensely committed in our pursuit of excellence in outdoor recreation. While cooperating with everyone, we will be the best we can be. Quality stewardship and customer service will be our measure of performance. We will reward excellence.

- Be creative in attracting new sources of financing for recreation investments. We want investors to seek us out as attractive opportunities to provide quality public service while realizing a reasonable return.
- Expand research to determine the needs and preferences of forest recreation visitors.
- Take advantage of new technology to meet customer preferences, provide services, and manage recreation resources.

- Plan and manage our roads to enhance recreation values, and propose a system of National Forest scenic byways.
- Feature National Forest trails in our recreation program. The system will offer the full range of opportunities: primitive, mechanized, all-season, barrier-free, short and extended, interpretive, historical, and more.
- Recognize the value of special areas for their unique and extraordinary National Forest features and settings such as National Recreation Areas, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic Rivers.
- Cooperate with State and local government and other landowners in the management of river and travel corridors heavily used for outdoor recreation.
- Work with universities and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management to establish professional standards and challenging career paths for recreation professionals.





THE ROAD AHEAD

A CHALLENGE TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US

As we said in the beginning, the Recreation Strategy is a powerful concept. It is a framework for finding imaginative ways to take advantage of outdoor recreation opportunities on the National Forests by working with people.

It sets the stage for Forest Service field people to join with local people and achieve mutually agreed-upon goals.

It does not look for “one big answer,” but rather for the thousands of little answers that you develop with local people, using grass-roots commonsense wisdom.

Those are the answers that will make this Strategy a success!

How will you use the volunteer spirit and willingness of the outdoor recreation community to nurture National Forest recreation?

I challenge you to pursue projects to success. And when things are not quite fitting together, do whatever is necessary to round out the proposal and make it a “go” project. Learn by trying, and be willing to adjust or start over

again to achieve your goals.

I challenge you to take this Strategy and make it work for you and your projects, right where you are.

Get together with others to talk about your ideas and experiences—even create a little healthy competition with your colleagues on other units. This will help start momentum that will increase our opportunities for success.

If it's to be, it's up to us—the men and women of the Forest Service. Start your own challenge! Trust in your power and capability! You can play a big part in making the National Forests America's Great Outdoors!







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