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Congressional Record - The Administration's Proposal to Reorganize the U.S. Forest Service

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Mr. Chairman, it is always a privilege to appear before the Senate Committee on Agriculture; this legislative Committee which has jurisdiction over some very important matters in my State of Montana. I am, however, deeply concerned that I should have to come before this Subcommittee to protest an unwise, ill-conceived and ridiculous Executive reorganization plan for the United States Forest Service.

The announced plan to make the Forest Service conform its Regional operations to the current 10 Standard Federal Regions will severely diminish the effectiveness of what has been an outstanding Federal agency. The Forest Service is charged with the management of one of the Nation's largest and most valuable renewable resources - the national forests and some of the grasslands. The proposed consolidation of Forest Service Regional Offices will not work and will only diminish the effectiveness of an already embattled agency. Quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, I am tired of having the management of our national resources dictated by the bookkeepers of the Executive Branch. These people are urban oriented in their thinking and unaware of complexities of this vast country. As I have said on other occasions, it will be a sad day when our Nation's policies are set by a computer. I have the distinct impression that the U. S. Forest Service implemented their reorganization plan rather hurriedly only after
considerable prodding from the Secretary of Agriculture and The Office of Management and Budget. I understand further that only in the past several weeks has there been any intensive studies developed to support the reorganization plan. The Department personnel are attempting to justify their position, after the fact.

I do not like the arrogance demonstrated by the Secretary of Agriculture in attempting to implement this plan. This was an obvious political move with no detailed studies or specifics to back it up. Earlier reorganization plans were rejected. This plan is contrary to the intent of the Rural Development Act which establishes a preference for rural areas. This proposal concentrates the administrative arm of the Forest Service in large metropolitan areas.

By design, the Executive Branch is curtailing the activities or abolishing established and worthwhile programs through impoundment of funds, reorganization and abolition - all without justification or consultation with the Congress. Among them are the Department of Agriculture conservation programs, the war against poverty, many Federal health, education and social rehabilitation programs and, in the instance of the Farmers Home Administration, the agency is being administered by an Acting Administrator, without FHA experience, who I fear is planning the dismantling of this agency.

The Department of Agriculture, Division of Administrative Management, in 1971 prepared a preliminary study of the "Feasibility of Conforming to Ten Standard Regional Boundaries." The obvious conclusion to such a study is that
it is feasible but it certainly is not practical. A person need only to look at a map of the United States. The present Forest Service Regional Structure is composed of 9 Regions. The boundaries of these Regions are set to accommodate the timber resources of the Nation, not the population centers as we find in the Federal Regional concept.

At the present time, Region I, which is located in Missoula, Montana, administers sixteen national forests in Montana, Idaho, and Washington, and 26,126,940 acres of timber. In addition, there are forestry research facilities in Missoula and Bozeman with associated programs at both State Universities. The agency administers grasslands in North and South Dakota. The vast majority of these forests are in Western Montana and adjoining Idaho. Missoula, Headquarters of Region I, is in the heart of these timber stands - a logical, central location.

Denver, Colorado, Headquarters of Region II, is approximately 1,000 miles away. Region II administers 20,000,000 acres of national forest. There are 186,000,000 acres in the entire national system of forest lands. The United States is a very large landholder and it does not seem unreasonable to ask that they continue to be administered from 9 Regional Headquarters. 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.

Region I and II are two very large areas, each distinct and separate. There is no direct public transportation between the two points. The other
Regional Headquarters under this plan is in Portland, equally inaccessible to Region I. There is no way in which I can be convinced that the affairs of Region I can be administered more efficiently from Denver. In fact, the people of Denver and State officials have indicated they do not favor the consolidation in Denver. The City of Denver has far too many urban problems now; they don't want more.

Looking at the map again, you will find the Department wants to place the State of New Mexico under the jurisdiction of the Regional Headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. How this contributes to efficiency is extremely difficult to understand. The Secretary of Agriculture is determined to make the Forest Service conform to the Regional concept, yet his organizational chart exempts the State of Alaska. Our Alaskan neighbors are deserving of this attention but the need to conform to the Federal regional concept is obviously not binding for all.

This is not decentralization of government but rather a new and aggravated type of centralization on a regional basis at the expense of the States. If the government wants to really decentralize, it ought to move many of its offices and bureaus out of Washington, D. C., and the metropolitan area.

The proposed move of the Regional Headquarters from Missoula would admittedly be a severe economic blow but, in any other terms, it is also very impractical. The activities of the Forest Service are not the same as other Federal agencies. The agency is involved with the day-to-day management of a renewable resource and, if these personnel are to do a good job, they can't
do it from afar. That is just exactly what would happen if the administrative arm of the agency is moved to Denver. There are rumors that the Department wants to move more personnel into the forests for on-the-ground management. I think this is an excellent idea but that does not mean that regional administrative management should be from afar. Movement of some personnel now in the Regional offices into the individual national forests would be useful.

The U.S. Forest Service has been an active and innovative Federal agency for most of its lifetime and I am now concerned with an obvious effort to clip its wings. If given the proper budget and number of personnel, I am confident that they will provide the management of this great national resource that the citizens of this Nation deserve. In fact, I believe it is time for the Senate to review the question of personnel levels in the Forest Service. Are they adequate to do the job?

The Federal authorities apparently agree that, because of the large expanse of territory within Standard Region VIII and the large workload, it is desirable to establish zone offices at Missoula and Ogden to handle certain work better accomplished close to the on-the-ground job. If that is so, why bother to change the present setup.

The Research Unit and existing facilities at Ogden, Utah, should be maintained. Region I has always had a close affinity with the Inter-Mountain Station in Ogden. We must keep research priorities for the Northern Rocky Mountain and Inland Empire area. Fragmenting the research facilities at Ogden between Colorado and Oregon will only compound the problem. Fragmenting and
disrupting research activity now under way will cause greater delays in some very important areas of research.

There is a great deal of hunting and fishing use made of the national forests of Region I, and this is an excellent measure of a heavy people use. In fact, during 1971 the total recreation use on the national forests of Region I was almost eleven million visitor days. In that same year, eight states had in excess of five million recreation visits to their national forests. Montana was one of those states, with almost seven million visits, compared to forty-eight million in populous California and barely 1.5 million in Alaska. Even Georgia, which has only 837,000 acres of national forests compared to the twenty million in Alaska, had more recreation visits to her national forests.

Water is a very important resource in Montana. Region I national forests contributed over two trillion cubic feet of water to the Columbia and the Missouri-Mississippi watersheds and river systems. Not only is this water vital to farm, community, and industrial requirements but the management of these headwaters is important to every downstream area and town. By every test of use and resources, and by every test of the impact of people on the lands and resources of the National Forest, there is an absolute and clear need, in my judgment, for the continuation of a Region embracing the area that is now Region I and a Regional Headquarters at Missoula.

The Forest Service reorganization plan will, undoubtedly, entail the expenditure of considerable monies for moving of personnel, location, and rental of new facilities, abandonment of old offices and equipment. I have
seen no estimates as to any financial saving that would ensue from this ill-conceived plan. How much more money will be required for travel and per diem - distances would be substantially greater for Regional personnel.

The demands on our national forests are greater than at any time in history. The cost and demand for lumber is higher than any one anticipated. The lumber industry is pleading for more timber sales. Timber management of this nature requires sufficient personnel to protect the multiple use concept. The Administration proposes a solution to the timber crisis which is almost impossible to comprehend.

They announce a program of expanded timber sales in our national forests and then a reduction in personnel and removal of Regional offices which are important to on-the-ground management. In Region I, the organization plan calls for a personnel reduction of some 1,600 slots. The Department has asked for 450 additional personnel in timber sales but no additional funds. To say the least, I am somewhat confused - I suspect that may be the intent. 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.

The Department of Interior resource agencies, which is realigning their Regional operations, have found some difficulty because their activity is also resource based. The Regional structure there is less important. The major portion of their personnel are in the field. All in all, my colleagues
from New Mexico, Utah and Montana are bewildered by the intent of this reorganization plan.

Not only is the Administration talking about abolishing a Region that has been functioning effectively since 1908, but they are also talking about abolishing a Region that contains one-seventh of the lands in the National Forest System. The fifty states of our Nation reflect vast differences and that is one of the reasons our Country is great. The Forest Service Regions fit into this mold by providing an organization for management based on the location of the resource it administers.

My colleagues here in the Congress will be testifying on this issue at some length and we will be hearing from Governors and the people who will be directly effected by this proposal.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I would like to make several recommendations to the Committee.

The Department of Agriculture and The Office of Management and Budget should be instructed to stop reorganization of the U. S. Forest Service. Forget once and for all a change in the current Forest Service Regional operations. Place more personnel in the field but no further consideration should be given to consolidation of field operations.

I recommend that the U. S. Forest Service be exempted from Administrative personnel reductions. If the agency is expected to do a proper job of managing our national forests, they need personnel.

Mr. Chairman, I am sufficiently concerned about the issue at hand to
recommend that this Committee take no action on any pending legislation or proposal affecting the Department of Agriculture until this matter has been resolved once and for all.

I am confident that the Senate Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations will be willing to cooperate in every way.

What we are discussing today is the future efficient operation of an effective national resource agency which has been shackled by directives from above and I mean above. A resource of the magnitude of our national forests is something which cannot be taken lightly. The concern and attention of this Committee is most appreciated. Thank you.
THE ADMINISTRATION’S PROPOSAL TO REORGANIZE THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Mr. MANsFIELD. Mr. President, my distinguished colleague, the junior Senator from Montana (Mr. MERCALP), and I, along with the distinguished Governor of the State of Montana, Tom Judge, and the distinguished Congressman from the eastern district, John Minor, appeared before the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, specifically the Subcommittee on Environment, Conservation, and Forestry. Our distinguished colleagues, Congressman Stoop of Montana, Senators BENT and Moss of Utah and Senators Domenici and Moss of New Mexico, also appeared before the Committee. The topic under consideration was the proposal by the administration to recognize the U.S. Forest Service which would have meant a shifting in part of some of the administrative duties of the headquarters region which is at Missoula, Mont., to Denver, Colo., approximately 1,000 miles away, with no direct lines of communication, which would have meant a dispersal of controls to Denver, and which would have meant a shifting of the headquarters from Albuquerque, N. Mex., to Atlanta, Ga., for the purpose of administering the forest region within the State of New Mexico.

Mr. President, I will later ask unanimous consent that this testimony plus additional correspondence relative to the desire on the part of the administration to bring about a reorganization of the Forest Service, a move which was made without any contact whatsoever with the Members of the House or Senate from the three States, involving a move which was made in the dead of the night, so to speak, during the time Congress was in recess at Easter, a move which has been thwarted, at least up to now, because of the attitude on the part of the Appropriations Committee of the Senate and I believe the House as well, and on the part of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry which, when the matter was brought to its attention agreed to conduct hearings, which are now underway.

Mr. President, I would hope that in the future before any action of this nature is undertaken that at least the members from the affected States would be given the courtesy of being allowed to express their views rather than to have to depend upon rumor and accomplished fact, which luckily did not this time, become an accomplished fact only because of the awareness in Congress of the nefarious undertaking which was underway.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all of the material to which I have referred be printed at this point in the Record.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

U.S. FOREST SERVICE REORGANIZATION
(Statement of Senator Mike Mansfield, June 26, 1973)

Mr. Chairman, it is always a privilege to appear before the Senate Committee on Agriculture; this legislative Committee which has jurisdiction over some very important
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June 26, 1973

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matters in my State of Montana. I am, however, deeply concerned that I should have to come to the floor of this Senate and unburden an unwise, ill-conceived and ridiculous reorganization plan for the United States Forest Service.

The announced plan to make the Forest Service conform its Regional operations to the Present 10 Standard Federal Regions will severely diminish the effectiveness of what has been an outstanding Federal agency. The Forest Service has long recognized that the concept of one of the Nation's largest and most valuable and multipurpose resources—the national forests and the grasslands. The proposed consolidation of Forest Service Regional operations will not work and will only diminish the effectiveness of an already embattled agency. Quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, I am tired of having the management of our national resources dictated by the bookkeepers of the Executive Branch. These people are urban oriented in their thinking and unaware of complexities of this vast country. Another week or so will tell if ever. It will be a sad day when our Nation's policies are set by a computer. I have the distinct impression that the U.S. Forest Service implemented their reorganization plan rather hurriedly only after considerable Proluding from the Agriculture, Forest, and Office of Management and Budget. I understand further that only in the past several weeks any intensive thinking has been developed to support the reorganization plan. The Department personnel are attempting to justify this plan. I still wonder why.

I do not like the arrogance demonstrated by the Secretary of Agriculture in attempting to shove through this reorganization plan and political move without any detailed or significant public input. This is contrary to the intent of the Rural Development Act which establishes a preference for rural areas. This proposal is undoubtedly the administrative arm of the Forest Service in large metropolitan areas.

By design, the Executive Branch is curtailting the activities or abolishing established and worthwhile programs through impoundments of funds. This is also in the political move with no detailed studies or specifics to back it up. Earlier reorganization plans are already in oblivion. While this is occurring, the Secretary of Agriculture is making an ill-conceived move in the direction of the Rural Development Act, which establishes a preference for rural areas. This proposal is undoubtedly the administrative arm of the Forest Service in large metropolitan areas.

The proposed move of the Regional Headquarters from Missoula to Region I is now only in a severe economic blow but, in any other terms, it is also very impractical. The activities of the Forest Service, as other Federal agencies, are involved with the day-to-day management of the natural resources, there is no rational basis for this proposal. Again, I wonder why.

I do not like the arrogance demonstrated by the Secretary of Agriculture in attempting to shove this plan through the Congress. Among them are the Department of Agriculture, the timber industry, the reorganization of the Forest Service, and the elimination of the Farmers Home Administration, the agency that has been charged in the past with the responsibility of the timber industry. Without FHA experience, who I fear is planning the dismantling of this agency.

The Secretary of Agriculture, Dean R. B. Anderson, Administrator of Administrative Management, in 1971 prepared a preliminary study of the "Feasibility of Establishing Ten Standard Regional Boundaries." The obvious conclusion to such a study is that it is feasible but certainly is not practical. A person need only to look at a map of the United States. The present Forest Service Regional Structure is composed of 9 Regions. The boundaries of these Regions are set to accommodate the timber resources of the Nation, not the population centers as we find in the Federal Regional concept.

At the present time, Region I, which is located in the Northwest, administers between national forests in Montana, Idaho, and Washington, and 26,138,940 acres of timber. In Region II, which is located in the Pacific Northwest, administers 12 national forests and 8,378,417 acres of timber. In Region III, which is located in the Southern States, administers 10 national forests and 26,550,671 acres of timber.

The majority of these forests are located in the Montana, Idaho, Missoula and Bozeman, with associated programs at both State Universities.

The agency administering in North and South Dakota. The majority of these forests are located in the Dakota, Northern Minnesota, and Wisconsin areas. The Forest Service, in Region I, is in the heart of these timber lands—a loggers' haven.

Denver, Colorado, Headquarters of Region II, is approximately 1,000 miles away. Region II administers 20,000,000 acres of national forest. There are 186,000,000 acres in the entire national system of forest lands. The United States Congress and I believe it does not seem unreasonable to ask that they continue to be administered from 9 Regional Headquarters. This plan sets up an even larger administrative monster in Denver, in addition to the one in Washington, D.C., is already in operation. This plan goes against the great forests of the West which take away more responsibility and action from local people.

Region I and II are two very large areas, each distinct and separate. There is no direct public utilization of the two. This plan will cause increased costs, delays, and confusion. Realists take the two points. The other Regional Headquarters under this plan in Portland, equally incorrect to the concept of breaking up the Forest Service into seven Regions. The other Regional Headquarters must be established on the basis of the major geographic units of the United States. The change from 9 to 7 Regions will not work.

In Region I was almost eleven million visitor days. In that same year, eight states had in excess of five million dollars spent in their national forests. Montana was one of the leaders in this area, with 1,000,000 visitor days, compared to forty-eight million in populous California and barely 1.5 million in Alaska. Even Georgia, which has only 877,000 acres of national forests compared to the twenty million in Alaska, had more recreation visits than every other State in the Nation. Region I is almost entirely composed of the Mountain States. Region I is the most populous State of the United States. Region I is the most populous State of the United States. Region I is the most populous State of the United States.

Water is a very important resource in Montana. Region I national forests contributed over two trillion cubic feet of water to the Columbia and the Missouri-Mississippi rivers. Not only is this water vital to the farm, community, and industrial requirements but the management of these headwaters is vital to the health of every river system. The announcement to make the Forest Service Regional Structure is only in the beginning.

In the past several years the Forest Service has been administering a program or plan for reorganization. Action has been taken to abolish the Secretary of Agriculture, the entire Federal Forest Service, and the elimination of the Farmers Home Administration, the agency that has been charged in the past with the responsibility of the timber industry. Without FHA experience, who I fear is planning the dismantling of this agency.

The Secretary of Agriculture, Dean R. B. Anderson, Administrator of Administrative Management, in 1971 prepared a preliminary study of the "Feasibility of Establishing Ten Standard Regional Boundaries." The obvious conclusion to such a study is that it is feasible but certainly is not practical. A person need only to look at a map of the United States. The present Forest Service Regional Structure is composed of 9 Regions. The boundaries of these Regions are set to accommodate the timber resources of the Nation, not the population centers as we find in the Federal Regional concept.

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June 26, 1973

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by providing an organization for management based on the location of the resource it administers.

My colleagues here in the Congress will be testimony at some later date and I will be hearing from Governors and the people who will be directly affected by this proposal.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I would like to make several recommendations to the Congress:

The Department of Agriculture and The Office of Management and Budget should be involved in the reorganization of the U.S. Forest Service. Forget once and for all a change in the current Forest Service Regional operations. Place more personnel in the field but no further consideration should be given to consolidation of field operations.

I recommend that the U.S. Forest Service be exempted from Administrative personnel reductions. If the agency is expected to do a proper job of managing our national forests it needs personnel.

I am sufficiently concerned about the issue at hand to recommend that this Committee take action on any pending bills that would be proposed by the Department of Agriculture until this matter has been resolved once and for all.

I feel that the Senate Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations will be willing to cooperate in every way.

Mr. Chairman, I am concerned that the future efficient operation of a national resource agency which has been shackled by directives of the Department of Agriculture. A resource of the magnitude of our national forests is something which cannot be taken lightly. Whatever action the Committee will take is most appreciated. Thank you.

TESTIMONY BY SENATOR LEE MACCAY

Mr. Chairman:

I deeply appreciate this opportunity to appear before your subcommittee this morning. As my good friend and colleague, Senator Mansfield, has stated, it is unfortunate that we have to appear on this matter. But serious actions have taken place with regard to the Forest Service which violate that agency's mandate and the common sense of the American people.

Before the day is over, you will have heard from the entire Montana Congressional delegation. I was born and raised in Stevensville, a small town thirty miles from Missoula, deep in the heart of the Forest Service country and lived among the people in Missoula while at the University of Montana. Congressman Richard Shoup hails from Missoula. At the present time, you have already heard from Forsyth, just a few miles from the Custer National Forest.

As a native and in the course of my duties as a Member of Congress, I have had firsthand knowledge of Montana's forests and mountains and timber, and I have been constantly faced with the question of what actions we should take in the best interest of the people of Montana.

The successful farmer stays close to the soil. He sifts the soil through his fingers, sows it, and reaps the harvest. He knows the most opportune time to sow, weed, fertilize, and harvest. His relationship with his crop is physical.

The same relationship must exist between the forests and the public stewards of those lands. There are actions which require immediate short term action by competent Forest Service personnel. Those decisions simply cannot be made by bureaucratic agencies.

The success of the farmer is dependent on the health of the soil. The same is true of the health of our forests. We must take action now to ensure the health of the forests.

It is ridiculous that we should be restarting these obvious propositions today. There are only two questions to be asked:

(1) What should be the goal of the Forest Service, and
(2) What tools do they need to do the job.

The goal has already been laid out by Congress in numerous pieces of legislation, most notably the Multiple-Use-Sustained-Yield Law. That Act obliged the Forest Service to give weight to the multiple use management of these forests, regardless of the season of the year, range and management.

The tools should be those which meet increasing demands on the national forests. More personnel should be provided to manage timber on an annual basis and to respond to the ever-increasing demands of the public on the national forests.

In the past, timber has often been removed from the forests, and the public has been apprised of the consequences of the severe lowering of timber levels. But no further consideration should be given to consolidation of field operations. A responsible step in the right direction would be to increase field personnel.

Mr. Chairman, I think you will find part of the answer to the "summer half" of the reasons for these hearings. S. 1775 is nothing but a warmed-over version of the so-called "Timber Bill" which was rejected by Congress in February of 1970. Both measures share the distinction of replacing the multiple-use management of timber as the dominant use of national forests.

This preoccupation with commercial interests is a severe threat to the Forest Service, the Administration, so I suppose we shouldn't be surprised that it is extended to our national forests. The reorganization plan achieves two purposes for Mr. Nixon, the OMB and Mr. Butz. It gives the appearance of efficiency when viewed on the flow charts in government manuals, and it removes the watchdogs who guard the public's interest in the forest. Neither is accidental.

Although it is not properly an Administration bill, S. 1776 complements the Administration's efforts. It would concomitantly, if not immediately, effectuate the "Grover Cleveland" concept. In other words, it would cut the number of timber stands. The so-called "Wood Supply and National Forest Lands Investment Act of 1972" has the rationalization that the nation's housing goals can't be met unless "available timber supplies in the National Forest Management System are increased."

At first glance, the claim seems reasonable. But first glances seldom tell the whole story. In order to arrive at the formula for the "Wood Supply Plan," it was necessary to separate the cost of timber and the cost of the labor time involved in obtaining the timber. The reorganization plan categorizes the labor costs as part of the cost of labor to obtain the timber.

It is further claimed that this plan would cost less. As an example, the current claim is that the nation's housing goals can't be met unless "available timber supplies in the National Forest Management System are increased."

At first glance, the claim seems reasonable. But first glances seldom tell the whole story. In order to arrive at the formula for the "Wood Supply Plan," it was necessary to separate the cost of timber and the cost of the labor time involved in obtaining the timber. The reorganization plan categorizes the labor costs as part of the cost of labor to obtain the timber.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and the members of your Subcommittee today to discuss proposed Forest Service regional reorganizations.

I want to make it clear at the outset that I believe the plan to make the Forest Service conform to the Standard Federal Region concept is not in the best interests of the taxpayers, the people who use our National forests or of the forest resources in my District, my state or the Nation. In fact, in the context of proposals to consolidate or to curtail services, I believe that the Forest Service, the reorganization plan becomes an even greater threat to the people and resources I have mentioned.

Let me discuss several points individually.

First, the Forest Service has not justified the reorganization plan in dollar-and-cents terms. An analysis prepared by the Congress has not been made public which would expose the proposed plan to the Congress and the taxpayers. Only the budget estimates point out that the criteria upon which the reorganization plan is based are not criteria at all. They are arbitrary.

Mr. Chairman, I am aware that the Forest Service must make difficult decisions already made—in this case quite clearly by the Office of Management and Budget. Those decisions are a necessary evil. The President's plan is a hasty attempt to cut much of the managerial muscle out of the Forest Service organization.

Yet, in answer to requests for itemized estimates of projected savings that would accompany the reorganization, the Administration remained silent. They were forthcoming only at the very eve of this hearing, and then they were not complete and to the point. Until yesterday, I had been told by the Forest Service that the General Accounting Office was making a complete study of the matter and that I would receive a copy of the report. How could such a monumental reorganization plan have been devised and ordered into effect without cost/benefit figures having been prepared and carefully analyzed? What kind of management is this?

But the decision to go ahead with reorganization was made. And I still want to know how much more it's going to cost to have regional supervision of the forests in my District and in my State as a result of the decision to move the Forest Service headquarters from Missoula to Denver. No one either can or will tell me.

There are a number of important questions which I would like to touch on deals with the people who benefit from our National forests—the people who want, and deserve, the best forest management under the multiple-use concept as well as those who depend upon our forests for a living as a result of the timber industry. Those who use our forests as a magnificent recreation...
One forest-level people are telling me that already the economic pressure for more timber is being put on the single-use commodity out of which they are determined about it and so am I, particularly when an important safety at which level is being imposed to transfer to some distant city and employment of regional specialists, who serve a public purpose, is to be curtailed. Not only will forest-users suffer—more importantly our forests will suffer.

Service spokesmen have argued against my position and in favor of Service reorganization by saying that, in fact, more people can be assigned to forest-level jobs once the regions have been standardized and headquarters at Missoula, Ogden and Albuquerque eliminated. One Forest Supervisor told my office that he might even accept a transfer back to a Ranger position in order to save the Service under reorganization. I have been told, too, that once these professionals are put back into the forests, more of the decision-making can be handled at that level.

If all this decentralization is really a goal of the Service, I believe it would receive more attention. Then we could point out to the Service that it doesn't take the skills of a Ranger away from the daily cutting of deadwood in the office, if it is there in the first place.

I'm not convinced that increased forest-level staffing is a goal of reorganization, or that forest-level people have even been adequately consulted about the possibility of increasing such staffing.

My office recently released figures from within the Forest Service headquarters on projected personnel changes as a result of the elimination of the Missoula regional headquarters. Of the 370 Missoula headquarters positions that were projected to be eliminated, 200 were assigned to forest positions within the region, 170 were projected to stay in regional service, and 60 were projected for service to Denver, Portland or to forests more administrated in those regions, and 80 were expected to leave the service. In the case of those figures were greeted with complete surprise. Regional and Forest People told me that they had been conducted from the air because no one in Washington had asked them for information as to what personnel shifts might be expected under reorganization.

If the Forest Service can place more professionals at the Forest Service level to provide closer supervision of timber cut, recreation, and forest areas, there are many less specific consideration. They can do so now without involving a move to Denver. More decisions might be made in the field this result. The regional level is but one level of the service of the Service. Therefore, it is important that the regional level be reorganized to make it a functional level. It is especially important that if the Service found it necessary. On the other hand, it cannot also be assumed that any individual who are experienced enough to consider what regional supervision or assistance is necessary to fully evaluate such decisions. The Services are by necessity organized to provide assistance to the forests, hence to solve those problems.

This is not speculation. The plans for concluding the one forest headquarters would be completed with a proposed transfer 100 to 200 miles away. At the same time there would be district consolidation, involving some ranger district elimination.

It is clear to me that this represents overall government of the regional level. All levels, not increasing in the region. This would mean the establishment of the decisional structure for fiscal year 1974 which cannot be justified. It raises the specter of combined forest ranger districts, people being administered from combined forest headquarters perhaps hundreds of miles further away, at a time when regional decision-making and assistance is available only across half a continent.

As I have said, we have a threat to the proper management of our precious forest resources. That threat could evolve into disaster forest if the reorganization were unchecked. Regional reorganization should be stopped now, and forest consolidation plans considered for the present reorganization structure before any are approved.

Mr. Chairman, I again thank you and the distinguished members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to be heard on this subject of such importance to Montana and the Nation.

TESTIMONY OF MONTANA GOV. THOMAS L. JONES

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee:

I believe the concept of Standard Federal Regions is potentially workable. There are, however, exceptions where local, state and national interests supervene the organizational considerations. And the proposed reorganization of the U.S. Forest Service Region I Office exemplifies this type of thinking that ignores basic geographic and political realities.

In Montana, we recently completed a program to reorganize the executive departments of state government. This program was intended to achieve general objectives. As we proceeded with the reorganization process, however, we realized that it was necessary to make exceptions to assure effective government operation. We realized that our concept of effective government was based on administrative principles. We compromised some principles to achieve practical results. Eventually, we established a system which permitted to face the need of administrative principles.

And I would hope that the same considerations of necessity would be applied to the proposed relocation of the Region I Office. There may be serious questions of practical results, and if we do not act immediately to do a better job of managing and appropriating our forest resources, these problems will become critical.

Effective forest management is a triangle of personal, state, and federal. Some are presently involved—federal and state government and private interests. Because of the scattered or diffuse nature of ownership, a more effective involvement in forestry is essential. The western states, cooperation among those involved in forestry is essential to achieve good management. Maintaining and developing isolated tracts is not effective management. If the productivity and recreational value of our forests are to be maintained, federal and state government and private interests must work together to protect this priceless, renewable resource. And I believe Missoula, Montana is the nation's best example of this essential working relationship.

Missoula is the forestry capital of the Northwest. There are 13 federal and state agencies dealing with the forests in the Missoula area. In addition, private forest products industries include sawmills, pulp mills and plywood, particle board, and other wood specialty products plants.

During the years the forest products industry has developed with Missoula, many close personal and professional relationships have been established. These people have worked cooperatively to control national forests, reforestation, forest fires, forest fires, cultural diseases, cruised the woods, conducted inventories and timber sales, developed the pulp and paper industry. They have effectively managed the forests.

The triangle of responsibility works in Missoula and throughout the Northwest. And I do not believe that the practical advantages of the concrete good management, the Regional Office in Missoula should be cancelled by the vague concept of standard federal regions.

The organizational structure of the Forest Service works against the relocation of the regional office.

The Ranger Districts implement forest service activities and policies at the national forest conduct planning. The regional offices provide support including coordination, training, quality, public relations, fire and fire control research.

Regional forest service agencies implement policy only after receiving recommendations from the state agencies. If the office is moved to Denver, it will lose the daily contact with state forestry and private industry personnel that is necessary to effectively manage our timber resources. Quality control depends on the ability of the forest service to develop solutions to immediate problems. Confusion and delay can be disastrous in dealing with forest problems. An office in a metropolitan area 600 miles away will not be able to act decisively as an agency supervisor in the middle of the timber country.

Coordination of the myriad functions of the forest service is dependent on close contact with people in all areas of forestry. Because the forest service is concerned with the larger purpose of the forest, including coal development, land use, recreation, insect and disease control and fire protection, it is to the people in the forest that are most affected in determining policy.

Region I is comprised of 10 states, and although Denver is more centrally located, Missoula is in the heart of the Northwest forest country.

Transferring the Regional Office to Denver will remove it from proximity with the resource it is charged to manage.
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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. It will confuse and delay the implementation of our forestry policy by restricting the informational process.

The cumulative effect of all these conditions in a region, will be a deterioration of the Forest Service's capability to effectively manage our priceless timber resources. And these factors are all too easily solved. It is a prohibitive price to pay to achieve the still questionable objective of Standard Region studies as part of the government-wide Federal Aid Review (FAR) programs, directed at cost reductions and improvement of the ability of the Federal Government to provide services through conforming to the Standard Regions. Our studies show that we can conform and still carry out Forest Service programs effectively. At the same time, as you are aware, Federal budgets and manpower constraints have been tightened. Rising costs of doing business have added to the need to accelerate studies to find ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of National Forest management while reducing costs. Therefore, in order to maintain our present level of management on National Forests, it is essential that we look for a positive alternative to the current approach to this matter of great importance to Montana and the Northwest.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD

Mr. Chairman, before leaving this morning I would like to submit a series of correspondences for the record of this hearing. These documents include letters from my colleagues here in the Senate, Executive replies and reports.

To be very candid about the circumstances involved in this reorganization, I am not happy with the way that it has been handled. Inquiries early in the year about possible Forest Service reorganization brought replies—"the matter is under review"—and that we would be informed before any final action was taken. This announcement was made during the Easter recess when most of us were out of the city. After appealing to Senator Mansfield, Chairman of this Committee, Senator Talmadge, he instructed the Department to withhold implementation until such time as this hearsay could be held. The Department acquiesced, but only verbally, nothing was put in writing. Later the Department responded in writing that the reorganization was being postponed; however, tentative planning was proceeding according to a memorandum circulated among Regional Offices.

Senators Metcalf, Moss, and I asked for some detailed statistical information which we assumed went into this decision, and we received a partial response yesterday. Much of the information was considered too voluminous to provide or deferral was made to the upcoming study of the entire matter by the General Accounting Office.

Finally, I wish to state that it is an exceedingly most regrettable that the Executive Branch of the Government to improve its relationship with the Legislative Branch. I hope that this Committee will take appropriate action.


HON. EARL. J. BUTT, Secretary, Department of Agriculture.

HON. JOHN MCGUIRE, Chiel. U.S. Forest Service.

Hon. Lee Metcalf, U.S. Senator, Senate.


Dear Senator Metcalf:

Your telegram of March 26th has spread a rumor that the Forest Service is considering moving its Missoula Regional headquarters. Although we are reviewing the possibility, we have made no firm decision on this matter.

During the past two years, the Regional Standard Region studies as part of the government-wide Federal Aid Review (FAR) programs were directed at cost reductions and improvement of the ability of the Federal Government to provide services through conforming to the Standard Regions. Our studies show that we can conform and still carry out Forest Service programs effectively. At the same time, as you are aware, Federal budgets and manpower constraints have been tightened. Rising costs of doing business have added to the need to accelerate studies to find ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of National Forest management while reducing costs. Therefore, in order to maintain our present level of management on National Forests, it is essential that we look for a positive alternative to the current approach.

So far our evaluations are preliminary, but they do indicate that substantial savings can be achieved by reorganizing the Regional Forest Service headquarters offices, including the Regional Office in Missoula. If this were to occur, the Forest Service would need to maintain a work force in Missoula of about 270 people to support Forest Service programs.

We appreciate your concern in these matters, and we would be glad to meet with you at your convenience for more specific information or discussions. Copies of this letter are being sent to the other members of the Montana Congressional delegation as they have also inquired into this situation.

Sincerely,

JOHN R. MCGUIRE, Chief.


The President,

White House,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President: On my return to the city from an official visit to Mexico, I was very disturbed and distressed to learn that the Secretary of Agriculture had announced the U.S. Forest Service regional reorganization during the Easter recess. You may recall that I discussed this matter with you at our last weekend meeting.

In my estimation this effort to adjust the agency's regional organization to fit with the existing Federal regional structure is speculative, arbitrary and unnecessary. As I recently indicated to you, I am very much opposed, not only because it would mean moving the Region 1 headquarters at Missoula, Montana, but it will create similar problems elsewhere in the West. Moving the Forest Service from Missoula to Denver will create some very difficult problems of communication and transportation. Region 1, which administers one of the largest National Forest areas, would be some eight hundred miles away from Denver, which now administers Region II.

The Forest Service can be logically exempted from the Federal regional structure because of the nature of its business. Our National Forests are a renewable resource and require continual on the ground management. At a time when there are greater demands on our National Forests it is necessary that the administrative and operational personnel be located in close proximity. Also National Forests are scattered throughout the nation, and they are not uniformly located so as to conform to the United States regional structure.

The proposed reorganization is inefficient, and I cannot envision any financial savings whatever. Candidly, I feel that whoever devised this plan was more concerned with resources or the land area involved. You may remember that on your trip to Libby Dan
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Another case in point is the Intermountain Region, which includes all of Utah, southern Idaho, western Wyoming, all of Nevada, and portions of California and Arizona. For the most part, this is Great Basin country with high temperatures in the summer, moderately cold winters, and precipitation amounts that are less than generous. These factors, plus a general similarity of soil have created demands that lend themselves to the same general management techniques. To split the Intermountain Region would create the risk of taking a team of experts, skilled in managing one particular vegetative situation and scattering team members across the region. This would no longer be effective. This is hardly an efficient use of taxpayer monies. In addition, closing the Ogden Regional Headquarters will leave the Ogden Federal Building almost empty, leaving a very bitter taste in the mouths not only of the Forest Service employees, but also of the local voters.

We cannot accept the explanation that the regional home offices must conform to the standard Federal regional structural concept. Since the Forest Service's objective is to administer the Forest Service regional offices, the offices must be located where the majority of the forests are.

Again, I strongly urge that this proposal be reconsidered and that practical values be put above theoretical conformity.

Sincerely,

WALLACE F. BENNETT
Mike Mansfield
Pete V. Domenici

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET


Hon. Mike Mansfield,

Dear Senator Mansfield:

I looked into the matter of Forest Service regional boundaries immediately following the announcement of the consolidation plan.

It turns out that the decision to alter the boundaries and the regional office locations had already been made and was announced on April 24. I am assured that your views on the matter were on record and had been considered in the decision. I also understand that your office was notified prior to official announcement.

You will shortly receive an explanatory reply to your letter to the President outlining the reasons for the decision and the expected benefits.

There appears to be little inclination either in the Department or in OMB to reopen this decision so recently announced. However, I am qualified to state that any decision will do all it can to minimize the potential adverse consequences in your area, and, if you wish, I would be pleased to throw the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Long and Chief McGuire of the Forest Service to meet with you to provide a detailed explanation of the reasoning behind this decision and a briefing on their transition plans.

I'm sorry I cannot be of more assistance in this particular matter.

Sincerely,

JOHN C. SAWHILL
Associate Director.
Dear Mr. Long:

We have received a letter from a constituent expressing concern that the Department is proceeding with the reorganization contrary to the assurance received. The letter indicated that a meeting will be held in Missoula and that the word from the Secretary of Agriculture was that "they were proceeding with the reorganization and not going to let the Senators stop them."

I would appreciate confirmation of the fact that the reorganization will proceed.

With best personal wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

J. PHIL CAMPBELL, Under Secretary.

The Forest Service has been doing some further analysis and planning in preparation for the Agriculture and Forestry Committee hearing on June 26. No personnel transfers or other irreversible moves toward regional reorganization have been taken.

This Department is fully aware of its commitment to defer reorganization actions until after the hearings. I assure you that we will honor that commitment.

Sincerely,

Hase

June 15, 1973

Reply to: 1360 Meetings (6130) (1200).

Subject: Reorganization Placement Meeting.

To: Regional Forests.

REPLY DUE JULY 19

This is a follow-up of our letter of June 8 in which we tentatively scheduled a meeting of Personnel Officers in Washington the week of July 9 to prepare staffing proposals based on the possibility of reorganization.

As a result of the July 19 meeting, we are committed in taking no irreversible action on the implementation of the Standard Regions until the hearings are completed.

We are committed to defer reorganization actions until after the hearings. I assure you that we will honor that commitment.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.


HON. MIKE MANSFIELD, U.S. Senator.

Dear Senator Mansfield:

Bob Long is out of town this week so I have looked into the question raised by your letter of June 11. I have also discussed it with John McGuire.

The Forest Service has been doing some further analysis and planning in preparation for the Agriculture and Forestry Committee hearing on June 26. No personnel transfers or other irreversible moves toward regional reorganization have been taken.

This Department is fully aware of its commitment to defer reorganization actions until after the hearings. I assure you that we will honor that commitment.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

J. PHIL CAMPBELL, Under Secretary.
C O N G R E S S I O N A L  R E C O R D — S E N A T E

J U N E  2 6 ,  1 9 7 3


Senator LEE METCALF,
U.S. Senate.

Dear Senator Metcalf:

This responds to your June 6 letter asking for information you and Senator Mansfield had requested on May 8. You recall we had suggested awaiting outcome of the GAO survey in order to avoid possible duplications.

Since the GAO survey will not be completed before June 26-27 we have attached responses to the questions raised in your May 8 letter.

We are also sending copies of this information to the Congressional Delegations of Utah, New Mexico, Nevada, and Montana.

Sincerely,

ROBERT W. LONG,
Assistant Secretary.

Metcalf, Mansfield, and Moss Questions in Letters Dated May 8 and May 30, Respectively

Responses to the numbered questions in Senators Metcalf’s and Mansfield’s May 8 letter follow:

1. Each and every study, report and analysis with all of the supporting evidence which shows the efficiencies (or ineffectiveness) of the proposal to transfer Regional Offices and personnel, and consolidate or change national forests.

2. For Regions I and IV for the fiscal years 1971, 1972, 1973 through 1 April 1973 separately by:
   a. travel by individuals and purpose from Regional Office to one or more Forest offices including time, distance, mode of travel and cost for the portion from the Regional Office to first stop. Please show comparable cost under proposed change.
   b. travel by individuals and purpose from each national forest to Regional office with data as above. Please make similar comparison as above.

3. Describe facilities to be vacated or abandoned by move, cost, value, etc., and cost of new facilities in Denver and Portland and the net financial impact. Show cost to move equipment, etc.

4. By job title list personnel affected by proposed transfer.
   a. show estimated cost to transfer, including movement of household goods, sale of home, relocation expense and cost to move family, etc.
   b. for each position to be "abolished" show results of various inspections over past four years that discuss the position and summarize whether they recommended strengthening or abolishing position.
   c. for each position to be transferred show results of various inspections over past four years that discuss position and summarize whether they recommended transfer and the reasons therefor and whether they recommended transfer as now planned.

5. Based on the proposal, show analysis of how cost of doing business and effectiveness will be changed by making the changes advocated.

6. One part of your proposal suggests that New Mexico, which has five national forests, be attached to the proposed Atlanta Region. However, Alaska, which has three national forests, is proposed to remain as a Region. Please list the most direct mileage by the most expeditious modes of transportation from:
   (a) Atlanta to each New Mexico forest headquarters.
   (b) Albuquerque to each New Mexico forest headquarters.
   (c) Denver to each New Mexico forest headquarters.

Show the differences in time and cost for each and time as above.

(d) Distance from Missoula to each forest headquarters in Region 1 as now existing.

(e) Same information from Denver or Portland to each forest in proposed revision.

Show the differences in time and cost for each.

(f) Show distance and time from Juneau to each Alaska national forest.

(g) Show same data from each Alaska national forest to Portland.

Show distance in time and cost for each.

(h) Show the key elements of business for each national forest in Alaska, Region 1, and New Mexico, and using time to travel, distance and cost explain the logic of retaining the Alaska "Region" rather than attaching to Portland, the logic of attaching New Mexico to Atlanta rather than leaving as-is or attaching to Denver, and the logic of attaching Region 1 forests to Denver and Portland, rather than leaving as-is.

In summary, we want a full and complete explanation of all pertinent facts that demonstrate the efficiency of your proposal. If such studies were not made prior to the date when this proposal was ordered into effect and these data would have to be developed specially to answer our request, any such question can be answered by the statement "Do not know." However, you are advised that the absence of such studies and hard cost and benefit analyses will be considered as extremely significant factors in weighing whether the proposed revamping of the Forest Service structure advances or significantly retards efficient operation of these public assets in the national interest.

We will appreciate a reply at your earliest convenience. Please send a copy of your reply to Senator Alan Bible, Chairman, Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies, Senate Committee on Appropriations.

Very truly yours,

LEE METCALF,
U.S. Senator.

MIKE MANSFIELD,
U.S. Senator.
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Mike Mansfield Papers, Series 21, Box 49, Folder 5, Mansfield Library, University of Montana
functions or otherwise, they read the Record and make absolutely certain that they know what the intent of the Congress was and is—no reorganization.

I am delighted that the distinguished Senator has given me the chance to make these observations for the Record, because they will stand the six Senators and the Congressmen from the three States involved in good stead at the appropriate time.

I thank the distinguished chairman of the committee for what he has had to say about this matter.

Mr. BIBLE. Mr. President, if the Senator will yield further, I have checked with my staff man on the Interior Appropriations Committee, and I find that my memory has not faltered completely. The language is written into the supplemental appropriations bill and has been carried over in the regular Interior appropriations bill and has been so marked up on the House side and will be carried over on the Senate side.

Mr. MANSFIELD. I thank the Senator.

Mr. McCLELLAN, I hope we can accomplish this. This was a worthwhile project, that would never have been accomplished with full hearings.

Mr. MANSFIELD. That is right, and it was done in the stealth of the night.

Mr. McCLELLAN. That is right, and we caught them.

Mr. MANSFIELD. The Senator is correct.

(This marks the end of the colloquy which by unanimous consent was ordered to be printed at this point in the Record.)