



# National Museum of Forest Service History Newsletter

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August 2007

## The Lands Nobody Wanted The National Forests East of the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian

*By Dave Jolly and Jim McConnell*

*Dave Jolly began his Forest Service career in 1961, on the Francis Marion National Forest in South Carolina. He retired in 1995, as Regional Forester, Northern Region (R-1), making several stops in his 34-year career. He now lives in Alexander City, AL and is co-editor, with his wife Peggy, of the Southern Region Retirees Association newsletter, The Dixie Ranger.*

*Jim McConnell began his Forest Service career in 1956, on the Kisatchie National Forest in Louisiana and retired in 1993 as Regional Geneticist. Jim spent his entire career in the Southern Region (R-8). He now lives in Lilburn, GA and is serving as secretary and historian for the Southern Region Retirees Association.*

The lands that comprise the eastern National Forests were once part of a vast area of forested land east of the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian. The resources of this magnificent wilderness were used to build a young and rapidly growing country. Timber was harvested to build homes, barns and other necessities; valuable minerals were mined; livestock was grazed; and hillsides were farmed, all with little understanding or regard for the erosion that would result when it rained, much less the need to reforest and otherwise take care of it for the future. Fires burned over much of the area where timber had been harvested and much of the topsoil was lost. Cash crops, like cotton and especially tobacco denuded the soil after a few years use. New fields were constantly being cleared. Then our ancestors moved further to the west, always westward, seeking new plots to settle and clear. It was as if they believed that the resources were so vast that they would never be used up. This destruction extended from the Lake States to New England, down the Appalachians and the Eastern Seaboard, across the Gulf Coastal Plain and into the Ozark Highlands. Many referred to these areas as “the lands that nobody wanted”.

Legislation in the 1890s, authorizing creation of the National Forests from the public domain, had its greatest affect in the West since, by that time, there was little public domain remaining in the heavily-settled East. While there were the beginnings of support for establishing Forest Reserves in the east, there was no authority for the federal government to buy lands for forests. The Weeks Act in 1911 provided for the purchase of ...“forested, cut-over or denuded lands within the watersheds of navigable streams...”. In



Abused lands were purchased and later restored by the Forest Service.  
Jefferson National Forest, Virginia.

1942 photo. Photo courtesy of the Forest Service.

1924, the Clark McNary Act added ...“the production of timber ...” as a purpose for forest acquisition. Eventually Congress established fifty National Forests east of the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian.

It is an irony that the Great Depression, in the 1930s, stimulated a decade of land acquisition and National Forest establishment. Lands that had been cutover for lumber or farmed until “worn out”, and owners simply could not eke out a living or pay their taxes were abandoned and gladly sold to the federal government at very low prices. But a local public, desiring almost any program that would bring federal investment to the area to generate needed jobs, together with many who wanted to see better conservation of the nation’s resources and a public land base that could be used by all the people. At last there was support for establishment of the eastern National Forests. Purchase units, established by Congress, authorized the Forest Service

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**National Museum of Forest Service History**

A Nonprofit Corporation

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The *Newsletter* is published quarterly for the members and supporters of the National Museum of Forest Service History, a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving the history of the USDA Forest Service.

**Membership Categories**

Individual	\$30
Family	\$55
Contributing	\$150
Sustaining	\$300
Organization	\$100
Lifetime	\$1,000

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# Institutional Framework of the Museum

By Tom Thompson, Board Member

During the August 2007 Board Meeting of the NMFSH, board members had an important clarifying discussion to ensure that the institutional framework of the Museum was clearly understood and communicated appropriately. The discussion centered on the importance of continuing to focus on the cornerstone that we are truly a National Museum of Forest Service History and not just focused on developing a visitor center in Missoula, which interprets the history of the Forest Service.

Even though we have talked repeatedly over the last couple years about the value of providing a valuable interpretive opportunity at the Museum site, it is important that we understand and believe what distinguishes the Museum from just another visitor center. The following are just some of the obvious and in some cases subtle differences between viewing ourselves and communicating to others as an important National Museum and not just a visitor center off Interstate 90 just west of Missoula.

**Visitor Center**

Specialized or focused on single theme  
Tied to specific unique feature  
Local  
Limited national perspective  
Not necessarily a museum  
Typically uses replicas/illustrations  
Limited ability to vary interpretation  
Limited ability to support other efforts

**National Museum**

Larger inclusive perspective  
More institutional in nature  
National  
Limited local emphasis  
Almost always has visitor focus  
Capitalizes on actual artifacts  
Variety of interpretive themes  
Major support of other efforts

In summary, we as a board of this Museum are hugely excited about the progress that we have made in the last 24 months in establishing this National Museum of Forest Service History as an institution which will serve to protect, interpret, and manage the 100+ year history of the U.S. Forest Service for decades and decades to come. The service which we provide in supporting education, research, and understanding of conservation in the United States and indeed the world will have increasing value and importance in the years ahead.

As we communicate with partners, cooperators, and supporters of the Museum it is important that we clearly describe ourselves as a museum institution and not simply a visitor center initiative. As we continue to develop our interpretive themes and displays and indeed begin design of our building on site, this institutional distinction is critically important. We are a National Museum. We will provide a source of protection, education, interpretation, management of U. S. Forest Service history in partnership with the agency and other cooperators such as the Forest History Society, which will be invaluable in the years ahead to not only the agency, but the public as well.

Our vision is to be recognized as an institution worthy of being considered an affiliate of the Smithsonian organization and hope to be so recognized as we complete our initial museum building and exhibits.

Statement approved by the Board of Directors on August 3, 2007



Serious gully erosion on land purchased by the Forest Service, Circa 1940  
Conecuh National Forest, Alabama

Photo courtesy of the Forest Service

to begin buying land.

Support for establishing these National Forests and the actual buying of them, in many cases, turned out to be two different things. There were many stories reported by the folks who were responsible for appraising, buying and then taking care of these new public lands. Stories ranged from being told things like, *“Find another way to get to that fire, you ain’t crossin’ my land!”* or being told to *“Get your.... out of here!”* at the point of a gun. Fires were set to harass the Forest Service and to provide firefighting jobs when work was scarce. The Forest Service was scorched from time to time in a public meetings or when someone got a chance to talk to reporter. Local folks liked the idea of being able to unload their “worthless” land on the government but did not like the feds being around when they wanted to cut a few trees, graze their livestock or make a little moonshine.

It wasn’t just a matter of organizing and staffing up for managing land already in the public domain. The Forest Service had to buy the land and do all the things involved in putting it under management, learn to live with the folks who were neighbors, in many cases rescue it from past abuse and then get on with the task of making it produce benefits for all the people. It was a gargantuan job that was later recognized as a great service for the resources and the country. In some respects it remains a work in progress.

Aside from having been substantially abused by their previous owners, the National Forest lands in the East are different, in many other significant ways, from those in the West. For example, federal ownership within proclaimed forest boundaries averages only slightly over 50% and on one

forest is only 31%. The Forest Service concentrated on purchasing surface rights, which traditionally were bought and sold separately from the subsurface rights in areas where mineral deposits were likely to be found.

Purchase of subsurface minerals was deemed prohibitive. This resulted in government ownership of minerals under only about two-thirds of the lands purchased for eastern National Forests, with other people or entities owning the remainder. This established a highly fragmented ownership pattern leading to some very challenging management situations along with some real opportunities. Combined, these fifty National Forests amount to approximately 24 million acres, about 13% of the total National Forest System. Unlike the large highly consolidated forests in the West, there are lots of neighbors within the forest boundaries who have their own ideas about how land should be used and cared for. While the acreage may be very small compared to the West, pressure about how to manage these public lands is intense. About two thirds of the American people, 200 million, live within a days drive of at least one of the eastern National Forests.

Perhaps the most significant opportunity and challenge that came with these new public lands was a chance to demonstrate that they could be rehabilitated and put back in production. The Forest Service set about this with programs of: tree planting to reestablish forest cover and control erosion; cleaning out and improving stream courses; redesigning, rebuilding and improving roads; closing roads that were not needed; controlling wildfires and a myriad of other things necessary to help the land recover from past abuse. Over time,

tens of thousands of Forest Service employees dedicated their efforts and skills toward improving and protecting the ecological and esthetic values of the recently acquired lands. Today when you “walk” many of these areas you have to look closely to see remnants of past use such as stumps and abandoned logging roads. It is a tribute to their efforts, which were so successful, that within a few years many areas became commonly referred to as “wilderness”, and in, 1975, when the Eastern Wilderness Act was passed, some became Wilderness under that statute. Parts of the Cohutta Wilderness in the Chattahoochee National Forest in North Georgia had been railroad logged in the 1920s. It takes a practiced eye and historical records to see that now. Many an old timer has stifled a smile when told by ardent environmentalists, “This old growth forest is what we want.”

While the Forest Service led the way, it must be said that it had help from agencies of the various states and other cooperators, including individuals and groups who were users of the forests - either for recreation, hunting, fishing and other leisure pursuits or for business, such as timber harvesting, grazing livestock and extracting minerals. All these efforts led to a vast improvement of lands in the National Forests. There was the added benefit of showing those who owned land which was intermingled within forest boundaries, as well as those elsewhere, ways to improve their own land. A good example of state and federal cooperation to recover both National Forest and private land was the Yazoo Little Tallahatchie (YLT) River Project on badly eroded areas in North Mississippi. The

YLT, as it was widely known, was a Forest Service “project.” It was staffed with Forest Service people, covered parts or all of 19 counties in Mississippi, and functioned from 1948 to 1985. During that time over 739 million trees were planted. The job was to try to stop and manage erosion in highly erodible loess soils. Some gullies were so big, over 60 acres, and worked on for so long that they were given names to distinguish one from the other. Usually it was the landowner’s name. How would you like to have a gully named after you?

President William Clinton spoke eloquently in his October 13, 1999 remarks, to a group of “roadless area” enthusiasts, at the Reddish Knob overlook in the George Washington National Forest when he said, “A century ago when Mr. Pinchot was first dreaming up his plan to protect our forests, this vista looked very different than what we see today. In fact it was more wasteland than forest”. He then went on to say, “Nowadays hundreds of thousands of visitors come here every year to hike, swim, bike, hunt, fish or just to breathe the fresh air and take in the beautiful sights. The land that once nobody wanted is now a thriving forest everyone can enjoy”.

In a 1977 report for The Conservation Foundation, by William E. Shands and Robert G. Healy, titled “The Lands Nobody Wanted”, they said “The work of the Forest Service in rehabilitating the eastern National Forests— in large measure land that only recently nobody wanted— is one of the great conservation achievements of American history”.



CCC planting crew 1937, Blue Pond Plantation, Conecuh National Forest. First CCC pine plantation in Alabama.

Photo courtesy of the Forest Service.



**Museum Medallion** — Given in recognition of Capital Campaign Gifts of \$5,000 to \$9,999. It is a 3-inch pewter medallion, with nameplate and wood base.

# Museum Interpretive Goals

The goals were developed by Charrette members in April 2007 and approved by the Board of Directors. The definition of an Interpretive Goal is: An intended outcome stated as an expression of what the visitor will learn, understand, experience, or do. **Visitors to the museum and to the Internet “virtual museum” will understand:**

1. The historical and cultural context that led to the creation of the Forest Service and why it exists today.
2. The major role the Forest Service plays in managing wildfire as well as the natural role that fire plays in the ecosystem.
3. That there are many different demands placed on National Forest land and that the agency manages these demands for the greatest good for the greatest number in the long run.
4. How men and women of the Forest Service have remained hard working and dedicated even as their makeup has changed over time in response to changes in societal values and technology.
5. That the Forest Service has one of the largest research and technology organizations in the world and along with universities and private organizations provides the basis for professional management of our nation’s public and private forest and rangelands.
6. That they (the visitors) have a voice and a responsibility to let leaders know how they would like their forests to be managed now and into the future.
7. That from the beginning, the Forest Service has worked with and been assisted by many different groups and partners in fulfilling its diverse mission.
8. That the Forest Service has used many means and methods to communicate its message of resource conservation to the public. Some of these have become cultural icons. Examples are: Dixie Crusaders and the penny pines, posters, Smokey Bear, TV, movies, Ad Council, Aircraft Warning Service and environmental education.
9. Become aware that the Forest Service went through distinct eras or transformations during its first Century.

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## Green Hornet Fire Engine

Dan Gosnell is leading the effort to restore the 1951 fire engine. The water pump has been rebuilt and Pierre Levin, City Wide Trucking and Equipment of Sherman Oaks CA has donated tires and rims for the truck. A partial list of items needed for restoration are: Stock Ford gas cap, White government license plates, Tear drop shape back pack pump, Gated brass wye 2 ½, 2 R5 alum nozzles, 2 ½ basket ball alum strainer, appropriate hand tools, 400 ft of 1” hose, and a new battery. Please contact Dan (909-382-2632) if you can donate any item or for additional information. Dan’s address is San Bernardino National Forest, 602 S. Tippecanoe Ave, San Bernardino, CA 92408. See photo page 6.

## 1938 Kenworth Remount Truck

A project coordinator is needed to lead the restoration of the vehicle that is located in Missoula, MT. Please call the Museum Office (406-541-6374) to volunteer for the project.

## Missing Museum Members

We need help to track Museum members who have moved and did not leave a forwarding address. The last known address is listed below for the missing members.

**William A. Campbell**, 6300 Torreon Dr NE, Albuquerque, NM (a LIFE member)

**Van Johnson**, 900 S Meadows Parkway Apt 4513, Reno, NV

**Bobbie Saubert**, 19110 E Poco Rio Dr, Rio Verde, AZ (a LIFE member)

**Henry Sixkiller**, PO Box 532 Doniphan, MO

**James Stapleton**, 819 Carsten Circle, Benicia, CA

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## Coming Events



### Museum’s Annual Meeting

Portland Oregon in conjunction with the Society of American Foresters meeting. The date is October 23, 2007. Plan to attend.

### November Newsletter

Alaska Region History Article

# Welcome New Members

5/17/07 to 8/11/07

Richard R. Allured  
Robert D. Averill  
James K. Brown  
Clint Carlson  
George & Patricia Coombes  
Suzy M. Del Villar  
Paul K. Driesbach

Vicki Grimm  
Jim Hanrahan  
William N. Hawks  
Marcia Hogan  
Andy Leven  
Randy Menkens  
Gene M. Meyers

Terry & William Moore  
Nancy Norberg  
Hugh Pangman  
Bob & Diane Rhodes  
Dave Wanzenried  
Randall K. Warner  
Gloria Weisgerber

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# Unrestricted Donations

5/17/07 to 8/11/07

Chester A. Bennett  
Wade Boyd  
Gary G. Brown  
Wanda Ceaglio  
Dick Flannelly  
Jeanne Higgins  
Terry Hoffman

Wendall & Jessie Jones  
Carl Juhl  
Robert Lease  
Doug Leisz  
William M. Palmer  
Max Peterson  
Chris Risbrudt

Kenneth Roberts  
John Sandor  
Ken I. Young  
Pierre Levin, City Wide Trucking  
Equipment

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# Capital Campaign Donations

5/17/07 to 8/11/07

Richard R Allured  
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Chester A. Bennett  
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Robert W. Cermak  
Bill Cooperrider  
Forrest Fenstermaker  
Jerry Gause  
Fred Haeussler  
Gene Hawkes  
Terry Hoffman  
John R. Hook  
James & Rosemary Johnston  
Mike Kerrick

Andy Leven  
John Marker  
Terry & William Moore  
Gray F. Reynolds  
Bob & Diane Rhodes  
Ted Schlapfer  
Raymond G. Weinmann  
Mike Kaplan, Aspen Skiing Co.  
Tony Schoonen, Boone and Crock-  
ett Club  
Terry Forest, DJ&A  
Eastern Forest Service Retiree  
Assn.  
Mt Hood Ski Resort

Michael Berry, National Ski Areas  
Assn.  
Northern Rocky Mountain Retirees  
Assn.  
Pacific Southwest FSX Club  
Ron Raley, Phos-Check Retar-  
dants, Foam & Gel  
George A. Robey, Phos-Check  
Retardants, Foam & Gel  
Raley's Forestry & Wildfire Man-  
agement  
Richard D. Bass, Snowbird Renais-  
sance Center

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## 1951 Ford Green Hornet

Purchased by the mu-  
seum in 2006. The vehi-  
cle will be available for  
parades and other events  
in southern California  
following restoration.

See Green Hornet  
article page 5.

**Capital Campaign Donation and Pledge Card**  
National Museum of Forest Service History, P.O. Box 2772  
Missoula, MT 59806-2772

Donor Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_

I / We enclose a gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I / We pledge a total gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Pledge Payment Schedule:

1) Date \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 3) Date \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

2) Date \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 4) Date \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

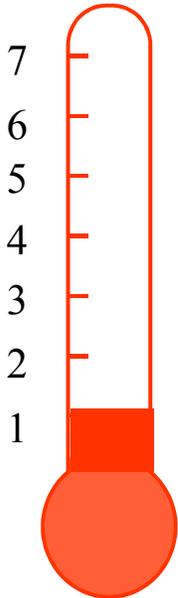
**Please pay pledges by December 31, 2008**

Gifts and pledges may be paid by cash/check or by gifting securities (stocks and bonds). For securities, please call the Museum Office (406 541-6374) or write the Museum Office for transfer instructions. In accordance with IRS regulations, **your gift is fully tax-deductible.**

All donors will be recognized in a commemorative booklet available at the Museum. Donors giving \$1,000 or more will be recognized on the Wall of Honor in the Museum lobby.



**Capital Campaign  
Thermometer  
\$6 Million Goal**



**Capital Campaign  
Gifts**

As of 08/13/2007

Members & Friends	\$ 263,050
Pledges	\$ 89,276
Organizations	\$ 102,400
Foundations	\$ 20,000
In-Kind Gifts	\$ 3,400
Forest Service, USDA	\$ 525,000
Endowment	\$ 17,034
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,020,160</b>

**Campaign News**

The capital campaign is moving ahead. Thanks to **Ted and Beth Schlapfer** for donating a residential lot in Palm Coast Florida with an appraised value of \$53,000! Thanks to **Bob Model** and the Boone and Crocket Club for a \$50,000 donation and **George Roby** for a \$10,000 donation from Phos-Chek Retardants, Foam & Gel. Also to **Stan Zimet** and **Oz Architects P.C.** for donating architectural services worth more than \$20,000. The Forest Service **Forest Products Laboratory** in Madison Wisconsin has awarded the Museum a \$25,000 grant for structural engineering design using small-diameter roundwood trusses. This year the Museum has received several generous donations of common stock and an IRA rollover.



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**Note: Your mailing label shows the date your membership expires. Please mail dues payment, 1 month prior to the date listed above. This space is blank on complementary issues of the newsletter. Please renew EXPIRED memberships as soon as possible to continue support of the Museum program.**



### Membership Application

Fill out, detach, and mail to: National Museum of Forest Service History, P.O. Box 2772  
Missoula, MT 59806-2772

Mr. \_\_ Ms. \_\_ Dr. \_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  New  Renewal  GIFT

#### Membership Categories Annual Dues

Individual	\$30 or more	Sustaining	\$300 or more
Family	\$55 or more	Organization	\$100 or more
Contributing	\$150 or more	Life	\$1000 or more

## Forest Service History Memorial Donations

5/17/07 to 8/11/07

Max Green  
Ed Grosch  
Randyl Hearst

Vale Mack  
Peg Mullen  
Max Peterson

John Sandor  
Pacific Southwest FSX Club