Some National Forests Never Became a Reality

Editor’s Note: In searching through the archival collection of the National Museum of Forest Service History, I quite often come across old Forest Service maps showing National Forests that no longer exist. This is particularly the case in the Forest Service’s Region 9, the Eastern Region. It may have been the case in other Regions. The following has been extracted from H.P. McConnell’s “Historical Summary of Land Adjustment and Classification, Region 9, 1929-1962.” Thanks to Sandy Jo Forney, Region 9 Heritage Program Director, for providing this information.

Abandoned National Forests
Dakota National Forest, North Dakota

This National Forest was abolished by Proclamation No. 1387 dated July 30, 1917. Although this National Forest was never under the jurisdiction of Region 9, Regional Office files contain information as follows:

“This National Forest was proclaimed by Proclamation No. 824 dated November 24, 1908. It was located in Slope County in the southwestern part of the State, some 25 miles east from the Montana-North Dakota State line and about 12 miles northwest of Amidon. The gross area was listed in the 1910 Forest Service area table as 13,920 acres, which made it the smaller National Forest in the United States. The net Federal ownership was 6,734 acres. The Forest was administered from Camp Crook, South Dakota, headquarters for the Sioux (Custer) National Forest, and was under the jurisdiction of Region 1 at Missoula, Montana.”

Bellevue-Savanna Forest, Illinois

This National Forest was abandoned as a National Forest by Public Land Order No. 982 dated July 15, 1954. A brief resume of the Forest’s history as taken from the records is as follows:

“This National Forest, originally called the Savanna, was created by E.O. No. 4247 of June 5, 1925, under the authority contained in Section 9 of the Clarke-McNary Act of June 7, 1924. By E.O. No. 44558 dated June 15 1926, the name was changed to Bellevue-Savanna.

The area is located in the northwestern part of the State, adjacent to the Mississippi River in Joe Daviess and Carroll Counties and comprises a gross area of 10,710 acres, of which 9,910 are in Joe Daviess County. The entire area is owned by the United States.

In 1925, the Secretary of War and the Secretary of Agriculture entered into a joint agreement relative to the rules, regulations and general plans for the administration of the area.

The area is also within the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge which at that time (1925) was under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture. By an agreement executed on November 18, 1926, by the Commanding Officer of the Savanna Proving Grounds and the Superintendent of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, and approved by the Secretaries of War and Agriculture, full jurisdiction of the area on the part of the Department of Agriculture was assumed by the Bureau of Biological Survey. Their headquarters are at Winona, Minnesota.

There are approximately 4,000 acres classified as timberland with a total estimated volume of 12,5000 MBM. The principal species are soft maple, ash, elm, river birch, willow, red and black oak.”

ABANDONED PURCHASE UNITS
St. Croix Unit (Minnesota) Abandoned December 3, 1930

This unit embraced a gross area of 183,540 acres. An area of 14,320 acres was located in Carlton County and 169,220 acres in Pine County. The area was adjacent to the east boundary of Wisconsin and some 35 miles south of Duluth, Minnesota, and was drained largely by the St. Croix River.

The report is dated November 15, 1928 and was prepared by Staff Officer J.M. Walley. It was submitted to the National Forest Reservation Commission and approved at its meeting on December 12, 1928.

Within this purchase unit about 70 percent of the lands were tax delinquent and most of the political townships had a bonded indebtedness. At the time this unit was proposed, it was believed that a procedure could be worked out with the Interim Committee of the Legislature that would permit the

Continued on page 3
From the Vice President

Your Museum continues to make strides on many different fronts. All Museum members can support these efforts by asking your friends to become members to support our goal of preserving and interpreting the history of the U.S. Forest Service. The Museum needs more members in all sections to the country. Our greatest strength is the broad network of friends and co-workers we have known at various duty stations across the United States. Please talk with your friends about the Museum and ask them to join.

President Bush signed Executive Order 13287, Preserve America, in March. The Executive Order is part of a new White House initiative to support community efforts to preserve and use cultural and natural resources. The goals are to promote the benefits of preservation of historic property, encourage public-private partnerships and improve Federal stewardship of cultural properties. Agencies are directed to seek partnerships to manage properties; contribute to local economies; increase public access; and benefit historical properties and objects.

The Forest Service and Museum partnership is well underway. Chief Dale Bosworth will soon formalize the relationship between the Museum and the Forest Service on the national level by signing of a Memorandum of Understanding. The Executive Order will allow the Museum to provide greater support to the Forest Service.

The Museum Support Group, a Board subcommittee is developing the Museum's Capital Campaign and has completed the first draft of the “Information Book”. Significant time was spent refining the Museum's program. The Support Group sees the program as much more than a museum building. The program is described as 1) a museum with interpretative displays, and documents; 2) Collections of Forest Service artifacts and documents; 3) Conservation education to aid understanding of current issues; 4) Honoring people through biographical information of persons who contributed to the conservation mission of the Forest Service; and 5) Linking history sites through collaboration with other forest history sites across the country for the purpose of exchanging information, loaning artifacts and providing technical curatorial advice. The program description may change as we receive member feedback and Board review.

I am looking forward to a busy summer Museum visitor program during July and August at the Bungalow cabin and the Forest Service Missoula Technology Development Center. The summer program will be very modest this season. In 2004 we’ll apply the lessons of this year and expand.

Dave Stack, Vice-President

From the Executive Director

A new season is upon us and it looks as though our persistence at this Museum project is beginning to pay-off. As Dave mentioned above, We are planning to open the Bungalow Cabin and help the Missoula Technology Development Center maintain visitor services during the months of July and August, 2003. We’ll need volunteers to help with this so please contact us (at the office telephone number at left) if you are interested.

Work on the Museum site is continuing with the planting of about 85 additional trees provided by the National Tree Trust and the Champion Tree Project. These trees will complete the screening on the SW boundary of the Museum property. We have received a grant from the US Forest Service to extend the irrigation system to supply these additional trees with much needed water. The irrigation extension was installed during the last week of April. Over the next month we will see the installation of, lawn irrigation, an exhibit, and the staining of the exterior walls of the Cabin.

I thank all the volunteers. Their effort continues to move us forward on the path toward our goal of a fully operational museum and educational program.

Frank McKinney
Never Became a Reality...Continued from page 1

United States to acquire the delinquent tax lands from the State of Minnesota. This never materialized and, since tax title lands in Minnesota are not acceptable to the Attorney General, a successful purchase program could not be carried out. In view of this, the Region recommended that the purchase unit be abandoned. Formal action to abandon the unit was taken by the National Forest Reservation Commission on Dec 3, 1930.

Souris and Sheyenne Units (North Dakota) Abandoned April 7, 1956

For several years beginning in the early nineteen thirties the people of North Dakota, through their Senators and Representatives and associations, had indicated a desire for Federal action in the reforestation or afforestation of certain parts of the State suitable for tree growth.

Several studies were made at different times, the result of which was to suggest two proposed areas within the State as offering the greatest probability of successful reforestation or afforestation under Federal auspices.

Early in 1935 Mr. J.H. Stoeckeler, Staff Officer of the Lake States Forest Experiment Station, prepared a report covering the proposed Souris and Sheyenne Purchase Units in North Dakota. Acreages by counties were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Souris</td>
<td>McHenry</td>
<td>366,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bottineau</td>
<td>11,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pierce</td>
<td>93,932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>471,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheyenne</td>
<td>Ransom</td>
<td>97,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Richland</td>
<td>171,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cass</td>
<td>23,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>292,531</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two units were approved by the National Forest Reservation Commission on March 7, 1935. Shortly thereafter, however, the funds available for land acquisition became sharply curtailed and the Commission adopted the rule that purchases would be made only within those areas in which the United States owned 20 percent or more of the area. Since two units did not meet that requirement, the purchase program was deferred.

Also in 1935, the Resettlement Administration established a Land Utilization Project with boundaries almost coincident with the Sheyenne Unit.

Only one tract was purchased in North Dakota. This was a 480 acre tract for a nursery site. Previous to this, a 40 acre tract was donated for experimental purposes.

As a result of the 1953 boundary revisions for the Region, a recommendation was made, in December of 1953, that the two North Dakota purchase units be abandoned. Formal action was taken by the National Forest Reservation Commission on April 17, 1956.

Hawkeye Purchase Units (Iowa) Abandoned April 17, 1956

Largely through the efforts of L.B. MacDonald, State Forester and Professor of Forestry at Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, a rather quick reconnaissance was made, by staff members of the Regional Office, of proposed areas for National Forests in southeastern Iowa.

During the latter part of 1934, the State of Iowa conducted the “Forest and Waste Land Survey” of many southern Iowa Counties, and it was on the basis of those surveys that four proposed purchase units were recommended for the State of Iowa.

The four proposed units and acreages by counties were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chariton</td>
<td>Appanoose</td>
<td>27,965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lucas</td>
<td>21,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marion</td>
<td>18,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>84,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>151,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wapello</td>
<td>Appanoose</td>
<td>48,776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chequest)</td>
<td>Davis</td>
<td>133,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monroee</td>
<td>16,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Van Buren</td>
<td>21,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wapello</td>
<td>24,436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>244,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand River</td>
<td>Clarke</td>
<td>44,668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>166,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lucas</td>
<td>34,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ringgold</td>
<td>11,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Union</td>
<td>39,608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>12,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>309,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keosauqua</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>61,497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Van Buren</td>
<td>62,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>123,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand total:</td>
<td>829,116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These proposed units were presented to the National Forest Reservation Commission and approved at its meeting held on January 21, 1935.

In February 1935, the name of the Wapello Unit was changed to Chequest. The basis for the change was to eliminate confusion with the name of an established purchase unit in Missouri named “Wappapello”.

The initial purchase in the State of Iowa was a 100 acre tract for a nursery in 1936.

In 1938, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics was interested in starting a purchase program of sub marginal lands in Iowa. Their first project choice was within the boundaries of the Grand River Unit. Since the Forest Service had not initiated any purchase program in this unit, it appeared desirable to cooperate with the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and action was taken to abandon the Grand River Unit. Formal action was taken by the National Forest Reservation Commission meeting, November 14, 1938.

Before any purchases were made in any of the remaining three units, the Commission, in January 1936, adopted a rule to the effect that no purchases would be approved in units in which less than 20 percent of the purchaseable area already had been approved for purchase. Subsequent to the passing of this 20 percent limitation, it became evident that the United States could not carry out its intention in the State of Iowa and recommended a resumption of a purchase program and reduc-
tion of the gross area of the three units from 519,820 acres to 218,671 acres. This was approved by the National Forest Reservation Commission on January 26, 1939. Due to rather meager allotments, only a small purchase program was conducted in the State of Iowa. By June 30, 1942, when the purchase program was halted in Iowa, a total of only 4,749 acres had been acquired.

As a result of the 1953 boundary revisions for the Region, a recommendation was made in December of 1953 that the three Iowa purchase units should be abandoned. Formal action was taken by the National Forest Reservation Commission on April 17, 1956.

Since 1956, two special laws have been passed involving Federal lands in Iowa. One was the Act of July 14, 1960, authorizing the United States to sell, to the City of Keosauqua, the 100-acre tract which had been acquired for a nursery site at a fair appraised values as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. Conveyance to the City was made on March 1, 1961, for $12,925.

The second law, the Act of October 4, 1961 that, authorizing the United States to sell to the State of Iowa approximately 4,649 acres of land at a fair market value. If within two years from the date the State is advised of the fair market value, the State has not entered into firm agreement for the purchase of all such lands, the Secretary is authorized thereafter to sell the lands to the highest bidder, for not less than the fair market value.

**PURCHASE AREAS UNAPPROVED**

Under this heading, there were two groups. One group was areas examined during the expansion period of the early and middle thirties, when large sums of money were available for purchase of lands under the amended Weeks Act. The other group included military areas used during World War I under the first group were:

- Wisconsin – Proposed Namekagon Unit: This unit was located in Douglas, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties, embracing a gross area of 449,965 acres. Report prepared in October 1930.
- Wisconsin – Proposed Wolf River Unit: This unit was in Langlade County with a gross area of 184,320 acres. Report prepared October 1930.
- North and South Dakotas – Proposed Sand Hills Unit: Located in Marshall and Brown Counties in northeastern South Dakota and in Dickey and Sergeant Counties in southeastern North Dakota. The gross area was 42,560 acres. The report was prepared in October 1930.
- Missouri-Proposed Lake of the Ozarks Unit: Located in Miller, Camden, Morgan, and Benton Counties and embraced a gross area of 326,400 acres. It included a reservoir known as “The Lake of the Ozarks” created by a dam across the Osage River and comprised some 64,000 acres with a total shoreline of 1,300 miles.
- Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota-Proposed Mississippi Bluff Unit: Located in western Wisconsin, northeastern Iowa, and southeastern Minnesota. It was proposed primarily as an erosion control unit by the Lake States Experiment Station. It included an area of 1,430,400 acres in Wisconsin; 891,500 acres in Minnesota; and, 279,100 acres in Iowa.

The second group of unapproved purchase areas was composed of military reservation areas. After the passage of the Clarke-McNary Act of June 7, 1924, the War Department requested the Department of Agriculture examine several of the military areas in the United States and consider their acceptability for National Forest purposes, under Section 9 of the 1924 Act.

Within the boundaries of Region 9, the following military reservations were examined by the Chief’s Office:
- Michigan………………..Camp Custer
- Illinois………………..Great Lakes Naval Station
- Missouri………………..Jefferson Barracks
- Wisconsin………………Camp Sparta

For the most part, the areas were small with little or no timber cover and totally unacceptable as National Forests. In addition, all areas would remain subject to the unhampered use of the Army and Navy for National Defense.

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**FOR SALE**

**SOLD**
From the Museum’s Collection

With approach of the inevitable fire season in the Northern Rockies, we thought we would publish a few pictures to show the high tech firefighting equipment of the 1920s and 30s. Things haven’t changed all that much.

![Image of 1920s firefighting equipment]

These photos were taken at the Herman Creek Ranger Station, Mt. Hood National Forest, Oregon, ca. early 1920s. This Station later became the Columbia Gorge Ranger Station. People in photos not identified. Photos are from the Verna Price Collection, National Museum of Forest Service History.

Below, left is an REO Speed Wagon from the 1930s at the Columbia Gorge Ranger Station. Now we all know where that great rock band from the 1970s and 80s got their name. Photo from the Verna Price Collection, NMFSH.

Big Thanks to Gary Brown

On Wednesday April 2, 2003, former NMFSH President Gary Brown was presented with a plaque of appreciation from the NMFSH Board of Directors by Executive Director Frank McKinney. He also received a letter of appreciation from Chief of the Forest Service Dale Bosworth, presented by NMFSH Vice President Dave Stack, retired Missoula District Ranger. The presentations were at the Annual Meeting of the Northern Rocky Mountain Retirees Association (Forest Service Region 1 retirees) in Missoula.

Gary served for 14 years as the President of the NMFSH. He has seen it grow from a small idea in a few people’s heads to an organization with a growing operation. The Board and the Chief of the Forest Service wanted to show appreciation for his long term service to our organizations.

We also have to give NMFSH Board member and volunteer Jack Fisher a big thank you. Jack designed and built the plaque out of black walnut that came from Pennsylvania. Jack’s craftsmanship never ceases to amaze us and we are very fortunate to have his assistance with our many projects. Thank you Gary and thank you Jack.

Gracias

NMFSH Executive Director Frank McKinney (L), Former NMFSH President Gary Brown (M), NMFSH Vice President Dave Stack (Right).

Exec. Dir…………………..Continued from page 2
Monetary Donations
2/1/03 to 5/8/03

Dick & Carole Carson
Ray Connelly
James Drury
Joseph Flynn in memory of Henry Branagh & Lloyd Britton
Harry Fowells in memory of George M. Jemison
Sam Halverson
Mike Hardy
Lyle Laverty
Donald Morton in memory of George M. Jemison
Margaret Nybo
Skip & Donna Oetzel
Jan Peterson
Delmar Radtke in memory of Ralph Space, Sam Evans, Gus Verdahl
Jim Reid
Emil Sabol
Ted & Beth Schlapfer in memory of Tony Skufca
George Semmens
Florence Strickler in memory of Bruce Strickler
Steve Yurich in memory of M.M. (Red) Nelson
Roy Wenger in memory of David Chapman
Whit Whitfield in memory of John McGuire
Archer Wirth

A huge thank you goes out to all those listed above.

Smokejumper Memorial Plaque

On Friday, May 18th, 2003, the NMFSH received a plaque by the National Smokejumper Association. The plaque memorializes 30 Smokejumpers who died in the line of duty, from the beginning of the program in 1939, to the present. The plaque also came with a book containing biographical information on the individuals. Thirteen of these plaques were produced and presented to organizations with an interest in the Smokejumper program. The NMFSH thanks the National Smokejumper Association for this wonderful memorial. The plaque will be on display in the Bungalow Ranger Residence and will someday hang in the new Museum building.

NMFSH makes the Combined Federal Campaign List

In April of 2003, the National Museum of Forest Service History applied to be included on the 2003-2004 local Combined Federal Campaign. We are happy to report that the NMFSH have been accepted. This means that federal employees in the Missoula/Ravalli County area can now make donations to the NMFSH through the CFC Campaign.

This is significant because, while it may not result in a large amount of donations, It gives the NMFSH additional recognition and credibility within the FS and the Federal Government. Remember, every little donation to the NMFSH makes a difference. Those of you who give to the CFC, please consider designating the NMFSH as the recipient.

Thanks to Board member John Drake for his help with the application. He was a big help.

Volunteers Needed

I wanted to let our membership know of several volunteer positions available at the NMFSH during the summer of 2003.

I am looking for someone interested in doing lawn mowing work at both the Catlin St. facility and the Bungalow site. This position would require about one day’s work per week. We’ll supply a push type lawnmower for the job. Someone with a riding lawnmower would be welcome to donate the mower time; we can supply the gasoline.

We are also looking for individuals to volunteer as guides and interpreters to help with the summer program in July and August.

If you are interested in helping us please call the NMFSH office at 406-541-6374.

Bungalow Ranger Station Project

We are looking for people who have lived and worked at the Bungalow Ranger Station, Clearwater National Forest, Idaho for a project to compile oral histories of the Station. We are also looking for photos and artifacts that are associated with the Station.

Our goal is to develop an exhibit and publication about the Ranger Station and the Residence now located at the National Museum of Forest Service History. If you are interested in helping contact us at the numbers and addresses on page 2.
Membership Application
Fill out, detach, and mail to: National Museum of Forest Service History, P.O. Box 2772
Missoula, MT 59806-2772

Name: __Mr.__ Ms. ___Dr._____________________________ Address: _________________________________

City/State/Zip: __________________________________________ Daytime Ph.: ___________________________

E-mail:______________________ ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Membership Categories Annual Dues Individual $30 or more
Family $55 or more $30 or more
Contributing $150 or more $300 or more
Sustaining $300 or more $1000 or more
Life $1000 or more

Profession*:__________________ Age*:______________________

Income Range*: $__________/yr. Educational level*:__________________

*These are optional

The Company Store

Get your NMFSH merchandise here!

“Guardian of the Headwaters” by Monte Dolack: A print dedicated to the men and women of the Forest Service on the 100th Anniversary of the USDA Forest Service. $20.00+$6 S&H unsigned, $75.00+$6 S&H signed and numbered, 25¢ for postcards.

NMFSH Cap: White w/ forest green bill and NMFSN logo, or solid green w/ white logo, cotton, adjustable, $12 ppd.

NMFSH Sweatshirt: Stylish, heavyweight, cotton/polyester sweatshirt. Forest green with cream logo. (L&XL only) $25 ppd.


“Conservation Motifs” notecards: same design as the poster (with envelope) $1 each ppd.

“They Hired Out To Be Tough” booklet: A short history of the FS published by the NMFSH. $5.00 each

Send check or money order only to: National Museum of Forest Service History
P.O. Box 2772
Missoula, MT 59806-2772

Please allow 3 weeks for delivery of all items
The Last Defense.
The North Wind roars, the grey smudge soars,
Hell’s Kitchen hot again.
The Rangers prance to the Devil’s Dance
And the call goes out for men.
From pool hall lights and jungle nights,
From dive and dump and flop.
We’re rounded up like a homeless pup
By the Dick and Harness cop.
We’re every sort from every port
Cheerful and grim and sad,
We’re brown and white and black as night
Some good, but mostly bad.
We’re loud mouthed punks and canned heat
drunks,
Straight and crooked - or worse.
We stand the gaff with a whine or laugh,
And work with a joke or curse.
We hack and chop till we want to drop,
Shovel and scrape and clear.
With a throat that’s dry and a smarting eye,
Till we long for some needled beer.

We put in shifts where the sour smoke drifts,
And loaf on night patrols.
We have the shakes when the fire line breaks
And Hell grabs for our souls.
Oh, it ain't no Kid in a Stetson lid,
It ain't the guy with a shield.
That stems the tide when the fire front’s wide
And the Forest doom is sealed.
I have a hunch it’s the hobo bunch,
From hither and yon and whence,
That drags their tails down the long, long trails
And forms the last defense.
From the papers of R.W. Ayers, National Museum of Forest Service History. Notation on typewritten manuscript states that the poem was found in a WPA transient work camp, Parris Valley, Cleveland National Forest, California, February 1936.