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The Friday Newsletter



No. 51 1690 December 17, 1982

News Briefs

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO EACH OF YOU!
As we enjoy the Holiday Season, it is a good time to reflect on the year just past, and prepare ourselves for the year ahead. This year has been a year of accomplishment, and the Forest Service Family can be proud of its achievements.

We have adjusted to an economic situation, and its ongoing demand that we accomplish more with fewer dollars and fewer people. Your cooperation and creative ingenuity were invaluable in helping us reach our goals. By staying in front of the situation, making decisions early, and making a vigorous effort to find better ways of doing things, we've adapted to cutbacks without major disruptions. And this is the way we are approaching the year ahead.

I wish for each of you a warm and enjoyable Holiday Season. And I extend my

personal thanks to you for your contributions to the Forest Service during the past year. Merry Christmas!

POSITION CLASSIFICATION PROCESS P.I.T. TEAM MAKES REPORT: Another of the Productivity Improvement Teams has completed its report. The Position Classification Process team briefed us last week on recommendations which could streamline the system and save more than \$2.5 million annually.

The team's recommendations included increased use of standard job descriptions, and greater line officer involvement in the classification process. We have initiated actions to implement these recommendations.

Members of the team are David Jay of R-5, team leader; and Eric Hodnett, R-6; Shirley Moore, PNW; George Martin, R-8; Norm Powell, R-4; Shirley Atkinson, R-8; Kathy Quillian, WO; and Carl Webb, R-9.



P.I.T. TEAM DECORATES CHRISTMAS TREE-- Members of the Position Classification Process P.I.T. Team decorated the Washington Office Christmas Tree after briefing us on their report last week. In the picture (left to right) are Shirley Atkinson, Norm Powell, Eric Hodnett, Kathy Quillian, George Martin, Shirley Moore and David Jay.

For further information, contact the Editor of the Friday Newsletter, Office of Information, WO.

PRISON INMATES ARE CUTTING THEIR OWN FIREWOOD: In a wood energy demonstration--a R-8 S&PF cooperative project with Mississippi and the Department of Energy--hot water and heat for three dormitories at the Mississippi State Penitentiary in Parchman, are being provided by a huge wood-fired boiler. The fuelwood for the boiler and its six heat exchangers is grown and harvested on a State woodlot by the inmates.

The penitentiary has hired a forester to manage its woodlot. Objectives of the project are to harvest, transport and store woody biomass for the three inmate housing units, and to demonstrate the application of aggressive management techniques in integrating fuelwood recovery with regular logging operations on state forest land.

So far the inmates have cut and stored more than 1,200 cords of wood. About 750 cords is estimated to be a year's supply. The inmates have fabricated six sleds, one splitter, two flatbed trucks, and have modified another truck to serve as a workshop.

Three interesting side benefits of the project, which have developed, are that inmates are being trained as woodsmen, surplus wood is to be sold to supplement project funds, and the state land where the wood is being cut is undergoing intensive stand improvement. Inmates working on the project are volunteers and are proud of their work.

The state's Department of Corrections plans to use wood for heating 23 additional housing units in the future.

CONSISTENT FIREWOOD POLICY SET: In the interest of eliminating the public's confusion about our policies concerning personal use firewood on National Forests, we directed that a more consistent policy be followed throughout the Forest Service.

Increased demand for personal-use firewood has caused National Forests to charge for, or grant free use for firewood in differing ways. The new policy will ensure better public understanding.

Where a charge is made for National Forest firewood, the minimum will be \$10. Charges will probably be higher in areas where there is a great demand, such as forests adjacent to large metropolitan areas. Free wood still will be available where supplies significantly exceed demand.

The amount of wood available under each permit will depend on local supplies, but, generally, individuals will be limited to a maximum of 10 cords per year.

The personal use firewood program has grown to the point where it has become a major use. Some forests no longer have surplus wood available, particularly near population centers.

Since 1973, the demand for firewood from National Forests has increased more than 1,000 percent. More than 900,000 individuals harvested 4.2 million cords of wood from National Forests through the personal use firewood program in 1981.

NF TIMBER CAN BE MANAGED MORE EFFICIENTLY: Assistant Agriculture Secretary John B. Crowell, Jr. spoke to the California Alumni Foresters in Berkeley recently on National Forest management under the Reagan Administration. He said that his objective is to contribute as much as possible to the process of getting the nation's economy back on its feet by improving the productivity of the National Forests.

Analysis has shown, he said, that National Forest timber can be managed much more efficiently than it has been in the past.

The barriers to more efficient management include: the non-declining yield policy applied to accumulated inventories of old-growth timber; unnecessary caution in eliminating productive sites from the timber base because they are also difficult terrain; costly timber harvest methods, including road construction; and high administrative costs, the Assistant Secretary said.

He said that if there has been any single effort that has the potential for

greatly reducing operating costs, it has been the redirection of the road building program. In 1982, we revised the direction, procedures and criteria for selecting road design standards. Our new direction includes: minimizing reconstruction; reducing road standards; restricting the amount of road surfacing; reducing the level of slash disposal on road rights-of-way; and closing some roads when the timber sale has been completed.

Emphasis on economic efficiency, he said, does not mean a lack of sensitivity to non-market values. There is no inherent conflict between achievement of reasonable economic goals and reasonable environmental goals. What is required is achievement of environmental and non-market goals in a cost-effective way and in a manner that is consistent with the need to produce market resources efficiently.

Legislation

WILDERNESS UPDATE: The House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs ordered reported, from their Dec. 8 markup, the following bills:

S.2710, Charles C. Deam Wilderness, Indiana; S.1965, Paddy Creek Wilderness, Missouri; H.R.7340, Oregon Wilderness; S.1946, Irish Wilderness; S.764, John Sack Cabin; S.1501, Mining Education Act.

In other action, an amendment to H.R.7340, offered by Rep. Denny Smith (R-Ore), that would have made RARE II sufficient in terms of wilderness value assessment and public participation, was defeated. An amendment to add provisions of the Wilderness Protection Act to S.764, was also rejected. And, an amendment to authorize the American Conservation Corps was successfully attached and made part of S.1501.

On Dec. 7, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee reported out four wilderness bills for consideration by the full Senate.

They were: H.R.9, Florida Wilderness; S.2110, Lee Metcalf Wilderness, Montana; S.2955, Cheaha Wilderness, Alabama; and

H.R.5161, West Virginia Wilderness.

PRESIDENT SUPPORTS BILLS FOR HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT: As members of Congress were returning from the election recess, President Reagan indicated his support for legislation that would provide for maintenance and rehabilitation of the Nation's highways and bridges. The proposed legislation would also contribute to needed employment of laid off workers.

Several bills have been introduced. The House has passed H.R.6211, Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982. This bill would authorize the expenditure of \$33 million for forest highways appropriated from the Highway Trust Fund for the next six years. The Trust Fund is financed by the Federal gasoline tax.

These monies would be expended for only those roads in the forest highway system which qualify. A similar bill, S.3043, the Senate's Federal Aid Highways Improvement Act of 1982, has been reported out of the Committee on Environment and Public Works, and would authorize \$50 million for forest highway improvements. Another Senate bill, S.3044, is being considered by the Committee on Finance. It would boost the funding level to \$75 million by the year 1984.

New Releases

*The complete text of the following speech may be obtained from the Speechwriting Section, OI, WO, FTS 447-6957.

Title: National Forest Management Under the Reagan Administration. Speaker: John B. Crowell, Jr., Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment. Audience: California Alumni Foresters. Place: Berkeley, Calif. Date: Dec. 3, 1982.



Chief

