

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

Washington, D. C.,
May 24, 1924.

O
Personnel

District Forester,

Dear Sir:

The answers to my letter of February 28 call for thoughtful consideration and, I believe, should serve as the basis for a revised Service policy regarding student employment and use of technically trained men as Rangers.

The conference with representatives of Forest schools has been postponed until fall but I wish at this time to review your replies and ask some further questions. I should be glad to have the discussion continue during the summer both by correspondence and in contacts with the members of this office.

In answer to the question as to how many forest school graduates will accept a District Ranger's work, District 1 reports that a majority of the graduates of the Montana school prefer Ranger jobs. Many of them prefer to go in as Rangers even though Ranger salaries are considerably less than those paid Forest Assistants. The same is believed to be true of the Idaho men. District 1 expresses the belief that a reasonable percentage of men from the eastern schools would prefer Ranger work.

District 2 believes that the present frame of mind prevailing among our young men and born of the spirit of the times is to cash in as handsomely and quickly as possible on their special training. The whole attitude of the rising generation toward life will have to change before we shall see any great numbers of highly trained specialists with Masters' degrees willing to settle down on Ranger districts with their income regulated by the Government salary scale. Perhaps more would be willing to do so if they could get the same salary that they would receive as a Forest Assistant, but not many of them are enthusiastic about taking on such a job at the entrance wage for a Ranger.

In District 3 the experience has been that in assigning technical men to districts considerable difficulty has been encountered in recent years. The men themselves in recent years have been dissatisfied with their assignments and have looked too much on Ranger work as a distasteful assignment merely accepted as a stepping stone to staff work or special assignment.

District 4 reports that some of their Forest Assistants appear to be anxious for training as a Ranger and that during the last year two have been placed in charge of Ranger districts and that they are taking hold, appreciating their opportunities, and are believed to be making good. The District believes that if the Service adopts the policy of requiring Forest Assistants to pass through the Ranger grade and if the heads of the schools recognize this and select the men properly for such experience, there will be no difficulty in having a large percentage of the Forest Assistants accept District Rangers' work and pass through the grade. It is largely a question of proper background and disposition on the part of the graduate.

District 5 believes that about one-third of the number of forest school graduates entering the Service would be willing to accept the work of a District Ranger if the salary scale provided by reclassification is made available and the policy of giving first consideration to technical men having District Ranger experience when making promotions is made clear.

District 6 believes that there are some forest school men who are perfectly willing to accept District Ranger work.

District 7 is convinced that the introduction of technical blood into the Ranger force will never work on a large enough scale to have an appreciable effect. The Ranger's job and pay will not hold the average man with a Master's degree in forestry for more than a couple of years at the most. It is not believed that we can expect the typical forest school graduate to be satisfied with the average Ranger job for as long a period as three years. The typical man is going to want quicker action in salary and in place of assignment and if he does not get it he and the Service acquire dissatisfaction.

In answer to the question as to how many forest school graduates each District would take on annually for the next four years for District Ranger work or assignments leading to District Ranger work the replies indicate that considerable headway will be made. The answers are shown by Districts in the following table:

Dist. 1	10.
" 2	Depends on how many of right sort turn up.
" 3	5 to 8, one-half to be technical grazing men.
" 4	4 or 5.
" 5	8 of which 3 should be technical grazing men.
" 6	10.
" 7	2 or 3.
" 8	1

District 1 plans to fill half its District Ranger vacancies by men from the forest schools.

District 2 is "very much opposed to, in any sense, considering the District Ranger job as merely a stepping stone for a forest school

graduate since this detracts from the importance and dignity of the position in the eyes of the technical man who we expect will remain on the Districts, acquire a feeling of proprietorship and give it the best there is in him without being unsettled by the desire to immediately graduate and do something better." The District regards very highly the employment of District Rangers who will remain permanently in the communities they serve; does not believe that the average technical man would be willing to settle down and view a Ranger district job as a permanent thing; has found in practice that technical men will not do so; also believes that graduating men from Ranger district jobs to fill higher places will take care of itself. District 2 makes the point that the need for technical men in District Ranger positions where intensive forestry is being practiced has been overstressed. The Black Hills is cited as a case where cutting is right up to the limit and management as intensive as it will be for a great many years but where nontechnical Rangers are handling the actual timber sale work satisfactorily. The District believes that without a different background than most of them have, Forest school men will never be able to handle the many other lines of work on a Ranger district as well as the local resident who knows from experience just how to handle himself in the woods and how to handle the local people. Wherever a forest school man with the right make-up and experience is found the District would consider putting him on a Ranger district just the same as anyone else but it is "impossible to forecast how many men of this sort will turn up."

The trouble with this is that it seems to the Forester's office to lead inevitably to a situation where it is only a matter of accident when a technically trained man selected for advancement to Supervisor and higher positions has the advantage of actual personal experience in the duties and responsibilities of a Ranger district. I cannot accept this as a sound basis on which to erect the structure of our personnel policy.

District 3 makes the point that technical foresters going into District Ranger work should not do so with the idea that such assignment is for a specific period or for training only. They should instead go in with the idea that advancement will depend entirely on themselves and on the occurrence of technical and administrative openings, and that for the higher administrative assignments they are in competition with Forest officers who entered the Service through the Ranger examination.

Experience in the District has been that the typical forest school graduate lacks much of the experience needed for District Ranger work and that because of this fact and because Eastern men need to become westernized before taking charge of districts it is advisable for them to get some training as an Assistant to a District Ranger. District 3 suggests that it may modify its conclusion as to the importance of the assistant assignment when the possibilities of its new Ranger training camp system are definitely known.

District 7 mentions the point that the District Ranger is the key man of the Service who furnishes the contact with the public and practices, or should practice, the real forestry; he lives in the woods and is of them; he is and must be identified with the life of his District and play a potent part in that life; his tenure of the position should be reasonably long. Men should have pride in the position. "We cannot afford to cheapen this position by having it looked upon solely as a stepping stone to other positions. I fully appreciate the benefit to the individual and to the Service of training Forest Assistants in the District Ranger position, but I do not subscribe to the belief that actual experience at the Ranger job is an absolute essential training in the development toward a Supervisorship."

The Forester's question here is, Does not this come pretty close to saying that a man can properly qualify himself for Supervisor and higher positions without practicing "real forestry or living in and being identified with the woods?" Do we really want to take any such position as this?

District 7 hopes, however, to put into the District Ranger position two or three technical men each year by transfer from acquisition work. The desirability is emphasized of impressing upon forest school representatives the fact that District Ranger work has become a position of dignity and standing in the profession.

District 8 is willing to take one forest school graduate in a position as Assistant to the District Ranger provided the individual can be approved in advance. Subsequent opportunity would depend entirely on the man himself.

In regard to the employment of forestry students in summer the statements by Districts may be summarized as follows:

District one has experienced considerable difficulty due to students not keeping their contracts of employment. District practice in handling student employment has been carefully revised and developed and it is hoped that the difficulty mentioned will disappear. If not it will be necessary to pretty well eliminate students from summer positions. The District employs students through the District office except those who are reemployed on the same National Forest. The latter may be hired by the Supervisor under whom previous service has been performed. Last year the Forests requisitioned approximately 70 students through the District office. This is in addition to those reemployed without reference to the District office. Applications for work were received from men in 14 different schools. Of 60 men to whom positions were offered, 42 declined, some so late as to seriously embarrass the District. It is estimated that 60 students all told were employed in the District last season. For the season of 1924, 101 students have been requisitioned by the Forests in addition to those who will be reemployed on the same Forest. Thirty-six are to be in the fire organization - lookouts and firemen. Two are for administrative guards, one for scaling, one for road work, eleven for timber survey and grazing reconnaissance and forty-nine for trail or other improvement work.

The system in use in District 1 commends itself to the Forester's office as very well adapted indeed to the needs of that District. Others who are interested might care to write District 1 for copies of letters, forms, etc., used.

Next summer District 2 plans to employ eight field assistants on timber survey jobs and they will probably all be forest school students. In quite a few cases forest school students have been employed as guards and these men have later taken Ranger jobs and then become full-fledged Forest Assistants. District 2 reports no great difficulty with students since the forest schools have adopted a policy of controlling the assignment of their men.

District 3 makes the interesting suggestion that a couple of special trail crews composed entirely of forestry students under competent supervision might be organized. The District is willing to place eight men in such a crew as an experiment and expand later if proved successful. After reviewing the other opportunities and peculiar limitations of the District it seems to the Forester's office that student employment is pretty well out of the question.

District 4 furnishes blank forms to a number of forest schools on which students can make applications for summer employment. The replies are summarized and the information given Supervisors and other employing officers in the District. These officers have tendered summer employment to a number of forestry students but usually such offers have been rejected. From \$70 to \$90 per month has not been sufficiently attractive to draw students from their other opportunities for summer work. Eastern students find it too expensive to come to District 4. Nevertheless from 3 to 8 eastern students have usually taken District 4 summer jobs. Forestry students from the universities of Idaho and Montana seem to find their way into District 1 work pretty largely.

District 5 secures from Forests a list of positions available for forestry students and this information is tabulated and sent to the forest schools, who are requested to correspond directly with Supervisors relative to all but timber survey positions which are handled from the District office. The District deals with fifteen different forest schools. It is planned to use 26 students in 1924, 8 or 10 of whom will be on timber surveys. The remainder will be dispatchers and firemen. Some 4 or 5 may be used on improvement work. The vacation period of the University of California does not harmonize with the period of need for students on the Forests. Forest Assistants now in the District have been drawn largely from the ranks of the students employed during the summer season.

In District 6 the employment of students is left to Supervisors. About 15 are normally employed - mostly from Oregon and Washington schools. Mention is made of the difficulty of getting students for the wages the Service can offer and reference is made to the difficulty of getting students to do manual labor.

In District 7, the advantage of proximity to a number of forest schools is more than offset by the fact that vacation periods do not coincide at all with suitable periods of forest work. Some students are employed on acquisition work. Mention is made of the fact that the forest school student usually seems to be a city bred man. The multiplicity of tree species in District 7 offers another handicap in the use of students.

District 8 expects to use one new student from the University of Washington on timber survey work. Half a dozen such men have been used in the past. Student employment has not proved very satisfactory due apparently to lack of the personal qualifications necessary in forest work in Alaska.

The answers to the question about the practical training and experience a forest school graduate needs to enable him to handle a Ranger district are, I think, extremely important as a foundation on which to build this part of our personnel policy. The answers by Districts are summarized as follows:

District 1

The plan of preparing inexperienced Forest Assistants for District Ranger work by a season of experience and instruction will not work. Two summer seasons or one complete year of employment is a minimum of experience such men should have before taking a Ranger district. The point is not serious in District 1, however, because technical graduates can be secured from the two near-by schools, who have had two or more seasons experience on National Forests in the intervals of undergraduate work.

District 2

Expresses confidence in the possibility of preparing inexperienced Forest Assistants for the responsibility of a Forest Ranger by a course in the Ranger training school which the District is developing. "It is difficult to say just how much of a training period a newly graduated Forest Assistant should have to fit him for a Ranger district, it depending so largely on the individual."

District 3

Intends to make an effort to put all forest school graduates through the Ranger training camp which is now being organized. Length of training to enable a man to qualify for the responsibility of a District Ranger will depend entirely on the man himself and the nature of his summer assignments. In no case should summer assignments without a month at training camp be considered adequate and in most cases assignment for some months to a year as Assistant Ranger will be urgently needed.

District 4

If a man has had in earlier life the experience and hard work which develops initiative and self-reliance, I see no reason why he should not be just as desirable a candidate for a job as District Ranger in just as short a time as would the untrained men who are now working into Ranger jobs. On the other hand, if the man has been raised in luxury and his conception of hard work is that which he has often been compelled to do in college, if he knows nothing of Western conditions or Western people, has never seen a cow or sheep on the range, has never seen a forest fire, has never wielded an ax or a grubbing hoe, it must be perfectly apparent that he will need a couple of years seasoning before he can take a Ranger District. It all depends upon the man: every once in a while we get a Forest Assistant who can step into a Ranger district almost immediately, and, by using his own head and hands, handle the job; others it is necessary to nurse along for years, and some, as you know, never do make real practical administrators.

District 5

I believe that two seasons of work, in the absence of practical Forest Service training a student may have otherwise received, is sufficient to enable the average Forest or Grazing Assistant to handle a Ranger district, particularly if it were possible to give him a month or so of intensive training in the work of a District Ranger.

District 6

Is more concerned about lack of personal knowledge of local topography, etc., on the part of a new Forest Assistant assigned to such work as dispatching or firemen's duties. Believes that the best men after a season of employment in a job that would give them at least some experience in the work of a District Ranger should, especially after a month or so of training in the fall, be able to handle the work of a District Ranger. The average man, however, should work at least two summers and then probably get some training before he would be qualified to handle District Ranger work.

District 7

Can use new graduates in acquisition parties, recognizing the typical man's limitations for such work, and believes that it may be possible to assemble the new men in the fall for a month's training by employing them on trail or minor road construction and giving instruction in general administrative work at night. Might employ three or four new graduates on fire work during the fall season if it were not for lack of funds and the fact that such men would not make as good firemen as the typical fire guard recruited from the immediate locality of his job.

From necessity green nontechnical men are sometimes employed but the nontechnical man is usually either thoroughly familiar with the country to which he is assigned, having had experience as a guard, or has similar experience elsewhere either within or without the Service. The nontechnical man though deficient in education frequently has common sense and the ability to absorb the policies, spirit and technique of the Service. The average nontechnical man is, I think, better fitted to take over the fire control duties of our average district than is the average forest school man. On the other hand, on districts where we have considerable intensive timber sale work, the man with technical education and training has a better chance to break in quickly. Here again, I believe that we could afford to discount to some extent at least the loss in fire control because of gain in other activities, but we cannot lose sight of the fact that the District Ranger is that much talked of "key man." It is he who has contact with the public and he must have a sympathy with and an understanding which his older and more mature and less fortunate nontechnical competitor has too often acquired in the school of experience.

On the question as to whether the forest schools are giving a training helpful for District Rangers, the uses a District Ranger can make of technical training, and suggestions which should be made to forest school men to make their training more helpful to their graduates who might become District Rangers, the answers are as follows:

District 1

Schools are using methods of the Forest Service and conditions on the National Forests as a part of the text for instructional purposes and the men coming out of the forest schools, therefore, have a great deal of information about what the Forest Service is doing. That is as far as a school should go. There is so much science that a student ought to learn that it is best for the schools to stick to the teaching of forestry and not attempt to train men in the practical aspects of the jobs they are going into after graduation. The Service should do its own training for specific practical jobs. Our need is for better professional foresters rather than more practical foresters. The way technical training has worked out depends almost entirely on the personality and aptitude of the man. If he has had previous training, likes the work and is apt at it, he makes a good Ranger. If he is not apt he is a failure and his technical training will not save him. There are in District 1 approximately 9 Rangers with four year forest school training and 4 with three year forest school training. There are approximately 12 Rangers and 5 Supervisors and Assistant Supervisors with one and two years of forest school training and approximately 37 Rangers and 12 Supervisors and Assistant Supervisors who have taken the Ranger short course at Montana, Idaho or Washington State universities. None of these men hold appointments as Forest Assistants and probably none of them have passed the examination. This indicates a

considerable infiltration of men with more or less technical training who have not come in by the Forest Assistant route. Suggests that forest schools need either to specialize in training of men for particular lines of work or have selective courses so men may choose the ones best calculated to fit them for the lines of forestry they are going into - investigative, administrative, etc.

District 2

It is undoubtedly a good thing for a District Ranger to have had, say, a year's work in some school which makes a specialty of training men for the Ranger job. Do not believe any forest school can take over the job of training Rangers in those things which have to do with the work peculiar to the Forest Service. The place for Ranger training schools is probably in the Service itself, at least to the extent of finishing men after they have had some general preliminary training elsewhere. Do not know just what the forest schools can do to better fit their graduates for District Ranger jobs except by beginning at the beginning; that is, the men who are to be put in such work should ordinarily be selected from the western country for their knowledge of local conditions, for their background, and for their understanding of all that goes with the District Ranger position as it affects the personal side of the man's life. Schools might stress the fact that a District Ranger job is no mean job, but requires a great deal of ability and it is in no sense beneath the dignity of even a full forest school graduate. The major thing which the schools can do is get their students into the right frame of mind for the Ranger job and then leave it to the Service to put the finishing touches on their education. The District has made extreme efforts to keep its technical force up to full strength and has usually broken in new men on timber sale and timber survey work after which qualified men are transferred to District Ranger and staff positions.

District 3

Beyond question, a sound ground work in fundamental forestry is of value, besides which forest schools develop a certain amount of proficiency in various forest administrative activities. It is doubtful whether more than this can be expected of them and there is much in District Ranger work, particularly grazing, improvement, land and fire activities that can only be learned on the Forest. Generally speaking, then, forest school graduates need the assistant assignments in all but very few cases: the exceptions being due not so much to the nature of forest school training as to the adherent ability of the man himself and his earlier experience, i. e., the man raised in a western forest region and familiar with western range conditions, farm life, etc., accustomed to work with his hands as well as his head, who becomes a graduate from a forest school, would be in fairly good position for Ranger work - for him a training camp course supplementing summer work would probably prove ample. The Ranger with technical training can use it to excellent advantage. A Forester's attitude is essential if for no other reason than to secure better correlation between fire, grazing, timber production and watershed protection.

Forest schools can do much in the way of creating the proper attitude toward National Forest work and District Ranger work in particular in the following ways:

1. Kill the idea that Ranger work is nontechnical unless the Ranger makes it so. Although there is much strictly routine business it does not require a great stretch of the imagination to trace forestry relations in most of the Ranger's everyday work.

2. Kill the idea that Ranger work is primarily labor.

3. Kill the idea that it is a reflection on a man's ability to remain a Ranger for a long time.

4. Instill the idea that Service work is working toward long tenure of assignment, low promotion in title but better salaries.

5. Instill the idea that in Service work the sharp distinction between technical and other assignments is breaking down and that all assignments offer great and often unused opportunities for the creation and application of technical knowledge.

6. Instill the idea that forest management and grazing are not the sum total of opportunities for technical work. Fire, watershed protection, game, recreation, and other new activities likewise offer limitless opportunities for expanding the principles of forestry.

District 4

Forestry schools are giving training which is helpful to District Rangers. The schools are not giving all that the men need, however, and I doubt that they ever can unless they require before graduation that the men secure the necessary experience in hard work and the development of the quality called initiative. One of the principal things to be kept in mind by the heads of the forest schools is the kind of men whom they put through their schools and expect to send to the West. Such men should be those having had early training in hard work, men who have been raised on farms or have had experience in the lumber woods, or other experience which will have inured them to hard knocks and hard labor. I believe that one of the greatest causes of dissatisfaction of technical men in the West for a number of years at least has been due to the type of man, and the expectation he apparently had when entering the Forest Service. The Forest Assistants with whom I have come in contact recently have been of the studious type, which in itself is, of course, not objectionable but they were not adapted to hard work nor apparently anticipating the need for hard physical exertion. Too many of them have been of the "teacher type." I suggest then that the heads of the forest schools should study and rate their men carefully and send to the West only those who can adapt themselves to the conditions and who are willing to do all of the various kinds of work in addition to that of purely technical forestry.

District 5

I do not believe that the training given by the forest schools is all that may be desired if we are to consider them as a future source of supply for District Rangers. Desirable, if at all possible to secure, a closer contact between the schools and the Service. Many of the instructors having been drawn within the last few years from the student bodies rather than from outside fields of forestry are not in touch with the work of the Forest Service. Every District Ranger must have the point of view of a Forester. Many of them now lack this essential. Believe that the forest schools are not as successful as they should be in giving their graduates this viewpoint. Young forest school graduates do not see the application of the knowledge which they have secured from books to field conditions. The ability to apply this knowledge intelligently must, of course, be developed largely through practical work but a beginning can and should be made during the period of theoretical training. For example, more practical knowledge of actual simple surveying, timber cruising, scaling and mensuration should be given by the schools. Believe the schools should instruct those men in their student bodies who are intending to enter the Forest Service along lines adapted to Service work. These men should be given less theory and more practice. Since as District Rangers they will be doers it is more important to show them than it is to tell them.

District 6

Forest school training certainly gives a District Ranger the proper background for his work; it also helps in connection with timber survey, other surveying work, management of timber sales, planting, etc.

District 7

In this District where timber sale business is paramount to everything else except fire it would be highly desirable if every District Ranger had as full an education in the fundamental principles of forestry as does the graduate of the average forest school and the men who come to us through the Forest Assistant examination. Would not object to filling District Ranger positions with Forest Assistants after they have qualified by preliminary training in Forest Service ways and methods of doing things.

District 8

Convinced that the regular collegiate or university course in forestry is distinctly helpful to a District Ranger in Alaska, particularly in connection with his timber sale and land survey work. Believe, however, that a man with the qualifications we are looking for would not be content to remain in that position, but that it would simply be a step leading to higher responsibilities.

Madison Laboratory

Suggests that a number of forest schools devote little if any time to actual field experience and that these schools should expect to place their technical men on Ranger districts. Suggests a course in applied psychology designed to give the man in an administrative position an insight into the problems of personal adjustment and help him understand how to develop the special abilities of the individual, thus securing from the individual the best service of which he is capable. Suggests better training in English and training in public speaking along with forestry studies.

Several Districts refer to the salary problem. District 1 would not be in favor of taking men direct from forest schools and without Forest Service training at beginning salaries of \$1,500 per annum and assigning them under seasoned and competent Rangers receiving a lesser salary, with the requirement that the Ranger train them up to the point where they will be able by close supervision to hold the lighter District Ranger jobs. Believes that such a practice would be demoralizing to the organization. Proposes that green forest school graduates be employed at guard salaries with the assurance of permanent employment and the assurance of promotion to the Forest Assistant salary as soon as their superiors consider them qualified to fill Ranger positions. Length of time required would depend on previous experience and aptitude for the work. Believes that reclassification should provide for another grade or at least some arrangement should be made for taking in new men from forest schools at salaries lower than what are provided for in the Forest Assistant grade in the classification schedule. Thinks these men should come into the Service at salaries ranging from \$1,500 to \$1,680 after reclassification is in effect and be advanced as their qualifications merit. Feels sure that it is not the entrance salary but the possibilities of the future which are going to determine the class of men that the Service gets from the forest schools.

One fact which the Forester's office must keep in mind in considering a lower entrance salary is that in the eligible lists certified in the spring of 1923, there were forty names of which 19 either declined or failed even to answer our inquiries. If we lower our entrance salary from the proposed reclassification figure can we succeed in getting the men we need?

District 5 points out that if we are to accept reclassification principles literally the Forest Assistant filling the District Ranger position is only entitled to the District Ranger salary. This might result in some Forest Assistants being appointed to special positions with a salary of \$1,860 to \$2,400 while others would secure appointments to Ranger positions carrying either the \$1,500-\$1,860 or \$1,680-\$2,040 salary grade. The District Forester would prefer to see all technical men enter the Service at the present rate, \$1,740, rather than \$1,860, and enter the Forest Assistant \$1,860-\$2,400 grade only after one year's satisfactory service if this is practicable.

Professor Bruce of the University of California proposes practically the same salary plan as that advocated by District 5. He also makes another proposal which challenges attention. He suggests that the Junior Forest examination as now conducted should be abolished. As long as this method of entrance into the Service exists, he says the alternative of passing through the Ranger grade will be considered a second best makeshift to be shunned if possible. There should be substituted therefor a new technical examination open only to men of one or perhaps two years of Forest Service experience. The successful passing of this should lead to immediate and automatic promotion to the Junior Forester grade with increase in pay. Our reclassification entrance grade of \$1,860 would be practically what Professor Bruce proposes upon passage of his proposed technical examination. Professor Bruce says - "If you make some such procedure as this the definite and universal method of entrance into the Forest Service you need have no fear that the schools will not do everything in their power to train men properly therefor. I should regret, however, to see you bring your influence to bear to weaken the technical training by a greatly increased emphasis on practical detail. I conceive it to be a fundamental of a successful educational program to teach nothing in the schools which can be learned as well or better by actual practical experience the first year or two after graduation."

I cannot read the replies to my letter of February 26 without being impressed with the idea, expressed in different ways by different men, that although the District Ranger position brings a man closest to the actual practice of forestry there is apparently a serious lack of harmony between the requirements of the District Ranger job and the training, qualifications, and aptitude which the typical forest school graduates bring to such work. This note which is expressed in so many places raises numerous vital questions. Does it mean that the charge is true that we are not foresters and are not practicing forestry? Does it mean that the practice of forestry on the National Forests includes an amount of hard work, living in or near the woods and dealing with human beings which is omitted from the conception of the practice of forestry or the attitude toward their initial work which men acquire by forest school training? Does it mean that four years in a forest school overeducates a man for District Ranger work and responsibilities? Does the trouble lie in the fact that the raw human material which goes to forest schools is drawn too much from cities and too little from National Forest regions? Are we at fault in not undertaking to see that boys go to forest schools who have a background of familiarity with hard work and the life of the woods and the open range?

Your replies to my letter of February 28 suggest that some misconceptions have arisen and that it is desirable to make clear a few points which should be kept in mind in working technically trained men into Ranger assignments. These points are as follows:

1. The assignment of technically trained men to District Ranger jobs should never be a mechanical process and should never be made until in the judgment of the Supervisor and District Forester the individual man is equipped with the necessary training and experience.

2. Recognizing the desirability of placing a reasonable number of technically trained men in District Ranger jobs yearly and keeping in mind the requirement that such men must have a certain degree of training and experience before they can do satisfactory work as District Rangers, the problem becomes one of utilizing those forms of training which will best suit the circumstances. Student employment, reconnaissance, scaling, Assistant Ranger work, acquisition assignments, Ranger training schools, all have a place in preparing technically trained men for the responsibilities of a District Ranger and should be utilized as seems most advantageous in each case.

3. District Ranger positions should not be regarded as stepping stones for technical men any more than for other men. Advancement will be governed by (a) individual qualifications, (b) occurrence of vacancies and (c) free for all competition between technical and nontechnical men. As a practical matter we know that the demand for capable men to fill positions of higher responsibility is greater than the supply and will continue to be so. Any man technical or nontechnical who by the sustained general excellence of his work in charge of a Ranger district demonstrates first class capacity for larger responsibilities will be given such an opportunity without unreasonable delay. We cannot promise more and men cannot reasonably expect more.

4. The man with the degree of master of forestry is not the man we have in mind primarily in developing our policy of using technical men in charge of Ranger districts. Such men may and doubtless sometimes will seek District Ranger work as the best road to the actual practice of forestry and a thorough knowledge of National Forest management, but the men we have principally in mind are the bulk of the forest school graduates, with four years of college work behind them.

5. I believe thoroughly in dignifying the Ranger position. We should not regard it merely as a stepping stone. We need to emphasize its opportunities for varied duties and interests which appeal to technical men. It is extremely important that we cultivate a sense of pride and satisfaction in good growing forests on the part of the man directly responsible - the District Ranger. But we cannot and must not create the impression that there is not a lot of hard physical work in the job. The tradition that forestry is an office and paper profession must be given no foothold in the American Forest Service. The conception that the place of forestry is in the woods and that the forester instinctively turns to the woods for the practice of his art must be woven into all our personnel policies. We must also be clear on the point that the actual management of National Forest land involves many things beside

what is usually referred to as purely technical forestry. The successful forester needs to limber up his mind in dealing with a wide variety of problems and he must do different kinds of physical work with the distinction that comes from interest and skill.

6. Bringing the student into personal contact with National Forest work by student employment needs to be supplemented by encouraging men of the right type to take up forestry in the schools. In this we can help in ways which will be welcomed by the schools. It is practicable and important for us to stimulate interest in technical training on the part of boys who have the advantage of growing up in an environment of hard work on the farm and in the woods.

7. The entrance salary is important. We must secure a considerable number of good men but we must not inject a demoralizing element into the scale of field salaries. There must be some definite entrance test for forest school graduates and the examination which will admit such men to full technical standing must not be lowered. The proposal of Professor Bruce merits serious consideration.

Assuming that civil service difficulties can be overcome would you favor abolishing the present Forest Assistant examination as a means of entering National Forest work outside of investigative and similar specialist activities? This would contemplate giving the Ranger examination at the forest schools and giving the technical examination to those men only who have had one or two years Forest Service work, or possibly comparable outside experience. Men who passed the Ranger examination would be admitted as needed for both Ranger and other work and paid reclassified Assistant Ranger or Ranger salaries of \$1,500 or \$1,680. Men who later passed the technical examination would be appointed as needed at the Senior Ranger and Junior Forester salary of \$1,860, and employed on Ranger or other work according to varying needs.

On the whole the plans of District Foresters for getting technical blood into District Ranger work are gratifying and I hope ways will be found to carry them out. I wish to urge Districts 2 and 7 to make a special effort to get a reasonable number of technically trained men moving in the direction of District Ranger positions.

Very truly yours,

A. B. Berkeley
Forester.