LEISZ, Douglas __
2004
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U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Region Five History Project

Interview with: **[Douglas] "Doug" Leisz**
Interviewed by: **Bob Smart**
Date: **September 10, September 30 and October 12, 2004**
Transcribed by: **Mim Eisenberg/WordCraft; October 2004**

BOB SMART: Good morning. I'm Bob Smart, and it's September 10th, and I'm at the home of Doug Leisz [pronounced Lease], and Doug and I are going to stop and talk a little bit about his Forest Service history. Doug, we've got a little form that's out there these days. I was wondering if maybe you could run through that form rapidly so that I'll make sure that I catch the pertinent things to get kind of the thing started.

DOUGLAS LEISZ: I'd be glad to. I was born in Oakland, California, in the year 1926. Grew up in the Oakland-San Francisco Bay area. Was a strong participant in practically all sports: baseball, football, basketball, track. And went to Oakland High School and left Oakland High a half year early because when I was a senior, World War II was going on, and one day, my math teacher told me that I was wasting time by staying in high school, that I should immediately go on to college. So I went home and told my mom that I had been kicked out of high school—

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: —and I should go out and register at UC, Berkeley, and so I started UC, Berkeley, rather than finish my senior year in high school. And I started in engineering there and got one semester in Cal, and then by then the war was going, still in full force in 1944, and so I volunteered and joined the Merchant Marine Cadet Corps, which would lead to, if you completed it successfully, an officer's qualifications in the Merchant Marine and the Navy.

During my growing-up years, one of the things—my family loved to go to the forest for vacations. Actually, my mom and dad had their honeymoon at Fallen Leaf Lake on the Eldorado Forest. But there were five of us. I was the middle kid. I had two older brothers and two younger sisters. We didn't have an easy time growing up, but we never knew that we were going through the severity of the Depression years except that we saw just a terrible thing, with people that came to the house begging for food and so forth. Although my folks did everything they could to help those people along, my dad's business failed, and so we were really squeezed tightly in those growing-up years. But I never felt underprivileged at all, growing up. We just were expected to go find jobs early, and I did that. At age thirteen, I was working summers in the Stokely-Van Camp cannery. Joined the union, actually, at that time, because the next-door neighborhood was a VP of Stokely-Van Camp's. He was very willing to make jobs for kids that wanted to work.

Well, I've discussed something about the family. So I had gone to the forest before I ever got out of high school. Actually in the 1930s, when I was nine and ten years old, I remember camping trips.

My grandfather on my dad's side had ranches in different places: in Calistoga and the Trinity-Alps area and San Leandro, which at that time was an agricultural center, not a booming metropolis the way it is today. And we'd periodically get to those ranches, and that was great fun because there were lots of horses there. My grandfather had come to California in the 1870s, from Ohio, and had been farming down in the Tulare county. He started out in farming and then moved to the Bay Area and actually developed a large market there and had the first mechanical refrigeration at any market in the Oakland area.

So we worked. We were expected to work. In fact, we grew up enjoying to work, because that was part of life. I had been to the Eldorado Forest a number of times, up into a place called Loon Lake. Above Loon Lake, at one of the lakes up there, we had gotten acquainted with the Wickanders, ,Alice & Victor, who, at Buck Island Lake, had a permit for a cabin from the Forest Service. You couldn't drive there; you had to hike to get there. Victorhad been a water engineer there, and so he showed me one time, when I was probably about fourteen years old, where a tunnel someday would go from Buck Island through to Loon Lake. And, of course, as I'll tell you later, when I came back to the forest, it was being constructed, just about forty years later.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: But pre-Forest Service jobs. I worked in a lumber mill. I worked repeatedly at the cannery. I worked in a laundry. Did lots of other work activities. I worked at the end of the war for the Merchant Marine. Actually I was the third officer bringing war brides back from New Zealand and Australia, before I went back to UC. And we've, I've always been pretty active in whatever community we were in. We always, as we moved to different places, thought we ought to get to know the community, we ought to participate, and we ought to carry on like we were going to be there the rest of our lives, and so become part of it. I've continued that in retirement. I still do a lot of volunteer activities.

I started in the Forest Service in 1950.

SMART: Let me break at this point, Doug, because I'm afraid we may transition right on into the whole interview.

LEISZ: All right.

SMART: We've pretty well captured those background pieces?

LEISZ: I think so. I probably ought to add one more thing. I was a real youngster when I went into the service, and in the Merchant Marine Cadet Corps, what happened is you went to an initial school for about six months, and then you immediately went on board a ship as a cadet, and you were supposed to stay on the ship for about six months and then when you were finished your ship duty, then you went back to the academy at Long Island and went ahead and got your commission both as third officer and as an ensign in the Naval Reserve.

I got on board the ship, and because of things that happened during the war and the captain of the ship and circumstances, I ended up for the rest of my time in the Cadet Corps staying on board that ship, which was about a year and a half almost. The captain asked me to stay on the ship, and then later on, when the third officer was court-martialed in Australia because of some indiscretion on his part, why, the captain asked me to take over as third officer, and that was awkward at first because I was all of nineteen going on twenty, and there were a couple of senior officers—that is, senior to me—on each of the watches, including my own, so I was put in charge of two ensigns as well as the rest of the ship for the eight to twelve watch period.

That was a fascinating thing because all of a sudden that demand was on me, and when I questioned the captain about it, he reminded me that it wasn't my decision to make and did I think I could handle the job or not? And I said, "Yes, sir!" [chuckles], and went on from there. But that was a fantastic experience because at that age, really you don't hesitate to tackle anything, and if you have some confidence you assume that you can in fact do anything, and what do you know? If people help you, you can, almost.

But that was a tremendous experience for me, and it reshaped me because, as I mentioned, I started out in engineering. I had time on that ship to really think about things as

well as watch for submarines and mines [chuckles softly], and I decided I really wanted to get into forestry when I got back after the war, and so that thinking time probably led me into a change in career.

[[Pause]

SMART: We're continuing on with this interview with Doug Leisz. Malfeasance on the part of this operator has caused us a little bit of delay, but we've got a background that we've captured now about Doug's biographical information. Before we jump into the regular Forest Service part of your career, I know that over history you've been interviewed by others, so if you were a historian, where are some places people might want to check to get a little more background of the life and times of Doug Leisz or whatever you might call it?

LEISZ: You just don't know whatever might have been recorded at different times by people, but certainly some of the Forest Service records. There are some events that I'm sure that my place in those is well documented. But I did do an oral interview with Sac State [California State University, Sacramento] project at one time. For me, that was six or eight sessions. The difficulty of that was that the woman was capable certainly, but she had absolutely no background in the Forest Service, and so it distracted from the interview because it required defining each term I used that related to the Forest Service, like whether it was multiple use or the enabling act for the outfit. It takes away from telling the story if you have to go into definitions at the time you're telling it. I think the way to do that, a better way, in reflecting back n that, would have been to go ahead with the interview and then have those key words come up later and then define those. That, for me, works better because my mind can't handle too many tracks in various directions at the same time.

SMART: And my background is I've experienced a lot of the history that you have, and I'm sure that I'm going to overlook some of the terminology, too, Doug, so we won't make a point about doing it, and then we'll kind of rely on others to tell us where we've said some things that didn't make sense unless you were inside the outfit.

So at Sac State there's quite a file on you?

LEISZ: There is a volume there, and I'm sure the Forest Service—I assume they have a copy of that, because it was part of the project that the Forest Service started, and that was probably about twenty years ago that that was done.

SMART: Any names of the researchers or anything that might come to mind?

LEISZ: [No immediate response.]

SMART: We're looking.

LEISZ: The publication is titled "USDA Forest Service Oral History Project, 1991 Centennial, Forest Reserves Act." And it's done by Cal State University, Sacramento, California. And the interviewer is Judy [Allen?]. It doesn't give an address for her, but she was part of the Capital Campus Public History Program.

SMART: Okay. I certainly didn't want to just pass by some very—that's a very detailed volume, it looks like there, that you have.

How about other places that—

LEISZ: I think you'd probably have to go to some of the key activities, like the Firescope program or [fire study?] or the Vermejo acquisition or the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency activities. Certainly there are some track records on a number of those things. But, you know, the Forest Service as an organization, as you're moving through, really doesn't do much of a job at recording history as it happens. I suppose that's true not only of the Forest Service but with

others. But all of a sudden, a ten-year period has occurred, and things have evolved. They've changed a pattern in response to a piece of legislation or happening, and we don't capture that at the time it happens, and we don't really record the interactions of all the people that were involved.

And I think this is a shame because often people get credit, as I know I did in my career, for doing things, being the principal person, and when you take an activity just like the largest donation that the Forest Service I think has ever accepted, was the Vermejo one, and I got a lot of credit for that and certainly I had a big part in it. But there were a supporting cast of two dozen people in the Forest Service and in OGC [Office of the General Counsel] that aided me there, plus the administrators for [the Department of the] Interior and other agencies that listened and helped us along the way.

So you end up with a lot of activities, particularly if they involve other agencies, where it's a group of people that make sure things get through, and they all add their efforts to it. Often, then, when you capture history, you talk about the role of this person or that person with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, for example, and I was the federal representative on that planning agency for eight years. I'm sure that there's a record about doing a lot of the activities at that time, but I had a supporting cast there that helped me through the process of doing that administration, like [Andrew] "Andy" Schmidt and [William] "Bill" Morgan, were just absolutely essential to getting the job done as well as the various district rangers that were there during the period.

So that's a long-winded response to you, but that's the way I see a lot of activities in the service.

SMART: So for the rest of your biography—it's just pretty well integrated into some of these documents. I know you don't ever take full credit for any of these kinds of things, but that would be a place people could look if they wanted to know more about—

LEISZ: Yes, and you're reluctant to take more credit or to assume more credit because you never know when you're going to need that help again.

SMART: [Laughs.] Well, part of this effort—I hope today—would be [to] get into where you could bring the color of some of these events: how you started off in good faith, thinking you're on an adventure that everybody was agreeing on, and then in ten years you find that these folks are aligned in a different way than where they were before. If we can capture some of that more colorful parts of your history, I'd sure like to do that today.

LEISZ: That would be, I think, interesting. In a little bit of preparation for this, I caught my wife for five minutes this morning and said, "What were some of these real issues that you recall that we faced in different locations, both the positive and negative?" And she did contribute some that—they were on my list, but she embellished them some and refreshed my memory about them. And I think a number of those are really important. They give some flavor to what was going on.

And maybe we ought to just start with my first brush with the Forest Service, which actually came in 1948 because I worked a summer for the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine (BE&PQ). This was a survey job, and we worked in Northern California and Oregon and developed a ten-point penalty rating system for insect potential mortality for trees, and worked with some of the icons of the day in forest entomology: Doc Hall [D. R. Hall & Jack Bomberg and others that were part of that group.

The job was to go out and survey trees and determine which insects were active, the level of activity. If a tree was dying, to find out why and to plot those trees on a photo.. So we were using aerial photos, which my college had given me some prep for, so stereo photos, and you went into the field. Often you went alone on these tasks. I had the Warner Mountains to do. Set up my own survey plots there and did strip plots. Actually spent I think seven to ten days in there and a grazing permitee was the only person I saw for that entire period of time. Never thought much about it until about twenty years later, and I thought, *My God, if I'd had an accident in there, how would they have ever found me?* Probably it would have taken the buzzards to help do it, because there weren't radios. We didn't have radios then, and you simply said, "I'll be in the Warner Mountains." Well, that's a big area.

But anyway, everything worked out well, and that really gave me an introduction to the Forest Service because I saw and got to know people on the Modoc and on the Fremont Forest in Oregon, and the Mendocino Forest, which I later worked on. But it really was a tremendous education, and we just worked extraordinarily long days. You know, at that time, like in my early Forest Service career, there was no even consideration of overtime. When you put in a daylight to dark hours, ten or twelve hours, you did that because there was a job to do, and you sure wanted to take advantage of those long days, and you knew that when you got back you'd get some refreshments for dinner and everything would be ready for the next day.

So that was the first. Then, when I graduated from Cal in 1950, jobs were a little tough to find in the Forest Service at that time. They were doing very little professional hires. I passed the exam all right. We took a federal entrance exam. But I took an appointment as a foreman at the Mount Shasta Nursery, which was east of McCloud, about nine miles. My wife and I moved there in the summer of 1950. When we moved there, the only housing that was available was at

the Bartle guard station, which was another two to three miles from the nursery, itself. The Bartle guard station is a community of one house, the guard station.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: And it, of course, had no electricity, and the water system was a well. But it had a unique situation: it was right adjacent to the McCloud River Lumber Company's railroad, and so daily the train would come through there, and the engineer got to know that we were there, and so he always dropped the newspaper off every day, and he would often—if he saw my wife out there and she would be up there many times by herself, he would stop the train and ask her if there was anything he could get her in town. Extremely friendly. But anyway, we were there for several months, and then the house became ready at the nursery and we moved to the nursery.

There were two houses at the nursery: the manager's house—Carl [Lanquist, was manager—and the foreman's house. That was myself. And the job there was growing trees for planting in the forest. While I was there, they constructed a cold-storage facility because that was at an elevation in which, for spring planting, you simply couldn't get at the trees in the early part of the spring because we had snow. And the highway we lived on there would close periodically in the wintertime. It was about nine miles to the town of McCloud, so my wife had the experience often of doing the shopping by driving to town herself. On one of those early encounters, why, a mountain lion crossed the road right in front of the car. When she got back home, she was all excited about that sighting.

Well, we loved that location. Gave us a lot of fun because the McCloud River was less than a quarter of a mile away, and there was nobody in that stretch, and we used the river for recreation. We did a lot of hiking around there. I fished in the McCloud River with a vengeance. I enjoyed that. We climbed Mount Shasta while we were there and had some family

members—and we had one fascinating experience there, and that was when they announced that they were moving the house that we were in from one side of the road to the other because originally on the site plan they had put the house down in an area of lodgepole. Well, most folks that live in the lodgepole areas know that lodgepole in the mountains of the Sierra indicates a high water table. And so with that house, why, the septic system would never function well in the springtime, and so they decided to move it.

The contract said that there would be just a 48-hour disconnect for the house when it was moved. Well, the people arrived one morning unannounced and started jackhammering the foundation about seven in the morning. We were already up. We actually had some friends there. My brother-in-law and sister were visiting, and so my brother-in-law's comments were, "Well, I guess we know when it's time to leave."

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: As the jackhammer was pounding the foundation. Well, the house got disconnected and moved, and it was over six weeks before it was hooked up again. So we had to do some other things, make other arrangements because you couldn't live in it. It was moved part way and on a slant and not hooked up, so there were no facilities there. That was kind of a different thing, but things like that happened in the Forest Service. When I asked the forest engineer about that, he said, "It's in the contract that they have to reconnect it in 48 hours." And I said, "But they're not doing it." [Chuckles softly.] And he said, "We'll have to check on that." Well, the checking that they did and the efforts—it still took about six weeks to bring things—

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: —to the final stage of moving it.

But also while I was there at the nursery, we were actually doing a lot of new practices with seeding and tree raising, and Carl Lanquist was a superb nurseryman. It was interesting to learn under him. I volunteered while I was there to take an assignment in Colorado with the Spruce Bark Beetle Project. I didn't realize that—I had seen a Forest Service newsletter, and it just mentioned the project, and if you wanted to participate from Region Five, why, send your application in, and I did that. Unfortunately, I didn't know protocols, and I didn't tell my boss at the time that I was doing that, and I was selected, as well as one other person on the Shasta Forest. And so we ended up, he and I, going there. My boss wasn't at all happy about it, but it wasn't a time where we had any lifting or anything other than water scheduling for the nursery, so I assumed it would be all right. But I learned later that you should do a better job of informing the boss about things like that.

But that was a great project. Went to Colorado. The Engelmann spruce bark beetle was out of control. About five years before that, there had been a heavy blow-down in Colorado in spruce and an insect buildup, and the agency had tried desperately to get funds for eradication and containment of that beetle outbreak, originating from winthrown timber. And they were unable to get funding to do it, and so they were caught in a trap until the thing became an enormous problem, stretching for over a hundred miles there, north and south of Kremling, Colorado. And it was really a fascinating thing to participate in because the books told you, the entomology books told you that the Engelmann spruce bark beetle only had one generation per year, and the entomologists there were finding that, with the excellent conditions that were there, some stress on the trees but the enormous outbreak that was there, they were going through two and three generations per summer.

It was not only infesting and killing the spruce, it was also attacking the lodgepole, and so what happened by the end of that project is for a huge stretch there of the territory, you had dead spruce and dead lodgepole, and really only the broad-leafed trees came through that. The aspen came through in great shape, and the aspens spread from that, of course, with those dead trees—why, it became very aggressive.

That project went on for several years. We had Indian work crews there from the Southwest, fun people to work with. I tried desperately to learn some of their language and did know a few words, but I found early on, with the several crews that were assigned to me, that I had the presence to ask about their facility with English, and, of course, a number of them spoke up right away and said, "No speak English. No speak English." And so then I followed that and asked, "Well, how many have been to college?" And five hands went up in the crew out of about thirty-five. And so I immediately made them foremen.

We worked—actually, we a un time with that project until the snows came.. It went on for another year, and by that time, or even while I was there, you saw the woodpecker population just build up tremendously. We were spraying trees up to the height of the average snow there, and we were using a spray that today would be toxic and not used. Our safety features were probably minimal for that, but we were careful not to get skin contact.

SMART: Do you remember the chemical you were spraying?

LEISZ: I'd be guessing, but it was, as I recall, a dichloromethane thing, which is no longer used. The spruce is a thin-barked tree, so you needed to spray the tree from the root collar up to the height of the snow, which meant about ten feet of the tree would be sprayed, and that would kill the broods that were in there over winter. After being there until the snows came, which was

about a seven-week detail on that project, I went back to the nursery and had a rather cool reception there from my boss—

SMART: [Chuckles.].

LEISZ: But I worked hard to overcome that. The house was ready, and the next summer I was back there again after doing some tree planting in the wintertime down at the Bureau of Reclamation out of the Redding area, where their reservoir then, the big dam there, Shasta Dam, had taken over some lands that had been formerly a copper smelter impact area. Copper smelter fumes killed everything, and they were revegetating that area. And so we had a big planting job going.

SMART: What year would that be, Doug?

LEISZ: Well, it should be 1951. Then back in 1951 to the nursery. Then I received a transfer offer to Mount Shasta, to go to work in the timber management group there, and that was a fascinating team. Vance Brown was the TMO [timber management officer] for the forest, Shasta Forest. Vance had been logging engineer in Washington and was well skilled in all of the aspects of commercial logging and also a very sensitive, well-organized guy. His principal assistant was Andy Anderson. Anderson was a technician, a high-grade technician at that time but a tremendous asset because he knew the forest; he knew the job; he was a hard worker, a good communicator.

And so with a few weeks of training with Andy—and we helped each other on sale preparation. At that time, all timber sales were handled out of the supervisor's office. There was no sale activity except for firewood use at the district levels. And so we split the Shasta Forest. I took the north half of the forest; he took the south half, for sale administration and preparation That meant you left your home Sunday night, went out to the logging camp, because you had to

be there in the morning, and you marked the timbers, and you also did caliper scaling in the woods. As the trees were down and bucked?, you scaled them.

That was an extremely demanding job. I had three sales going, and we finally got to the point where one of my sales had a landing scaler, which was a brand-new thing. It was an interesting job, and it's something to reflect on because on two of the ranger districts of that forest, the rangers were not at all enthusiastic about harvesting trees. The harvesting of trees, to them, meant the roads would be dusty. Even though the operations watered the roads, the roads would be dusty, and there would be slash accumulated on the areas that were logged.

The marking at that time on most of our sales was the high-risk marking. You took the trees, marked the trees for logging, using—the same penalty point system of rating trees for insect mortality potential that I developed, helped develop in 1948 they were using then as a marking tool to determine which trees would not last the next twenty years, likely. And those were the ones that were being marked and logged, and the rest of the stand was left. We lopped all the slash, got it in a place and condition where it would deteriorate fairly rapidly in those areas, and certainly were careful not to impact the residual stand. So you had to make sure that they put in bumper logs around the trees, so the skid trails did not skin up the residual trees.

This was a fun job. It was long days, because at night, after you did the caliper scaling in the woods, you had to do the book work at night. The logging camps—you lived in the logging camp. You ate mess with the logging camp crew. Sometimes traveled with them, but most of the time you were in your own unit. You were trying to keep out ahead. With three sales going, you could work a couple of days on one sale, and then you had to get the next one, and then you had to get the other one, so you had to hit them all during the week to make sure they weren't taking logs or trees that were unmarked.

SMART: Here you are, you're living and you're eating, you're sleeping in these logging camps. What kind of pressure might you have felt from the industry as far as your judgment calls?

LEISZ: There are a couple of examples of that. At Associated Lumber and Box, at a little town on the Oregon border there, at Doris, there was a mill right there, and the camp was about twenty miles out of town, up in the Bald Mountain area of the Shasta Forest at that time. That was before the Shasta and the Trinity were combined. The logging boss was very, very accommodating. Nice guy. Never challenged anything that I did, and in fact, there, unthinkable today, one of the first things I got acquainted with is he handed me a little book of hire and fire slips for the company.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: With directions, if I found anyone that was failing to follow the contract out there, I was to give him a slip, which would mean that their job was terminated with the company. They were not going to tolerate—they did not want any penalty assessed, be it the contract—because we had penalty clauses, which, if they cut up more trees or left high stumps, there were fines...And the one time that I did come upon a faller cutting an unmarked tree there, and the tree was about to go over, so I didn't rush in and try to stop the falling, but when he felled it, his buddy was standing there, and when he shut his saw down, his buddy said, "The Forest Service is going to rack your ass for this one." I walked up and gave him the fire slip, and that was the end of his job. And they paid the triple stumpage for the tree cut. But we had generally tremendous cooperation. They knew we were under tremendous pressures on the job to get around and cover everything, and I never had any pressure from that outfit.

Now, I had a sale with McCloud River Lumber Company, and they were a big, big outfit. In fact, the town of McCloud—that was the railroad and the lumber mill and everything, five

head saw rigs at that time, —so they sawed tremendous volumes, and they cut a little bit of Forest Service timber. But the sale that I was administering was just two 40-acre pieces of national forest that were completely surrounded by private-land logging. But we had some nice sugar pine on those areas, both of those [forty acre tracts, and some heavy insect activity. So I had marked trees, and they had just begun to log when I hit their sale one day.

They were setting their chokers in the break, and just for a quick lesson on that, why, when the tree falls and you buck it up into log lengths, it's easier if you set the chokers in the breaks because you can set two chokers. You can set it on both log ends. When they do that, though, why, it makes a wide sweep as they start to haul those logs out. The alternative, of course, is to go right down the tree length and set chokers one at a time as you go, so you're always moving the logs forward, not swinging the one log completely around, destroying other vegetation in the process.

I saw that practice in there just starting, and I stopped it, and the logging boss was so furious that he shut his outfit down as far as logging the Forest Service went, and told me he was going to call my boss and this was ridiculous, that they always logged this way. I had also told him that as they got their skid trails identified, that there were certain places that they had to put buffer logs in there to make sure they didn't destroy the other vegetation. Well, he really strongly objected to those things, and had a "By God, we'll have you outta here" attitude "by the end of the week. But in the meantime, we're not gonna log."

So when I got back to where I could, I called my boss, Vance Brown, and told him about it, and he asked what the circumstances were, and I told him, and he said, "Stick to your guns. Don't back off." And he said, "I hope they do call me." Well, the company did call him, and the next day, when I went back to the sale, because Vance had called me that evening and said, "Go

back to the sale tomorrow. They're going to restart again on the national forest stuff." And so when I went back, the logging boss met me as I came into the landing area. And he said, "The crew's waiting for you here. You take them up to your damned areas, and you tell them *exactly* what you want to do, and they'll do it precisely the way you want, and I'm not even coming into the area."

Later on, a couple of years later, we became actually pretty good friends, the logging boss and I. He told me later—he said, "That was a really gutsy thing that you did there. McCloud has never been shut down by the Forest Service or anybody else in their logging." But I have to credit my boss and the work that I did with Andy Anderson, really, in setting the stage for knowing that your job was to protect the forest out there, make sure the logging was done properly, to the contract, but protect the remaining stand was the big thing. Better the stand with the logging, not take it down or damage the remaining trees.

The other thing that was going on at that time which was very interesting is that Long-Bell Lumber Company had an agreement with the Forest Service. When they finished cutting their areas, by sections or half sections, they turned the land over to the Forest Service because of the liability of taxes if they continued to own the land., They had to pay a tax for protection on those lands if they held onto it after logging it. They really took almost all the merchantable trees off, except they weren't logging white fir at the time, or red fir. And so we were acquiring lands from those cut-over areas. Their logging, with the areas we were getting, looked like the wrath of God had gone through there because they were doing railroad logging. And the skidding was often cable skidding for some distance, and so anything that was in the way got mowed down.

But as we looked at those areas and determined that indeed we should be picking up the fir, because there were some sale opportunities for fir if you had access to them, and so we put up some sales of white fir, red fir and incense cedar, which they had left. When they saw that we were doing that, they bid on one of the sales. They hadn't bid on the first few, and one of the other competitors had gone in and logged. That brought an end to the transfer of lands to us after they logged them, because we were picking up far more value on those acres through those sales than they ever imagined might be there. But it was kind of a shame. We did acquire a lot of area at that time.

The other interesting job up there was that we got an emergency call to cruise timber up on the slopes of Mount Shasta in the wintertime. And the reason was that near one of the recreation attractions up there, near Sand Flat, which was a place for staging to climb Mount Shasta There was a section and a half that a company owned, private land that was immediately adjacent to Sand Flat , that they were going to log the next summer unless they got substitute timber from the Forest Service, through exercising the land-for-timber option, where we use timber sales revenues to acquire land..

And so I formed a team, and we went in there and cruised that timber on snowshoes, and it was interesting, particularly at the start, because there weren't any good reference corners. I had made a little planometric map, using my photogrametric skills, and noticed that there was a [quarter corner?] in a meadow there, called Onion Flat according to the original land survey notes. That corner was one of the key places we needed to find to then go another half mile to start the timber cruise. And so we went out there with snow on the ground, and fortunately there was only probably fourteen, fifteen inches of snow at that time, and made a bee line for the meadow, which I could identify in the photo, and found the meadow and thought we found at

least one of the reference trees for that quarter corner, and went to a point in the meadow that indicated from the photography work I'd done where the quarter corner should be. We took the snow off the ground, and after a couple of tries found a pile of rocks. The rock on the bottom of the rock pile had an etching, one quarter corner. And that was exactly the reference we needed. That corner had not been found before, so it was a thrill. I enjoyed doing that.

So at any rate, we did that job, and I got acquainted at that time, when we were at Mount Shasta, with Ellis Smart and with [Robert] "Bob" Ground , and I got to know them, of course, during my entire career. So you pick up friendships there. And I must also mention that while we were at Mount Shasta, Barbara Schmidt, Andy Schmidt's wife, was just a mother to all the wives of the young foresters that came in there. She made sure that the kids were—that we knew about where the good doctors were and the shopping. The pay at that time was always late, and that was tough because the paychecks were small and you had expenses for rent and food, and they'd almost be a week late. You could count on them being a week late. And so we got a little pool of money there established so it would tide people over. But Barbara Schmidt was a tremendous asset to people coming in.

Our first child was born when we were at the nursery. I kind of forgot that. And the second one, at Mount Shasta.

SMART: Was Barbara the banker?

LEISZ: I don't recall that Barbara did the banking there, but she was willing to personally take care of people, whatever people's needs might be, if there was any. Of course, I got to know the Schmidts better and better over the years, and their kids, and it's just, you know, one of those rich things about getting to know people in the Forest Service. And then, as you move during your career, eventually you have reconnects with those people, and the camaraderie that gets

established there is so helpful when you make moves, and you go to a place that is new to your wife and family, and there's families there that they know a little bit and that help them get acquainted. So that's one of the rich flavors for the outfit. We moved a lot of times. I think fourteen house moves in thirty-two years, and three moves in houses in one location. But you helped one another tremendously, and you passed that down to other people.

The time at Mount Shasta ended, and I was transferred to the Mendocino Forest, to handle timber sale preparations for the entire Mendocino Forest. But that was the year of the terrible tragedy, the Rattlesnake fire, in which fifteen lives were lost, including the forester whom I was sent to replace, [Robert] "Bob" Powers. That had been just a terrific, horrific impact on personnel on that forest, from the supervisor right down, because they were out on the fireline and on the road when that emergency occurred from a pressure grading shift, which changed the fire from an upslope fire to a down-canyon one, and caught that crew. A few of the crew followed instructions and went out the top and got out safely. The crew that tried to outrun the fire going downhill were all consumed in the fire.

And so when we got to the forest, the move, why, the living accommodations that they had was up at a place where the wife of the deceased employee was still occupying, and of course things with her kids and herself—why, she had not gotten over that impact. My wife just didn't want to live up there. She wanted to live out of that immediate area, at least, and felt that there was too much of an impact to ask the other survivor, wife, to move so we could move in. So we lived at Stonyford, which was a hot valley town right adjacent to the forest. And we were the first professional timber employee on that district.

interesting The ranger was Kermit [Cuff?], who was a soils scientist and a really neat guy. The FCO there, [Charles] "Charlie" Lafferty, was one of the old-time Forest Service

technicians. Wonderful guy. Kermit and his wife, Charlie and his wife and one other technician on the station. There wasn't any housing for us, so we had to find housing in the town, which was really tough because there wasn't any town water system, and a quick determination by me was that that only house that was available had a well, and the well was just too close for comfort to the septic system, and so we had to bring in, haul water in for everything, and we began immediately looking for another house.

But the district situation was, again, very interesting there. They had not had timber sale people assigned before—I was supposed to work forest wide, but they wanted me at a district, and I reported technically—well, for program work—to the forest TMO at Willows, but worked through the ranger at Stonyford, because a lot of sale activity was on that district. There was one project sale officer on that district at the time, and one sale going. I was brought in because they had lots of sales preparation needs over the entire Mendocino NF.

There was a little tension there because the fire people on that district—all of a sudden, I was going to do some of the timber work that the FCO, the fire control officer on the district had done, and he didn't know how that was going to impact his job. And so you learned very quickly that as the organization shifts had come on and impact people, you learned to do the subtle way of integrating your activities into the district, and you don't come on like the new elephant in town; you really come on and say, "Let's figure out how to work things out."

And so that was a big demand in that job. At that time, we had some sale activity there, and the whole schedule of sales for me to prepare on the forest, over the forest. Our first entry into the Middle Eel River—

SMART: Let me stop for just a second there, Doug. You're the first professional forester to come in on to handle a lot of this. What was the organization seeing that caused them to change from the traditional technician role to professional?

LEISZ: The main job had been a caretaker job. There was grazing work. Most of the grazing work the ranger did personally on that forest. There was recreation, and the recreation was strictly the summer people hired to manage some of the campground facilities, but very few at that time, and that was in 1954. Major activity was centered around the fire activity. Planning, certainly, for prevention. A tremendous amount of prevention work done at that time. And working with all the cooperators so that if a fire did break out, whether there were logging or cattlemen or forest residents, they were ready to help.

And the knowledge—because that forest had quite an incendiary problem, people purposely setting fires to burn the brush off, and it had tremendous brushfields below the timber zone, that was a big job, was to work with those people and try to contain the time of prescribed fire applications, because the history there in the Mendocino had been fire after fire, deliberately set, that ended up being large fires. So it was largely oriented to those things.

Kermit Cuff had come off the vegetation management survey board that established the soil types and so he had tremendous knowledge in soil and water aspects, as well as vegetation, and a very skilled guy to work with, with aerial photos. He was delighted to find that I was an aerial photo nut by then and that I was interested in searching for corners. That used to be a weekend thing. We'd go out and search for corners because there was a local resident, "Sharky" Moore—I can remember his name—who, as a kid, remembered some of the land office surveyors in the country and also remembered his dad telling where certain corners were, and so

when you went out with that guy, he would think, "Well, if we went across this ridge and down across the draw and up on another hill, there's a corner, a section corner right there, I think."

And nine times out of ten, we found them, and I'd locate them on the photos so we can.transfer the location to a map... But the only time he was available was on weekends. And so that became a weekend activity, a really fun thing, and we found lots of corners that way. I mean, at that time, he was as old as I am today, which is getting on in years. He was in his late seventies. Yet he loved to go out there, and his memory was just fantastic, remembering back sixty years and more. He remembered stuff when he was eight years old when he was out seeing some of that. So that was a neat thing.

A very kind of a tough community. They were largely anti-Forest Service, with some exceptions, and some of the permitees were helpful there. But we did get a sale program going there. I ended up with a four-person crew, and we did a lot of ten-on and four-off schedules. We went into the back country by pack stock, fifteen miles into the place where we started cruising for a future timber sale.. And there was a tremendous amount of timber trespass taking place on that forest.

They had a fraudulent survey there on the Mendocino Forest. The fraudulent survey—the surveyors had done this very early, so they had used bark scribes to try to imitate exactly the kind of work that was done with the original survey. And this stuff was really tough to ferret out and find out what the legitimate corners were and where the false ones were. They had adjusted the corners because they had made all the timber and stone patent applications, and they wanted that to fit the best timber there, and they missed in some of their efforts, and so they then went back and tried to adjust where the corners were.

So a lot of timber trespass, and that meant a lot of line running, as best we could do, but we weren't licensed land surveyors, so we would find the corners, determine the trespass, and then bring trespass action, and then have to hire surveyors to come out to make sure they were licensed in California. That was a big activity.

The Middle Eel thing was a fabulous country. We prepared a 50-million-foot sale up there, and some of the fastest growing trees that I've ever seen were on those alluvial flats in the Mendocino, on that Eel River area. Just extremely productive soils....And the fascinating thing to me is we were in there and dropped down to the Eel River, the Middle Fork of the Eel there. What do you know: there were salmon and steelhead in the river in the summertime. They'd come up the river and had to stay over the season to spawn during the next year's water flow... They'd be in these big holes in the river. I will admit that some of my days off, the four days off, I would spend teasing those fish. And you could fish them with flies and have the time of your life because the steelhead were about nine to ten pounds, and they put on an aerial show that was just incredible.

But anyway, I've held a responsibility for sale preparation over the forest in all the ranger districts . I went around the forest, to get to know the wildlife, get to know the fisheries and the forests. And the fish—every stream and every lake on each of the forests I went to, and I did a pretty thorough job of that, on my own time. But that gave me an excellent opportunity when recreationists would ask me, "Where should I go to try some fishing?" or "Where's a great place to camp?" or "Where might I have some success in deer hunting?" I could tell them first hand. I kind of enjoyed doing that. Local people hated me for doing that – letting the tourists know the good fishing areas.—

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: —because they did not want the transient recreationists having an opportunity at the best sites. I felt some obligation. The public owned these forests, and they ought to have a chance.

But we had an active time on the Mendocino. I went off forest on fires to the Southwest and went off with [William] "Bill" Anderson, the ranger at Upper Lake, a professional guy with a long background of trying to deal with that incendiary problem at Upper Lake District, so that the two of us and Allen "Al" [Mullen?], also—he was on the Eldorado Forest at that time, was part of that team that went to the Gila Wilderness fire in Region Three. That was the fire back in the wilderness, and we were ferried back to an airstrip that was right adjacent to the wilderness area and then hiked in from there.

The forest had been working with that fire for about ten days. At that time, the policy in Region Three was not of the aggressive suppression that I had been taught in Region Five but was to trail the fire, work the edges and don't jump on it to try to eliminate it; let it do some burning, and trail it, and then eventually contain it. So you worked these edges that wound all over the country in that process. Well, I didn't know their policy there, and I'm not sure that Andy did, either, but we got—from the base camp there in the south end of the fire, they assigned us to the north end of the fire. And so Al Mullen stayed with them.

At that time, Region Five had a pocket sized fireline notebook , and it had all kinds of stuff in there that helped you with not only safety issues but in planning for fighting fires and what you needed for tools and reports.: the checklist for ordering a fire camp flown in, dropped, the things you might go through, and the tool list, everything was there. The other regions just hated our guts for that, when brought out the R5 Fireline Notebook because it had fire

organization structues. . Organizationally, the tendency was: Oh, my god, here they come with that damn R5 stuff again.

But anyhow, so we took off for the north end of the fire, and they were ferrying some Indian crews in for us that were supposed to be in there that evening. We worked our way through and around the fire to the north end of the fire, and it was probably about three or four miles to where—until we got out on the north end of that fire. But as we got out to the north end, it struck Andy and myself—the fire was slowly going towards the north there—that there were some great opportunities to burn this thing out and contain it very quickly.

And so we began to think about our strategy before the Indian crews ever arrived. Being an old timber guy, I always had some flagging with me, and so we decided that a particular draw would hook the whole end of the fire, if we could fire out about a mile and a half or two miles that night. And so he went one way and I went the other, and we flagged out to the break points, where there were some rock breaks where the fire was not going to burn. And so we did that and had that done when the Indian crews arrived.

They had shovels and axes and Pulaski tools but no fuses. We had a radio, and we decided—with Indian crews you don't need fuses?, you just tell them, "We're going to fire out" and they carry the fire with the shovel and they do a fabulous job. I think they would rather do that than use [fuses?].

But anyway, we decided to do that, and we did it. Pretty soon the word from the lookout is something like, "Well, the fire has really flared up there in the north end."

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: "There's a tremendous fire burning up there, and there hasn't been any action like that since the first day." And then they were talking to the supervisor's office in Silverton, and

Silverton would come back: "Who's up there?" "Oh, that's those Region Five guys." "Oh, my god, they're probably firing out. They're not supposed to do that. We didn't send any [fuses?] up there, did we?"

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: We could overhear that, but we couldn't enter into the conversation because our radio didn't have the capacity to reach it. But we could hear. Anyway, we proceeded to complete the firing out, and so the whole north end of the fire was contained by morning. In the morning, the first thing they did—the crew had come in that night. Andy and I had loaded up with food when we left the base camp to go to the north end because, although we were told they were going to drop food to us, we thought it would probably be a day before they do; let's have some grub. So we really packed a load of food with us...

It was slim pickings, though, for the thirty-five people we had for that night and for the next morning. The first thing that came in with an air drop the next morning was the 100-man cook stove, which was parachuted in to us. It was kind of damaged a little bit in the drop, but it got there. But no food. It didn't take the Indians long, and they came back with a turkey, a wild turkey they had stoned out of the tree. They were going to cook the turkey. So I saw how Indians cook turkeys. They don't take the feathers off; they burn them off.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: But it was too late to say, "You're not supposed to kill those turkeys, guys."

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: But about ten-thirty in the morning, in comes the pack train, and they're bringing water. Well, the Indians had found water. We had water. And they had bread. Bread and water is what they had, but they didn't have any other substantial food. They said, "A little later in the day,

they're going to drop food in." They really were hot about what have we done with the fire. And they looked at it. "Yeah, you guys did get control of the fire, but that's not the way we fight fires [down there?]." And we said, "Where were the instructions? We received no instructions. We did the best job we knew how to contain the damn fire."

And they were really upset about it. They said, "With what you've done and what they've done now at the south end, the fire is out. It's all burned out between where the fire was and where you sat last night." We said, "That's good news." They said, "We'd like you guys to stay in here another day and then hike out, but you can bet that we're going to send a letter back on both you guys to your region. We're very upset with the way you fight fire." And we said, "That's your prerogative, but that's the way we fight fires. We try to put them out and go on to the next fire."

So that's one letter I did pick up in my file. A letter came back, and I remember [Robert] "Bob" [Dasmin?] was the forest supervisor on the Mendocino at that time, and he asked me to drop in. He said, "There's this letter here that is offering strong objections that you're much too aggressive in your fire fighting, in trying to contain the fires, and that Region Three didn't fight fire that way, and we should have known that." Well, we didn't. But anyhow, that was quite a lesson.

During my early fire years on the Klamath Forest, I had gotten acquainted with another person that stayed in my career and became a strong personal friend over the years, [Richard] "Dick" Millar. He was stationed at the Klamath at that time, and later our wives got acquainted and all our kids got acquainted. You build these friendships as you go along the way, and then they come back.

Well, the Mendocino Forest—we moved from Stonyford up to Paskenta, and I took on the assistant ranger's job under [Kenneth] "Ken" Norman up there at Paskenta. That job was mostly, primarily the grazing, the recreation and the fire job on there, but also in helping with the timber activities since they knew my background there. One of the first things I did after going up there—because we moved up there in early summer—was I checked to see if there had been any fire inspections at the Crane Mills landing in the woods. And there hadn't, and so I scheduled one and went up there and found they were not in contract compliance with the fire clauses in the contract.

They used propane to drive their trucks with, and for some reason, since they weren't using gasoline or diesel trucks, they felt they didn't need shovels on a truck, and also their fire cache was just about half of what was required. I talked to them about it on the landing, and since we had a scaling in the landing, I told the scaler to stop scaling, that the operation was shut down until they complied.

And Crane Mills had never had that happen to them before. Actually, Harold Crane—they radioed him. They had good communications there. And they radioed in, and Harold Crane came up, himself, to the landing. I of course had a copy of the contract with me, and the clauses, and he asked the guys at the landing and then he came over and talked to me about it and said, "This has never happened to Crane Mills before." And I said, "Maybe things were up to where they should be." And he said, "It's really a tremendous embarrassment. We'll fix this immediately. We want to be in full contract compliance. Will you make an inspection again tomorrow?" And I said, "Sure. I'll be glad to do that."

On the side, before he left the landing, he came over to me and he said, "That was a gutsy move, but you did the right thing, and I really admire what you did. You were facing the whole

damn logging crew. Didn't you have any concern about that?" I said, "No, I didn't think about that. I just thought it was not in compliance to the contract." Well, anyway, he left, and we became good friends after that.

But that was one of the jobs to do, was to make sure that in fact things were in compliance. It just made everybody feel better if you knew that the contract was there and you're going to enforce the contract and there was reasons for that. The truck drivers were a little irate about having to put a shovel back on the truck, but as I told them—I said, "You know, if you guys were going down the road and you see a small fire, you've got to stop and try to put it out."

SMART: One of the things that I'm kind of picking up on, Doug, is when you talked about when you were over at McCloud Flat that the companies had been pretty well logging on their own private land and had their own turf and they were doing that, but you had the exceptions where they moved onto the national forest. Now it sounds like on the Mendocino, you were seeing quite a bit of reliance on national forest timber. So you were in kind of a period of transition.

LEISZ: You're in a period of transition. That's a good thing to reflect on, and I didn't pick that up. But after World War II, the Forest Service had a lot of pressure put on them to open up and provide more logging opportunities because the private lands had been hard hit during the war years, and there had been some logging of national forests. The Forest Service had one, I thought, really remarkable role during World War II, and that was that people from logging camps, because wages ended up being frozen during the war, went to the shipyards to work, where the high wages were, and pretty soon the mills didn't have enough hands. The Forest Service actually did recruiting in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Tennessee to bring people out to the

West to fill in so that the mills were able to keep running. The Forest Service got involved in hiring people from other states to bring them into the mill locations during the war. I never knew about that until some of the people in one of the towns, the small town of Doris, that were there that were from Arkansas, told me, "Oh, yeah, the Forest Service recruited me from Arkansas during the war. That's how I came to Doris."

So there was that, and then the other big thing was that the Forest Service had determined that, as we developed access to the national forest—because in many places, we lacked road access. There might be a road there; it was not usable to haul logs and do other development work. So we got into a huge right-of-way and road construction program. We had road construction crews, Forest Service road construction crews on the Mendocino. The private owners that owned a lot of the lowland timber areas and some of the other lands were reluctant to give us right-of-ways, and often when we put a sale up on the Mendocino, it required the company furnishing the right-of-way as part of the sale, contract sales clause . And in one case, one of the companies—near the end of the sale, they wanted their bond money back. They hadn't provided the right-of-way, and I said, "We can hold onto your deposit, all deposits until I get that right-of-way." And they tested that to the full level, and finally came up with the right-of-way.

But the direction, the policy direction set by the service then was that we're going to have full public rights-of-ways as we develop this road system; it's going to be a multi-purpose road. It's going to accommodate recreation and commercial hauling as well, and therefore the Forest Service right-of-way program and the road construction work became one of the largest road activities of any agency in the entire country, including state highway departments. We took on a tremendous job of putting a system in that was adequate, professionally engineered and

constructed to standards that would not cause undue erosion and so forth, and redoing some of the transportation system that had been put in in the Triple C [CCC, Civilian Conservation Corps] program.

So we had a tremendous growth in that area as well. And as we put the roads in and gained access then, we could sell timber. And until we did, we would sell fire salvage timber, a one-time type of thing, fire salvage timber, but we would not put up standard sales without permanent access. If we had not adopted that policy, we'd never have developed an adequate transportation system, because it forced the lumber companies to cooperate to the point of furnishing rights-of-way and then jointly actually participating in constructing roads. That's a little later part of the story.

But anyway, the Mendocino Forest—lots of good memories there. The first prescribed firing in Grindstone we did on the Paskenta District, and that was an interesting one because by then I'd picked up, through fire research, a lot of facts about dealing with the chaparral we had there on the Mendocino, about when moisture content started to change in the spring, because once the moisture content is up in the brush, it wouldn't burn. But in the wintertime it would burn until it started to grow. That was true with the various brush types we had there.

But we planned a fire along the north part of Grindstone in that spring of 1955, and what we did is we burned a strip along a road at the top of the canyon—we got weather forecasts. We were going to have five- to eight-mile-an-hour winds at the max, humidity was perfect, and fuel, moisture conditions were good. And we had a road along the top. We fired out the road first for a mile and a half along that road, and the forest staff officer we had, both fire and grazing, [Joseph] "Joe" Ely was watching from the other side of the canyon.

Joe was very nervous about it. You have to know that two years earlier, there had been the horrible Rattlesnake fire, and the loss of life. But the Mendocino had determined that they were going to do something to change that continuous chaparral fire hazard, to start to break it up and keep it broken up, and type convert where they could to bring in grasses.

Anyway, we burned successfully along the road and established probably about, oh, a hundred to two hundred yards with the varied sum of burned-out material, and then five of us each took a ridge, going down towards the Grindstone, and we fired out the ridges, making sure one didn't get too far ahead of the other. I had one radio, and we started down the ridges and got about a third of the way down, and we had lots of fire, but it was creeping around as well. It wasn't a wall of fire. We were firing from the top down, so we were getting some creeping down, but most of it was going back up.

The fire looked pretty good, but we were putting up a hell of a lot of smoke, and I'm sure from across the canyon it looked threatening..And we got about a third of the way down, and I was talking with Joe Ely on the radio, and he said, "Doug, I think you better stop." And I said, "Joe, I'm not sure I can. There's no way we can go back up the ridge." "Well, it's just looking like too much fire from this side." I said, "I think we're putting up a lot of smoke, but actually on the ground it looks pretty good. And it's making holes in it; it's not slicking everything off."

And so we got halfway down, and then he said, "I can't stand it anymore. I'm going back to town," he said on the radio. And so he did. And that was the end of that. But by morning—that night, we worked our way down the river. We went down to the road, got the transportation, and went back home, and it was smoldering, but no fires were running.

So at the end of that: Came the next morning, when Joe flew over the ranger station in an airplane and radioed me he's going to land and take me on a flight because he had just flown the fire and it just looked perfect.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: "We haven't lost anything."

We need to break for a few minutes.

SMART: Okay.

[Tape interruption.]

SMART: Okay, we're hot again, Doug, and we just took a short break, and you're still on the Mendocino.

LEISZ: Still on the Mendocino Forest, and I think I'd gone to Paskenta, and it's—well, to talk a little further about the blending of technicians and professionals because that forest, for me, as I got involved there at the ranger district level for a lot was the first real numbers of professionals now were coming into the district offices, not only in timber management but as assistant rangers and, in many cases, taking over the fire job. The fire control job at the district level had always been the technician job. As we got into different aspects of fire management that required some professional people's involvement, that more and more became a professional job, although not entirely.

The blending of people there, with the professionals coming in at grade levels that were higher than the technicians could attain in a number of years of work, there were some feelings there—certainly there has to be—about people coming in and taking over part of the job and not knowing the job as well as they did and being at a higher grade.

And so I think the message there was to get to know those people and show that you're not backward about asking them for their opinion on something, and take advantage of the knowledge they have, because my findings over the years were that often the technicians—for one thing, when you went into a new area, where the technicians that had been there their entire lives, work lives, knew the area, and you could find out things that you'd only find out the hard way unless you asked them questions. When you start to lean on people for their knowledge, you develop a different relationship with them personally. They know that it's obvious that you respect them or you wouldn't be asking them, and it's the way you ask them and the way you work with them starts to break the barrier down.

But it definitely was an edge to overcome as the professionals moved into the district-level jobs. They came really in pretty good numbers at the district levels, and you got a lot of different professionals, not in just forestry, but we got wildlife biologists in there, and in some cases we got hydrologists there.

SMART: That early.

LEISZ: That early, yes.

SMART: The Mendocino [unintelligible] very progressive.

LEISZ: It was a slow process, but it was happening, and one of the things that, as I reflect back on my early career with the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine and then other places—the Colorado bark beetle project—is forest health was a major theme early on for the Forest Service, and as I look back and looked at some of the original records dating from the 1920s, actually earlier than that, the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine surveys each year would show forest health conditions and would show serious problems in various parts of this region and other regions, so the record buildup there, the concern over forest health was

there from the beginning of the outfit. Forests need attention. They need watching. They need help, because they do get into swings of disease and insect activity that produce disastrous consequences that can be tempered if you catch them early in the process. Of course, that continues on with what we see today.

So anyway, from the Mendocino in 1956 I was given a chance to become a district ranger, and I went to Salyer on the Six Rivers Forest there, and landed there at Salyer. Salyer had just gone through a terrible flood sequence in 1955. There had been lots of damage to all the dwellings along the river, and people had been out of power; the roads had been cut, so people had had to rely on their local capacities to get through that situation. It was interesting to find out, for example, that the Forest Service had one of the only generators, portable generators available. When power goes out and it's out for a long time, you got to do something or you lose whatever you got stored in your deep freezes, and the Forest Service had made that generator available throughout the community, to try to keep people's deep freezes charged.

Well, that established a kind of a feeling that bettered some of the traditional things that you often find in communities there. The district was in a state of disorganization. The ranger had left there. It had not been a pleasant stay for him and his wife, and as he left, why, things obviously needed rebuilding. I remember the assistant ranger that was there asking me, after the first two weeks I'd been there, a question like, "Well, how do you feel about the district at this point?" You know, oftentimes you respond without thinking an awful lot about what it may sound like, and I told him, "Al," I said, "I think anything we do is going to be up from here. We're at the bottom. We can't sink any lower in some of the things, so we'll be moving up, and I need your help to do it." He was very responsive and told me later he thought that was a pretty good assessment of just the way things were, but he didn't know that I saw it.

One thing I learned there, and I did at that [time]—I saw so many things that distressed me that I started making notes to myself, and saying, "Here's the situation. Here's what I want to do about it." It got into a number of pages.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: But in the five years I was there, it served me as a reminder list to go back and take care of things. We had problems with timber sales; we had problems with grazing permitees there; we had watershed problems; we had problems with the highway construction and their methods of disposal of overburden and with cutting through some very unstable soils, and then the soils would all unravel the next winter, and the highway would wash out type thing. And we had lots of trespass problems there: occupancy, grazing and timber trespass. And a community that needed lots of help because jobs were scarce, and the Forest Service was one of the principal employers, and the mills were the other employer. And schools that needed qualified wives, schoolteachers from the Forest Service to be there at the schools. We were right next to the Hoopa reservation, and that took some special care because a number of the Hoopa Indians were permitees on the national forest for the grazing, and that led us into my first association on a working level with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, people that were Hoopa Reservation Administrators.

So the job I came into was a real challenge. We had a forest supervisor staff that was, I think, very competent. Had a hard-driving forest supervisor, [Wesley] "Wes" Spinney. And I got to know Scollay Parker. He was the ranger to the north of me. And [James] "Jim" James was at Gasquet [pronounced GAS-key]. So we start to build an entirely new group.

We had one other professional on the district at that time and some technicians at Salyer. We had a big tree planting job to do from a major fire there, the, which had been started by a

logging operation, but it just had done devastation. We had demands for a large timber sale program there, and we had certainly concerns about soils as we built roads into that country. We also had a situation where one of the entire townships that made of the district was unsurveyed, and so there were no corners within that township, and there were private lands within it because it had been a fraudulent survey and lands had been patented within it. And there was private-land logging going on in there, without adequate land survey work. .

Other opportunities that came along was that during that time, each of the districts was to proceed to get a multiple-use plan together. The Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act [of 1960] had passed, and part of the outgrowth of that was to get your multiple-use plans. Prior to that, we had functional plans. We had a timber management plan, we had a grazing allotment plan; and we had recreation plans, so we tended to have activity plans. To some extent they were integrated, but not entirely.

At the same time we were developing that, the Recreation Resource Review came along, and there was a direction to take on a systematic way and inventory all the potential recreation development sites on the ranger district. And so that was a great thing to do, because we'd had lots of interest there, and we had just fabulous needs from people that came for seasonal salmon and steelhead fishing, and camping in the Northwest, and a lot of hunter visits, a lot of just recreation use. But it was all highway related plus our good roads that gave them access to the forest that let them get out there.

So those jobs were really tremendous jobs to do. The trespass one was a difficult thing. We had one operator there, whose name I won't mention, but almost any job he set out to do with logging on private land, he would trespass on national forest. And so I got to the point where several times I had taken him to the local JP [justice of the peace] for trespass charging,

and he had been fined several times. The next time that I went to the JP, he ended up with a decision which I can't quote verbatim, but it went something like this: that he, the judge, directed the trespasser, who now had been before him for at least four or five times, and the trespasser at this time complained to the judge that I had given him a bad reputation by calling him Trespass Vic. His first name was Vic. Which—his allegation was true. "You just are known as Trespass Vic. Anyplace you go, we know we're going to find a trespass."

Anyway, the judge at this time gave him probation. He was going to put him in jail for trespass. But he put him on probation, and he said, "Before you do the next logging, anytime you're adjacent to the national forest, you have to report to the ranger first so that you will not trespass." Anyway, we did get cooperation there, but to take a trespasser into the federal court system was impossible. You couldn't get the help to do it from our lawyers, because it was an incidental job, and the Justice Department wasn't going to get involved because this was not a serious enough thing, these minor trespasses of $500 to $1,000 in damage and that sort of thing.

SMART: Were there any U.S. magistrates at that time?

LEISZ: There weren't. We had access to no U.S. magistrates there, and that would have helped. It would have been a tremendous help, but we hadn't. I suppose we might have found one in Redding, but that would be a long way over to Redding for us. Redding and Sacramento probably would have been the only ones that we had access to.

SMART: What about training law enforcement people within the Forest Service?

LEISZ: My first encounter with that was at Mount Shasta, actually, when we had one of the regional law enforcement people stationed there, [Mervin] "Merv" Adams. His boss, George [Whitbeck?], had really brought organized, trained law enforcement to the Forest Service. They would give our district people training in law enforcement: how to do investigative work, how to

handle your case, present it and handle it as best you could. And then when you had very serious cases that got into high values, they would conduct the investigation, but there were only three investigators for the entire region available to us, at least at that point in time. And regulation enforcement in forest administration, at the district level, was a district job. That was our job to do. So you needed the training, and then you needed to proceed and do what you could.

You had to use all sorts of approaches because where you lacked a bona fide land survey, with Land Office corners established, and you knew that running property lines from whatever known corners were out there and that this was a flagrant trespass, then you had to establish and get somebody to believe that you had a trespass problem, and then find the culprit before they left the country. The only way to do this was you had to be watching every time a new logging operation started up that was close to the national forest, you had to go there, find out what the basis was for their land lines.

We got into a process then of line location agreements, so with responsible outfits, responsible logging companies we'd do the best we could to establish an approximate property line, and we'd log to those lines and have written agreements that we were doing that, pending a final survey. That really overcame the issue with any responsible people. In the township I mentioned that was unsurveyed, we ran corners in from adjacent townships. We did photogrammetric layout using the adjacent township's corners. The basic problems with those townships is that they were never six miles square. They were odd shapes because of the survey work that had been poorly done from base points. That meant there was insufficient area at the north end of the township, or at the south end sometimes, to have full sections. You had a wandering of section boundaries, when the areas were actually surveyed. But we did the best we could there, and actually I think put a stop to the flagrant trespasses that were under way.

The watershed work. We finally got a response from the federal highway department at that time for the construction jobs that were ongoing, to pay more attention to proper watershed issues as they constructed the main highways through tough terrain . And also working with the state. it was hard for me to understand that with these state jobs, often the construction outfit—their job was to get the job done. They could care less about maintenance problems. Then, of course, our concern was that if it wasn't constructed properly to start with, the maintenance job could go on forever, and the result was just terrible land impacts and watershed events.

But we did make progress there, and we did get our timber sale program developed to the point where we were meeting our targets. We were getting very good success with our plantations because we'd learned we had to control the hardwoods on those units, and we did patch cutting. Our patches, unlike the clear-cut patches, which they normally used, were usually about five to seven acres in size, at the most. We had steep country, so we had to give lots of consideration to soils there, and then we prescribed burn the logging slash f— when logging was all over, and immediately replanted and worked out a sequence: if we, through out fire, could expose soil over 65 percent of the ground, we could get plantations successfully established.

And then we had the issue to deal with—

SMART: That, through natural regeneration, you could do?

LEISZ: Well, we could get natural regeneration, but we also supplemented that with planting, planting stock. That job then led us into some young plantations, which became popular for deer, habitat. We finally worked out a system of pretty cheap deer fencing, and it was fascinating to me to go back to that ranger district fifteen years later, find out the people there then knew nothing about our deer fencing operations, and I had to take them out and show them

on the ground where parts of one of the fences was still there. We had comparative growth areas inside the fenced area and outside, to see what the impact of deer browsing was. Even after fifteen years, the trees that had been in the deer protected area were substantially taller than the trees outside. They'd gotten a spurt of growth initially that had put them into great height growth.

The other thing that was a fine opportunity for me there was the Pacific Southwest Forest Range Experiment Station had a field operation there that Douglass Roy, a silviculturist, ran. He liked to put plots in any place he could get cooperation with the district personnel in helping to establish those. So we were looking at growth plots, at brush competition, how to control brush competition, stand reestablishment, flowering of trees—why are they only setting cones every so many years? We had a strong participation there.

And then the fire researchers also found a happy home with us on application of some of the prescribed fires, using mechanical devices to set off the fires. In other words, you pre-wired places you wanted to have fire start, and you wouldn't have to do the laborious and hazardous jobs of getting down there and doing that by hand and then getting out of the area, out of the way and let the fire burn.

I had one, one of the years that I was there—you had to burn fairly early in the fall because in the fall deep shadows set in in those canyons, the places where it would get wet, and then you couldn't burn. You couldn't effectively prepare the area for burning. One of the falls we did that and had all our fires going, I got a call to come to the Eldorado National Forest] on their fires both, I think, the Icehouse fire and the [Camp Seven?] fires. And when I got that call, I had to share with them that we had so much fire going, I couldn't leave the district. I got a sharp response ferried to me via the supervisor's office on the Six Rivers from the regional

office, something like "what the hell are you doing setting fires when we're trying to put them out in the region?"

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: But anyway, we got our burning down, and then indicated a willingness to go to all forest fires, but it took about a week, and by that time, they didn't need us. I think they were pretty unhappy that...But you had to do things like that in the Northwest or you simply couldn't do prescribed fire; it wouldn't burn for you. You wouldn't get 65 percent clear area established for regeneration, and you couldn't get a fire to start, often. When shadows get so deep that you don't get any sunlight in there, it's simply not doable.

But we put up a lot of smoke, and some of the community impacts from that were people raised some objections about it, the locals, because they got smoked in. In the nighttime all the smoke would settle back down in the canyons, and that's where people lived.

SMART: Before I lose it, you talked about a successful deer fence. Could you describe what that was?

LEISZ: Oh, yes. It was a pole fence with—just a four-foot base fence but with outrigger wires, so that you had the vertical pole with a pole leaning against that, going out from the top of that fence pole to the ground, and then several strands of wire across the slanted poles , so if the deer got close to the vertical fence they could not raise up and jump the fence., If you didn't have the outriggers there, the deer could easily jump the 4' fence. But with the wire outriggers, they would have to struggle to get under those wires, and then they were constrained by the wires, so they couldn't jump the low fence. And the poles that were going to the outside of the vertical fence would be 10- to 12-foot poles, so the deer would have to do a long jump horizontally before they could ever get to the vertical fence. The fence design worked almost 100 percent. I

don't recall ever seeing any deer inside those fences. And they were cheap to put up. We used the old telephone wire to run the individual wires that were run, just like you would with a cattle fence.

SMART: You're on this ranger district, and you're the ranger. How did you see your interaction with both the forest supervisor, the regional forester, the chief of the Forest Service?

LEISZ: There were several times when we had contacts like that. The forest supervisor liked to come to the field to see what we were doing, and he often would challenge what you were doing. One thing: with Wes Spinney you knew that your signs have to be vertical or he's going to take them out of the ground.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: But anyway, it was a sense of "we wanted to look like somebody cares about this outfit," was the message you'd get from Wes. He'd give you strong support if you were meeting your targets, and he'd ride you pretty hard if you didn't meet your targets. It was not an easy place to bring new foresters into, because a new forester coming in, say, that lived in the Midwest and coming into the canyon living of the Northwest, gets into a situation—I can remember still a couple of the wives that came in. "I can't stand it. I feel like the trees are closing in on me, and when the winter comes, it's just a dismal place to be. We never see the sun." That was a little exaggeration, but it was true that the sun hours were very minimum there in the deep part of winter. The trees were tall, and they were towering, and you could get the feeling of—they just couldn't handle it. So it was difficult for them.

The other thing that was difficult there was the norm to have the highway closed part of the winter for three or four days at a time. We added two children to our three while we were there, our youngest two, and it was fifty miles to the hospital. I can remember one time just

barely getting through the slide and taking Marian up to the hospital. And then I couldn't get back through, but we had people that could take of our other three kids right in the area. But the highway closure—and that was a frightening thing for people coming in that were never used to having to put up with that isolation. .

Often the power was out for a day, two or three days at a time, and you learned to be able to deal with that. An unfortunate design issue again: They built some new housing there because, as our activities expanded there, we needed additional personnel, and there just wasn't housing in the community that was available for rent, so they added a house there, and we actually ended up moving into the house. They added a nice two-bedroom house. It was all electric, and there was no place to burn wood. As I saw that happening, I brought up the issue with the supervisor's office, saying, "You know, do you realize what this does to us when the power goes out? And it does for several times a year. We won't be able to cook on what we have, so we'll get the camp stove out and make out with that. But why not design a wood-burning facility into these houses? That would be an easy thing to do, and we all have plenty of wood, and that's the most economical way to heat." Well, it took a year and a half's effort to get wood-burning established in the houses, but that was true with the houses at these other places that were outlying as well.

We had these annual runs of salmon and steelhead there. I had an affinity for going down there to the river and testing the runs . During that season, we always had great barbecues at the station. We constructed, on our own time, a smokehouse in the station and actually put the smokehouse on the site development plan for the station..

You asked about the regional forester. Well, one trip, the regional forester came through and he stopped and visited for several hours, along with the forest supervisor and a couple of

other staff people, and wanted to tour our facilities. Well, we had the ranger station on one side of the highway there, and our trailer court, for living accommodations, on the other side, which was pretty well designed. We had laundry facilities over there, and shower facilities, so they had bathing places as well as their accommodations in the trailers. And the smokehouse was over there.

I showed him and pointed out to him, and he asked me—he said, "What's that?" I said, "That's our smokehouse. That's our community smokehouse." "Oh. Does that show on the site development plan?" I said, "Yes, it does." "Well, we'd like to see that." We got back to the office, and I rolled it out, and it not only had the smokehouse shown in there, it had the regional forester's signature and the forest supervisor's signature on the plan. And I said, "Both of you guys signed off on this. You must have known there was a smokehouse here. It's plainly labeled." And they laughed.

And the regional forester said, "How is it used?" And I said, "Everybody, mostly at the station here, when the runs are in, they do some fishing, and we can run a lot of smoked fish through there, and so everybody uses it. And some of the local people know that it's the best smokehouse around, so they use it, so it's a community kind of thing." We had just, for the first time ever there, they finally paved the ranger station facilities. They had just gravel, and it was a pretty dusty situation, at that. But they paved it, and I got some outside lights put in there, outside the warehouse, so if we needed to load things up during the fires and so forth at night, we had floodlights out there.

Well, it just so happened that some of the town people saw that, and we had a square dance group there in town, so when the weather was decent, why, we had our square dances at the ranger station, with the floodlights turned on. I think one of the fiscal guys quizzed me about

that, and he said, "You're burning electricity there for the community." I said, "Yeah, we are." [Chuckles softly.] And we did.

We entered into the service club over there. Willow Creek was the local town. I became a member there. I coached one of the Little League baseball teams there and established a Kiwanis group at the Indian high school in Hoopa, which was really an interesting thing because there had been a Negro battalion there stationed in the early years on that reservation, and there had been some blending and Negroid and Indian, and you could see some of that in some of the current population there. The Indian tribe took no exception to that. They blended in. But there was a lot of very intelligent people in that community, and there were some that were renegades, and so you had a mix to deal with.

But the youth there, as evidenced by our young people's Key club there at the high school, sponsored by Kiwanis organization, was really a thing to see because those kids—with a little encouragement, we could get them to start to think about going to college, and then how do we get to college, and what resources they would have. And you'd link up with scholarships and things, and I'm sure that made a difference for some of those folks.

And then the grazing permitees there—they would graze on the reservation land, and then those that had permits would graze on the national forest, with a set season, and we established the readiness date for the vegetation. We had the high country. The ranger before me had exhausted all other measures, so he established a drift fence between the reservation and the national forest grazing. It was the only way that he thought he could control trespass. What happened was that the Indians would simply cut the wire and let their stock through at places where you'd have to walk the whole line to find. They'd do that because by the end of the

grazing season on the reservation, they grazed so much stock there that there was nothing left to graze, and so they'd push them onto the national forest.

I tried to deal with that. We'd mend the fence; we'd move cattle out that didn't belong, and finally decided the only way to do this was to get the help of the legitimate permitees. So we had a meeting in Hoopa, and I talked to them and said with range conditions the way they were on the summit area, I was going to have to reduce allotments by 30 percent and that I knew and they knew that a big part of the problem was all the trespass stock that were coming in. I said, "I don't have a way to control it, but you guys do, and if you don't want your permits reduced, keep the other stock out. Help me do that."

I had a group of about sixty people there. I'm sure a number of the trespassers were there as well as the permitees. There were twenty-seven permitees. I thought we were going to get roasted out of the room for a while. "You are going to cut our permits because there's trespass stock." I said, "Yeah, that's right, because I have to go on what the range can handle, not how many legitimate stock are up there. And you know and I know the range is deteriorating, and I'm not going to stand for it. We're going to bring that back to good range conditions. ."

And there was about maybe fifteen, twenty minutes of pretty testy discussion. And finally one of the Indians got up that I had gotten acquainted with, and he was one of the mix of Negroid and Indian, an old-timer, probably, like me, in his late seventies. He stood up and talked to the group. He said something like—he said, "The ranger is correct, and we're the ones that have to solve this. That's what he's telling us." And he started to name the trespassers there. He said, "You're all here, and you hear this, and if you keep trespassing up there, you're jeopardizing your neighbor's permit, and your neighbor is not going to put up with that." And he

said, "You have to stop." And that set the tone, and we got it pretty well accommodated. I think we only had one or two of the fences cut a time or two, and the range responded nicely.

SMART: When you took on an adverse decision like that as far as those people go, was there a sense that they were going to involve their congressmen, that they were going to go to the regional forester, that they were going to go to some higher authority to bring smoke on you?

LEISZ: That certainly was a possibility. For that night, I invited—George Ramstead, who had grazing responsibilities in the SO, in the supervisor's office, came. The thing that showed there is that I'm sure if I had not established some kind of working relationships with some of the permitees and some of the people on the reservation that were in their leadership group, we'd have had real trouble with that. But we got them involved in taking some of the range readiness data and the trend data, got some of their folks that were quite knowledgeable to do that, and they knew there was a problem. They just didn't know how to deal with it. They knew that the fence wasn't going to work. If you've ever tried to round up some renegade Indian cattle, you know that that is nearly an impossibility. They're hardly drive-able. They'll spread out in the woods to the point where you have to corner them and move them out by single numbers, and that's just a huge job.

SMART: The way the Forest Service has moved through time and so has the public has moved through time, but it sounds to me like you had kind of a culture that said, "Let's take care of our problems in [unintelligible] Valley here, inside the canyon" or whatever.

LEISZ: Yes. But I don't think it would have worked if I hadn't done a lot of work in identifying myself as somebody that cared about the community but yet was going to manage the resources so that they were protected as well. And then to get help like—this guy's name was Andy Mescet . I can still practically see him standing there. I hadn't asked him to do that. He got up

and did it, and those people probably that he pointed out, the trespassers, hated him for it, but he had the stamina to get up there and say, "Let's work with the ranger and correct this problem. He's trying to give us all the grazing the area can stand, but he's telling us he's not going to let it be abused." But it was a great response.

My experience had also been with the various timber companies we dealt with. We had some very responsible ones. They would follow the contracts; they'd tell you if they saw a problem that they thought you'd maybe not seen and corrected, so we could correct it. Those were men of their word type of individuals. I had nothing but respect for those people.

There were some others that were just trying to shade things any way they could to take advantage of the government, that we had continued difficulties with, whether it was trespass or failure to perform on a contract and have to go after them with all the vigor you could. I've had complaints like—I mentioned the McCloud one, going to the SO to try to override my decision. And I had some of that, one as far as the regional office when I was on the Mendocino, when they failed to provide a right-of-way and I withheld their money on deposit and their bond. I got excellent backing.

While I was there, why, the head of timber management in the Washington dropped by to the station and wanted to look at one of the timber sales that we had in preparation that had not been sold yet, and we went out on the ground, to look at the sale area. We had a special way of mapping, and we were using prism cruising then. We had the regional prison cruising session there on my ranger district. But anyway, he was interested particularly in how we were not only designing the cut areas but how we were dealing with the stands we left. What was the stand to be left going to look like? And what kind of considerations were we giving to future harvesting when you do sequential harvests adjacent to the one you are taking out? And really raising the

issue: Are you just creaming off the best stuff? Which I felt strongly that that was never our license to do. Our license was to find the stand that needed the treatment the most, the worst, the stand that was in the poorest condition that needed to be harvested so that you could reestablish thrifty stands there.

We spent the better part of a day out there, and then he all of a sudden he asked me about a particular plant that was out there. I said, "That's poison oak." And his expression was, "Oh, my god, I'm susceptible to poison oak. I have to leave. Now." So he lost interest in seeing the rest of it, for the day.

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: But he got about a half day, and I understand he got a considerable dose of poison oak on his wrist there. But we did get support and interest periodically. Had an excellent timber staff officer on the Six Rivers, who was very knowledgeable, that transferred down from Region Six. We were doing some of the early cable logging there, high- lead logging, because you simply couldn't operate on slopes as steep as we had with tractors or contour roads with short cable equipment. That was challenging. Once again, we tried to make sure that what we were leaving was going to be better than what we were taking. We weren't high grading..

We had some recreation development money while I was there, and we were able to put in a campground along the river, and had to challenge trespass mining occupancy to do that, somebody had built a cabin and really never had a legitimate mine there. This t was another form of trespass which was just rampant in the Northwest and here on the Eldorado as well.

In dealing with those mining occupancy cases the Service Rights Minerals Law that came along a little bit later was a big help there. But actually getting a professional mineral examination to determine the validity of an occupancy, and did it really relate to a bona fide

discovery of valuable minerals or was it just flagrant occupancy trespass? Which an awful lot of them were. We had others there that were old miners that had been there for a number of years, and they tried to make a living mining. They were just barely existing, and they were in their senior years and just barely making it. You could have challenged their occupancy, perhaps, because they were making almost not enough to hardly buy beans with, but they were trying to mine. They weren't there trying to establish a home or something that had nothing to do with mining. And they had been there a long time.

I made it a point to try to get acquainted with those people and to let them know that I was really interested in what they were doing and that we were interested in them as people that were residing in the forest. I never did try to chase them out because even while I was there, why, several of them passed away, and we just made sure that another occupant didn't get established there.

So there was a transition opportunity there, coming from the old days of where people just went out and they thought they found a valuable homestead and they built a home and then others didn't bother about the mineral discovery; they just built a cabin and tried to occupy the land and then contest the occupancy trespass later. But that was a busy number of years on the Six Rivers.

SMART: How long were you at Salyer?

LEISZ: About five years.

SMART: And then you went on to?

LEISZ: I went on from there to the Sequoia Forest. Our kids hated to leave each place we left, I think. I think, though, perhaps Marian was ready to leave Salyer when we did.

SMART: What year was that?

LEISZ: It was 1960. We'd been there from—we were there in 1956, '57,'58 and '59 and the middle of 1960 we moved to Porterville, Porterville in the San Joaquin Valley. Hotter than hell in the summer time, in fact. In the supervisor's office in Porterville. My job there was timber, recreation and lands, a staff person there. Had some competent help in the landscape architect, a fellow by the name of Bob]Stignanni?, who was a great landscape architect. Ralph White was the timber assistant there. The three of us, plus a clerk, ran those activities from the SO.

That was a fascinating time because the Kern Plateau had surfaced into one of the areas of national significance. Congress was looking at the Kern Plateau and the multiple-use plan for the Kern Plateau, which included new roading, new recreation developments and timber harvesting in an area that had been off limits except to those that had off-highway vehicles so they could travel up through the woods without roads. There was strong objections to new roads in timber harvesting because those people thought they had their pristine environment, that they could go cross country in their motor vehicles, even with the damage they did. They seemed to ignore that. And so they challenged that whole idea of roading into new areas in harvesting, and Save the Kern Plateau was formed.

The Sierra Club got involved to some extent in that, but not as a strong motivator. It was the Kern Plateau Association, a locally organized group which became very vocal in fighting it and making all kinds of charges: number one, that once we harvested the timber it would just become desert. Because of low rainfall and soils there, you could never reestablish forest stands. While we were doing selective cutting there, trees in a lot of the areas were really in poor shape, a combination of mistletoe and insect activities. Our inventory showed we were losing up to 10 percent of the volume per acre in some of these areas.

And so our targets were to get into those areas and try to contain the losses that were taking place and improve the health of the stand. That was a battle. A congressional committee came out and reviewed. Various state organizations did. The news media was there on that time after time. But we got pretty good marks on what we were doing. We built a decent road in there and put a surface on it, out of the Kern River Canyon and up into the Big Meadows area. That was the first area.

There were pollution measuring devices put in some of the streams by the research station, because that was one of the charges. The granitic soils are highly erodible, and if you fail to treat them with caution, you could get into serious erosion problems. And so we got assistance from research, putting in stream catchment basins and weirs to measure flows plus measure sediment deposits both in logged areas and unlogged areas so that these comparisons could be made.

We started into the development process up there, and at the same time, one of the jobs I was given was to set out the boundaries for the Domelands Wilderness Area which the forest was going to propose. That activity took a lot of time. I felt the need to go on the ground and examine that. And we pretty much tied to geographic points that could be easily identified, so high points were used to define the boundaries. Using a topographic map. We avoided a boundary that would be mid-slope and impossible to determine whether you were in or out of wilderness. Unfortunately, I think it's two years ago, the entire Domelands Wilderness burned, with a very destructive fire.

SMART: Where did the pressure come from for the Domelands Wilderness?

LEISZ: It came from the forest, itself. There was good support from local Sierra Club folks and some indications from The Wilderness Society, but it also was driven by the regional office, who

were really trying to have the areas that should be into primitive classification at that time or into wilderness, to get them established. And, of course, the Wilderness Act didn't pass the Congress until 1964, as I recall. And so part of our multiple-use planning was to look at the forest and provide for what we called primitive area or wilderness designation for parts of the forest that seemed to warrant that kind of approach.

I got involved pretty heavily with some of the ranger districts on timber sale preparations because we found that we lacked the skills on that forest that I had become accustomed to on the Six Rivers and the Mendocino. We didn't have the skilled personnel that we had experienced. In fact, the year before I arrived, the forest had had a serious fire, the Dry fire, —a life was lost in that fire.

But there was salvage logging to do from that, and part of it was fairly steep ground. There had been provisions for some cable yarding in the contract., and the company was trying their best not to have to set up for cable logging. Well, I got there, and they had no experience with high-lead logging, and I told them absolutely it's the only way. The contract required it. They had to do it. And so they actually then asked me for some high-lead logging companies that I had had successful relationship with, They brought one down from the Six Rivers Forest to do the setup job for them. It ended up being a very successful operation.

At the same time, part of that job was to put in soil catchment basins below all that burned area, including not just the area that was logged, because we had pretty good watershed protection built in there. We got a lot of the small woody material on the ground, put in a lot of erosion barriers there so that the slopes were better protected inside the logged area than they were outside, where the brush had just been slicked off. Very hot fire. And so catchment basins went in there. That was the first time that I really saw extensive watershed protection following

a fire. The Kern River, of course, was right below there, and the power generation and the water systems that went into the reservoir below were all dependent on good-quality water. The Kern River, of course, goes in and becomes a major water supply for the city of Bakersfield there. So it was a very interesting challenge .

Another activity I got strongly involved in there was that we had an opportunity to acquire additional giant sequoia groves that were on private land, in private ownership. That required some exchanges and some purchase, and my predecessor in that job was [Joseph] "Joe" Flynn. He had started some of this land acquisition. He got transferred to the regional office before they were completed. But one of the dilemmas we had was that how do you value a giant sequoia stand when there is prohibition against logging of trees of that size? State law. The general accounting office made a review of our appraisal and challenged this, and we finally developed a rationale and said, "We view these trees as irreplaceable, and we're willing to put a substantial value on them for protection of the stand and to get it into public ownership. They are values that should not be lost by letting them remain in private ownership when the private owners want to sell. Either they're going to subdivide these areas and we'll have houses scattered among the giant sequoias, or else they're going to come into public ownership."

Anyway, we prevailed and were able to acquire three major groves there. The Freeman Creek grove was one of those, and it's an outstanding grove. One of the groves we acquired, Congress later decided should go to the local Indian reservation there, after we had acquired it. That was a little bitter pill, but that came after I had left the Sequoia.

So we had really a lot of activities there. We had a heavy Western pine beetle infestation and also the ponderosa pine bark beetle there in the northern part of the forest. The Park Service was also taking a heavy hit on their trees because of the beetles.

SMART: That would be the Sequoia National Park?

LEISZ: Yes, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. So we worked out some combinations there. It was my first exposure to the Park Service being willing to commercially remove some trees, which we did for them. We had some timber sales. They had a process where they could cut hazard trees and remove those and get wood back from the lumber company for their construction projects. Anyway, we helped them do that.

And we worked out a process where we did continuous surveys for nsect activities.We were getting first some of the older trees attacked that were weakened by age and infirmary of one kind or another to the trees, where the crowns start to open up and they just start to lose their full vigor. Those were easy targets for insects once populations build to high numbers.

And then also insect populations were getting so large, they were beginning to hit the younger trees as well. So we had to get into a process there to take the trees out while the broods were still there and hadn't hatched and flown yet.We worked with small gypo loggers that were strong cooperators with us in moving that stuff out of the woods as quickly as we could. After a two-year period there, we managed to treat, by removal, most of the infestation sources and salvage some, and our problem diminished. We got on top of the insect problem there.

The same thing was true with some of our work in the Kern plateau, where we had this just ubiquitous mistletoe infestation in the stands. The young trees were all just clobbered with mistletoe. Mistletoe, while symbiotic for most cases—it will coexist with a host, but it reduces growth to the point of almost you can't count on that tree ever becoming a mature tree, in the sense that you'd like to see. So we did get into some aggressive actions there in mistletoe removal and then replanting trees and establishing some break-in species so that you just didn't

have continuous pine stnd but you'd have species breaks—mistletoe is very species selective. Species that attacks the pines does not attack the firs, and if you had some geographic break by species, you had a chance of stopping that from becoming widespread.

We think it worked fairly well. I've been back and looked at some of that years later now, and it's very rewarding to see healthy stands where there were unhealthy stands in 1961 and parts of 62, but the other thing is that you find that wildfires do their share of damage there as they come through.

SMART: So you had the redwood acquisition going on; you got the Kern Plateau's role, as a big issue; you got the—

LEISZ: Recreation development in the Kern River.

SMART: The Domelands is coming.

LEISZ: We got that.

SMART: And you got the [unintelligible]. As you look at that kind of activity going on compared to what was going on when you were at Salyer, how would you describe that?

LEISZ: There are interesting comparisons to make. First of all, tremendous people pressures on the Sequoia. We had seasonal pressures on the Six Rivers. There, we had year-round pressures, on the Sequoia. There wasa large potential winter sports development (Mineral King) on the forest, and there were additional ones that were coming into consideration. And you had a newspaper. The *Bakersfield Press* was a great paper to work with. I remember I took them on a show-me-trip trip on the Kern Plateau, and the Sequoia acquisition (Freeman Creek Grove) and the Domelands Wilderness area.. We got fabulous articles written, supporting our work. Taking the media out to the ground, rather than just trying to hand them a paper—it worked great for me.

So we got newspaper support. There was a lot of interest because we had lots of controversy. We had good community support in the city of Porterville, and I found, to my real amazement there was a former forest supervisor of the Sequoia living in the area. The city has a fabulous park. Over time, it occurred to me, *How in the world did they ever get this great park for a small community like this?* Three swimming pools. Big pools. And so you could put the small kids in the proper pool. They didn't have to go in the big pool.

There was a former forest supervisor that lived in the area, that worked out of the area. Elliot was his name____ or Joe____ Elliot Sr.?]. He had been the supervisor there at one time. He'd also worked elsewhere in the region. But he dug out some old pictures, and he showed me, and he said the community was just distraught at the time he was supervisor (during the great depression years) They didn't have any recreation area at all. And so, on a volunteer basis, our engineers and our foresters designed the park. I said, "I've heard from some people that you did more than that." And he laughed, and he said, "We had some ropad equipment we had to put in storage for the winter when it was coming down out of the forest.. We did do some excavation work with the pools."

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: I said, "Yeah, I understand there was some tree planting." And he said, "There were some. One year we had some surplus trees, doing planting in the forest. Yeah, we did plant some trees, and then we managed to get some more trees from other sources, and people put in a lot of volunteer time," Forest Service folks volunteered]. He said, "Anyway, yeah, we were part of the community. We were really a part of the community."

Because, you know, that's where my wife and kids went. They had a fabulous time there. Up to then, in the different locations we were—on the Six Rivers, we had the Trinity River and found a

great swimming hole there, and that's where the kids learned to swim. Marian would take them on a daily basis in the summertime to that place. We ended up with five kids there. That was something to really try to manage, five kids in a swimming hole.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: But that Porterville area was a great one. We managed to establish a good working relationship with the Park Service, where we would jointly invite the other party to come to safety meetings that we'd conduct. And one of the acquisitions, the redwoods, that stuck in my mind was an area in the north end of the forest that had been acquired before I got to the forest, some years prior to that. Windy Gulch was a place on the forest. Redwood logging and the early logging on the northern part of the Sequoia.. The log and lumber transportation ransportation was by flume. Whether it was lumber from the mill going down or logs], they were transported by water in the flume. To the valley. When the flume burned a couple of times—I think the second time it burned, and it had been one of the longest flumes for logging ever put in anywhere. . There were remnants, boards out there in the woods from that, but the flume, by the time I got there, had pretty much collapsed and was just rotten wood.

But here was, on Windy Gulch, was a stand of redwood trees, enormous trees that had been felled. Just the bucking started in, and of course, they had to split those to get them in the flume for transportation. But you had this whole sea of downed big redwood, with young redwoods coming up between these big huge logs. Some of those logs are still out there today.

SMART: [unintelligible]?

LEISZ: Yes. And they'll last a long time because of the way redwood perseveres. But the Sequoia Forest and the Sierra have a splendid Big Tree groves, and of course there's one here on the Tahoe, just six trees.

SMART: When you look at the composition of the workforce—when you were on the Six Rivers and on the Mendocino, you saw new specialists coming in and join the outfit.

LEISZ: Yes.

SMART: What about the women coming in the organization? What does that look like?

LEISZ: As I go through—the women—my time through the course of the Mendocino and the Six Rivers and into Porterville, we had a few women professionals in, but mostly they were in the administration ranks. We didn't have women foresters applying for jobs. We had a few women engineers that had come in, and we had one or two landscape architects, but it was just really beginning to be, I think, considered an attractive workplace for women. I'd say probably when I arrived in 1962 on the Eldorado, we wee beginning to see a strong interest there.

Of course, it had been a pretty much a man's organization, except for research. We had women involved in Forest Service research quite early on. In fact, I remember one of my days in the 1950s on the Shasta Forest, there was a woman researcher at Mount Shasta, as part of PSW [Pacific Southwest Research Station]. But it was an abnormal thing to find women Professionals in natural resource work. You found them on lookouts early on. In the 1920s a woman lookout was hired on the Klamath. But to move up in the professional ranks, it just hadn't been, and certainly they were not involved in the fire crews until really quite into the 1970s.

SMART: Yes. I just want to get a quick reflection on what was going on there. You're going to leave the Sequoia after how many years?

LEISZ: I was there two years. It was a wonderful two years. I think I fished every lake on the Sequoia and left little notes. We used to go on weekend trips, and we'd hike to a new area whenever we could. Sometimes there were long hikes, but they were worthwhile because we not only saw a tremendous amount of country, we'd pick up some of the history and the flavor. In

the Mineral King area, for example, there was an old mining camp high up—I think it's at Eagle Lake there, where there was stone foundation remnants of the old mining buildings—that took place at Mineral King. That's how it got its name. And the difficulties, the stories that came out of the difficulties. They tried to work up there and live up there most of the year round, and you got heavy snows in there. And they talk about the avalanches that they'd encounter going in or out of there, because they had to go down to the valley for supplies, and to get out of that awful winter in there some of the times. .But to visit that country and see it today, or then, in the 1960s, and realize what it had been in the late 1800s, as a mining effort...

We found that in almost all the places that we occupied or went to. There was the old mining history that was there. And some of it remained, and some of it had just been abandoned and left, and we'd just find the remnants. That was of particular significance to us because one of Marian's grandfathers was a miner and came through the Placerville area and went over along Highway 4 to , what had been city over there, and he mined over there. With the maps and so forth that we were able to dig out of the Bancroft Library [of the University of California] and family stuff, we located his claim. The building foundation is still there -- a rock foundation.. That mining endeavor never made it. although there's one gold-mining operation still over there today.

But that sort of impact on the land—you know, people, as they talk about multiple use, people wanted to always kind of think of it as—that you do all uses on a single acre of land. I can remember early on the regional forester, [Charles A.] "Charlie" Connaughton, did an excellent job of talking about multiple use, that the first thing to understand is that uses would change over time and that the use that was there today might not be tomorrow's use. And as you look at the dredgings down in the valley here today, you see those old mine dredgings have

become the gravel for the roads that we build today. The dredging scars are getting smaller and smaller as they need more gravel. In those sites, still a number of dredger piles of gravels.

So the key, in multiple-use planning and thinking, was to make sure you're going to leave land in a condition to be used in the future. And if there were apparent high values there, whether they were watershed values or wildlife habitat values or recreation, that you accommodate those. If your first entry was with the road system and the timber harvesting, then you recognized that and make sure that the area is going to be usable for those other values in the future, as it comes.

I found the concept to be a demanding one in that it demanded you to think in the future about areas and how they might be used, and a very demanding integrating one, of how you then do this, how you would design your silvicultural treatments to harvest, to keep good forest health with harvesting an area that is later going to become a prime recreation attraction. And we did an excellent job of that in a number of locations. We did that at Fallen Leaf Lake campground, after we acquired those private lands, and they've had a number of hazardous trees in the campground. I came in after that job was done.

Andy Schmidt had been the person in charge of harvesting the hazard trees and leaving an attractive forest for the future campground. They took out the hazardous trees there, removed stumps to the point where you didn't know a tree had been removed, and were able then to put campgrounds in to an attractive foest setting having taken the hazardous trees out. A beautiful example of harvesting and making use of a product, but still keeping the primary purpose of a campground in mind.without the hazardous trees.

So the multiple-use concept to me was, I think, and still is, a great one. It makes you think ahead; it makes you think now; it makes you integrate the various resources. And if there

is to be a heavy land impact that takes the land out of future consideration—and I'll just use an example there of—well, mining could be one. Certainly water development that establishes a new reservoir and floods areas, or a winter sports development that's going to put permanent installations there which mark that as primarily an attraction for winter recreation. They're going to use it for their winter sports. You're only going to remove those trees when they're hazards for that occupancy.

So we put some kind of permanent stamps on it. When we put a new highway through, we tried to locate that highway to avoid impacting areas that had special significance. And I can think of where we did that time and time again with highways, and we cost the public a lot more money for that highway because we didn't want it to obliterate special values.—

SMART: [unintelligible] design.

LEISZ: Yes. So when we do a good job, we tend to consider the range of uses that should be there and could be there over time, and we try to keep that in mind. The key thing, though, is that you have to keep the soil in place to manage any of the resources that are out there and for the future, and you have to be alert and continuously remind yourself that watershed is probably our primary responsibility as we blend in all of the uses, is to not abuse the watershed.

SMART: I got a sense, Doug, that we probably want to do this in a couple of sessions, not just the one session a day.

LEISZ: Yes, I might do that. Let's pick it up the next time when I transfer to the Eldorado.

SMART: To the Eldorado? Okay.

LEISZ: There's another half of the career out there.

SMART: Absolutely, yes. But I think we've done a pretty good job of laying the base, because I'm going to be asking you about transitions, of changes in the patterns. I think this is a good place to stop.

LEISZ: Let's do that.

[End CD 2. Begin CD 3.]

SMART: Good morning. I'm Bob Smart, and we're continuing on with the interview. This is September 30th of 2004, and I'm at the home of Doug Leisz.

Doug, the last time we visited, one of the stories you had to share with me was about the acquisition of a major ranch in the Southwest, and there was a lot of political intrigue that went along with that. It's that political intrigue kinds of things, as we come on [unintelligible] today, I'd like to spend probably a little more time trying to look at the intricacies of what is it like, as a leader in this organization, to have made things happen sometimes. That will be kind of a theme that I'll be trying to push a little bit today. But in our past interview, we got up to 1964. You were about to arrive on the Eldorado.

Before we get to that, was there anything that struck your mind about prior to 1964? I would have liked to have covered that.

LEISZ: There are couple of things that I don't think I did adequately cover. When I was on the Mendocino, Joe Ely was developing the aerial tanker program. At that time, I was on the Paskenta District as assistant ranger. The fire activity as well as recreation and grazing was part of my job, and some timber there, too. But I got very active in building Helitack on the district there and ended up kind of heading that Helitack crew up. That was my early contact with [Robert] "Bob" Trimble, who was one of the primo helicopter pilots in the region. It was

through him, I'm sure, and some guidance that I avoided what could have been I think very serious helicopter incidents. He gave me some indicators to watch with pilots, because he felt that we were getting some pilots through contracts that were not fully qualified, that were ex-military pilots, but they were not really acquainted with mountain flying. And mountain flying, as he explained it, is entirely different than flying over the flat land.

I really think that was a great bonus, from my standpoint, in that at least at one time I sent a helicopter off because a pilot had violated one of the principal rules that Bob Trimble had told me about, over-speeding the rotor blades before we took off. He tried that several times, kind of testing, and was apparently uncertain whether we were going to get off the landing spot. I watched him go through his operations and decided that it was not in the best interest to continue him as our pilot, and we let him go, on the spot. Well, it so happened, in his transport from that site to Redding, he crashed, the helicopter. Fortunately, didn't lose his life, but the helicopter was a total loss.

So I think about things like that. And then I was on the ground, I think, with the first Stearman drop that was made on the Eldorado on a going fire. It was a logging truck that crashed, and in the crash of that truck, it went off the road and ended up on top of a mound of rocks, with brush and timber around it. The operator was inside the truck at the time I arrived via helicopter with one other person, to attack what had become a fire around the logging truck. One of the Stearman crop-duster planes showed up with a load of water, and that was our first aerial drop with [Joey Ely?] on the radio, and actually Joe Flynn was up in a spotter plane, and they watched as the pilot made his drops on the fire by the logging truck there. Really the net effect was that it lowered the humidity to the point where the fire was much easier to contain.

And we got the driver out safely from the truck. But that was my early introduction to aerial retardant dropping, and it was quite a little event.

SMART: What year would that be?

LEISZ: It would be 1954, as I recall. But, you know, you go through events like that, and you don't realize that you're part of history, the evolving history of something, like the retardant program or like building Helitack crews. Region Five was the most aggressive region in actually organizing Helitack crews as a specialty, and it quickly spread to other western regions because it was such an effective way to deploy people and reach and take care of the fires before they got too large.

But let's go on. In 1962 I left the Sequoia Forest, and I was surprised and delighted to get an opportunity to go to the Eldorado as forest supervisor. That was a time, as we all recall, when we had the Multi-Use Sustained-Yield Act, and we were busy trying to build integrated multi-use plans for the forests. That was very much under way on the Eldorado.

We also had on the Eldorado a tremendous pressure from the Lake Tahoe region for new development. Things were moving so rapidly on the private land up there that it just threatened to engulf the area with traffic problems, air pollution problems, lake pollution problems, and sewage disposal up there was becoming a huge factor. It was all treated, but it was sprayed on the ground at the time that I arrived, and that proved to be completely unsatisfactory because, over time, it was killing the vegetation, even the trees. Some of the heavy metals that were processed just didn't extract. And we became heavily involved with that.

I think the Eldorado was probably recognized, as I heard from the Washington office, as kind of the principal, well-balanced forest for the combination of uses. It had high watershed values; it had high recreation value; it had very high timber values, and it had some grazing and

some mining activity, although the mining activity—most of it had preceded the post-World War II era. And so the forest was one in which, when you set about trying to develop a multi-use plan, under the Multi-Use Sustained-Yield Act, why, you really were challenged to find proper balance for resources.

It was clear, not only in the Tahoe basin but especially there, that watershed values were so high that you simply couldn't impact those in any substantial way without unacceptable results. One of the biggest problems that we had is that we lacked an adequate road system on the forest, adequate in the sense that for handling both recreation travel and commercial travel on the roads but also for out-of-season use. The roads had pretty much been developed in the Civilian Conservation Corps days and some beyond that, but they were low-standard, dirt roads, many of them unsurfaced, with gravel or certainly no hard macadam surface on them.

But we set about with a major effort to rebuild that system and actually increase the access to the forest with true multi-use values in mind. And even while that was going on, we were looking at—I was here in 1964 when the Wilderness Act passed, and that called for an examination of the then-existing primitive areas and other areas that had been identified earlier as suitable for wilderness. And so we had the Desolation Wilderness proposal to take on and complete, and then behind that, the Mokelumne Wilderness in the southern part of the forest.

Those were interesting challenges. They got to be, in the case of Desolation, actually a very workable kind of thing because we contacted both the Sierra Club and the Four Wheel Drive Association and got them actually to enter with us in studying the boundaries. There was lots of discussions between those groups about acceptable boundaries. We ended up with, when we had the public hearing in Placerville, I can recall, we got unqualified endorsement from both

groups. We found resolution on the boundaries that was reasonably acceptable, and in the end fully acceptable for all interests.

There was another element that was exceedingly interesting in that process, because Desolation, like many of the wilderness areas that have been identified in the primitive area classification--the agency had on its own that preceded the Wilderness Act—many of those had power withdrawals, withdrawals for the development of water and power within the primitive boundaries. Of course, when wilderness proposal came up, why, those had to be considered in the wilderness bill itself.

In the case of Desolation, PG&E [Pacific Gas & Electric] had a development within the wilderness that fed Project 184 at the South Fork of the American River, and that project actually had been developed prior to the creation of the national forest, but the part within Desolation had never been constructed until after the forest was created. But the other part of Desolation, the Sacramento Municipal Utilities project, which was under construction when I came to the forest—they also had a reservoir located inside Desolation, a diversion. They were proceeding to develop that. We actually had quite an issue with them about accessing that. They wanted to simply cut a road through the wilderness to access the reservoir site, and that was about an eight-mile trip from the outside of the boundary into the interior there.

We had long discussions, and we fought that very thoroughly, saying that any road in there was going to have to be material laid on the land to make a roadbed rather than cutting into the surface, so that when the project was completed there would be no road access in there. And so we took the road through the bottom of what became Loon Lake Reservoir and then came out of the reservoir and went over the hill and into the wilderness area, to the Sand Flat area, where

their dam diversion was that went through Rock Bound & Buck Island Lakes, then through a tunnel to loon Lake. .

So all that beyond the Loon Lake area became a trail when it was completed, rather than a road. Well, we had to push that right to the wall to get that accepted by SMUD. They thought they had right of access, and we said, "No, you don't have right of access; you have the right to develop there. You have to get an access permit from the Forest Service, and you have to meet our conditions." That was very testy because the ex-head of the Bureau of Reclamation was a general manager for SMUD, and he thought he had far-reaching authority on the use of land. We disagreed. Anyway, it worked out all right, but it was a very testy situation.

The other thing that happened with Desolation: Desolation, because the power withdrawals—when it came to the congressional floor for action, it had to come through in a way that would not allow floor amendments to the bill. The power companies were concerned about the wilderness classification, and so they were offering and lobbying behind the scenes to not have the wilderness bill go ahead, at least with those areas inside, and those areas would have left big holes in the interior of the proposal. And so we worked through with that.

The action then that was required was to go to the Rules Committee for a review of what could happen on the floor of the House with that bill. I was asked to come back and testify to the Rules Committee, and that was my first time before a committee in Washington, D.C. The person that was the local congressional representative was Harold [T.] "Bizz" Johnson. He invited me to come back and thought it was crucial that I would explain to the Rules Committee about wilderness and why we needed to have this accepted with these withdrawals inside.

I came there, and there was probably a dozen of the Rules Committee in attendance. I was at first just kind of flabbergasted by seeing that they sat there, and this was the first thing in

the morning on their agenda, and we were in one of the committee rooms there in the Capitol. They all had the stock page of the newspaper before them as we sat there.

SMART: [Chuckles softly.]

LEISZ: The chair started out and made some remark like, "Well, what is this wilderness thing we're looking at?" And one of the other members said, "Well, you know, that's just beyond where there's development." And so I thought, *Wow, they really don't relate to the Wilderness Act the way I do.* But we had a discussion between newspaper readings and my words for about forty-five minutes. And Wayne [N.] Aspinall was there. Wayne was a chair of the Lands Committee that affected public lands for a long time, a congressman from Colorado, very active. He gave me lots of prompts about the types of things I needed to know and talk about.

We finished that after an hour, with full endorsement from the Rules Committee. But as I left, I thought, *Wow, somehow we need a trip for each of these folks to really understand what wilderness is all about*. But it was my first experience to see what the agency had to deal with in terms of all the various programs that these congressional reps faced and what an incredible, difficult job we had to make sure that they understood what issues were all about, in a fair-minded way. But we came back, and Desolation—it was enacted.

While I was on the Eldorado we also started to work with the Tahoe regional council to develop a land-use plan for private lands in the Tahoe basin. That kept under way from the time I was on the forest. And then in the summer of 1967, why, I was transferred to the Pacific Northwest, Region Six, in Portland, Oregon, to take over the lands and minerals R6 Assistant Regional Forester job. . That move ended—from '62 to '67, about five years on the Eldorado, which was a great time for our family. We had seen the further development of a ski area on the forest, really several ski areas on the forest, the Heavenly Valley and the Sierra Ski Ranch, which

became later Sierra-at Tahoe, and the Echo Summit one, which never did work out well, and the removal of one at lower elevation on hiway 50 that had marginal snow conditions. The operator was hard pressed to be able to provide the resources and business to attract skiers from the better areas to go to him, and so that was a painful closing down.

And it's interesting today to look back forty years now, about, and find that that former ski slope is entirely reforested and looks pretty good today. They've got a young forest there. So you can restore those areas, even though they are a major impact on the land.

Well, I got into Region Six and found that I knew little about the forests of Oregon and Washington except through some of my travels.. There was a different management group there than I was used to, and I was in the regional office. I had lost my forest, which was a tough blow when you move off the forest because at that point you're so close to the land and the people in the districts that you kind of live and breathe the forest. And when you get to the regional office, you're at least at arm's length if not several bodies' length from the activities that really are the stimulation for the jobs we do for years and years in working for the Forest Service.

The job up there proved to be very interesting and challenging. We had quite a bit of mineral activity in the region, some high-value minerals located in the Cascade Mountains. There were difficult access problems, and they had lots of mineral trespass, people that occupied public lands under the guise of the mining laws but actually failed to have a valuable mineral discovery, which is required by law. The only way you could deal with those is you have to do an actual sampling, using a qualified minerals expert to determine if they do indeed have valuable mineral, and then contest it, through legal processes, to have them removed from the land. And that's a time-consuming and expensive process. That was a significant activity in Region 6. .

Another large activity—

SMART: That was silver and gold basically?

LEISZ: Silver and gold and other precious metals. There were some other precious metals. I can remember going with the mineral examiner into the north part of the Cascades, north of Snoqualmie Pass, on a particular visit where they drilled cores at just the top of the ridge down through very hard rock, and brought up the cores that had a combination of gold, silver and other valuable minerals in them but completely lacked access. And people were wondering, the people that had the claims were wondering how in the world they could access that. But our visit was to determine if in fact there were valuable minerals there. The mineral examiner, a mining engineer, showed me in detail how they went through the process of determining what might be covered in terms of value and then looked at would it pay, would a prudent person invest in this to remove the minerals. That was the test that had to be gone through.

Another large activity there was the development of a road system in Region Six. As we did in Region Five, in many cases we had alternate section ownership, the old railroad and timber and stone patent lands that gave a complex ownership pattern out there, and when you looked at it, and you felt, well, if parties just on their own developed a road system, we're going to have twice as much roading and probably a lower standard than we want, so let's try to get forces to join together and design a cooperative road system.

We had done that on the Eldorado, in the forest. In fact, we had I think what was one of the earliest if not the earliest road construction use agreement with the Stockton Box Company, at Foresthill—American Forest Products was the owner. We jointly laid out a road system that accessed both land ownerships. They used the Forest Service for the location of the road and for calculating relative road costs, and then we shared in the cost of the road in proportion to the

respective land areas and resource values that were on the lands that the road accessed. That's your best guess, anyway. And then we agreed cooperatively that we'd maintain the road system. And that system on the Eldorado now is—it's over fifty years in existence, and to my knowledge, it's still inoperation. It's an extremely valuable cooperative undertaking..

Well, that was just beginning to develop in Region Six, and so it's kind of fascinating how you find that some of your experiences on the last job carry to the next job in ways that you never thought might occur. But we did in fact have a situation where they were working on a national road agreement at that time, trying to get all the major land owner companies, particularly the timber companies but there were some mining companies also involved, to cooperatively enter into a road construction and use agreement. They had a national committee working.

We had an urgent case where our calculations showed us that the timber company that wanted to use the road, that we had used public monies to build, both through timber sales and through appropriatied money, that they would have to pay us about a million and a half dollars to use that road. I tried, through several memoranda to the Washington office, to get concurrence that we would go ahead and execute a road construction and use agreement with them, but we would also collect a million and a half dollars for road use, as their share..

Finally, in desperation, I sent a note in that said something like, "Once again, I urge your attention to this matter. If we don't hear from you in the next ten days, we'll proceed to complete this agreement and accept a deposit." I had the feeling that maybe that was a fairly florid memo, but I thought it would be appropriate. We never got any answer in the ten days, so we collected near a million and a half dollars from the company and deposited in the treasury, and then I got a telephone call that put me straight about—that I was not in a position to tell the

national headquarters how to run the outfit unless they responded in a ten-day period or a short time and that they wanted our actions stopped and so forth and so on.

I explained to them that I had already deposited the money and the agreement was completely signed and it was actually being called upon by the private operator. Well, I got chewed on fairly well about that for I think the next month or so, and a letter put in the file about being a little too aggressive with pushing actions Without WO concurrence.

SMART: Can you characterize the people who were being critical of you?

LEISZ: I knew the person, and, bless his heart, he's passed on now, [Russell] "Russ" [McRory?]. Russ was a very competent, hard-charging guy with the public interest in mind and certainly capable. He just wanted to get on the policy matters in his own way, and I think probably had a little resentment about somebody pushing policy ahead of what he was doing, working with the national committee. And I can understand. As I later progressed in the outfit, I can understand concern that way.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: I did chide him about being unresponsive to memos marked urgent.. [Chuckles.] He said something like, "Well, some day you'll know what it is to be here and enjoy the frustration of not being able to answer all the memos you receive that are marked urgent.

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: Well, we had a lot of things going on in Region Six at the time. There was the North Cascades Park issue and just a tremendous amount of activity, a lot of development on the east side.

I'd like to mention one other thing. I found just some incredibly talented people in the Northwest that I had not known before, so this is kind of interesting, when you move to a new

region and a new set of faces and there's a new way they operate and so forth. But there are several little instances that I'd like to just touch upon. One of those has to do with Region Six had the highest timber harvest of any of the regions. They had the highest volume. But they had extraordinarily productive stands of timber in the Douglas fir region and in the pine region as well. In the Douglas fir region, we had a situation in central Cascades there, on the west side of the Cascades, where there was heavy private ownership, and they developed a road system using off-haul trucks. Now, these trucks were huge off-hiway haul trucks.. They took enormous loads, and they were stacked high enough so if you were in a pickup or a sedan on the road and met one of those loaded trucks, your first inclination would be to find a hole to dive into because you knew if anything happened to that load, you'd be absolutely crushed.

Well, also those trucks required exceptional load capacities for bridges and road surfaces and other things, and that was troublesome because then you had to think about, "Well, wait a minute. We're trying to build a road system that gives public access to these high recreation values in the Cascades, and here we are with timber hauling that just dominates the road use in a threatening manner.." I wouldn't have my wife and kids drive up that road because of that, while those trucks were operating.

And so that was a difficult thing for us. I started to work with the timber companies about doing something about that, and found out that I was probably the most unpopular guy in the region—

SMART: [Chuckles].

LEISZ: —[unintelligible] brought that up. Well, we worked through that and finally got agreement so that—for instance, the first approach was that Mondays and Fridays until noon on Monday we kept those trucks off the road, and Friday afternoons you kept those trucks off the

road so that the rec riding public was not going to have weekends of facing those trucks as they drove in to the reservoirs and other recreation centers in the Cascades. That was grudgingly agreed to, but we did get agreement there and then set in motion, with a time certain, a five- to ten-year period, where it would be phased out. And that brought some very strong objections from the industry.

My boss, who incidentally [unintelligible] was Charlie Connaughton, who had transferred as regional forester from Region Five to Region Six, and I found myself at lunch with Charlie Connaughton and the attorney for the timber industry, trying to talk through this road issue situation. After some discussion there, why, Connaughton put it to the attorney for the industry and said, "Well, John, I think maybe what we could have done in this case, rather than your claiming we were arbitrary here, and it appears maybe we did act pretty straightforwardly on this and didn't beat around the bush about it but we did it in increments, maybe what we ought to do is try to sense what the public views are on this. We could put some things in the newspaper and see which side the public might be on. What does the public think we ought to do in a situation like this, and see what kind of response we get."

Well, that brought a response from the industry spokesman, John Crowell. Well, he didn't think that was a good idea, that he couldn't really see this as being that much of a public interest item, although he did admit that the recreation statistics we had showed a high public use in there. So we solved that one, but that was a little touchy with the industry. The industry had been able to operate pretty much without having to accommodate public recreation, and public recreation in that region was growing just like in the region I had come from, and they needed a better deal. Our people felt that. It was just how do you approach and get this kind of thing done?

So it was interesting and challenging, as a combination of people, because you don't do these things by yourself. You need staff support and you need legal support to make sure you don't get in the wrong place with it.

The other one I wanted to mention—

SMART: Before you leave that, and I don't want you to lose that thought, Doug, where you're shifting to, but with these road systems and these cooperative agreements, where they were being developed and they were obviously built with some very unusual specs, what would you say the overall picture was as far as competition among the industry, itself, on these? National forest timber was being put up for sale.

LEISZ: Competition in Region Six was very strong, at least in the late 1960s. They had lots of industry there and lots of big industry, and heavy competition, very high-production areas and excellent markets so that they had markets for anything they were harvesting. But a very aggressive industry. I think they had some reservations initially about this kid from California coming in and being a champion for some of the other use categories, but over time I got to know a number of them, and some of them admitted to me later that they knew this was coming; they just didn't know when, and they hoped that it would have been after I'd left.

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: Another one that was interesting—and once again it shows that one region gets pressures exerted, and the agency learns how to respond and deal with these in ways that are helpful when people that go through that transfer to the other regions. In this case, it had to do with land values. The east side of the Cascades, particularly at [unintelligible] Mountain and also the Deschutes River, was under enormous pressures for growth. As we saw that developing, why, there were pressures, of course, on the low-elevation national forest lands. In

the case of one of the areas of development, the Sunriver Development, there was a parcel of national forest land right out there in the flats, completely surrounded by the developer lands, that didn't have access directly to the Deschutes River but was close enough and had been an old military installation, and it had come to the Forest Service after the military was through with it.

The Sunriver Development Company t were putting in a golf course and fancy homes,an upscale recreation community, very impressive. I got a call from the forest supervisor to please come over and help him in the lands issue dealing with the Sunriver Development. And so I went over there, and I found out that the national forest lands that were intermingled in the Sunriver Development proposal were proposed to be used by the Sunriver Development as a parking area for the development Mostly they were going to end up as some of the public parking area and parts of the golf course, as I recall, but not for lot development per se.

As we looked at it, and the forest had been thinking along the lines of what kind of use permit and how much they would charge for that—and after my experiences in Region Five, particularly on the Eldorado but also on the Sequoia Forest, where I had learned that this public land had such high value in the real estate market, that you had to be cognizant of that when you permitted uses , whether it was for a summer home or a road or whatever.

And so as we looked at that, right away it went through my mind, *I wonder what they're getting for their lots*, and so I asked them, the developer, and we talked about it. And so then finally we got to the questions, well, could the lands be available for the development? And when you looked at it, we decided, well, probably that was maybe the best thing that could occur because we would be landlocked essentially. And so then could there be a special-use permit with a moderate fee? That was thrown in by the developer.

I had made a few calculations, and so it fell on me to both inform our forest supervisor and the developer that we would expect the same value on those lands as if they were going to be developed for lots, and he had given me a value, and so that's what we would use. As we looked at those, we'd look at the land value not the improved value, so we'd be looking at lot value the same way he was.

And so I'd run the calculations through, and the annual fee—I told him we would charge 5 percent of the land value as an annual fee. It became very readily apparent that the fees were going to be up soon to the $30[,000] to $50,000 a year category, which was appropriate to the value of the land]. He was absolutely stunned by that approach and wanted to see my calculations. I showed him. I said, "This is rough now. We would have to do some more appraisal work, but this is about what it's going to be. This is only an approximate figure, but it is going to be a substantial value. We look at it as being just as valuable as the land you are developing , and that's the way it has to be.

Well, we left that, and he said, well, he felt his only recourse was to go to his congressman about this. As we left, I mentioned to him—I said, "You know, for the long term really what you ought to do is you ought to find and buy some land along the Deschutes River and exchange lands with us." It took him a minute to really receive that, and he said, "Tell me more about this." So I told him. I said, "The highest value of lands for us nearby here would be along the river, itself, for public access to the river and recreation use, and so if that could come in the future, that would be a way to not have to pay what we think is a reasonable fee for the land that you think is a very high fee for the land on an annual basis."

So we left with that, and we did get a call from that congressman. I shared with him, when he called me, that we had directions from the Office of Management and Budget to make

sure that we did put on a fair market value when we provided private use of public lands, and I assured him that we were doing that, and this was a case that was coming up more and more frequently because of the higher land values that were developed by the private developments.

Anyway, they took the use permit and went ahead and acquired the Deschutes River lands, and the land exchange was completed, I think, in about three years there, and so there is some more public access to the Deschutes River as part of that. But, again, it's not really the personal thing here; it's the fact that I had some training in my earlier region, and so I had gone through a process of dealing with this sort of thing and realized that, hey, my job was to make sure that the public got full value when private parties got the use of those public lands. I'm thankful for that earlier training because the people that helped me understandwere in Region Five. While I was in Region Six I certainly picked things up there that they were doing that were ahead of what we had faced in in Region Five. So you end up believing that transferring people is a good way to share expertise and knowledge and gain understanding of what different issues the regions are faced with.

We also had many acquisition opportunities while I was there in Region Six. The Sand Dunes area on the coast of Oregon was beginning. The Anaha? River on the east side of the region was an area where acquisitions were sought—and the Hell's Canyon National Recreation Area was starting to surface as something that was going to be developed. So we had all sorts of lands activities. We had a very competent appraisal group in that Region Six staff group. They were constantly out there, looking for the best land acquisition opportunities.

We did complete large exchanges, one with the state of Oregon that had been hung up, which we found out, for] about fifteen years. As it developed, well, part of that had been personalities. When we found a way to get beyond the personality issues, we got an exchange.

And that was somewhere in the range of 60,000 acres coming to each party. That is, equal value, not equal land area. . We acquired more land than the state did. The state had a lot of isolated school sections scattered around the region, and they wanted to consolidate, and we had some areas that we were willing to turn over to the state, through exchange, that didn't make a lot of sense for us to manage because of their location and thefractional ownership.

And then we worked a big exchange with one of the timber companies. In many cases, they were still kind of in a situation where, as they finished harvesting the lands , they wanted to think of some way to avoid the tax liabilities of just holding those lands while the next crop grew. Clear-cutting, of course, in that region had been well advanced and, on private lands, left very large areas clear-cut; on national forest lands, the clear-cuts were relatively small in comparison. I don't think I ever saw any over perhaps thirty acres of clear-cuts in the national forest.

But there was an opportunity to pick up quite a bit of land from one of the timber companies that was cut over, and was in reasonable condition. It had some stocking on it and didn't serve their purposes, and so we were able to actually acquire that through land-for-timber exchange and land-for-land exchange. That was a high-value exchange, over $50 million

Once again, part of the training that I'd received early in my career was to look at these land ownership situations, try to figure out where you'd like the public to be twenty, thirty, forty years from now in terms of ownership. And we'd done that at Lake Tahoe with tremendous success. There, we started out with less than 10 percent of the area,at the turn of the century, of the 1900s, being in public ownership, and today there's nearly 80 percent in public ownership, through purchase, donation, trades, all sorts of special acquisition programs. It's an incredible accomplishment. And that was done without any taking of any kind, no condemnation actions

there. It was all through negotiated arrangements and through some exceptional participation by well-intentioned, well-off people that helped us out in acquiring lands.

About the end of two years in Region Six, why, I got the call to go to Washington, D.C. That was a change in assignments for me. It was to take over the manpower, youth and human resources programs for the agency in Washington, D.C. At that same time, President Richard M. Nixon was in the White House, Spiro T. Agnew was vice president, and the Job Corps program had come under attack.

Now, the Job Corps program had started in about 1964, and we had put in an early camp on the Eldorad NF, which had ended up being very well supported by the community and a pretty good camp but a challenge to run. These were camps that are funded through the Department of Labor to bring underachieving young people in and, in many cases, people that are in pathetic situations from a health standpoint and also from an education standpoint. Most of the kids coming to that program were not literate. Maybe fourth-grade reading would be the highest level for many of them. But the idea was to provide an education program and work program, teach them skills so they would be employable when they left that program and try to get them their equivalent degree so they had at least a high school education equivalency.

The Forest Service took that activity on, I think, with a lot of vigor, a lot of desire to run the best camps that there could be and felt, at the same time that a lot of the agency work could get done through developing and utilizing the skill of those young people. These were all-male camps. The enrollees were eighteen to twenty-one or so, and they're not supposed to be over twenty-one; sometimes we'd get them. And they came from all over the country. They were about half Caucasian, maybe a quarter Spanish-speaking, and the majority of the rest of them

were black. Many of them were coming from homes that they really didn't want the kids back at the home. The letters we got from parents were just very disturbing.

I found on the Eldorado that, given the exposure to those kids, how can you not feel compassion for people that had been so grossly under-supported in our society as those kids were ?said to be, with the health conditions and their lack of education? I mean, your heart would go out to them. We found, for instance, while there was a lot of people very nervous about bringing the black Americans into the area because there was little or no Negro population in the Placerville area at that time and there was concerns voiced about that, but we went and brought various community groups out to the center and had them sit at lunch with kids interspersed among the visitors, and when you ended up—I remember, for instance, one of the vocal people was a principal car dealer in Placerville. When I first explained the program to their civil group there, he was the voice in adamant opposition to it. He then went to a luncheon out there, and after the luncheon he came up to me and said, "When you need a driver training car for the camp, let me know. You can have one free."

The Republican women in Placerville took it upon themselves to furnish library books and do reading tutoring for the camp. The feeling I had—when I found and had contact with the first kids that came in there was a feeling of a disgrace, that somehow the parts of society that had benefited me had not been available to these young people. Why? How could we let that part of our society be in such a deprived state? So I felt, in a sense, a national disgrace about it

At the same time, I thought, *Well, we can do something about this. We can help these kids change their lives*. Well, that brought me back, of course, to the Eldorado, which keeps happening, doesn't it? As you talk about your oral history, why, you go from one region or one

job to another, and you're always referencing back because there are things that happened earlier that affect you in the future.

So anyway, I went to Washington, D.C., as the head of that program. It was much more than the Jobs Corps program. There were all sorts of job opportunity programs for people that had less opportunity to work than I ever dreamed of, through the Department of Labor. We had staff in Washington, D.C., that had ferreted out a number of those programs and found out they had great application for the national forest. We could go down into Appalachia, and we could work through those programs and provide jobs for people and build recreation facilities.

The Green Thumb program. I never heard of that on the West Coast. The Older Americans Act [of 1965]. We got people in that had retired from one job that wanted to come back and help, just to be doing something constructive with their lives. Some of those were seventy and eighty [years old]. I can remember one lady in her mid-eighties. I dropped into the office where they were giving her a little birthday celebration, and I remarked to her something about how great it was for her to come back and donate her time. And she came back with a comment that's pretty much stayed with me. She said, "Well, young man, wait till you get to this point in life, where you need to look to find something constructive to do so that you're not just sitting, waiting for the time to pass." She said, "This is a necessary part of my life."

But what an eye opener. Of course, all of sudden I realized today, as I'm talking, I *am* at the age—

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: —that a number of these people were at the time we were reaching out to them and providing some volunteer activity and a program for them, which, for a number of them, brought at least some minimal income to supplement their Social Security, and a lot of them needed that.

So in Washington, D.C., there I am, and I'm heading up a program which I knew something about but the Forest Service had over forty job corp camps camps scattered around the country, and we had a very contentious time working with the Job Corps office in Washington, D.C., because they always wanted to butt into the operation of those camps. The Forest Service, though all their programs, has operated in a very decentralized position. We expect people at the local level to run programs and to be accountable for the results, and if there's correction needed, they do it, but we're going to inspect in terms of results.

They're not hand-held by the WO and asked to do their jobs. We're going to provide the tools and the directions to start with, but then, in a sense, in the Forest Service you hold the operating level accountable for their accomplishment or you hold them accountable for coming back and saying, "There's a better way to do this." They're not expected to just follow operating orders in the sense of doing something, whether it makes sense or not. Really it's implied that if you can find a better way to do this, and more efficient and more productive, whatever it may be, then tell us and let's change it. And tell us how to do it that way.

You find that, you know, that stimulates people in the outfit to find better ways to do things. I imagine you've found that, Bob Smart, in your own career.

SMART: I have. [Laughs.]

LEISZ: Well, as part of that, you also find in the Washington office that you're part of the USDA. You're part of the Department of Agriculture. You're not just the Forest Service there. And the department needs your support and puts pressures on you for responses and wants you to participate in certain things, and so it looks to you, then, for leadership in the programs that you carry in the department. But when a new electoral group come in, a new president comes in, a new secretary of agriculture and other people come in, the Forest Service is expected to give

whomever comes in—it doesn't matter the political party—a comprehensive briefing of the issues the agency faces, the programs, the things that are emerging that are going to take special attention, a first-class briefing.

As I went in there, I became, of course, aware, with the new administration, of how important that briefing was, to set the stage with a new secretary of agriculture, new assistant secretaries and a new deputy secretary, and how to manage that. In a nutshell, what you had to do, each of us had to do was to, in a succinct way but comprehensive, describe your entire program and how it affected USDA agency wide, and to do that really using excellent English, with [unintelligible]. Because here's a secretary that's landed—a new secretary coming into the agency, and the secretary—one of his surprises when he gets there to USDA is to find out the Forest Service is the largest agency in USDA, and the secretary's got to be thinking, *What the heck is going on here? Here's a resource agency, the principal resource agency for lands in the United States, and it's in USDA, and they've got to understand that as well as all my farm programs*. There is that shock for a new secretary in most cases.

Well, one of the activities that would be an expression of this right away would be that I found a secretary of agriculture asking the Forest Service to represent USDA on the vice president's council on youth. That request came from the secretary to the chief of the Forest Service and then came down to my staff group, saying that "since you ran all these youth programs and the manpower program, you'd be the likely one to represent USDA, so please arrange to attend those meetings and participate with the vice president's council."

I think it was perhaps a month or two later that I went to the first council meeting, and the vice president, Agnew, was there. You know, sometimes there are peculiar coincidences, and this is one of those times. One of the issues before the group for discussion was the termination

of the Job Corps program. This was under way. The administration had decided these would be better run, if there was to be such a program, by states, not by a federal agency, and so they were going to eliminate the whole program or big pieces of it. With the then-governor of California, they eliminated all the camps in Region Five, the five camps.

The discussion went on, and there had been some comments about the excessive costs of the program and the program wasn't accomplishing things and so forth. And then the vice president made a comment, and he said, "Perhaps we've fairly well discussed this, but we really haven't heard much about the job program, itself, and I guess maybe there is someone here who could help us with that." Well, I thought I was getting an invitation to comment, and so I did. I volunteered and said "My Agency the Forest Service , ran a number of Job Corp Camps. I had been involved in establishing one of those camps, and shared with them my feeling about what I had seen accomplished in the program and how worthwhile it was.

And I probably got carried away a little bit with it, because I felt so strongly about it, in describing it. I didn't realize it, but I probably took five minutes of the vice president's time, talking about something I don't think he wanted to hear. I stopped finally, recognizing that my time was more than up. And there was dead silence among the group there, and several sitting next to me had moved away from me a little bit.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: I thought, *Oh, my goodness. I guess we'll have to see how this plays out*. Well, the vice president brought it to a close and said, well, that was interesting, but really we needed to get on and find a better way to take care of these young people. And that was the end of that, I thought. Well, it took me probably twenty minutes to get back to the office, and there was a note on my desk. "Come see the associate chief as soon as you're back." I walked up there and talked to

the associate chief, and he said, "What in the world did you say to the vice president?" I said, "There was a discussion about the job program there. Others were attacking it; I simply tried to put some perspective on the program on how good I thought it was and had been." And he said, "We have a request from the vice president's office that you be terminated by the end of the day."

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: And he went on to say—he said, "Of course, we don't operate this way. We're going to have to give him an answer, of course, but we'll have to think—so if you went over there next month—they meet once a month—and you had that sort of question, how would you answer it?" And I said, "If I was asked to answer it, I'd answer it the same way. I'd talk about the values. I'm not going to change my conviction because someone doesn't like the program. They have a right to terminate it, but they don't have a right to tell me what I think about it." And his remark to me was, "Well, I think we'll have somebody else represent the department for the next couple of months over there, at least, for those meetings, so don't you attend for the next couple of months, at least."

Well, I learned from that that, still, the agency respected your right to tell it like it is, and if you had a professional view that might run counter politically, probably, maybe I could have crafted that in a better way than I did at that meeting, but I had no warning that was going to come up, and I thought people could accept that honesty. So I felt, as a Forest Service employee through my entire career, that my job was to say what I thought and speak out and not harbor things and think, *Well, no this or that*. They probably *don't* know it unless you say something. I took that as a warning, really, to *just be careful [about] the way you craft things as you raise your objections to them*.

We were there in that job just for a year. A lot happened in that period of time with the program. I got around to a lot of the Job Corps camps, where we had had some difficulties.

SMART: But the Job Corps—I mean, it was obviously on the hit list.

LEISZ: It was on the hit list, and yet they decided not to eliminate all the camps, and the service ended up with still about twenty-five remaining. Some of the other programs had expanded tremendously. We found, for example, at one point the Department of Labor told me that the Forest Service was using more of the older Americans slots, the program slots, than any other agency in the federal government, which I thought was rather remarkable and probably a good sign that we were out there. Once again, my staff in this area and contacts with the Department of Labor principally was Jack [McIlroy?]. Jack made it a point to dig and find out every possible labor program that might fit the Forest Service and then develop a handbook of how to access these programs, and we distributed it service wide, so people could do that. We had more different programs operating there that both got missions of the Forest Service accomplished, through volunteers, essentially volunteers to us, paid by other programs, and put people to work in rural areas, which we thought was a worthwhile thing to do.

SMART: My reflection of that era was that that was an era of austerity within the organization.

LEISZ: It was.

SMART: And those people turned out to be pretty key to how the organization kept their nose above the water.

LEISZ: That's true. And at the same time, you got tremendous benefits back. I can remember going down to Appalachia and finding a campground that had just been finished. I was struck by a couple of things. As I looked at the campground tables and stoves and the arrangement, I thought, *Wow, none of these are according to our Forest Service standard handbook by design,*

but look at the absolutely gorgeous rock work these guys have put in. As it turned out, why, the twenty-some people that had been working on this project for a year over there—four of them were expert rock masons. Why would you make them conform to Forest Service standards when you had that kind of capability? And it was a beautiful development. They were proud of it. I remember asking them something about—it was so disturbing when we found new facilities that often had vandalism. One of the fellows that had helped build it said, "Well, you know, we live in this community, and the word's out: you mess with that facility up there and vandalize it, and you'll be toast."

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: And he said, "The community understands that, and any visitor coming in from the outside—they're going to respect the facilities because we're around that facility all the time. That's our baby. It's on public land, but it's our baby." Now, that's another aspect of this. These people are getting ownership in their public lands, and there's nothing better. We don't need to worry about vandalism when you got that kind of support.

Well, a quick year from there. Lots of things going on in the agency.

SMART: Let me just—there was kind of a track. When I first ran into you in '62, I guess it was—no, I ran into you in '67. It was kind of like it was known that you probably were being groomed for the chief's office, and there was probably some steps that you had to go through. Can you kind of give a sense of what those steps would be at that time?

LEISZ: I guess one of the things, as I reflect on the agency—the last place I really wanted to go was to Washington, D.C. The next last place to that, the closest alignment to that that I didn't want to go was the regional office. I really thought that staying on the ranger district would be the most enjoyable because your hands would be on the job, in the soil and with the activities.

One of my bosses at one time, when I left the ranger district job and went to the Sequoia Forest, said something to me—Wes Spinney was a hard-driving supervisor, known to be a hard guy, but underneath all that he had a pretty soft heart and compassion and lots of understanding, and he was, I think, misunderstood by a lot of people in the outfit. A taskmaster. If you failed to have things shipshape on your unit, there'd be no mercy shown. But he told me one time—he said, "You've got to get off the forest." He said, "You've got ideas. The agency needs some of your ideas. Your ideas need to be developed further. You're one of what us old-time supervisors label as the young Turks who are determined they're going to revolutionize the outfit and bring it up to some modern levels of operation. Only you are going to find what they are. But you need to get out and do that, so you need to leave the forest." And he said, "You and I have had our conflicts. You're strong willed. We need you in the outfit on other levels " and he said, "I'm not just telling you that this is an optional transfer. This is one that you've got to go. You've got to leave the Six Rivers Forest." And that hurt a little bit because we were really prepared to stay.

I was surprised when I left the Sequoia to get a chance at the Eldorado Forest because I knew a dozen people on the region that I thought were better qualified for that job than myself. And only after I accepted the job di I ask the regional forester "Why me?' There are others that I thought were better qualified...Charlie Connaughton was the regional forester at the time, and he said, "You're right: they are qualified, but," he said, "we need a major change coming through this outfit. We need to jump a generation, youth. We need youth here, and we haven't got it, and we haven't got it in this whole group that you mentioned." And he said, "You never know where your career may lead, but we need to test you, and the only way to test you is get you in

different forest environments, and we need to get you exposed to other regions, and sometime you'll probably be asked to go to Washington, D.C. Where that'll lead, you just don't know."

But I really didn't think of having any deep desire to become chief of the Forest Service. That wasn't something that really was grabbing me. I was interested in resource activities. The management of the land, itself, was an attractive thing to me. But the other thing—and I don't know if I mentioned this along the way, but the different jobs I got into and spent time in—and I think I've mentioned some of this, that I was always struck by capabilities of people within a new job situation that I didn't know, but when I got there, you start to get a feel for what they know and can do about a job.

I began to I think more and more firmly convince myself that one of the issues that we face in a large organization like this is to unleash the potentials that are in our people at various levels in the outfit, and that's a key for management, is to not try to tell a person how to do their job but try to give him a vision of what you want to attain and then let them figure out how to get there. When you start to do that, you find out the exceptional talents in the agency. And this just was awesome to me, particularly as I moved to Region Six and found out a whole new group of people there, but movement from forest to forest had reinforced that. It further showed me that when I got to Washington, D.C., the capabilities of people that were there and the things they were doing.

SMART: In this course that you're going through, were there mentors?

LEISZ: Some people did find that attractive, and I guess that I found it attractive to search out, I'd say, many mentors, because I saw things in people, parts of people that fascinated me as to how they operate and get things done. Yet I didn't become, in a sense, captured or wanting to capture as a primary mentor, any particular person. I had a feeling of complete rejection of

trying to butter up to the next highest level. That never appealed to me, and so I didn't try to do that as much as I tried to really search out who had the best answers and how did they get to those. You know, there were incredible people. I felt really particularly fortunate because I had, from the chiefs in the Forest Service, from [Richard E.] McArdle on, I had personal contact with. I saw the strength of those folks as they came forward. I got advice from some of them.

I remember when I went to the Region Five job as regional forester. At that time, [Edward P.] "Ed" Cliff counseled with me. I asked him what he expected out there on the job. He said, "You know the region better than I, but I expect you to go out there and improve the functions of that region, and I want you to do something about the enormous fire costs in the region. They're spending a third of our total national budget on fire and sometimes up to half. Why?" Putting questions like that to me.

But I watched those people in their dealing with outside groups and various conservation organizations and the skill they exhibited—Charlie Connaughton—and the easy access to the governor and many other folks. He had a marvelous memory. I challenged him one time and said something to the effect, "Well, Charlie, it must be a really good feeling to have a photographic memory." And I remember how bluntly he stopped my comment by saying, "I don't know anybody that has a photographic memory. The only thing I know about memory is that if you want it, you work at it, and if you want to improve yours, get to work on it." And he did have an excellent memory. I took some tips from him on that about how he did it, and it worked for me as well.

But the resources that are among the people—I thought at one time, reflecting back, the Forest Service group of resource experts and by resource experts I don't mean just the scientists or professionals], but I mean the technicians that found the ways to do things not written down

anywhere. They are effective with what they do, and they know how to do it. The other people working with people, development of people. When you put this all together, you couldn't help but be awestruck by the potential you had to mount any mission the outfit tackled , whether it was a Job Corps program, a wilderness classification or harvesting timber or getting on with more recreation developmente]. You had the tools. All you had to do was put them to work with leadership and with some funding. It didn't take a lot of funding, but it took a determination of what you wanted to do; where were the priorities. You had capacity that—no wonder the agency had the reputation that they tackle anything. You got that feeling, that you could tackle anything because you knew that you had resources that could address any problems.

Well, I should—

SMART: Yes, but let me [unintelligible] just a second, because you're touching on the way the organization was viewed, and another way of saying that would be it was a can-do organization.

LEISZ: Yes.

SMART: [unintelligible] the main [unintelligible]. In this era, there was hardly anything the Forest Service was really being seen as doing wrong?

LEISZ: I think that's true. And in fact we were looked at—I noticed the state of California looked—to develop a forest management act, they looked to us, and I testified three times before the committees about how we did our assessment of levels of timber harvest and caring for the land in the process. And in land management planning we were looked to by counties to be helpful in how do you direct development so that this doesn't engulf everything?

And with conservation organizations—the Sierra Club was a strong participant in our programs until they really rediverted their efforts to a point of focusing—and that started in about 1971 or so—of finding things that they were able to raise money [for]. In about 1970 they

were near bankrupt. The executive director shared that with me one time. My regional advisory committee had one of the founders of the Sierra Club on it, Bestor Robinson. We had strong operational ties with that Group. As regional forester, I even had close contacts with their principal attorney. If they had an issue on one of the forests that they were thinking about bringing some kind of action, we had an unwritten agreement that: Let's sit down and have lunch and talk about this, and if you've got a legitimate concern that you think we ought to address, we'll take a look at it. We headed off a number of lawsuits, and then the first lawsuits we had, I remember, at least during the time I was in the region, the lawsuits that were brought—we were winning 80 percent of them, so that was not a big issue for us.

But we did have a process of being able to talk with people. Now, the time of the Mineral King development proposal was a time when the Sierra Club really changed their direction.

SMART: Let me make sure I'm capturing it. Now, you've left the Washington office now, and—

LEISZ: Yes, I've gone to Region Five as regional forester. When I got there, why, a number of issues were really burning. Literally the region was burning in 1970. We had some fifteen or more large fires going on in Southern California at the same time, even as I came to the job in August, September, in that period, of just major consequences. We were short of equipment, manpower to allocate those, and one of the initial things was to meet with the governor in Santa Barbara and the state forester and give the governor a briefing on how were we going to be able to handle all these fires and how much military did we need to get access to—and that was [Ronald] Reagan at the time.

I visited a couple of the fires. As soon as I hit the region and saw that much fire activity , I went to the Cleveland Forest on one of the big fires there, and then another one on the San Bernardino, and then back to the regional office. I couldn't visit all seventeen, but I wanted to be sure the people on the ground knew of the interest and concern we had at the regional office. I had a lot of fire experience, myself, so I was not there to tell them how to fight the fire; I was really there to tell them the level of importance that we placed on their fire activity and being safe with their people.

And so we had a briefing coming up with the governor in Santa Barbara. We did that, shared some of the things, and I saw what a master he was at—from his acting career, he listened to about a forty-minute briefing that the state forester and I did, and took from that and crafted in a message that he delivered a half an hour later over TV, giving you some indication that he had been down at the ground level. Now, he didn't say that, but he used the instances we had provided him to indicate the level of interest and complexity that was out there. And he did a masterful job of it. He just did.

In fact,Lou" [Moran?] was the state forester, and he and I were well acquainted over a long period of years. I remember sitting there together and just both of us shaking our head and saying this guy was really good. He took our information and made his own .. He didn't mislead people, saying, "I was there and saw this," but he put it in a context of saying that he knew, by his contacts, what was going on at the ground level and what we were doing about it. He at the end, of course, mentioned that he had had an excellent briefing by the two of us.

But out of that, the Firescope program came. Out of those fires in which we found that things just didn't work well when you had that many fires and extreme shortage of resources and you couldn't really communicate openly between agencies because of the radio frequency issue,

where each agency had their own frequency and didn't have any comprehensive number of people that had multi frequencies. We had some of that, although at that time it wasn't considered to be legal to carry the other agency's frequency in your unit, but there was some that kind of slipped by the boards so that people, from different agencies, could talk to one another, but it was on such a limited basis, it wasn't effective when you got into that sort of situation.

And so the Firescope program a year later came along. Part of that was driven—the governor had a review made and, of course, we did, and everyone agreed that we had to do something so we'd never be faced with that kind of catastrophe again and at least pick up all the things that we knew we could do better. A research project was proposed, and it ended up as being a research development and application project. That's interesting to think about. So it wasn't just research. Firescope is simply an anachronism that stands for bringing the state-of-the-art equipment organization and application into a multi-agency command structure. The acronym stands for FIrefighting RESources of California Organized for Potential Emergencies.

It was directed at Southern California to start with, and it started really by getting an appropriation for the Forest Service to begin the think-tank work about what is this all going to mean, and they hired outside consultants to help with the project. It's fascinating to think that thirty-four years later, Project Firescope is still underway, with more development and applications. It's more directed at the current time towards counterterrorism activities that the fire agencies have to do, and concerns. But it's still operating. I don't know of any other program that started, of that nature, bringing together county, state and federal agencies into one command structure that would integrate, knowing where the resources are, assessing issues when they happened, prioritizing what equipment should go where, irregardless of agency ownership,

and then agreeing that they'll train and they'll name things the same. Whether it's the tanker or whatever, they'll carry nomenclature which would be standardized. All the training will be standard, so that if we have an incident commander coming from Los Angeles County or the BLM [Bureau of Land Management] or the Park Service or the Forest Service, they will have met the standards that are required to carry that incident commander classification.

That didn't happen easily. It took about three years of work, a lot of research work, a lot of technology that was brought down from the military, the infrared scanning equipment, so that we could download infrared from aircraft to the ground, to mobile command headquarters. Three or four mobile command centers were built with multi-channel radios, multi-telephone access, and they could move from fire to fire. The structure began to be developed, and it probably took around three years to do that, to bring it to a point where it was ready for some application.

So we had the research, then the application stage, which then meant you started to test these things at an operating level. You didn't apply them universally; you picked areas to say, Does this work? Will this work on the ground? And then finally, when you got into the operations thing, the issue was: All right, now we've got a system which we think works. Will you accept it in your agency? Will you change your operating standards to adopt this? That was a very ticklish thing. Lou Moran shared with me at one of the meetings in Southern California that we went to—why, he shared with me that he was getting a lot of opposition from his state people, and how was I dealing with that in the Forest Service?

SMART: Let me stop you at that point, Doug. I need to take a quick break, and then we'll come back and talk about how did you work your way through this, all these competing interests.

[Tape interruption.]

SMART: Okay, we've just taken a short break, and we [unintelligible] on Firescope just a little bit, Doug. I know that there's a lot of documents about the development of Firescope, but one of the things that was instrumental in this whole area concerning Firescope is that you had to bring in a lot of people that were external to the Forest Service. You had agencies, you had egos, you had politics that was pretty diverse. I wonder if you could just touch a little bit about the kinds of groundwork that you were trying to lay which would cause others to embrace change, because as we all know, change is not embraced very well by many.

LEISZ: If you're going to embrace sweeping change very positively, you just have to be convinced that you've got to change the way you're doing things. It's unacceptable to continue to do something that isn't working with what you're currently doing. Without that, change is very difficult because it forcers you to think differently and we all get into habits that we don't want to change. That was true with the fire activity, particularly if you got away from some of the core agencies.

Now, the principal folks that were convinced that we needed to change were some of our own Forest Service people, although there were a lot in the Forest Service who didn't believe that change was needed . We'll talk more about that later. But there was resistance in CDF [Division of Forestry], and yet the leader of CDF, Lou Moran, and some of the others that I was well familiar with also knew that we needed to figure out a better way to do this combined agency fire fighting

Then Los Angeles County was, I think, a real helpful group in that. They and the Forest Service often cooperated on a number of activities, so there was a strong bond there that was

extremely helpful in carrying that project out. Los Angeles County—the head of that department a number of times gave me confidential calls prior to one of our board meetings down there, about the sensitivity of an issue or two and the fact that things were not going well, hoping that I'd be able to find some way to deal with it, and also offering his help in trying to deal with it.

And we had Los Angeles City, and Los Angeles City is probably one of the best-financed fire departments in the world. Their annual budget is greater than the Forest Service budget for fire. That chief would remind me of that periodically.

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: And yet he was a very proud guy with lots of ego. Part of his thought about this project, about two-thirds of the way through, was that it ought to go over to the Office of Emergency Services, that they ought to run the project, and that it belonged there, with OES at the state level and the national level, and it didn't belong being chaired by the Forest Service. At one time he indicated he might pull out. Well, we couldn't afford to have him pull out, so I made a couple of trips to L.A. City and met with him. I remember the first trip I went down there, and when I landed, here was a special fire sedan out there, a Mercedes red sedan with a chauffeur and the chief, waiting for me to step off the plane.

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: I got a tour of his inner officers there at his main headquarters and spent a day with him. I went to a fancy lunch with a bunch of people. At the end of the day, he told me—he said something like, "I didn't know whether you'd come down and spend a day with me or not." And he said, "I figured that if you did, I'd stay in Firescope; if you didn't, I was going to pull out." And I said, "You're gonna stay in, aren't ya?" And, "I need you. And we need to talk about

some strategy." As soon as I personalized that with him, why, we got along fine for the rest of the time.

But the egos were substantial. You were stepping on toes; there's no question about it The project development work required personnel from all the agencies and Fire Researcher Dick Chase handled the Research phase; Bob Irwin took on the task of finishing the developmental work and the Application phase. I chaired the Agency Chiefs group. In the Forest Service, we had people that said, "No, this is the wrong direction." But anyway, the project shaped up, and we got to the first real operating application, so where are you going to put this multi-agency command structure into actual operation? Of course, the fear was, from L.A. County, is that L.A. City would house the operation.

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: "We'll run it." That wouldn't have been appropriate for L.A. County. Actually, we didn't have any facility close enough to function as an operating unit. One of the CDF rangers in Riverside named [Joseph] "Joe" Springer, got me aside at one of the meetings, and he said, "If you want a place to set up an operating headquarters , I'll clear out two of our warehouses and you can have them." And I thought, *Wow, everybody'll buy into that: the state, being a location where we'd house this thing; the feds won't be taking it over; it won't be ignoring the city entirely, and it won't be ignoring the countys* .

And so that's where we started, and we agreed that all the agencies would put all the resource data in the computers there.re. We'd see if we could accommodate all of the agency data at the multi-agency command center i The idea was that on any given day, given a fire report from any of the six participating agencies, , the dispatcher there woul know , from each agency, what resources might be available near the proximity of that fire. And given that

information and giving some of the tools of calculating the potential severity of the that fire, how much damage it's likely to do, how likely is it to become a catastrophic fire, they could give it the appropriate initial attack.

So you had some techniques to predict rate of spread. We did some mapping that brought everybody in with the same maps. You know, agencies were using different maps, different scales, and we all didn't have all the roads on some of these maps. We got help from USGS to provide new maps for the southern California area., providing all agencies with the same maps. Ortho photos became available.

So anyway, that was the beginning of an application. It had some things to work out, like operational problems and new questions, and then the question came out: Is everybody going to really agree they're going to retrain people to these new job standards and put these titles on them? And you're going to change the equipment and in some cases you're going to change your hose fittings so that they would be interchangeable between the outfits? All that sort of stuff—it's a real job to do. It's one thing toWrite it up and say, "Oh, that's a good idea," but to actually do it is something else.

Well, anyway, Lou shared his concerns—and he said, "How are you going to deal with that?" And I said, "I've thought about it. We're going to bring our forest supervisors in and talk to them about it and tell them we're going to do it, and try to get any of their objections flushed out." I said, "The big question is going to be, well, who's going to fund it? Who's going to fund all the training that's going to be required for our people" and so forth.

Anyway, we talked it through, and I said, "You know, unless you do it at the state level, we'll never make it. You've got to do it, and L.A. County has already agreed they'll do it." OES had agreed to house the operating directions, once all agencies agree. , L.A. County and

L.A. City were well financed, and all we had to do was tell Chief [Raymond] Hill at L.A. City that we just desperately needed him to help us get it done. And once you gave him an opportunity to participate in a leadership way, he just went for it. He was great.

Other counties had problems on how to get this new organization under way in small communities. It wasn't just something that was going to drop into place that would be fully operational the following year. And then I had a job to do in thinking it through. I thought about, Well, are we going to have all of Region Five apply this? How is the organization going to function when we send people off to other regions for firefighting? They will now have been trained, and they'll carry a job title that won't be consistent with what's done in the other regions. tf.

I went to the Washington office. John McGuire was chief then. John was from research. John had been the PSW Research Director before going to the WO. He knew California fire problems; the fire lab in Southern California and other facilities had been under his direction as research director. We had worked together. He was chief, and [Henry] "Hank" [Debruin n?] was head of fire and aviation in the Washington office. I brought the FIRESCOPE issue up for Nation wide application. Hank had the feeling that this could not go ahead until the national standards group took a look at it and supported it and that he was of a mind that he didn't think the Forest Service could go ahead with any implementation.

Of course, at that point I was somewhat frustrated because here, the agency had put up millions of dollars in research work, and if you're going to provide for Development & Application in the research project, it made no sense to me to reject implementation. What was the point in the research project? And so Hank and I had some lengthy discussions about it, and we didn't get very far with agreement.i. And so I asked for a meeting with the chief, and we had

a long meeting with the chief. At the end of it, the chief agreed that there's no question that we should move towards application and that we should do that as an agency, working with the State Foresters and others.

And, over time , we would bring all the state foresters in to an understanding of what FIRESCOPE products were, especially the incident command organization.

Anyway, after that somewhat of a crisis meeting in Washington, we had our charter, that we could go ahead, and that helped me in the region. I told our people that the chief had decided we were going to go ahead. Of course, I was kidded somewhat by some of the supervisors who knew me fairly well and said, "Oh, yeah, we believe that after you talked with him"—

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: —kind of an attitude. But anyway, that started us down the road, and there was considerable resistance in those years. You must have seen that at the operating level, but you were one of the folks, I think, that picked up on the Incident Command t fairly soon as a solution to some of our problems, and you worked on that, certainly, in your career. You continued to be tapped for that expertise, even after retirement.

Well, that brought FIRESCOPE along. Let me jump to another issue, because it's a key one, the way things developed with conservation groups. Mineral King had gone along through development proposals, and t he secretary had made an award to Walt Disney. Walt Disney had personally gone to the secretary's meeting, where the secretary of agriculture determined who the operator should be for the proposed Mineral King development that the Forest Service had put out on bid. Disney, in his presentation to the secretary, had said that he wanted the opportunity—and I'm sure I'm not quoting, but the context is important now. He said, "I want the opportunity to develop the most outstanding public recreation facility on national forest of

any place in the world. We can do it. We have the expertise to do it. We'll do it to a standard that no one else will hardly dream of." That, coming from Walt Disney personally, I think affected the secretary substantially.

The other proponent that offered a bid really were extremely interested in profit from the operation. . They were much more interested in operating a business that was going to be quite profitable. Anyway, the secretary, as I recall, was Orville Freeman, made that award. It got, then, appealed by the Sierra Club, and the Sierra Club ended up taking it to the Supreme Court following losing in the lowe courts.for decision. That had happened prior to the time that I came as regional forester. Shortly after I got there in the fall of 1970, in San Francisco—I think it was in that winter, perhaps in the spring—the decision came down that the Sierra Club lacked standing in the suit, and so the issue was decided. They had no standing in the suit. They had no case.

So then actually I asked our general counsel attorneys, "What's that mean? Can we go ahead?" And they said, "Well, yes," it looked like you could go ahead, and whatever action the Sierra Club might bring, if they decide to do something else, wi'll come later. NEPA had just passed in 1969. Late in the session of 1969, the National Environmental Policy Act passed. That called for any major actions of the federal government to go through a process of environmental analysis, rigorous environmental analysis.

And so the other thing that was brought to my attention by OGC was that—well, the law passed, but the law doesn't require an action that's already been taken to come through a new law . But certainly you would have an option of looking at that law to see if there are parts of it that you might want to do something with. And so we looked at that. "We," I mean the staff that had been working on the Mineral King development proposal. And we decided that we did want

to bring it under some of the rigorous environmental analysis work that the act iprovided.s. We thought this was a fairly major undertaking.

And so we started to do more extensive work on air quality analysis and other elements. There was some objections to that from some of our group because the feeling expressed by at least one person was that if we hesitate at this point and don't go ahead, we'll never get it; it'll be lost in further lawsuits, and we should just take action now and do it. Well, on balance, the thought process for me and others was that, no, I want to make sure that we know what the impacts are that are going to be associated with this development. And so we did wait.

Of course, what happened from that is particularly interesting because a new administration came in, and with that [Robert] "Bob" Long became assistant secretary for resources and conservation. He was the assistant secretary in charge of the Forest Service.

SMART: And the president was?

LEISZ: The president then is Richard Nixon.

SMART: Still.?

LEISZ: Is that right? 1970. : Richard M. Nixon was inaugurated in 1969;

SMART: Well, let's go ahead with Long.

LEISZ: Yes, we may have to—let's see—

SMART: That'll be easy to find.

LEISZ: Yes. I'm trying to think whether that was the time that [Gerald R.] Ford was there, during the interim, after Nixon was out. But we'll have to pick that one up.

But with the new administration, anyway, there was a request from Bob Long. He'd like to go with me and meet with Sierra Club and see if our differences couldn't be worked out over Mineral King, because Mineral King had become such an issue nation wide.. And so we did

meet with [Michael] "Mike" McCloskey and Bob Long and myself and, it seems to me, one other Sierra Club member was there; it might have been the president of the Sierra Club at that time, but I don't recall exactly who that was. The discussion went on for a long period of time, and Bob Long pretty much put it straight to them and said, "Isn't there some way—aren't there some things that we could do to modify the proposal some, where the Sierra Club would find it acceptable, and isn't that possible?"

After a long discussion, Mike McCloskey finally shared with us some of the issues that the clubfaced. He told us that they were financially in great distress and that some things had been done previously by the executive director and over-obligated them into financing books and things that had not paid their way. They were desperate in terms of seeking to ways to make money, to get more members and to attract donations to environmental causes.s They had found that the Mineral King issue was a popular cause. To fight Mineral King was a popular cause.

SMART: That's quite an admission from him. Why was he so open?

LEISZ: He was open because he said to Bob Long and myself, "If you ever share this, I'll deny I ever said it." He said, "I want you to understand where we're coming from, and it's public knowledge that we're in tough financial shape. It's also public knowledge that we've had a lot of response on the Mineral King issue, and so if we identify a cause that we can indicate to the public that we're going to be the protector of the environment on this cause, we can attract new members; we can get additional funding." And he was telling us that Sierra Club needs to get into this kind of active analysis of proposals and taking issue with things they think are inconsistent with what objectives they identified.

Bob Long had asked them why, in some of the materials, they distributed they used statements that weren't consistent with the facts of the proposed development. We didn't get an

answer to that except to say that as you put these things to the public, you have to be quite specific so they believe there's a real issue here of degradation, something along those lines.

[Coughs.]

SMART: Shall we stop for a moment?

LEISZ: Yes.

[Tape interruption.]

SMART: Okay.

LEISZ: Anyway, the discussion ended with Mike stating that—[coughs]. We better—

[Tape interruption.]

SMART: Okay, we just took a quick little break in there, a little coughing spasm. You were talking about you'd been to the Sierra Club. It sounds like they've come forward and giving you kind of another agenda that's being played out versus where you'd been before. Is this the first you've really encountered?

LEISZ: It's the first significant one that showed that they really were finding economic support by developing causes and that that might become an operating style for them, and it certainly has proven to be the case. It's more and more so even today. I find some of the statements they're making are just outrageously inconsistent with the facts, to try to present a cause that will attract support for whatever it is, for more members or to file another lawsuit. It's discouraging to see the trend of events that have come that way, because we actually need to find solutions by

working more together than by simply taking stands that are intractable, and that's what's really happened.

SMART: For a person who's had a lot of successful encounters under conflicting land-use kinds of issues, you must have been pretty disappointed at [unintelligible].

LEISZ: I was. And I talked and found that the Sierra Club, itself, was split on the issue. Some of them wanted to see Mineral King development come ahead. They had been among the folks that developed Sugar Bowl Ski Area off Interstate-80 at Donner Summit, one of the principal ski areas in California. Largely the members in the early years t of the club were outdoor people that looked for recreation opportunities t and certainly were strong supporters of wilderness. I found, over the years, that members had been quite supportive of multiple use, including timber harvesting and grazing and mineral extraction where those were appropriate uses. So this was a big disappointment, and the trend simply broadened since that time. There were some issues that there was agreement on in later times, like the roadless area review. We found some ways to get together there, but then finally departed, and they contested the first roadless area review, and we went into a second one.

Another thing that was really troublesome in the region, even, I think, the first three or four years that I was regional forester—we were experiencing deaths from fire-suppression activities on a recurring basis. It was averaging three per year. They would be accidents like a helicopter crash with a crew, which killed the pilot and two young seasonal firefighters on the Los Padres Forest. As you thought about what was happening there, was that we appeared to be geared to not really doing a complete safety analysis to better protect our people in the process of aggressive firefighting.

We got on a program which we named Safety First in the region. That brought together people from outside agencies and the Forest Service field people to try to improve our operating standards. That went on for the best part of year, and we adopted some standards that really moderated what we were going to do in certain cases, and it strengthened our operating activities, especially with helicopters. That led us to making sure that anytime a helicopter was used, that we had to have a helicopter manager there that knew enough about weights and air density and helicopter capacity to make sure that we didn't overload helicopters. And we changed our approach to helicopter maintenance. We found that, in L.A. County, for example, in using their helicopters, part of the maintenance activity was in fact to periodically analyze the engine oils, and if they found metallic pieces showing up at all, they did an overhaul before it was ever called for under normal operating standards.

And so we did adopt a program of safety first. Frankly, we admitted that in a few cases we were simply going to back off, where there was extreme danger of putting people in and take some larger losses with a burned area than we would under earlier situations. I have to say, at the end of that study it required adopting some policies in the region, and as I met with that group that was developing the analysis work and the adjustments for changes, I remember that one of them remarked to me that "all you have to do is put out a memo, and if the regional forester signs it, it'll be done." Of course, I knew enough, coming through the outfit, that that wasn't the case, that it helped to put memos together. It made a lot more sense, as I told him, to develop standards that in fact were the best standards that the operating people could identify and that, having done that, then I would feel very sound about signing a memo that endorsed those for application. So I needed their help in developing specific measures to improve our safety..

This gave me a chance, really without deliberately thinking about it, to kind of coalesce my own thought process about the way things got most effectively done in the outfit, not from the top down but sometimes from the top down, analyzing and finding problems, and then going back to the field and say, "We've got to do something about this. What is it you recommend doing?" And then get people that are knowledgeable involved in that analysis work and in developing new standards. That's the way the outfit functions best because it's a decentralized outfit, and it's got to be decentralized even as you develop new policies.

SMART: I'll just interrupt a little bit, Doug. I think one of the things in my personal learnings on it was we really moved a lot of the concerns to—individuals had to address them, themselves. Early on, I contested a DC-4 that had been flown into Ontario and said, "We got oil pouring out the wing. [unintelligible] engine. It's [unintelligible] off the wing. It's not safe." And I wasn't chief of party, I was just, I guess, a sector boss or something [like that?]. But the fact is that the whole organization upheld me, although there was a lot of grumbling about what was I doing there. But the fact is that I think that was one of my first tests, and I had [unintelligible] test going through my career, but [one of the tests that said?], "Hey, this is for real." So I think it was really successful [when we?] transferred that individual ownership for the problem.

LEISZ: That's a good example of just the sort of thing we hoped would happen. You need everybody watching for weaknesses when you run as dangerous an activity as firefighting is. But anyway, once again we find the strength within the outfit to provide the ideas to adopt new policies. Our helicopter one only took a matter of a few months, and it went nation wide. And so we were , really bringing everyone into the act and saying that "we need all of you participating to arrive at the safety standard we're after."

SMART: Let me switch gears a little bit now. You've come back to California in 1970, and San Francisco was a flower power area, and you've got a work force that's—I mean, Vietnam is going on. You've still got a lot of turmoil going on. What do you see inside the Forest Service? What kind of things were happening?

LEISZ: There's actually a lot of things happening in the Forest Service because the pressures are really on to produce. The competing parts of society that are out there make it more difficult for people to produce. And let me just reflect back. When we had a situation where you lived on a compound on a ranger station and you had essentially the husband or wife—you had one of the married partners working and the other running the house, and now we're into a society in 1970, as it moves along, in which we've got both man and wife working, and they no longer live on a compound because we no longer have the housing to allow that to happen. They're out having to find their houses in among the population, wherever they can, and then commute back and forth to work.

So we part with the way of having a community of employees at a central location, where they get to know each other on and off the job, which of course has pluses and minuses, but they're also faced with the hard realities of economics, that their government income is insufficient to allow them to buy a home or to perhaps even pay the rent in some of these high-cost areas. And so that's a stress that's out there with our employees.

And we're getting more and more attention that is coming up with the questions: Are there equal opportunities in the organization for people, irrespective of gender or ethnicity? How is it going to be manifested? Along that period of time—it might have been around 1974, something like that; I'm not positive—but I knew that we had a university student, a graduate from the University of California that competed for the top student award. She was a forestry

graduate, and she was working in our information and education office there. As I did in the regional office in other jobs, I used to drop around the various offices to actually find out what people were doing and what they were thinking, just drop in unannounced. It was an informal kind of discussion.

I asked [Jeri?] [Larsen? Larson?] at the time, now Jeri Bergen, about how her job was going, and she gave me kind of a quick response and then she ended and said, "Would you really like to know?" And I said, "Yes, come on in." So she came into my office. She's a graduate forester. She's working with the"penny pines" program at our office of education, so she's going to meetings with the various civic groups and advancing our public participation programs.[coughs]—sorry about that. [Coughs.]

[Tape interruption.]

SMART: We just have taken a quick break, and we decided what we're going to do, is we're going to continue this on at a different time. So there will be a break now, and we'll have a [new track?] when we come back.

LEISZ: [Coughs.]

[End CD 3. Begin CD 4.]

[There is no more tape whoosh, and the volume is good for Mr. Smart; there is some tape whoosh and the volume is lower for Mr. Leisz.]

SMART: Good morning. I'm Bob Smart, and I'm at the home of Doug Leisz, and we're about to begin our third interview session. This is October 12th.

Doug, we've had two previous sessions. Was there anything that came to mind that you really want to go back and talk about again, from our previous two sessions?

LEISZ: Well, you know, there always are things that you forget as you do an oral interview, but I think one of the perspectives for the thirty-year period that I had in the service was it seemed like a never-ending series of new legislative proposals. That began certainly in the 1950s, but we just kept cascading through the 1960s and 1970s, and I suspect to some extent it's still going on. But if you look at the 1960 Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act, —it wasn't until 1974 that the national forest system was defined by an act so that we could bring in grasslands and other lands into the national forest system, as such. People forget about things like that.

And the 1964 Land and Water Conservation Act, which established a fund from motorboat fuel tax and other income streams that allowed us to purchase lands, all the federal agencies. And in 1976 the federal Land Policy and Management Act, the 1973 Endangered Species Act, and the 1965 Water Resource Planning Act, the 1964 Wilderness Act, and the various acts—the 1964 Roads and Trails Act. I had kind of forgotten about that one. That happened during the time I was on the Eldorado Forest. But that really gave us the authority to do something that we were struggling over, and that was to design and build roads that accommodated all uses. Before that, we lacked that authority in timber sales to actually require construction that would meet multiple purposes. And it also allowed us to cost share roads and collect money from commercial haulers for the use of roads that were built with public funds.

But we tend to forget about that sequence of acts, which changed the way we could manage the national forest. I'm sure in your career you remember, too, the [Surface Rights

Determination Act?--[verify name and ascertain date], where we finally got control of the occupancy trespasses that were associated with the location of and building of structures under the guise of the Mining Act, which often lacked any findings that would justify commercial operation of that claim for mining purposes. Those things, correcting trespasses that were on the forest since the very beginning of the national forest system. Isn't it fascinating to think that it took seventy years to bring that about, particularly the occupancy trespasses and the other trespasses?

Grazing, timber and other extractive uses I think were one of the early threats that we gave a tremendous amount of attention to: fraudulent land surveys that caused us to try to find the wherewithal and the technical capabilities to go back and resurvey. That authority didn't really come to us with any kind of ability to meet the demands until the 1960s, when we actually, through negotiations with the land office, where we got authority to do our own survey work. That started—I remember by the time I went to Eldorado we had a workforce dedicated to land mine location, land surveys, where we could officially records those surveys and reestablish corners.

Without doing that, people tended to think, well, the national forests are there, and certainly you must know where they are, but that's not so because there were so many claims and fraudulent surveys out there that made it extremely difficult sometimes to know exactly where the national forest land was and the boundaries of it associated with private lands.

But on reflection, actually, as laws were passed, for the most part they were helping us in our determination to try to do a multi-resource management job in the national forests. After the law is passed and you learn how to implement it, you tend to forget the difficulties you had prior to that time. And certainly new people coming into the outfit have no idea of the process you

went through to finally get to a place where you could manage the lands in a way that they should be managed, but in prior years you lacked the authority to do it sometimes.

So just thinking back, I couldn't help but think about that as a major factor that really shaped our careers, the authority to acquire land. That changed under the National Forest Management Act [1976]. And land acquisition and disposal authorities were key to perfecting a better national forest for the future. We had to have new authorities like that. For example, we never would have made the gains at the Lake Tahoe area without special acquisition authorities from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and actually a bill that was passed specifically for land acquisition at Lake Tahoe that utilized Bureau of Land Management sales down in the Las Vegas area, where land prices were very high, but they gave us acquisition funds for acquisition at Lake Tahoe, which was just a key need to stop the proliferation of development up there.

SMART: I find it interesting that early in my career, and it sounds like you were in the same place, that I'd frequently say, "There ought to be a law that allowed such and such to help me out on my frustration." And by the end of my career, I was thinking we got way too many laws and we need to stop making them. Did you reflect on any of that kind of stuff?

LEISZ: I know by the time I got to the regional office, I was of the mind that if we just knew enough about our authorities, we could do almost anything that needed to be done for the national forest, and that meant that you had to know the laws. And so often, when we determined that we wanted to do something, the job became one of going to the Office of General Counsel and saying, "Please help us identify the authorities so we can accomplish these purposes." They played an excellent support role in that. But indeed, if you look back over the entire smorgasbord of laws that governs that national forest and the Forest Service operation and research and state and private as well as managing the national forest, it's really an encyclopedia

that you need to have familiarity with and you need to reflect back on because the basic organic act has never been modified; they simply add with new laws, and say, "This is no way disturbs the basic organic act." That's essentially what the words are.

And so, as you're a steward of the land, you have to reflect on the authorities you have, under law, to make that job possible. And that requires, I think, being a reasonable history student of the Forest Service laws that you use today. In many cases, people today seem to forget about that, because those laws also often reflected on the rights of settlers and other people to use the forest resources. In many cases, they (early settlers) were there before the national forests were ever created, and they started their water project developments or whatever it was, and you had to accommodate those things. You must be a reasonable history student as you manage the national forests.

SMART: Let me move on, Doug. In our last interview, we were talking about you returned as the regional forester here in California. It appeared to me that you suffered some real frustration about Mineral King. We talked about that a bit. And then we turned to talk about the workforce that you were seeing now because this was a time of the real turbulence in this country and the kind of workforce that you saw across California. What did you see there?

LEISZ: Part of the frustration I had coming up through the outfit was that it seemed that, while we prided ourselves in being decentralized and giving authority and responsibility to the local level for land uses, that we often over-reviewed decisions, to the point of having duplicate efforts at various levels, whether it was the ranger district or the forest. If you held it to that level of review, that worked fairly well, but when you decided that you needed to review it again at the regional office and then review it again at the chief's office in Washington, D.C., it became a very cumbersome thing, and it started to really work against us. [Telephone rings several times.]

[Tape interruption.]

[There is more tape whoosh again, especially with Mr. Leisz's voice.]

SMART: I thought I hit Pause, but it looks like—

LEISZ: Is it on?

SMART: It looks like it's still recording, yes.

LEISZ: Okay, well, let's pick it up. Anyway, as I looked at the functioning of the outfit, I became very concerned that we were really undercutting the field organization by too much review, and the review ought to be on the basis of results rather than deciding whether indeed a particular culvert should be thirty-six inches or forty-eight inches. While that is perhaps going to a little too much detail, it makes the point that reviews should be making sure that people that have the authority and the responsibility are executing fully and not saying, "Well, I don't have to fight through this fully because I know they're going to review this at the regional office" sort of thing.

And so we went and incorporated an approach, that we were going to look to results management, and we were not going to review the details of proposals at higher levels; we were in fact going to hold people accountable for doing the right job the first time. It seemed to me that our people were getting paid to do that, and we should hold them accountable. And so we swung into and actually produced some documents which told that at certain levels, they were going to be held accountable for decisions and the results thereof and that we would look to make sure that they were carrying out the responsibilities.

That really brought a different management relationship between the regional office and the forest. I can use an example there in this. One of our continuing problems that related back to the Three C days, when a lot of roads were built in the forest—access roads were built. In almost all cases, none of them were built with the provisions of adequate protection of the watershed from the standpoint of out-of-season use. If the road got muddy and it was just a dirt surface and vehicles went in there, you knew you were going to tear it up and you were going to have soil wash that you didn't want.

We began a major job of road stabilization work either by reconstruction or abandonment of roads or of new designs, either to accommodate year-round traffic or they were to be closed seasonally so that they wouldn't have traffic in the off season. I can remember the efforts there to put together guidelines to the field. Our engineering staff at the regional office went about doing this, and we ended up with specification sheets that went on and on and on. I looked at that and thought, *Well, here we go. We've missed it again. Our job is to say, "Here's the results we want. We want stable roads with a controlled use season to meet watershed conditions adequately."*

So we pulled it back to about a couple of paragraphs, and when it got to the field, why, some of the field units responded initially and said, "This would require an outrageous sum of money to bring all these corrections about." And I can remember talking with a supervisor or two and saying, "Really you need to understand your job there. Your job is to figure out how you're going to do this, not to tell me that it's an impossible job from the money standpoint. If you can't figure it out, then we'll try to find a supervisor who can figure it out." That was not meant as a threat; it was really meant as guidance to get on with their job.

Then we got some extraordinary work accomplished when people understood that it was indeed their full responsibility to bring that about. They did things with timber sales, and they did it with public roads money. They did it with closing off some roads, and it was a fine response after the first six months or so of being very uneasy and thinking that we had given them an impossible job. But that was an example of the sort of thing that we went to.

Another thing at the regional office that I had noticed and I was really distressed about was that 1970 was a tough fire year. We had some others that followed that, in '74 and '76. But the thing that bothered me the most was that we were losing, on the average, two to three people a year that were either being killed with accidents associated with fire suppression or in fact being caught and trapped by fire. And I had had some dear friends that lost their lives in firefighting.

We brought really a cross-section of the workforce together to address fire safety.

SMART: Doug, we did pick up quite a bit of this last time, on Firescope and Safety First. We got quite a bit on that already.

LEISZ: I won't get into details there, but the result of that effort—we went five years following that effort without a fire fatality. I'm sure we burned some additional acres that we might not have in our quick response to fire suppression in earlier years, but more importantly we were considering personnel safety as a key thing in fire suppression.

The other item that I might mention is that I think I mentioned I [unintelligible] in the regional office, to talk to people. [They were at their?] various working levels there. I at one time talked to Jeri Bergen and asked her how things were going, and she told me—asked me if I really wanted to know. I said, "Certainly," and so she then came in my office and told me that she really had higher aspirations than to simply work in information and education. She wanted

to get into the field organization. She wanted to take whatever steps were necessary to get back into forest management at the field level, at the forest level. We worked her through an assignment or two and made her available to go out as a deputy supervisor. That was a big step for the region, and it was a big step for the Forest Service organization. But [Robert] "Bob" Lancaster, the supervisor of the Tahoe, told me that "he would be pleased to have her." So Jeri took that job on. There were tremendous pressures on her because she and her husband moved from the Bay Area up to the Nevada City area to take the job. She became a deputy there on the Tahoe Forest, worked through that assignment and finally became—as I recall, she ended up being the first woman supervisor of a forest in the nation. That was not because she was a woman but because she had the abilities to move ahead, and she had shown determination and capabilities. That was really a signal that there were going to be opportunities for women to move up through the line organization in the Forest Service.

SMART: There was an era also where you were trying to do some work on internal changes as far as people's thinking goes. Didn't you have a hand in team building and some of those kinds of things?

LEISZ: We did. We had some management training under way when I first got to the region that bothered me a great deal because it was really contrary to my own thinking and too loose in the sense that it seemed to project an idea of: Whatever you feel like doing, go do. That ran contrary to my idea that you had a job to do for the public under the Forest Service, and that had to be your first consideration. And certainly there were needs to be met by understanding how to go about doing that and making the job more pleasant. That's a part I could buy into. We really took on a very serious effort to try to integrate multiple resource teams. That was a difficult thing because as you brought in a wildlife specialist or watershed specialist or silviculturist or an

engineer to work on a project, the tendency was to keep it within your vision of wildlife or watershed or timber or fishery or engineering, and not to integrate it in the sense of all working together to understand what the end product ought to look like, and how to blend things.

This is a very difficult, complex thing to really bring about, because a strong biologist will find it very difficult to back off and consider what others' inputs are and how it might affect his idea of what the ideal habitat might be. That work continued on past my time in the region, but we did make some substantial progress there. The Mineral King job was one of that that really brought all kinds of specialists together to try to determine how in fact we could do that project and still be reasonable with the land impacts that were brought.

SMART: So that was a time of shift from the old multiple-disciplined teams to the interdisciplinary teams.

LEISZ: That's correct, Bob. People tended to believe that they were there with integration when they had interdisciplinary teams, and yet many times you saw that those interdisciplinary teams were functioning in four different directions. To integrate those was indeed a big challenge. As you well know, we did that fairly well in some cases and less well in others. A time or two we saw exceptional jobs done. But it took strategic thinking of people about the end product, visualizing an end product and then how to build it in a way in which various resource needs were met and considered and then integrated fully.

SMART: During this era, one of the meetings where you and I participated—you were the regional forester and I was just a ranger—was up in Northern California. At that point, I remember [Richard] Dick Pfilf ?], who kind of was rallying the forest supervisors and the rangers and he said, "You know, Doug, we've got some severe problems as far as meeting our cut on the Shasta-Trinity." That was the era when you had some of those roadless reviews were

going on, et cetera. And he made one of the more impassioned speeches that I ever [heard?], and you pretty well said, "No, we need to play this one out like we're doing it right now." Can you reflect on that era and the pressures about keeping the timber up?

LEISZ: I certainly can. The points you make about the regional office really going to the field—we did that deliberately. At least once a year, the idea was to get around and listen to the rangers and also listen to the forest staff, but primarily to listen to the rangers, because the chain usually goes from the rangers to their supervisor, and at the regional level I see the supervisors at formal meetings and through contacts much more frequently, as a regional forester, than I see individual rangers, by the hundreds in the region, certainly.

But here, the effort was to get down and listen to what rangers were saying and get a feel for how things were at the ground level. and then to understand where the problems were. In the case of timber sales, this was always a great pressure there because the preparation of the timber sale is not a simple thing. It requires years of planning. I think we used to figure that ideally you needed four or five years' planning to go into any significant amount of planned sales. That included road building and other resource considerations. In fire salvage you had a little different thing, but the normal green sale.took years of planning.chaparrel

That required that you have sufficient engineering money and sufficient timber sale preparation money and that in fact, as you laid these things out on the ground, that they in fact were going to be acceptable impacts and you were going to reach goals; or else you would adjust the goal. Early on, I had counseled with the forest supervisors and said that in my mind, there was no tolerance for abusive sales; that is, sales just to make the cut but were going to abuse the land, that that was not our role. Our role was to protect the resources over time, long term. And if the problems were such that you couldn't meet goals, then we needed to hear about it. We

needed to find out why. Of course, the difficulties that the forest had in that is usually, if you didn't meet goals, it meant reduction in funds. That hurt the workforce on the forest. The real tension was there, as costs went up, to access areas that were further and further back. Then the problem became that you often would see a gap between goals that were set by the management plan and what was attainable through the workforce.

I recall also that, with any plans that you make, certainly the harvest levels—they're projected on the best information you have for growth and [unintelligible] condition. As you get into the actual operation, sometimes you're going to find that that information was not adequate to set a target at a certain level, and when that happened, the key was that—the direction I had given to the forest [was], "You need to come back and tell us. Don't keep grinding stuff out if it isn't going to work. Tell us so that we can adjust." Because I had found that, in working with the Washington office, sure, there was pressure there to meet goals, but if I said, "No, we can't do that and do the quality of job that's acceptable," there would be some questioning about that if I made that pitch to the Washington office, but I never was turned down and [told], "No, you've got to meet your goal." They would listen.

It meant, then, that we had to have tangible evidence that we'd come up against a situation that didn't allow us to meet a goal that the Washington office in the prior year had told Congress that they expected to meet, because that required the Washington office to go back to Congress and say, "We're not going to meet this goal because." And so you needed very definitive causes related to that.

Well, that's a long-winded way to go back, but as you get into high levels of production, it doesn't matter what it is—whether it's reforestation or timber harvest or recreation construction or road building—often you're going to find that plans need adjustments, and you

need to have a process to adjust. That's, again, our wanting to get to the field to listen was to try to pick those things up before they became a crisis somewhere. But I do remember that. It's a good example of saying, "That won't work."

We've had parallel situations in working with some of the chaparrel on the forests in southern California where we wanted to keep a mosaic of brush ages in trying to contain fire in Southern California. We did that through prescribed fire but also by using goats to graze the brush, and through mechanical removal and a combination of things. If you then found that you couldn't meet the targets , we wanted a feedback on that before the end of the year came and then we wouldn't get surprised by non-accomplishment. So We did hold supervisors in the forest accountable for saying why they couldn't meet targets, but we also held them accountable to make sure that land-use practices were not abusive. So they knew that they were in a tight fit there. They had to be the ones to call the shots, to make sure the management job was done fully.

SMART: Were you a regional forester—when did you leave the region?

LEISZ: In 1978 I went to the chief's office. I went there as deputy for administration. I would have been glad to stay in the region. I had another five or six years perhaps to go career-wise, but the chief told me that he needed me in the Washington office. That was a time finally that our kids were gone. The five kids were no longer living at home. And so my wife and I were able to make the move to the Washington office. When we went this time—this was our second time in Washington, D.C.—we decided we wanted to live close in so that I could walk to work and Marian could enjoy the various things that are available if you live in the D.C. area, and I don't have to commute an hour, an hour and a half each way every day.

We did that. We managed to find a place that was just a block down from the Senate Office Building on Maryland Ave., and went into a community with an old three-story house there that was, I think, forty feet long and about twenty feet wide, set back nicely from Maryland Ave., itself, because it was part of the original design there. The massive oaks that were in the median area there, between the street and the sidewalk, were eastern red oaks that dated back to the early designs of Washington, D.C. But it was indeed a fascinating place to be and to work.

Then I did in fact, except for really bad-weather days, I could walk to work. It was just about a mile and a quarter, down to the Independence office. I could catch the underground there just by the capitol on bad-weather days. But we really enjoyed that, because it let us join in much of what was going on in Washington, D.C.

SMART: When you went back there—I got to tell you that secretly a whole bunch of us really wanted you to become the chief. Can you give us some insight of what transpired back there?

LEISZ: Oh, well, of course a number of things transpired. But the former service organization did an incredible job of planning ahead for transition times, and they did that in a number of ways. First of all, I was really quite surprised and pleased to see the kind of effort that went into the preparation of transition material to brief the new secretary of agriculture when a new secretary came in. That was really a very professional job, very direct and succinct in describing programs and problems and directions that the chief wanted to take. So that kind of sets the stage for—as you get into the Washington office of the Forest Service, you're part of the Department of Agriculture, and you get pulled into the department in many different ways.

You represent the department in some categories of general response various government activity, and you become acquainted with the deputy secretary and the secretary, proper. And so they get to know you. The service did that deliberately so that when it came time to change

chiefs, that they would already know the candidates.—a secretary of agriculture would already know people that might be candidates to be considered for chief.

I was back there for the second time. You get involved in a lot of the congressional testimony, representing the department on bills that affect the Forest Service, and you get involved in the budget sessions in either giving a little part of that or responding to questions or working with congressional representatives. So you get into an exposure. So national groups that are active in Washington, D.C., get to know you, Congress gets to know you, the department gets to know you, and invariably you get into association with other departments that have programs that the Forest Service is involved in.

Like, the Department of Labor, with Job Corps and the special work programs that the Forest Service utilized. The Department of Interior, the Bureau of Land Management, the Park Service, Geological Survey. You get into many of those. You get into the Office of Management and Budget. With that kind of exposure, then, you get into a position where you could be considered to be a candidate for an appointment that might take you to the chief's job. I went through that process. I think I had been there—well, I was there as deputy chief for administration for only about a year and a half and then went to the associate chief's job, as Rex Resler retired.

So I was associate chief for Chief John McGuire. That was a fun job. I still had a strong orientation to the field organization, and I visited a number of research stations, more so than I had done in national forest administration, and I got to the field quite a bit. Mostly it was time to listen again, when I got out there, to find out what indeed the outfit was thinking and breathing and doing. Those were enlightening sessions because I brought material back to the chief's office and shared at our meetings there with the other deputies and staff directors and the chief.

While I was in that job and doing a management review on Region Ten, the Alaska region, why, I got a call directly from the secretary of agriculture, which surprised me. He said that he wanted me back the next day in Washington, D.C., that he wanted to interview me, along with others, for consideration as to who should be the next chief of the Forest Service. John McGuire announced that he was retiring in several months, and it was time to do that interview. I can remember I mentioned to him that I still had another two weeks of that management review to do and that it might be better to finish that off before and could the interview wait? And he said, "I won't wait beyond tomorrow."

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: He expected me there. So I did go to that. And at that time, I think there was probably three of us left as candidates. That was an interesting process because the secretary had a number of questions that he wanted to talk about and ask and see how you respond to those. They were on key issues of the Forest Service. It was interesting to me that he was doing this interview by himself. There was no assistant with him. There was nobody from the Forest Service there. The secretary of agriculture was the one conducting the interview.

SMART: And that was who?

LEISZ: Bob Bergland

SMART: That's okay. But you're in this room all by yourself.

LEISZ: In this room by yourself. And he did a good job of it, of the interview. He had some questions there towards the end. He said, "Suppose I choose one of the others. What would you do?" And I said, "I think I'd stay on as associate chief." And he seemed quite surprised at that. I said, "Assuming that whoever is chosen as chief wanted me to." He seemed quite surprised. He said, "I really am amazed by you people in the Forest Service. With other agencies where

I'm appointing the head of another agency, why, the comment I often get is, 'Well, I'll leave the outfit.' They don't indicate that they'll stay in the organization if someone else gets the head job." But he asked me about that, why we do that, and I said, "I'm sure that I could work with whomever you might select, but I think that there's some important stuff that I should probably try to complete, and I'll try to do that." My allegiance was to the organization, not to a particular job.

And I asked him—I said, "Are any of the candidates outside the Forest Service that you're interviewing?" And he responded in an indirect way to that. He said, "I've now interviewed four of you for this job, and I have to tell you that I am just absolutely amazed at the competent people the Forest Service has prepared to take over this job. Why would I go outside? There's no reason to go outside because of the highly qualified people that are well prepared to take on as the next chief of the outfit." And I thought, *Wow, that is a compliment to what the agency is doing. They're preparing people.* And we probably talked for two and a half hours, I would guess, for that interview. And it was probably two weeks later that he told me that—and he called me to tell me that he had selected Max Peterson for chief.

That was an interesting time because I know that there were some competition under way from various groups about who should be the next chief. I had a pretty good reputation, I think, with industry as being tough but fair, and certainly never backed away from situations where they needed to be called on something that wasn't right. But I had also had the same kind of reputation with the Sierra Club, of not really bending to their wishes but listening to them. The Sierra Cub didn't support me as chief,..

The secretary told me that I had some strong support from members of Congress, committees that I had testified before, and that surprised me some, because one of the committee

members that I testified before was John Seiberling, who dealt with public lands and wilderness classification. I had been on field trips with John, and I had also, on numerous occasions, appeared before his committee on testimony. He always felt that we weren't quite giving enough acreage into the wilderness system with our testimony. He'd always ask me personal questions at the end. It was almost kind of a baiting game as I came before his committee. But at the end of all that, why, he had been one of the ones that had been very supportive. In fact, he sent me a letter when I retired that complimented me on coming before his committee, and said, "I know we often disagree, but" he said, "no one could fail to respect the fact that you were coming from a professional standpoint." And he said, "I thoroughly enjoyed the lessons in forestry you provided to the committee over the years."

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: But one of the points he made which stayed with me and I shared with our other people in Washington was that he said, "I knew when you came before us that we were going to get, number one, the administration's position very clearly presented; number two, when I asked you questions, I'd get professional answers from you." And he said, "I never felt that you were giving me an answer that was something you thought I wanted to hear; rather you gave a professional reply from your judgement." He said, "It always appeared that you were talking as a professional." And he said, "I respect that and respect the agency for that," which I thought, well, that's exactly the job that I had for the agency, was to be a professional, not to enter into trying to say what I think Seiberling wants to hear and try to craft it in a way...But I didn't try to provoke him, either. But our people felt that we had had a rather tenuous working relationship with him, and yet his letter proved to us that he respected precisely where we were coming from.

The time then that I continued to serve as associate under Max Peterson as chief was a good time. Max and I were thoroughly acquainted with one another. We knew we had different views on things. Max liked to travel and did quite a bit of foreign travel and was very active externally. I did a lot of the internal things for the agency, and I think I did a reasonable job of keeping him informed. He was straightforward, in working with me, in saying, "When decisions are needed and I'm gone, go ahead and make them. Just let me know what they are when I get back, and I'll support whatever you decide to do."

That's a pretty good, solid working relationship, I think, and I think that carried forward during the time that I was there, for a couple of more years. In that time, why, some great opportunities came along.

Let's take a break. [Coughs.]

[Tape interruption.]

SMART: Okay. I'm sorry, Doug. I need to go back to where we took the break. You were talking about these different opportunities that were coming down, and then [there was a] malfunction on my part. I'd like to recover a little bit more about some of these changes that were going on.

LEISZ: As associate chief, why, I liked to look over the entire programs, in research, in state and private and the national forest system and make sure that we were passing along all the funds possible to the field organization: the research stations, the state and private areas, and to the national forest regions to get the work done, to get it planned and to get it operational. There

was a practice , in the Washington office, to withhold some funds at the deputy chief level, for later apportionment for their own special projects.

Let's break for just a minute. [Coughs.]

[Tape interruption.]

LEISZ: And as we looked at that and I talked with John McGuire first and then with Max Peterson when he became chief, why, we agreed that we'd try to do a better job of getting more funds to the field at the beginning of the fiscal year or as early as possible. We gave some warning to the staff directors and to the deputy chiefs about withholding funds at the Washington level, and there was some response to that was in the right direction, but there was quite a bit of money that was being held at the WO. So in order to have full understanding about what we meant, we impounded those funds and brought them within the authority of the chief to allocate then, with the understanding that at the first quarterly review of regions and stations and areas, we'd make a determination of how those funds should be directed.

Well, that did not increase my popularity at all with the deputies and staff directors, but it did serve the purpose of funding the field organization, which in my view was really stressed to try to meet the targets. If you don't get money out early in the year, the field organization, particularly at the ground level, simply cannot plan adequately to get the most economic attainment] of work, and the most effective. So we did make those adjustments. They were painful at first, and then they flowed very nicely after a time or two.

But another one that I'd recount for you is that one day, kind of out of the blue, I got a call from a person that identified themselves as the vice president of Pennzoil Corporation and

wanted to come in and talk about land acquisition, selling us some land, the Vermejo Ranch, that was in New Mexico, an extraordinary piece of property that reaches into the Sangre de Cristo Range and has a great wildlife resource there, particularly in elk. But anyway, he wanted to drop over. He had been in the Department of Interior office talking with Secretary Watt..

He came into the office. Pennzoil had a land area that was nearly 500,000 acres in New Mexico, in the high country and in some of the lower elevations. They had acquired the land. This had been a land grant that had been given at the time the land was acquired from Mexico. The company, Pennzoil, still operated a cattle ranch there, but they really had decided that they wanted to get out of the land ownership associated with that area, and they had had an appraisal made to split the acreage into ranchettes. That would be the end of a major area of forests and grazing lands in high country there that had been in a single ownership since the war with Mexico.

At the time that he came to me, I asked him why did he come to the Forest Service, and he said, "I was over talking with Interior Department about their purchase of it, because they expressed desire to purchase the area, and the secretary of interior reminded me that the president had sided with the Sagebrush Rebellion, and it's stated pretty straightforward that he felt that there shouldn't be any additional, major land acquisitions to bring additional private lands to the public ownership." He was coming from there to the Forest Service.

I asked him, "How did you pick us?" And he said, "One of your friends in Interior, said, 'Why don't you give Doug Leisz a call and go over there and see if the Forest Service—can handle this., if anybody can do it, perhaps the Forest Service can.'" And so, as we looked at it at first blush, why, I told him we didn't have purchase funds and reminded him that the secretary certainly was correct that the president had announced that he was opposed to any major

acquisitions of the public acquiring additional private land and that our authorities, then, might be to use timber values to acquire portions or all of the land.

And then, as we sat and talked for an hour, I said, "Have you ever considered a donation?" Obviously, he hadn't considered a donation and was interested in how that might work. And so I explained to him that it was possible that they could receive tax credits for making a donation. With substantial donation, why, it would go to the Treasury Department to determine what kind of tax credit they might be eligible for, and that sort of thing.

Anyway, he went back from that meeting to his head office for the Pennzoil Company and called me about a week later and said that they were quite interested in the details of what a donation might do. We proceeded with that, then, to determine whether in fact we could process a donation. I went to the assistant secretary with the proposal—

[Abrupt end of CD 4. Begin CD 5.]

SMART: I'm Bob Smart and what I've just done is changed the chips in the machine. I'm conducting an interview with Doug Leisz at his house, and it's October 12th, 2004.

Doug, when the chip ran out, we were in the process of talking about this land acquisition in New Mexico.

LEISZ: Let's not assume that any of that got properly recorded, and let's start from the standpoint of without any preliminary announcement, I got a telephone call one day in the Washington office from the person who identified himself as the vice president of Pennzoil Corporation, and he wanted to know if he could drop in and talk about the possible sale of land in New Mexico, the Vermejo Ranch, that's an extraordinary piece of property, about 500,000

acres in total. Pennzoil had decided that they were going to dispose of that land. I said, "Certainly drop on by," and he did, and then explained to me that he had been at the Department of Interior, trying to sell the Vermejo property to the Park Service, and they had turned him down, saying that the president, President Reagan, had announced that he sided with the Sagebrush Rebellion, and that was a term given to—where they were saying, "No more great areas of private land being acquired by public agencies," that there was enough land in public ownership, and the job for the public agencies was to better manage the land, not to acquire a lot more land.

Well, Neal Wade was the vice president, and he proved to be a very interesting guy to work with, very capable, certainly. He described to me that their real interest was in selling the property. They had an appraisal of the property, which identified the highest and best use as breaking the property into ranchettes of five to perhaps a hundred acres in size. That gave an enormous value to the property. I had known of the Vermejo property only from my dealings with the former regional foresters in Region Three. Their home base was in Albuquerque, and their desires were to to acquire that property and the frustrations of being unable to. But [William] "Bill" [Herst?] had firmly planted on my brain the Vermejo stamp, saying if there ever was an opportunity to acquire that piece, why, do it!

Anyway, we talked about it, and the only authorities—we had no purchase funds available, but I told him we were definitely interested in acquiring the property, all or parts of it, but we certainly would have to get approval from the secretary of agriculture, and we would have to find a way to acquire it. One of the ways we had was we would be able to use timber receipts to pay for it, but that would really seriously impact the counties of Arizona and New

Mexico with the timber receipts and would take years to accumulate the kind of money that the property might be valued at.

And then, as we talked on for some time, I mentioned to him the possibility of donation. He asked how that might work, and I explained to him about that in some detail, and as we talked further with it, it became clear that there were some rights outstanding on the property, timber rights. There was a portion of the land that had commercial timber on it and had been logged, and some of the commercial timber had not yet been logged. But those rights were outstanding, and I told him that we would have to have those rights along with the property and that we'd also insist on water rights associated with that property. That property had some of the finest water rights in New Mexico. Then there was also subsurface coal mining. Kaiser Industries had some coal mining rights associated with that property.

Well, as we talked about possible donation, he took the information and went back to his corporate headquarters. Called me about a week later and said that they were not interested in the timber-for-land process because they thought that would be extremely unpopular for the company in going to New Mexico and Arizona and [explaining the timber receipts 25% fund would be adversely affected for years.. But they'd like to explore further the donation possibility, just how that might work.

So we did. We went at that. At the same time, I told him I had to go to the secretary [of agriculture] and make sure we had an approval. With the president's announcement, it certainly wouldn't be a shoe-in. And I went to the assistant secretary first and explained it to him, and I think quite properly and directly, he said, "Didn't you understand fully what the president meant? He said he sided with the Sagebrush Rebellion." And I think my response to that was, "John, this is an opportunity for an environmental accomplishment for President Reagan, and he

needs one of those." He was a little amused by that, and then we talked a little further, and I asked him about the possibility of a session with the secretary of agriculture to see if he might have a different view of this than the assistant secretary.

That was a little bit awkward, to talk about that, but the assistant secretary was straightforward, and he said, "Sure, you can have your shot. You be the proponent and I'll be the negative side in the discussion." And so we did arrange—and the secretary at that time was John [R.] Block, a pretty young guy for a secretary of agriculture. As we came into that meeting, he told us that he had twenty minutes, and then he had to go on to catch an airplane flight and he'd hear us in that amount of time. [Richard] "Dick" Lyng , the deputy secretary, was also at that meeting. It was just the four of us.

We went through our presentation, and one of the questions that the secretary had for me—he said, "You paint such a rosy picture of this. What's the worst thing that could happen if the acquisition proceeded and they donated the land?" And I said, "We might, I suppose in the future, ten or twenty years, why, there might be some reason the property would have to be sold. But under the provisions that we take donations, we should realize a handsome profit for this because they'll only receive 58 percent of the approved value of the land for tax credits, and if they're able to take all those tax credits, it means that they must have five years of pretty profitable operations. And if they can't take them in five years, they lose them."

And John Block said, "This sounds like a deal I'd never pass up I were in private life" and said, "How might we do this?" At that point, Dick Lyng spoke up. He said, "Doug, you're going to go back to the office, and you're going to prepare a one-page summary to this, and you can attach a picture of the area to it, and you bring it back to me, and I'll take a look at it," and he said to the —the secretary , "At the next cabinet meeting, after the cabinet meeting is over, you

stay and go up to the president and hand this to him personally, this one-pager, and talk to him about this tremendous acquisition opportunity that's essentially watershed, wildlife habitat and extraordinary recreation values for the public."

And so I worked on that one page, went back and took it to Dick Lyng , and he looked at it and improved it some, and the next cabinet meeting, John Block took it to the president. And at the end of the meeting, he said the president expressed—being an old rancher, himself, Reagan loved the cattle ranching and the property he had on the Los Padres Forest there. It was a neat piece of mountain property. But anyway, he expressed his interest in it, and at the bottom of that one-pager, we had put two things in there. One of them was: "Please provide more information." And the second one was: "Please arrange for me to stop, on one of my trips to the West, to look at the property an announce the acquisition." There was no "Declined" opportunity on that page.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: But John Block came back from that meeting and called me and said, "He didn't say yes and he didn't say no." I said, "What's that mean?" He said, "It means you go to work on it like it's going to happen, but you better put this package together as quickly as you can." And so we did. We went to work on it. And that required extraordinary cooperation from the Justice Department. Justice had to send somebody to New Mexico to do the title work on it because title was in the historical record of the acquisition of the land from Mexico, and it had gone through very few title changes since that time, . This required an enormous amount of record search work. It was not a nice, neat title package. The Office of General Counsel provided an attorney that spent over thirty days down there, in searching the information.

We needed Department of Interior assistance. We needed Department of Treasury assistance. As it ended up, why, we found that one of the senators from New Mexico was and

always had been a strong supporter of public acquisition, [Peter V.] "Pete" Domenici. I never met Pete Domenici, but I called him to let him know about it. He took the call personally, as it happened, and listened to it, and he told me what a great deal he thought it might be and asked what he could do to help in the process. I said, "The next time you have an opportunity to talk to the president, you might mention how important it is."

I needed to get concurrence from the secretary of the interior and from commerce and an okay from the Treasury Department in handling it. We decided that probably the chief should not be involved in this, that this was not going to be the easiest thing to bring through and it might have some fallout later. And so I would carry it entirely along working with our lands staff in the Washington office, and we proceeded to do that.

I can remember calling the secretary of the interior, who was James Watt at that time, and he certainly didn't have a reputation for being an environmental secretary; however, I had found him quite to the contrary, a good one to work with. When we had issues with oil and coal leases, he always listened and accommodated our views. When I explained to him what we were doing, he laughed and said something like, "What do you want *me* to do?" I said, "I need a letter of support from you." And he laughed again, and he said something like, "I never would have believed that an agency of the federal government would go ahead with an acquisition like this through a donation." He said, "It's marvelous. You write the letter for me, and I'll sign it."

So we had his support, and Commerce was fairly good, and I talked directly with the special assistant to the secretary of the Treasury and asked them for a pre-acquisition, pre-donation valuation process, which is unusual, but possible. They agreed to do this. At any rate, the lone House of Representatives New Mexico member, Manuel Lujan [Jr.], decided that he would not support the acquisition. That was a troublesome matter, but we got into an

accommodation where I promised to keep him informed as things went along, and we proceeded and ran into a number of difficulties associated with it.

Because of the outstanding coal rights, why, Kaiser was less than satisfied about a change of ownership, and there were some provisions that would affect their operations to some degree. We had to get special language into the surface rights mining law operating proceedures working with the Interior Department Office of Mining. We were able to work that through. Again, Interior was quite responsive to that. Request.

But as it came along finally, why, things worked out, and we acquired I think about 110,000 acres of the 500[,000], and it gets heavy recreation use today and has a tremendous elk herd on it. There's been special recreation improvements made for handicapped and it's open to the public. The elk hunting is very strictly governed by state permits, and I think it's a marvelous acquisition. It's just too bad that we didn't proceed to get the other 400,000 acres. But it worked out fine, and the New Mexico representative was unhappy with me, but we went ahead with it. He did not want to proceed. But I think things have worked reasonably well.

There's another one that came up while I was there, was the Mount St. Helens eruption and the establishment of a monument at Mount St. Helens. I became thoroughly involved in that. We ended up with the monument boundaries for more than we thought ought to go in there, because there was opportunity to salvage another billion board feet of timber that had been blown down by the eruption. But that didn't work out. But we ended up with the Mount St. Helens Monument. I was just reading in the last two weeks that Mount St. Helens is rumbling again.

Another one I just might mention is that the Resources Planning Act was always an at that we were interested in because it gave the Forest Service the responsibility to look at the

nation's resources and indicate for the future what we ought to be doing, to make sure that we had sufficient supplies of resources to meet the country's need. That has to do with water, and it has to do with recreation; it has to do with timber resource, minerals, and wildlife habitat. The whole ball of wax was there. But to project into the future and propose a t ten-year plan what should we be doing to stimulate activity in the private sector as well as the federal land sector to meet future needs..

That was sort of the opportunity that I saw to try to think beyond single-year appropriations, because the Forest Service has a terrible time with programs that demand multi-year follow-through when you depend upon an appropriation that is only for a single year. We did make some progress in that light. There are some things that carry over for a year or two. Perhaps there have been further improvements in that. But the nation still has the opportunity and the need to look to the Resources Planning Act to lay out long-term, strategic programs that deal with the public lands, and private lands as well, providing resources for this nation's future.

The third thing I'll mention, which I think really worked out very well, is that we watched the native land settlement process going on in Alaska. The last hang-up had to do with the Chugach Indians and the lands they were going to receive in the Land Settlement Act. Interior had worked with them for several years, and they just absolutely had been unable to resolve it. They called us and asked if we would make an attempt to try to reach an agreement on the lands claim side of it, because it did involve some national forest lands. Of course, the areas that might go to the Indian tribe, we wanted to make sure that they were appropriate ones to transfer and not ones that would have extraordinary public values, that it would not be in the public interest to transfer those.

And so we began with Office of General Counsel, myself and a couple of other Forest Service staff assistants to meet with the Chugach nation representatives, who came to Washington, and we worked through several meetings. Finally one night, as we were meeting and trying to work on a particular area that had extraordinary values for] wildlife nesting but it also had some coal reserves in it and some islands that the region wanted to retain for public use, primarily recreation use. Finally, in meeting with the tribe members and with the chief representative, I mentioned to them that—had they considered at all about the possibility of receiving money rather than land for portions of this settlement, a substantial amount of money? Just for discussion purposes.

He warmed to that pretty quickly because he said that, as a group, they were absolutely strapped financially. Their nation didn't have the resources, the natural resources to accumulate any kind of funding base, and so we would have the discussion about that. Then I called the senator from Alaska after that meeting, because he was extremely interested that we reach agreement with the Chugach nation on this. He indicated that he thought that might be a possibility and keep him informed of progress.

And so we went back the next night, and we met till midnight that night, and the Tribe agreed that they would drop their land claims down to what was acceptable from the Forest Service standpoint, and would receive $15 million in the process. There had been no particular funds appropriated for that, but I called Senator [Ted] Stevens the next day and told him that we had reached agreement, and he was happy about that. I said, "I need your help on one detail." He wanted to know what that was, and I said, "We need $15 million." "What??"

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: But I talked with him about that, and I said, "I think that there is a special fund that can be used for this, and I think that you might talk to the Justice Department and find out that there could be funds available through their offices. It wasn't more than two hours. He called me back and said, "I don't know why I didn't know that, but you're right, and we've got it." So it worked out well for the public, for the national forest and for the Indian tribe. Those things are really satisfying when they come through in that way, and you can find a solution that works for everyone. That was a fine opportunity.

One of the folks that worked in the Washington office, in the legislative group, programs and legislation, Mark Riemers, as I retired, came down to talk to me. He said, "Well, you know, we're really gonna miss you around here, because we could always count on a new opportunity," he said, "in your words, coming to the Forest Service every week that we didn't plan last week." He said, "We just don't know what we'll do with our time with you gone."

SMART: [Laughs.]

LEISZ: But I enjoyed that career with the service. It gave me some extraordinary opportunities to learn and do things, work with people, and most of all we find that the resources the agency had in terms of people capability was a marvelous thing as an administrator, but the big job was to figure out how to turn that loose and work in a direction that was somewhere we needed to go for the public interest, and then to move the programs through. I don't think I could have found—I can't imagine finding a happier opportunity to spend thirty-two years at than I've had in the Forest Service. It was because of the basis that was laid for the system, the national forest system. What a fantastic array of resources it offers! In research, in state and private assistance, to see the Forest Service assist states become fully independent in the way they can handle their resources. That was the role of state and private: You make the states better through their

assistance programs. And we find states that have come into full capability where they are fully as capable as the Forest Service is with their fire suppression activities, with the fire and some of their forest management. And forest research has given us many, many things to work with and still remains, I remember, grossly under-funded for what we need to do as we face the future.

But that and working with conservation groups, and I'll include in that the off-highway vehicle use people as much as I do the winter sports industry or the Sierra Club or the Wilderness Society or the Audubon [Society] or other groups. They represent parts of the public that have to be reckoned with and worked with, and if you can work things out so that at least you hear them and take the parts that you can utilize out of what they want to see done, so that you end up with the best possible solutions, I think that's the job that the forest administrators have to do.

First you've got to follow the law, and you have to find the laws that are appropriate for whatever you want to do. As we've talked about, there are enough laws out there so if you get familiarity with them, you can find one that supports what you want to do, if it's in the public interest, and you should pursue it on that basis.

But it was a marvelous opportunity for me, and [I have] absolutely no regrets in the outfit. When I left the outfit, I felt that I ought to get out of the way because of the talent that was behind me, and I had thirty-two years to contribute, and I had done more or less the best I could, and it was time to move on. So I left with a great feeling about the outfit, and I still follow and support it in many different ways.

SMART: A thirty-two-year career. Do you look back to any regrets?

LEISZ: I really don't have any regrets. I had times that I thought, *I probably ought to go do something else* a time or two, and I offered, actually, to do contract services for the Forest Service once on timber sales. I knew I could do it cheaper and quicker and perhaps better if I

didn't have to go through all the processing stuff. The supervisor, I remember, was Bob Dasmin on the Mendocino at that time. Bob Dasmin looked at my proposal and said, "Why don't you just get on with the job in the outfit and stay in the outfit and see what you can do to improve the processes by which we operate? That's the best way to contribute. Don't leave the outfit. We need you, and you need the outfit." And I think that was good advice.

We had a tremendous time. I know my wife was reminding me that when we were on the Eldorado Forest, she said, "You know, we never took vacations. We never left the forest. We went to backpack and camp someplace or we skied different places, or we hiked. We did something in the local forests because the opportunities were too great to go someplace else." I think that's true. We worked over, as recreationists, every forest that we were on, and then when we got into the Pacific Northwest region, we were on the go on weekends. The wonders that are available in Oregon and Washington—it was enormous, incredible. So we enjoyed it not only from my working standpoint, but from the family's standpoint it was a wonderful experience.

We had some back-country stations that were tough at times, and we have to put those in perspective over the long haul and then figure out how you make those enjoyable. But the people that you associated with, not only in the outfit but in industry and in conservation groups—it's just a wonderful opportunity to carve out a career and have the sorts of associations we had.

SMART: Would there be anything that you look at as being the kind of the crowning jewel of your career?

LEISZ: You know, that's hard to point to one thing, but certainly—I really felt that I was somehow in the right place at the right time when the Vermejoopportunity came along. Why was I able to do that? Because I had been taught along the way about these various

opportunities, through laws, that were available to the agency if you just knew how to work it. And the Chugach settlement I thought was another one that I really felt good about, because we resolved something that brought satisfaction to all the parties involved. Those were tremendous. The time on the Eldorado Forest as a supervisor was an extraordinary time, and probably the greatest involvement with family was during that assignment and, to some extent, the ranger district as well. But the family was at the right age, so they were participating in the community as well.

I just think we had probably extraordinary opportunities, the way things unfolded in the outfit. I was pleased that we were able to move when we did, to new challenges, and I don't remember at any particular time looking for a move. I wasn't trying to move; I was really trying to excel where I was, and we were having a good time.

But it's a different climate out there today. Today, well, you've got usually both members of the family working, spouses working, so you have dual careers to track, and the enormous cost of housing today would really be a tough one for a move, and I know it must be for those folks today. . But certainly the job—there must be extraordinary opportunities out there. I marvel at the way some of the folks are tackling those today that are still in the organization. They're doing extraordinary work, and I fully support that.

SMART: It was a marvelous career, Doug, and I sure appreciate your sharing that with me. You [end up with?] the highest respect from everybody who ever worked for you, so it's been a delight for me to be able to even interview you about [this thing?]. So I guess with that we're probably at the close.

LEISZ: I think we've probably over-talked.

SMART: [Chuckles.]

LEISZ: It's been enjoyable.

[End of interview.]