

From: "Dick Artley"
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January 14, 2007

Dear Abigail Kimbell, Regional Forester, Northern Region, U.S. Forest Service,

Why am I not surprised that you have been selected to succeed Dale Bosworth as the next Chief of the U.S. Forest Service?

It's clear to most thinking Americans that Bush has no regard for the environment. Bush's staff and their corporate allies spend an incredible amount of time and money to seek-out people who will carry on Bush's anti-environment legacy long after Bush is gone from the White House in January of 2009.

I knew you Abigail on a day-to-day basis at Oregon State University from 1978 to 1980. We were both pursuing our master's degree in logging engineering. I could not understand at the time why you were never able to envision a tree as anything other than several logs. To you, a tree was a "piece" that weighed so many "kips" to be hauled to a "landing."

It never occurred to you that these trees you wanted so desperately to log were part of a forest ... or a favorite picnic site for a family ... or a critical piece of wildlife habitat ... or that these trees might shade a blue ribbon trout stream.

I never said anything to you at the time. I felt you might grow out of it. I thought once you left academia and actually started walking alone in the forest you would see the majesty of the natural world without human tinkering. I was wrong.

Based on your history (shown below) it's obvious that your skewed sense of values stayed with you and became even more bizarre after you left college.

Your Bighorn National Forest mistakes

You were selected as the forest supervisor for the Bighorn National Forest in 1997. Prior to your arrival on the forest, you knew that in 1994 some Bighorn N.F. employees wrote a letter to their regional forester, disclosing that the Bighorn forest supervisor had created a hostile work environment for his employees and was mismanaging the forest in several ways (see below). Rather than thanking these employees for their work, you reacted differently.

Within a year after arriving, you decided to abolish 14 positions with a forest reorganization. Of the total 14 positions that you proposed to be abolished, 5 were the positions of the 6 people who signed the 1994 letter that were still

working on the Bighorn National Forest. You told the press that the reorganization was vital to stay within your budget.

Over the next two years, you used the WRAPS process to reassign four of the 1994 letter signers to other duty stations. One of these 4 people was reassigned to a position in Arkansas that he had never performed before and had no prior experience in. One letter signer had his job abolished and was able to be re-employed on the Bighorn only after various members of congress spoke on his behalf.

By the year 2000, only 2 people remained on the Bighorn who had signed the 1994 letter to the Regional Forester pointing out massive mismanagement of public land.

The Government Accountability Project (a non-profit law firm) defended the employees that were threatened by you Ms. Kimbell. The GAP attorneys alleged that the reorganization was an attempt by you to discipline whistle-blowers.

The GAP was right. It was no coincidence that your reorganization had eliminated the jobs of most of the employees on the Bighorn that signed the 1994 letter.

Abigal, you carried out all this punishment and caused so much heartache for these splendid employees because they told the Regional Forester in their letter that the previous forest supervisor, Larry Keown had:

- approved timber sales that damaged caribou habitat,
- abandoned his legal reforestation commitments,
- cost the taxpayers money by favoring politically-connected timber companies,
- abandonment his wilderness preservation commitments,
- violated the employees' civil rights with sexual harassment and "contempt" for handicap access regulations,
- approved the construction of roads through Native American sacred sites, and
- a "pattern and practice" of whistleblower retaliation.

On April 22, 2003, U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) announced the favorable settlement of eight whistleblower retaliation complaints filed by the

Government Accountability Project (GAP) on behalf of 8 former and current employees of the U.S. Forest Service's Bighorn National Forest in Wyoming. Under the settlement, the Forest Service was ordered to pay a lump sum amount of \$200,000 to be divided between these 8 people. The agency was also ordered to provide corrective personnel actions for 2 of the 8 complainants, mitigating a 14-day suspension to a reprimand, and providing an interim bridge appointment to a former employee who experienced a break in federal service after he was removed for refusing to accept a geographic reassignment.

Special Counsel Kaplan stated, "This was an unusually complex retaliation situation given that it occurred over a lengthy period of time and through a dubious reorganization that took advantage of WRAPS procedures."

Unfortunately, one employee who signed the 1994 letter lost her job after her ecology position on the Bighorn N.F. was abolished before the settlement proceedings had begun.

Most forest supervisors would have been grateful to these caring employees and rewarded them for pointing out such mismanagement of public land. Not you Ms. Kimbell.

With this one act, you had just placed yourself at the top of the Bush's search-list (which would start in 2 years) of potential anti-environmental candidates for either BLM Director or Forest Service Chief.

If any readers would care to check the accuracy of the Bighorn information presented here, please access the Office of Special Counsel April 4, 2003 press release at:

http://www.osc.gov/documents/press/2003/pr03_10.htm

Your Promotion to Associate Deputy Chief of the Forest Service

You were named to become the Associate Deputy Chief of the Forest Service in 2002 to lead the nation's timber program on national forest land ... a Bush administration decision. They were now grooming you to be Chief. After your Bighorn performance, they knew you were exactly what they wanted.

Your Promotion to Regional Forester

You were named to become the Regional forester for the Forest Service's Northern Region in December 2003 ... again, a Bush administration decision. This was your reward from the Bush administration.

Few American citizens know that much of your time at your last job as Associate Deputy Chief in Washington D.C., was spent authoring the tragic Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. Bush signed that Act into law the same month you became Regional Forester in December 2003. The vast majority of the statements of fact that you wrote in the Act were contradicted by the general scientific consensus. You knew this, yet you wrote them anyway.

You now knew that you were on the fast-track to the Chief's job ... the first woman to hold that position. It was time to lay low and make no mistakes ... appear to care for the public land.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to connect the dots of your past.

Your Job as Chief of the U.S. Forest Service

You and you're your new boss (USDA Asst. Secretary Mark Rey) will get along great. You have so much in common. You know this, since you have worked with him before. You can continue to trade stories and laughs about Mark's previous employment as a timber industry lobbyist.

Abigal Kimbell, you shouldn't be Chief, you should be ashamed.

I can only pray that your stay in the Chief's office will end with Bush's departure in January 2009.

Every person in America that cares about their public land will be watching your every move like a hawk ... including members of the new congress.

Sincerely,

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