

**NATIONAL FORESTS:
SHOULD THEY REMAIN IN THE HANDS
OF THE PUBLIC?**

by
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ABSTRACT
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My thesis, "National Forests, Should They Remain in the Hands of the Public?" focuses on the system of management that the United States Forest Service has utilized in overseeing the nation's publicly owned national forests. The Forest Service was created in 1905 during the conservation movement under the guidance of forester Gifford Pinchot. Pinchot's ethic of management was to control the forests with a concept of sustaining a timber yield for future generations. He referred to this ethic as "wise use" management. My thesis contains a case study of Klamath Falls, Oregon; a timber-dependent community whose economic stability relies on the status of the timber industry. Currently, the Forest Service is mandated to serve both commodity and noncommodity interests of the national forests under the Multiple Use and Sustained Yield Act of 1960. The various public interests have become increasingly controversial with legal conflicts resulting. Since its inception, the Forest Service has maintained Pinchot's conservation ethic and has failed to serve each public interest. My thesis raises questions about the future of the national forests with regard to their present system of management. It examines the Forest Service's ethic of "wise use" management and proposes an alternative.