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DEC./JAN. 91

TAKING THE PULSE OF THE BANKHEAD NATIONAL FOREST

## BANKHEAD GETS DEATH SENTENCE

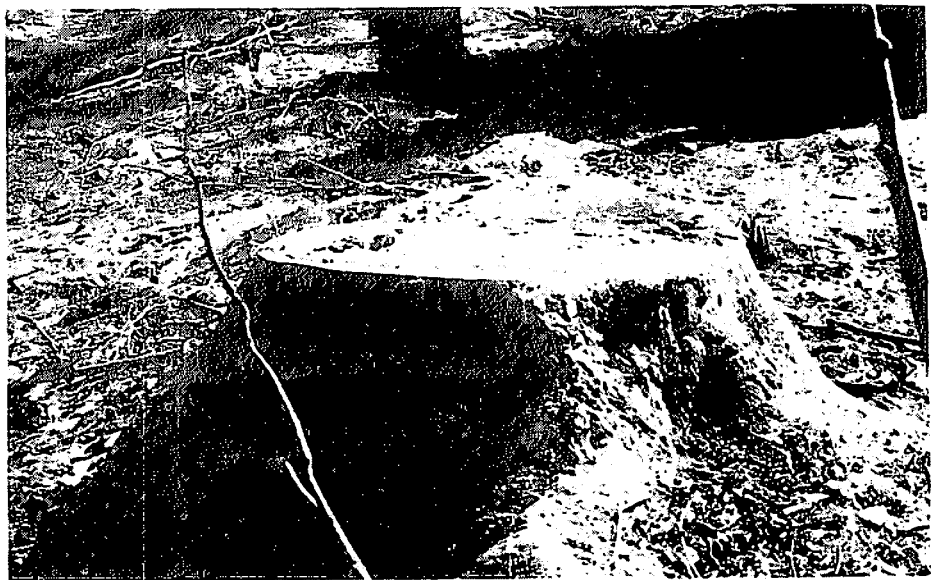
### EXECUTION BY CLEARCUT

#### THE FOREST KILLERS

The Bankhead National Forest is dying a slow but sure death. The natural, native forest is being replaced by a tree farm.

With the conversion of the former Bankhead National Forest into the Bankhead National Tree Farm through the practices of clearcutting, herbicides and clone management, the former beauty of this natural forest is vanishing. The only true forest by biological definition will be the Sipsey Wilderness and the Scenic River areas which compose only 15% of the Bankhead National Forest (BNF).

Of the 180,000 total acres in the BNF, 150,000 acres are classified as management area 16 which are being managed as an agricultural crop. This once all-age natural forest has already been converted to 75,000 acres of pine plantation with the remaining 75,000 acres still in hardwood. According to the regional headquarters for the central planning committee the bulk of pine plantation is located in the southern half of the forest



and the hardwoods in the north.

While professing that hardwood sites are put back into hardwoods upon regeneration (clearcutting), and pine sites into pines, we now have 50% of what was once a nearly a 100% hardwood forest in a giant pine plantation. How can that happen? Very easily if you happen to be the final authority on classifying a piece of land as a pine site.

Anyone who knows anything about the natural forests of our area knows that pines are nature's intermediate stage to a

climax hardwood forest. But our talented tree farm managers kill off the competition of hardwood trees with herbicides. They also kill off understory shrubs and ground cover at the same time. Kind of like plant genocide on behalf of a superior race of trees.

Did I say tree farm managers? You bet I did. That is what the manager of the BNF is: A tree farm manager.

When the U.S. Forest Service looks at a forest they see board feet. Visions of sawtimber and poletrees

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## EDITORIAL

### 1992 - 40th Anniversary of Fight.

It will be 40 years very soon since the first Northwest Ala. petition bearing 500 signatures was presented to authorities protesting the destructive logging practices in the Bankhead.

#### 1960s to 1980s

Environmental War Rages. The Alabama Conservancy leads the fight which eventually exempts 26,000 acres from the U.S.F.S. clearcutting plans. The Sipsey Wilderness is saved.

#### 1991. U.S.F.S. PUTS

#### INDIAN TOMB

#### HOLLOW TO THE SAW.

The Bankhead Monitor is born of the public mandate for some non-partison group to investigate and monitor the U.S.F.S. activities in light of laws such as The Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Protection Act, and the Nat. Historical Preservation Act. The U.S.F.S. has been accused of performing very general assessments pertaining to the impact of their pet vocation - which seems to be clearcutting.

We are investigating cut-over sinks, rare plant habitat, damaged stream beds and several secret projects that will be revealed in the coming issues of TBM.

Those who believe themselves to be unaccountable for their

actions and above the law should be brought to justice.

### THE BANKHEAD MONITOR, INC.

a nonprofit educational corporation published in the Forest by and for those who care for their native forest.

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This issue is dedicated to Mack Smith, a Game Warden for 25 years in the Bankhead. He loved the forest and loathed the clearcutting.

#### A Call For Legislative Action

We need a Senate Resolution demanding a return to nondestructive "selective timber harvest methods" in the national forests of Alabama. Are there any senators and congressmen in our state who will take a stand for the land?

#### OFFICIAL MONITOR SLOGAN.

"National Forests exist today because the people want them. ....the people themselves must make clear how they want them run."

Gifford Pinchot - 1st Forest Service Chief.  
We, the people....not the

timber lobby; not the central planners of the U.S.F.S. ! Thats' the spirit of the Monitor, Gifford. I suspect you would roll over in your grave if you could only see the state of the National Forests today.

### Dec. 91 / Jan. 92

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# DEATH SENTENCE

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dance through their minds. There is nothing wrong with timber or the timber industry. It is Alabama's number one industry. There is nothing wrong with tree farms. But there is something wrong with turning our national forest into one. There is something wrong in exterminating our old-growth hardwoods that cannot be replaced for centuries. There is something wrong with destroying the beauty of the public's natural resources and there is something wrong with stealing our rare and endangered plants and animals away from us and our posterity.

The U.S.F.S. is a Federal Timber Company. There is no question about that. Their primary purpose in life is to grow, manage, and market timber. The harvest methods have gone from what was once an environmentally sound selective cutting to what is now the most disastrous form of rape ever carried out in a forest - clearcutting. In just 15 years between 1950 to 1965, 800,000 acres of protected areas were reclassified as timber land subject to clearcutting. Since 1945, 20 million acres of national forest land has been reclassified from noncommercial to commercial forests. Only 11 million acres were set aside in the same period for wilderness and recreation.

In 1950, only 15% of all lumber came from public lands. By 1975, 40% of commercial timber came from public land. Nice trend.

In 1991, almost 30 miles of temporary logging roads were slated to be bulldozed through the Bankhead. That pace translates to about 300 miles of destruction and 360 additional acres of clearcut every ten years. The current plans of the U.S.F.S. are to clearcut the entire 150,000 acres of the forest. Each clearcut will eradicate the diverse age and size differences in the new generation of trees. As even-age brothers, they will better fit the preset machinery at the mills.

The Bankhead is being torn apart by clearcutting and logging roads. It is becoming a splotched landscape of bald spots from the air. It is sickening that the public has stood by for 40 years and let these forest killers have their way. Modern biology teaches us that clearcutting is not ecologically sound.

What is a true forest? By definition a forest is the most complex, land-based, living part of the eco-system. It is characterized by trees. There are 147 different types of forests in the U.S. composed of 1182 species combinations.

All life in the forest is connected with all other life in a chain that starts with the sun. Under the cool shade of the trees, protected from the heat and wind, a great variety of shrubs, vines, ferns and mosses combine in a grand design of relationships that support a

smaller and less visible world of life. Within this chain of insects, the fungi, and microorganisms, are the processes that eventually supply the trees with nutrients.

Nothing in the forest is wasted. The standing, dead and decaying trees are essential habitat for birds and animals. The fallen giants feed the bio-mass and create the great sponge-effect of the water holding ability of the ridgetops that seep moisture to the canyons below in the dry of summer. Hence the great diversity of life in the canyons.

The forest swarms with this complexity of insects, mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians all in a delicate balance that we call nature. Each is tied to one another in an unbroken food chain. If one tiny thread is broken, the entire pattern of the forest tapestry can unravel and be lost.

The natural forest not only survived for thousands of years without the help of man or his tree farm managers, it thrived. The Bankhead was beautiful and considered a game paradise in the 1800s. It should and must be preserved.

Lamar Marshall



# A CLEARCUT CASE AGAINST CLEARCUTTING

## **CRIME AGAINST NATURE**

There is no doubt to the trained biochemist that clearcutting is a crime against nature. When this method of removing timber is carried out in a national forest it is a worse crime in that a scenic resource is destroyed for many years. The charges against clearcutting are many. To fully realize the extent of damage inflicted, one must first understand the cycles of the land.

## **CYCLES OF THE LAND**

The cycle of life begins in the mold of the forest floor where the nutrients that allow trees to grow are created. The functions of the bacteria, microorganisms, fungi, snails, centipedes etc. are to carry out the process of conversion of a fallen tree into nutrients which can enter into the food chain of the forest and regenerate it. This is nature's economy. A dead tree in the forest represents years and years of stored sunlight being returned to the forest to support future growth. This quantity of dead limbs, trunks, fallen leaves that is being

composted back into the fertility of the land is called bio-mass.

**BIO-MASS** Bio-mass represents the health of the land. Repeated clearcutting removes bio-mass from the forest and hence the fertility. The chain of nutrient building is interrupted and the habitat of many creatures is sacrificed in the process. The bio-mass of the forest can be thought of as a giant sponge that soaks up the rain. The root systems of the trees absorb the rainwater and releases it in a pure, dependable flow. The canopy of the forest is like a great air filter that removes pollutants from the air. At the same time, the trees absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen. All this activity ceases in a clearcut forest.

**WHAT TREES DO** One tree can evaporate 100 gallons of water per day into our atmosphere. One tree can dissipate 230,000 calories of heat per day. It takes 5 room size air conditioners running for 20 hours to do this same cooling feat. One beech tree each year consumes the amount of carbon dioxide equivalent to that

displaced by 800 single family homes.

Compare the temperatures of a barren field and a mature forest at different times of the year. On the hottest days of summer, the forest will be cool and comfortable, while the field will be unbearably hot. Compare them again in the coldest days of winter and the forest will be many degrees warmer than the barren field. Our forests modify the extremities of climate.

## **THE FOREST IS A CHAIN**

The forest is the trees; the birds that live in the trees; the woodpeckers that make holes in the trees; the flying squirrels that live in the holes the woodpeckers make; the soil microorganisms and the water that flows through the soil through the trees to the air into the rain that falls to the earth again. All this is but a part of the cyclic structure that goes on around us every day. We take it for granted. The U.S. Forest Service looks at a forest and they see board feet of trees. This is not the whole picture at all.

## **CHARGES AGAINST CLEARCUTTING**

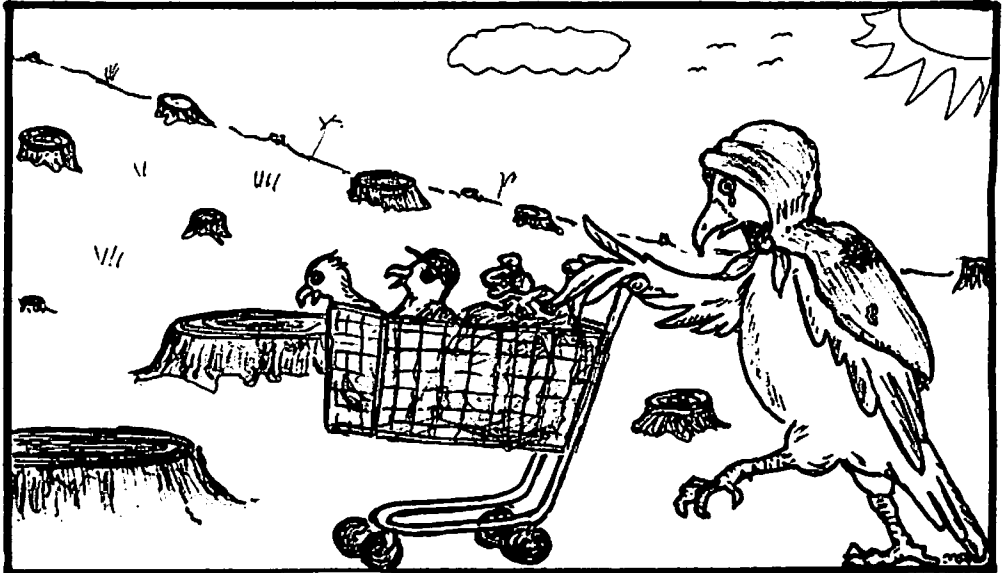
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Clearcutting is ugly. It steals the forest from us all for a century or more. It impairs the life cycle of a living ecosystem. It wipes out plants that cannot tolerate heat and sun. It heats the ground and raises air temperatures. It wipes out the rich, moist humus accumulated over centuries in the first hard rain. The silt fills creeks and stops up springs. Hillsides are eroded. Animals lose their homes and habitat. The water table is affected by sun-leached land. The heavy machinery that cuts up the land, hauls the logs and grades the logging roads, inflicts permanent scars.

Do we need more evidence?

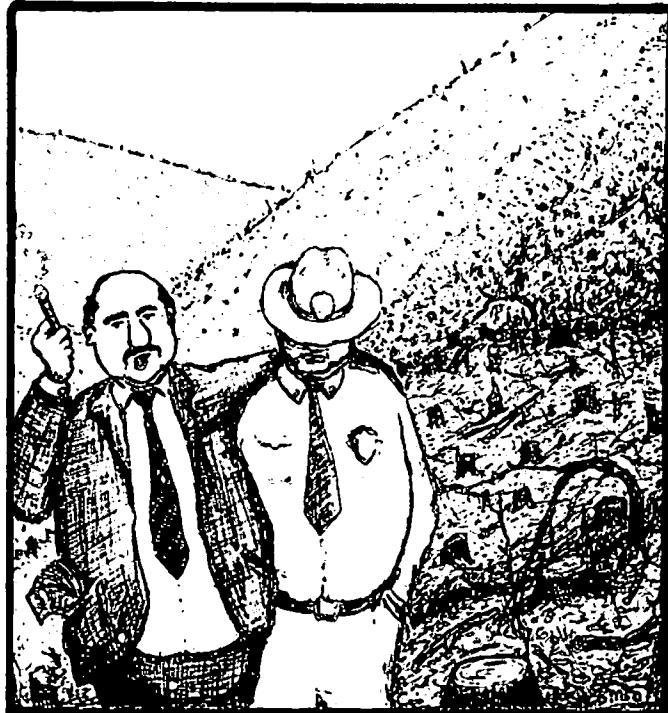
**THE GREAT QUESTION** The great question being asked by scientists around the world is "Just how much impairment can the cycle of nature tolerate before irreversible damage is accomplished?" The great question the people of north Alabama are asking is why does our little 150,000 acres of precious Bankhead National Forest have to be destroyed by our own government?

Bob Hawken



## BANKHEAD HOMELESS

*In Alabama, total national forest lands from which timber can be cut comprise less than 5% of the timber lands. According to Alabama Forestry Magazine, timber production is expected to increase over the next 40 years to the extent that the number of people employed in this business will double. National forest timber is not essential to the economy. Natural forests are disappearing. 5% is not an unreasonable figure to devote to beauty, parks and wildlife.*

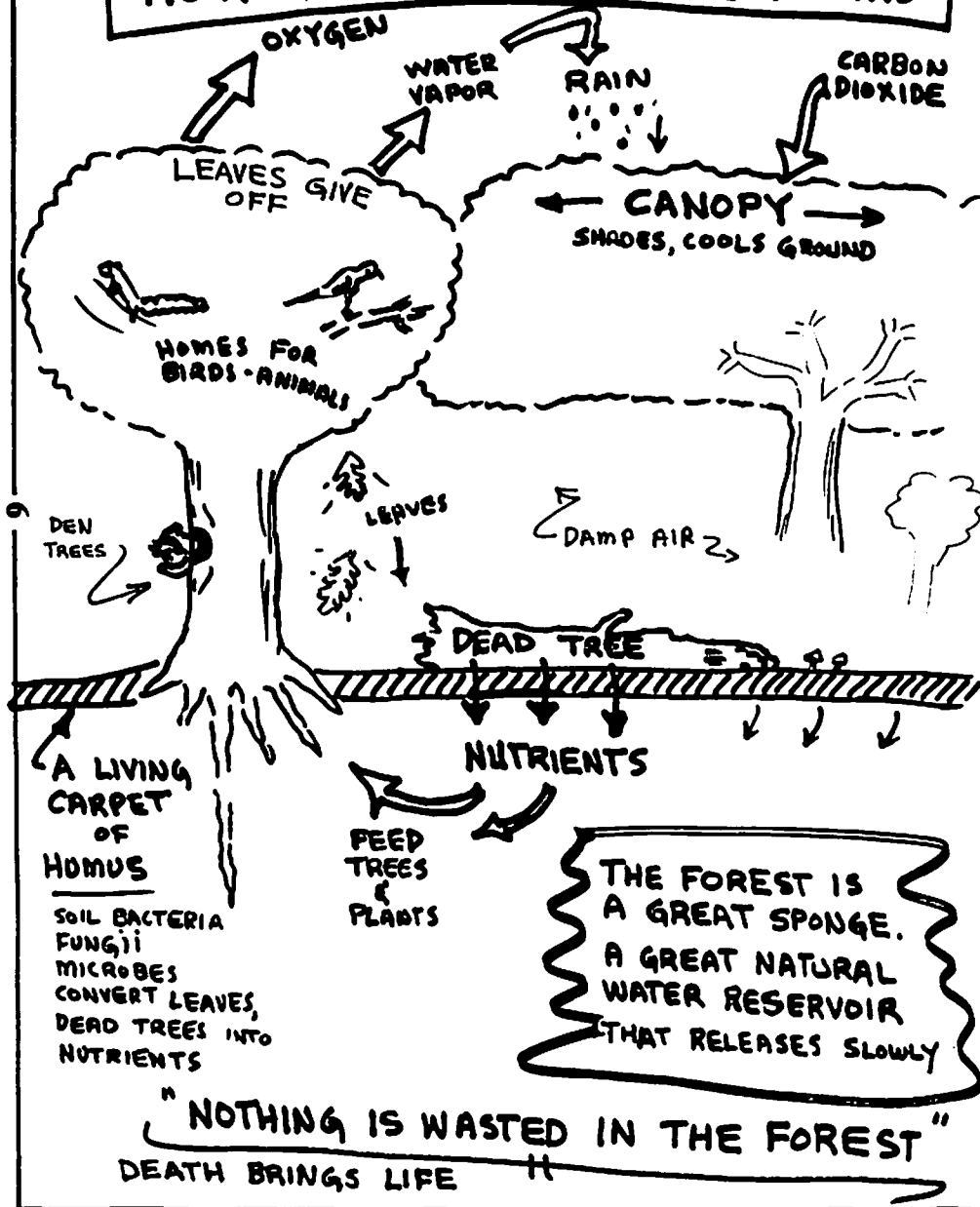


**DONT WORRY - IN 300 YEARS  
NOBODY WILL EVER KNOW  
THE DIFFERENCE.**

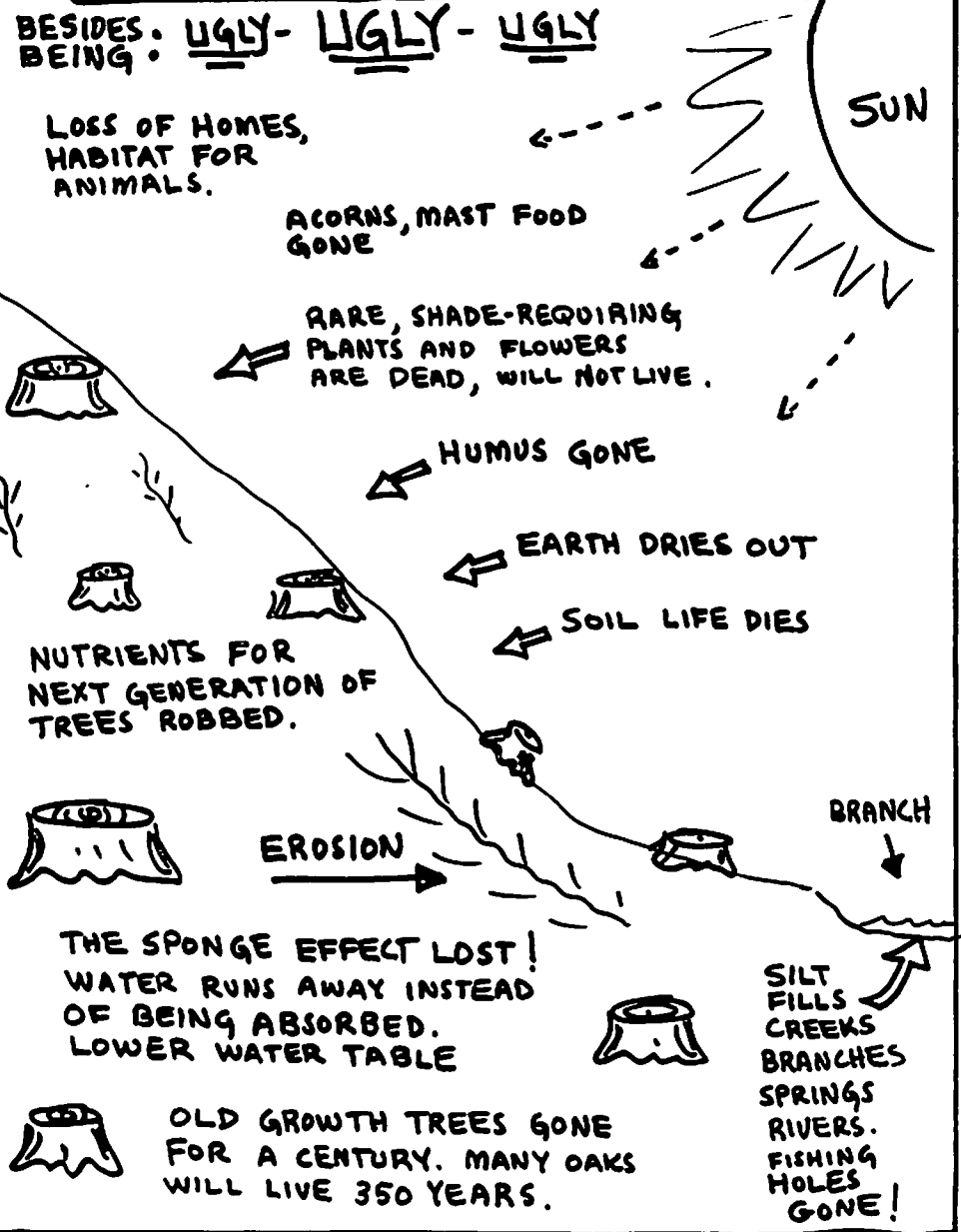


# CYCLES OF THE FOREST

## HOW THE FOREST CYCLE WORKS



## WHY CLEARCUTS DON'T WORK



# BANKHEAD PLANTS

## BLOODROOT

*Sanguinaria canadensis*

Lifting up creamy white petals clasped in the protective embrace of a single palm shaped leaf, this delicate relative of the Opium Poppy greets the fortunate hiker as a harbinger of spring, flowering as early as March.

Be quick, however, if you want to catch a glimpse of this elusive beauty. Within a day of unfolding its daisy-like rays, a light wind filtering down through the leafless canopy of hardwoods above will shatter the petals causing them to disappear scant hours after opening. Exposed is a small two-chambered capsule containing seeds of the next generation.

At this point the leaf releases its grasp and begins to unfurl and grow. This will continue throughout the season sometimes reaching several inches in diameter.

The root reveals itself as being one to four inches long and of a dull red color. When broken, the sap rises to the surface, seeming to ooze as if from a cut finger.

Bloodroot can be found throughout the Eastern U.S. in shaded, hardwood hollows of calciferous soil. Plants found in the company of Bloodroot include Black Cohosh, Rue Anemone and various types of Trilliums.

Famed naturalist William Bartram ( while traveling through the South in the late 1700's ) found the Creeks and Cherokees using Bloodroot as a dye for skin, clothing and baskets, not to mention as a medicinal plant.

White men were quick to add the blood red sap exuded by the stems and roots to their pharmacopoeia where it has remained to this day as a treatment for certain warts and skin cancers.

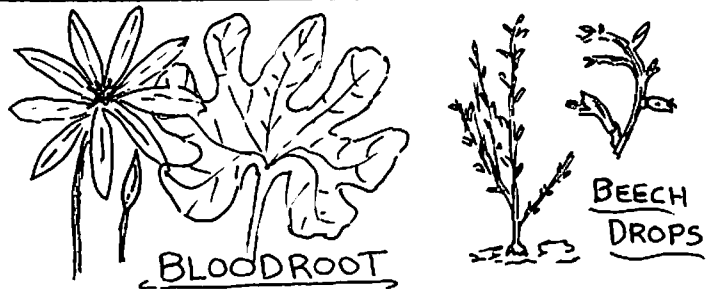
Historically, Bloodroot has been employed for a wide range of ailments. Topically, it was used for skin eruptions, fungal infections and cancerous growths. Known as an escharotic, it causes a sloughing of tissue.

Internally, Bloodroot was famed in the treatment of bronchitis, laryngitis, and other conditions affecting the respiratory system. It is

considered a sedative to the bronchial nerves and also as a stimulating expectorant.

Curiously, Bloodroot has become the major ingredient in a popular toothpaste and oral rinse for the control of plaque.

Bloodroot also goes by the name of Red Pucoon in some of the older herbals.



## BEECHDROPS

*Epifagus virginiana*

Imagine yourself on a leisurely stroll through Kinlock Springs in the Bankhead on a hot day in August. Rounding the knoll of a hill you stop to catch your breath and in the cool shade of a magnificent Beech you find yourself staring at the strange skeletal remains of a plant. It is reddish-brown with branches but no leaves and seems totally out of place in the lush growth to be found in this area.

Upon closer inspection, you realize that you have stumbled onto Beechdrops, a parasite found living at the bases of Beech trees and occasionally with other hardwoods.

This strange parasitic plant grows 1 to 1 1/2 feet tall having a smooth leafless stem and a color ranging from purplish-brown to brown and more typically a dull rust red.

Flowering during late summer, Beechdrops are inconspicuous and easily overlooked while tromping through the woods looking for the more colorful plants found at this time of the year.

It was an herbal medication used by Native Americans and eclectic doctors of the 19th century.

Darryl Patton.

# BLACK BEAR AND THE BANKHEAD



Black bears roamed the hills and canyons of the great forest for eons. The Indians depended on them as a staple food and ointment for their skin. A good coat of bear grease protected them from sun and wind and insects. The meat was like coarse beef.

The question has been asked as to why don't we have bear in the Bankhead anymore. The last native black bear was probably killed before the turn of the century. This writer doesn't know.

When we asked several local residents what they thought about restocking the Bankhead with bear, we got varied answers. The issue boiled down to two views. One - some thought it would be great; two - others would be frightened and believed the bears might

become a nuisance.

The Monitor contacted the Dept. of Conservation's Game and Fish Division in Montgomery to find out what it would take to get the state and federal government to bring bears back to the BNF.

After all, with about 26,000 acres of wilderness, there is adequate habitat to support the bear.

I talked with Keith Guyse who told me that it was a complicated process since, for one thing, two agencies would be involved. The U.S. Forest Service and the Dept. of Conservation would have to work together.

An analysis of public acceptance would have to be performed.

"When animals are restocked, whether they are bear or even deer, some of them are going to take off across country. The bear would eventually range out of the wilderness. That's where the problems will be. The bears could become a nuisance to surrounding landowners.

The public just doesn't tolerate predators like wolves and bears. It would be different if we had a large place with mountains like the Smokies."

Guyse said he didn't think that the Director of the Game and Fish Division has any interest in any bear relocation except in South Alabama where we have bears naturally. In this area we have great areas of very dense thickets. The bear there can exist close to humans and go virtually undetected.

Guyse said that the bear may show up on its' own in the Bankhead one day. There seem to be migrants that move through periodically.

"As for making an effort to establish a population, I just don't see the public being receptive to the idea."

Local people have reported seeing bear in and around the forest over the last few years. I live in the forest and think that I could tolerate the excitement of seeing a black bear standing in my pasture.

*The last attempt to restock the Bankhead with bear was in 1955. Three were released including one old sow. One took off and eventually all were killed.*



# A BANKHEAD NATIONAL PARK ?

At one time the Bankhead National Forest was called the Alabama Nat. Forest and at another The Black Warrior. It one time was a sprawling 560,604 acres in size. It was a proposed National Park. This was before Lewis Smith Lake was built. With the waters of the lake destroying the most scenic waterfall in the state and the reduction in the size of the forest lands, the idea of a national park died. This changed the future and the face of Alabama's north-central forests. The deepest canyons of the Sipsey River filled with water and the most remote and rugged wilderness area in Alabama was destined to be known for its cold, deep, water; fishing, skiing, and waterfront property.

The bulk of the Bankhead Lands lie north of U.S. HWY. 278. This section contains the 26000 acre Sipsey Wilderness on its western flank. It is cut down the middle almost evenly from north to south by Ala. Hwy 33, also called Wilderness Parkway. Roughly 150,000 acres remain in this area. This is the "Disputed Territory " that is being cut out and even-aged into a pine and hardwood plantation. These are the lands whose only hope might be that National Park or Preserve status would deliver them from the saw and grader.

Congressman Tom Bevill is currently working toward a 15,000 acre National Preserve status for Little River Canyon

in northwest Alabama. A similar move should be made for the beleaguered Bankhead.

I believe if a few Senators and Congressmen took a helicopter trip over the battle zone of the Bankhead, they would feel compelled to act in its behalf.

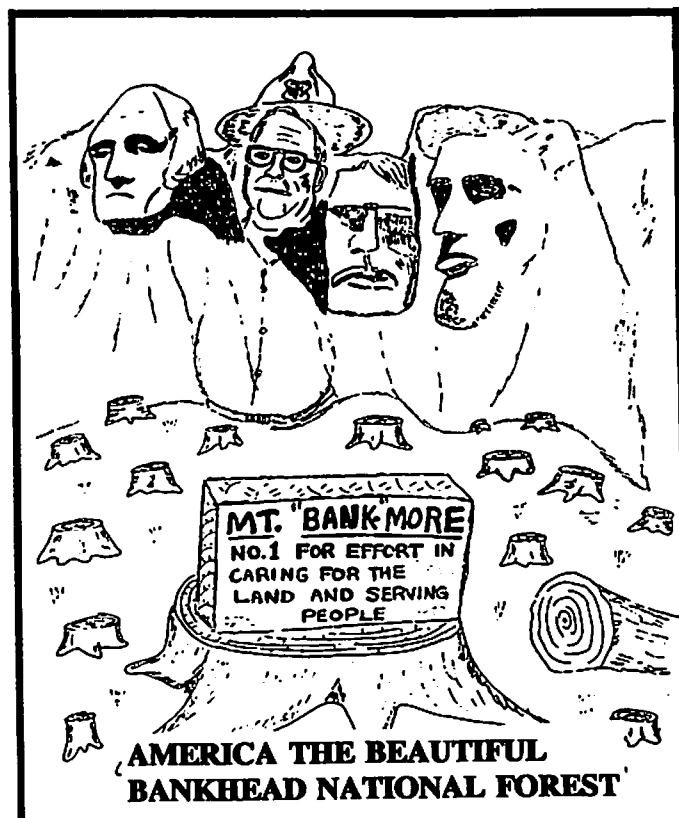
The important change would be the transference of BNF supervision from the Dept. of Agriculture to the Dept. of Interior, which is far more conservative with public resources. The Dept. of Agriculture views our national forests as just another crop of potatoes.

The majority of the people of north Alabama are extremely pro-hunting. They would never accept a ban on hunting in exchange for National Park status in the Bankhead. Therefore,

provision for a Game and Wildlife Management Area within a Bankhead National Park would be essential to its creation.

The important issue at hand is to save the native, natural forest from the ongoing destruction of the Forest Service which is executing a 50 year plan to clearcut the native forest away and replace it with a 150,000 acre tree farm which many biologists describe sarcastically as a " Clone Forest. "

The staff of the Bankhead Monitor regularly takes interested persons and parties on guided tours behind the lines of retention to the most recently devastated, clearcut areas in the forest. The U.S.F.S. sanctions about 25 square miles of clearcuts every 10 years.



# HEMLOCKS

## REDWOODS OF THE BANKHEAD

The oldest living species of trees in North America is the Great Basin Bristlecone Pine. At 3000 to 4000 years old, it is old-growth by any definition. The next oldest is the Giant Sequoia or Redwood which lives only a mere 2000 to 3000 years. It achieves a height of 230 to 360 feet. Of course these trees are found only in the far western U.S. We have nothing to compare to these famous specimens. Or do we?

You might be surprised at just how old some of our venerable natives can live if they are not cut down in the prime of life.

A white oak can live over 500 years and grow well over a hundred feet in height. That's not to say that every one of them would. Three hundred and fifty years might be close to their average age under optimum conditions. Other oaks and hickories can live two or three hundred years of age.

A beautiful and unique tree of the Bankhead is the coniferous Eastern Hemlock, a member of the Pine family. It is unique because the Bankhead is the southernmost limit of its range and it takes one in spirit into the Smokie Mtns.

The hemlock could be the oldest living tree in this forest as it could make a thousand years. Most of

them don't make it this long due to the trees shallow root system which makes it vulnerable to blow-down in strong winds. The hemlock has many nearly equal-sized roots that spread away from the trunk compared to large, long taproots of trees such as oaks. It's roots are generally not more than 25" deep. This explains why it grows in the canyons and bottoms where the soil is more moist.

The average life span of the hemlock is around seven hundred years. The oldest hemlocks in the Bankhead are found in the sheltered canyons close to protective bluffs where the wind can't hit them full force.

The wood of the hemlock is reddish-brown, coarse-grained and weak. It is poor firewood because it pops, sending out sparks for several feet. The bark was a favorite for tanning in the olden days.

The needles of the hemlock fall to the forest floor and create acid conditions that will discourage other plants from growing beneath. This condition, although not as severe, occurs in pine plantations also. That is why vast natural plant populations have disappeared in the 75,000 acre pine plantation of the Bankhead. Soil PH is a factor of all plant habitat. To replace hardwood habitat with pines

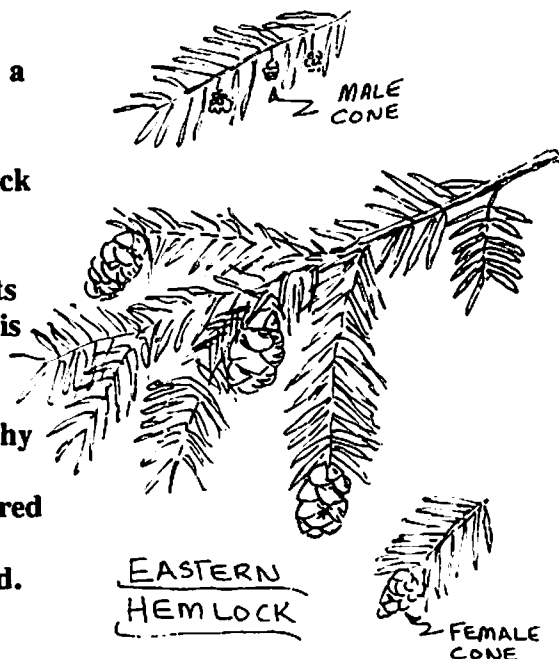
is to alter the habitat of the forest.

The hemlock is not the tallest tree in our forest and generally averages 65 to 80 feet. Some have reached 165 feet.

Whitetail deer browse the trees when other foods become scarce. The denser stands and occasional thicket make good cover for turkey and deer.

By the way; the scientific name of the Eastern Hemlock is *Tsuga canadensis*. But you probably couldn't pronounce it anyway.

There is a hemlock reported in the Bee Branch area that is about 12 feet in circumference. How old do you reckon that one is?



## **NEW MONITOR ALLIES: U.S.F.S. EMPLOYEES**

U.S.F.S. employees have formed an organization called "The Association of Forest Service Employees For Environmental Ethics." This reform movement is spreading rapidly through the ranks of the forest service nationwide.

These forest service employees are "frustrated over the agency's resource exploitation and its resulting contribution to world-wide environmental degradation and loss of bio-diversity."

That's their quote and it's a mouthful. Heres more." We believe its high time our agency stopped being an embarassment to itself : we want our agency to take its *rightful* place as **LEADER** towards a sustainable, livible 21st century."

" We believe its time for a change in philosophy and strategy : lets start meeting the **SPIRIT** and **LETTER** of **NEPA**, **NFMA**, The **Endangered Species Act** ( and our other resource protection statutes ) instead of meeting political-mandated, inflated timber " harvest levels."

Now here are the true " **Foresters** " of the 90s. Here are men and women who support a return to rational select cutting in lieu of destructive clearcutting.

There were at last count about 11 chapters across the country. The movement has been likened to the "

Glasnost " and " Perestroika " of the Soviet Union. Let us only pray that the archaic and counter-productive "Plan" of our old regime of hard-liners collapses as sure and fast as did communism.

If you are a forest service employee who would like to see clearcutting ended in our national forests, why don't you contact this group and find out how you can help.

If you are a current , retired or former forest service employee, you can join and become a member of **AFSEEE**. If you are a concerned citizen or public interest organization you can become a supporter. All correspondence is confidential.

Write: **AFSEEE**

P.O. Box 11615  
Eugene, Oregon  
97440  
(503) 484-2692

## **OFF-ROAD VEHICLE TRAILS PLAN**

An ORV trail system is to be constructed from the McDougle Camp south of Central Fire Tower on Ala. 33, about 10 miles south of Moulton. The system will be east of Ala. 33 and consist of 30 to 50 miles of designated ORV trails.

The ORV trail system will be closed to horse use. It will be open seasonally from May 1st to Oct. 30th, in order not to conflict with the hunting seasons. The trail season is located within the Black Warrior Wildlife Management Area.

ORVs are not permitted on National Forest lands except

this described trail system which at this time is not complete. ORVs are defined as motorized vehicles less than 50" in width not conforming to applicable state laws for use on public roads or highways.

## **WHERE ARE OUR DEER ?**

Game paradise in the 1800s; huge deer herds in a climax, virgin forest of thousands of years.

It's strange. In the 1990s, the Bankhead deer herd has all but vanished. And after all the rhetoric about how clearcutting opens the forest with so much more browse for deer. Too much poaching, they say.

How about too much **MAST TREE** cutting. How about 75,000 acres of pine straw. Deer do eat pine straw, don't they? Maybe they had better learn.

The government should think about hiring realists to manage resources instead of theorists.

*" THE LAST 20 YEARS OF ABUSE HAS JUST ABOUT RUINED THE BANKHEAD NATIONAL FOREST. THE FIGHT FOR THE BANKHEAD REPRESENTS THE LAST HOPE OF THIS CENTURY TO PRESERVE THE NATIONAL FORESTS OF ALABAMA IN THEIR NATURAL STATE. "*

*Bill Weatherford.*

# GUIDE TO SCENIC CLEARCUTS AND PINE PLANTATIONS

The Bankhead Monitor is working on forest wide maps to plot the clearcuts and pine plantations to enable the public to do two things. One - visit the gorgeous places where the trees "used to be", or two - avoid them if they're subject to nausea.

The 75,000 acre Bankhead pine plantation has one redeeming attribute. It is evergreen. So on sultry, wintry days when you long for green trees, take a drive down Pine Clone Drive and Turpentine Trail in the BNF. Be sure to keep an eye open for two of our hybrid birds that roost in the pine tops. The Red-Cockeyed Turpentine Sucker taps the sap of the longleaf while Banded Brazilian Beetle Thrashers compete with the latest insecticides for the Southern Pine Beetle.

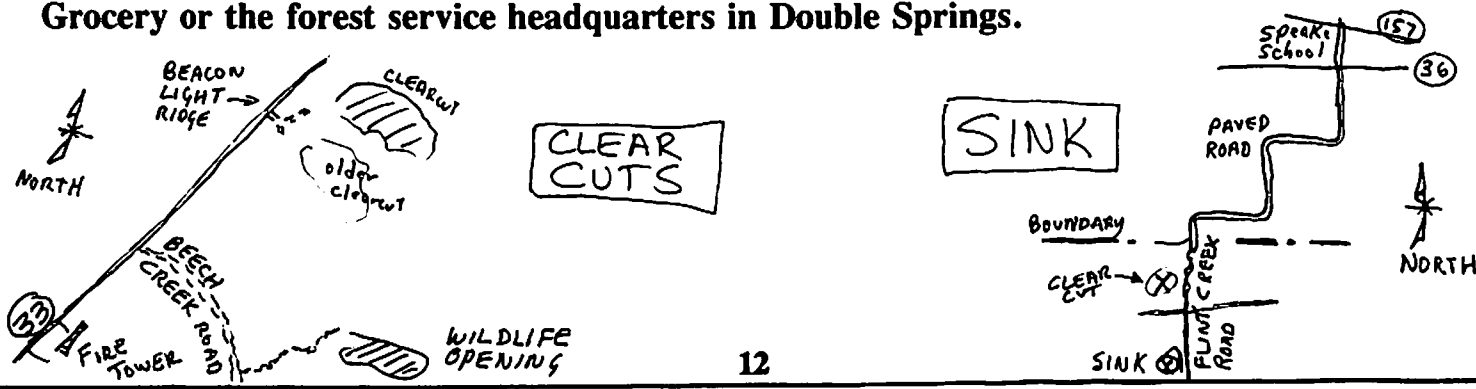
**CLEARCUTS.** If you come into the forest from U.S. Hwy 278 on Ala. 33 be sure to see the massive, private clearcuts before you cross the Sipsey River. They all look alike but let's not blame the government for what they didn't do. As we have said before, much of the clearcutting is behind retention lines of trees so you can't see them. Many are deeper in the forest on poor, logging roads. Hire a helicopter for a great view.

One that is close to Hwy 33 and easy to walk to is Beacon Light Ridge. To get there drive north on Hwy. 33 past the Fire Tower and U.S.F.S. work station 3/4 mile. Park in the turnoff on the right. As you walk down this little road bear to the left and in a few hundred yards you won't miss it. This ridge not too long ago was in great old oaks; a historic feeding ground for deer.

Don't miss Beech Creek Road. It is the first right turn heading north from the fire tower again. The first couple of miles have some huge private clearcuts on them that have put plenty of silt into the east and west forks of Beech Creek on our National Forest land which joins them. To see a genuine "wildlife opening" in the BNF clock yourself when you start down the Beech Creek Road and turn left about 3/4 mile on a dirt road. Go about 1/2 mile and when you get to the big clearcut on the right you have arrived. If you get out, be very cautious or you could be trampled to death by herds of wildlife.

**CLEARCUT SINK.** This is what water scientists call "charging the aquifer with silt", which means when you clearcut 20 acres of land that drains into a cave or sink; the erosion plugs up a natural feed into the water table. Look for yourself. It is located on Flint Creek Road about 1 1/2 miles into the forest from the north border. Go south from Speake School on the paved road and it will lead you to Flint Creek Road.

If you don't have one, buy the official Bankhead National Forest map from Wren Grocery or the forest service headquarters in Double Springs.



# FORESTSPEAK

## UNDERSTANDING THE LANGUAGE OF THE PLAN

Chances are that when you talk with the Forest Service, they shower you with such a barrage of text-book terms that you need a dictionary to understand what it was they just said. The reason they do this is to impress you with their vast knowledge and shame you for being so ignorant. Now there is help. The editors of TBM have a team of trained scholars busy translating Forestspeak into plain English. Now it will be impossible for them to fool the common man into believing that a spade is a backhoe or a stump is a tree.

### FORESTSPEAK DICTIONARY - PART TWO

**STUMPAGE** - When the Forest Service or timber personnel speak of stumpage, it refers to the value or amount of timber as it stands on the stump. In reality it is a prophetic term describing the forest's future.

**REGENERATION** - Here's one they use with every breath. Sounds so creative and environmental. But, remember what comes before regeneration - Catastrophe! It means to destroy through clearcutting and then allow nature to heal for a century. Or in clearer terms : What Nagasaki and Hiroshima have been doing since 1945 when the " bomb " was dropped on them.

**UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE** -

- A. A Federal Timber Company
- B. An arm of the timber industry.

**DISTRICT RANGER** - A tree farm manager.

**PINE SITE** - A parcel of land that has dried out due to removal of spongy, waterholding, fibrous bio-mass through clearcutting. Also acid soil from extended, artificial pine cultivation. Any place can be declared a pine site if you happen to be the official " Pine Site Declarer."

**HERBICIDE** - From cide (kill) and herb (plant). plant killer. In our application it translates to hardwood tree killer; shrub killer; orchid killer; any rare plant that happens to be in the path of the progressive pine plantation planters. It's their weapon of choice. Once the U.S.F.S. was sued for spraying poisons on the forest. The wind blew the chemicals onto private property and killed the wrong plants. I believe it was in the Mt. Hope area? We must do a story on that choice bit of history.

**WEED TREE** - These unlucky trees were born without a price on their head. In other words the Forest Service can't sell them. But we can't have nonvaluable trees taking up room where pine trees could be growing, so let's exterminate them.

cont'd next issue.



On your way into or out of the forest stop by this outpost for your groceries, cold drinks and gas.

**Canoe rentals - Bankhead Maps - Hunting supplies - Information.** Call James Farris at (205) 974-9831  
Store located at the intersection of Ala. Hwy. 33 and Hwy. 36 south of Moulton.

# WOODCRAFT AND INDIAN LORE

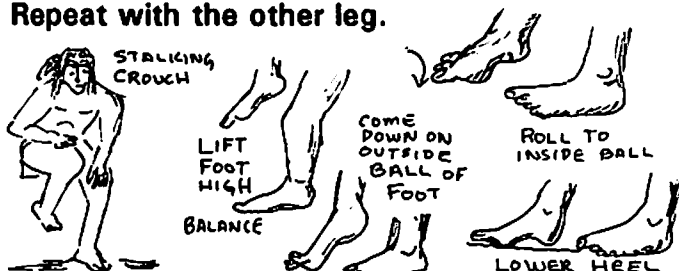
## HOW THE INDIANS WALKED

If the Indians had walked as the sidewalk shufflers of the city walk today they would have been very poor at stalking and traveling the forest. In fact, their movement through the woods is almost a lost art today except for a few of our best hunters and adept trackers. The most renowned and skilled is Tom Brown of New Jersey. He was trained at an early age by an Apache.

The art of walking is not a skill that can be learned in one lesson of instruction. It is a skill that is developed by long practice of basic principles. The achievement of this skill will improve the balance, the coordination, and the strength of your legs. In time, you will be able to stalk very close to wild critters without spooking them. This is useful if you enjoy nature observation and wildlife photography. Let's get down to business.

The key to moving through the forest is lifting your feet with your thighs. Most people walk by moving their body forward and pulling their feet forward to catch up. They lift them off the ground just enough to clear it. This doesn't work in the woods for obvious reasons. We want our legs to move while our upper torso is still. The head must not bob up and down.

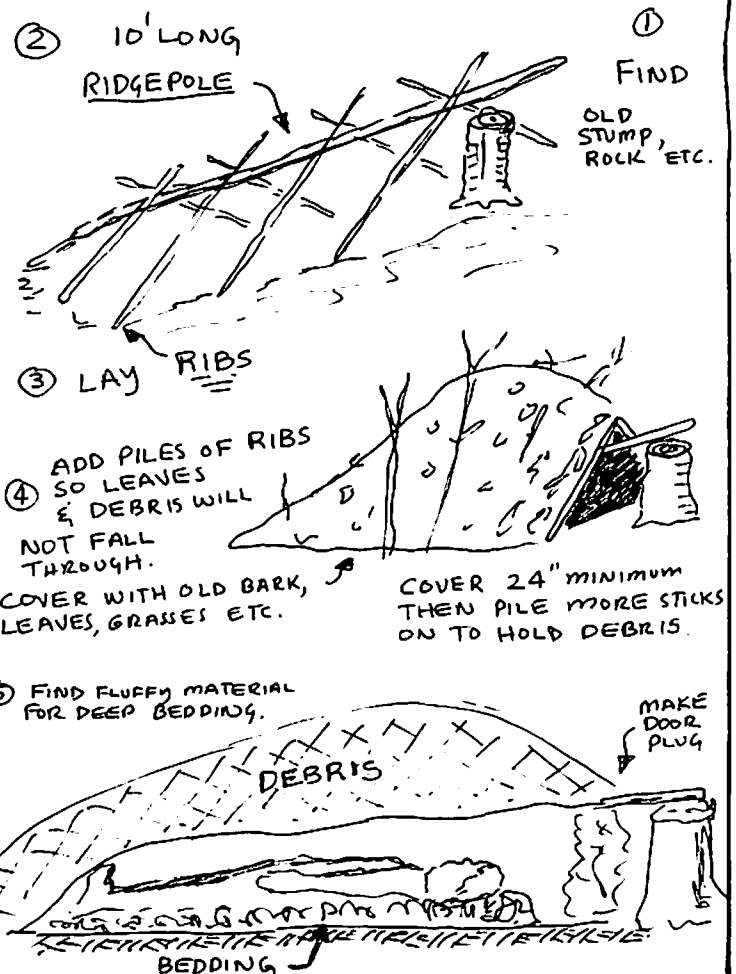
Sink your weight with your knees slightly bent. Raise one leg from the thigh so that the thigh is parallel with the ground. If you froze in your tracks you should be balanced on one leg. Remember the upper body doesn't move. Take short, easy strides. Lift and plant each foot gently, almost with one directly in front of the other. Instead of coming down on your heel first, come down on the outside of the front ball and roll your toes from the small to the big. Don't commit your weight until now. This way you feel the ground and don't snap branches. Repeat with the other leg.



## WILDERNESS SHELTER

This shelter is called the debris hut by some. The principle comes from the squirrel's nest; an insulated and warm place to sleep. The materials are all from dead trees and plants. They are abundant in the Bankhead area. If built right, it serves as a good winter refuge. Just remember to make the walls 30" + thick. The steeper the roof, the better it will shed rain. If you're caught out in the Sipsy or even other areas, try to find a bluff shelter to build under. Then you can store your firewood in the dry while not worrying with a leaky roof.

In the summer and fall, always carry your DEET based insect repellent with you. We have what is known as seed ticks in this area and you haven't been uncomfortable until you get about 200 of these invisible whelp-raisers on your bod. Some people smoke this shelter out in warm months. But beware, it will burn very easily.



# AN ADVENTURE IN THE BANKHEAD

WITH THE JONES FAMILY

Boys, we're going on a great adventure in the wild. We are going to hike and camp in the land of your forefathers. It will be a visit to our past and an observance of nature. The National Forest has been preserved in its pristine condition for these reasons and more. The undefiled beauty, the scenery, oh you just wait and see!

Aw Dad, C'mon! Forefathers?

Yes forefathers. You know that you're part American Indian on your mother's side, but did you know that her folks are from this area? Some of them probably lived and were buried in those hills, canyons and hollows.

Wow Dad! Are we there yet?


Won't be long now.



Well it's almost daylight, what will we do first? Fish Brushy Creek? Hike the High Town Path? Explore Indian Tomb Hollow?

Indian Tomb Hollow? Lets go!

We're going to watch the sunrise in Indian Tomb Hollow. This is going to be a sight we won't forget! Grab your gear, we're stopping and walkin' in. Alright lets go!



Are you sure this is the right place?

What happened, World War Three?

It's been Clear-cut!




LATER

Ranger Smith, why are the old hardwood stands being clear-cut and destroyed?

They aren't, they're being "Regenerated."

What about the plants that depend upon that canopy of life? How about the animals? What about saving some of it for future and present generations?

We are balancing wildlife and recreational needs with "sustainable yield" logging.



Mr. Jones, we are adhering to a national "multi-use" policy. Logging rights are awarded on a competitive bid basis, which includes clear-cutting, it's all legal, all part of the "plan."

How do I explain this to my kids?

Try abstract terminology and political double-talk, works for me!



What did they say, Dad?

Well, I didn't understand all of it, and what I did understand, I don't think you want to know.

That bad?

Yes. He suggested for a family outing that we go to a State or Federal campground. You know, the kind with numbered camp sites, toilet facilities, etc. Away from recent and present timbering activity, right? Right.

He didn't like it when I told him I was going to let people know what's going on.

What are we going to do?

Tell people, let 'em know!



The names, characterizations, and queries of certain persons depicted are all fictional. The treatment, damage or attitude by the USPS toward our forests is real. 1959

**THE BANKHEAD MONITOR, INC.**  
**An Educational Nonprofit Corporation**  
**Agenda And Platform**

(1) To oppose the destruction of The Bankhead National Forest through the process of conversion from a natural, native forest to a 150,000 acre tree farm.

(2) To expose the U.S. Forest Service for what they have become: a Federal Timber Company and arm of the timber industry; that in fact today's foresters are no more than tree farm managers carrying out the business of managing our national forests as an agricultural crop.

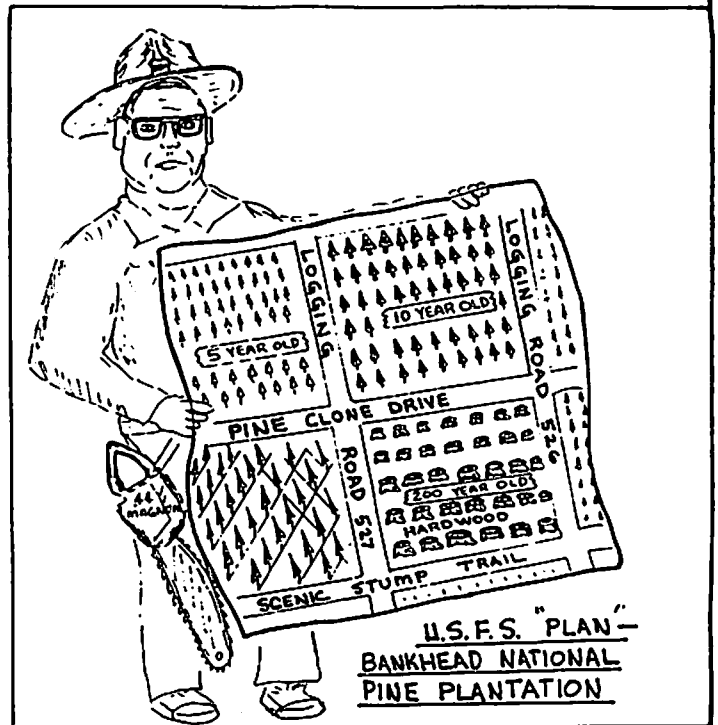
(3) To protest the methods of timber harvest and forest conversion, i.e. clearcutting and herbicides as the most ecologically destructive practice of forest management ever devised.

(4) To call for legislative action to demand an end to clearcutting and return to the former practice of select and all-age management.

(5) To call on legislative action to study the recommendation that the Bankhead National Forest be made a national park which would transfer the Bankhead from the Dept. of Agriculture to the Dept. of the Interior.

(6) To build a powerful lobby by which to combat the 1994 "New Land and Resource Management Plan" which will be a continuance of national forest abuse and destruction.

(7) To educate the people of Lawrence and surrounding counties in the truth that the great economic potential of the Bankhead lies not in its timber, but in recreation. That recreation and natural beauty are inseparable and cannot co-exist with the current policies of the U.S. Forest Service.



# SAVE THE BANKHEAD

The coalition is formed and growing. Thanks to Associated Press we have members all over the state. We have subscribers and we have racks expanding into stores. Any kind of help is appreciated and furthers the common goals of us all. We are building an "army" of people who want a change in government policy concerning our public lands. Thanks.

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**TREE FARMS ARE NOT  
 ECOLOGICALLY SOUND**