

# Eagle Post

September 2016



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**EAGLE POST** - The newsletter of **Friends of Eagles Nest Wilderness** ([fenw.org](http://fenw.org)), apprising you of important activities in and around Eagles Nest, Holy Cross, and Ptarmigan Wilderness Areas.



**Greetings!** Our topic this month:

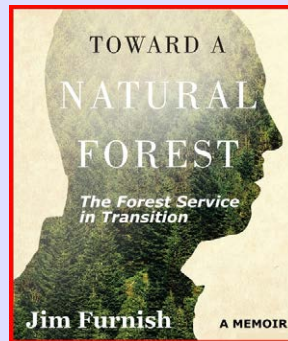
## **TOWARD A NATURAL FOREST**

Friday, **September 16**, 6-8 PM

Silverthorne Library [MAP](#)

**JIM FURNISH**, former US Forest Service Deputy Chief

**Introduction:** In today's sharply divided political world, Jim Furnish must be feeling "*deja vu*" all over again," because more than twenty years ago, he lived - and ultimately solved - an analogous debate between loggers and environmentalists in the U.S.



Forest Service. It was the **spotted owl** controversy that forever changed the direction of the agency. Jim discovered that the key to achieving a civil, and ultimately productive, dialog between tree cutters and tree huggers was to be found in a particular native species... read about it in his essay below, and in his **acclaimed** book, Toward a Natural Forest.

Join us **Friday, September 16 at 6PM** at the Silverthorne Library ([MAP](#)) to learn the inside story of Jim's personal journey as he reshaped the U.S. Forest Service.

## *Toward a Natural Forest*

by Jim Furnish

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Make a difference!

### **TOWARD A NATURAL FOREST**



**JIM FURNISH**,  
former USFS Deputy  
Chief  
**Friday, September  
16, 6-8 PM**  
Silverthorne Library  
[MAP](#)

-- Readings from Jim's book Toward A Natural Forest.

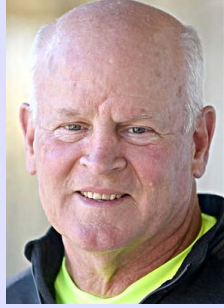
-- 30 minute documentary: "Seeing the Forest"

-- Panel discussion: Future of forests on a local level, with Jim, **Dan Gibbs** (Summit County Commissioner), **Josh Kuhn** (Conservation Colorado), and **Bill Jackson** (USFS District Ranger). Details at [Jim's website](#).

Jim will also be speaking in Golden, Ft. Collins, Boulder, and Telluride ([Schedule](#)).

FENW **Trail projects** are

Jim Furnish



I chose to spend our 1976 Bicentennial backpacking in the Never Summer Mountains, which form Rocky Mountain National Park's western border. Remnant ice at midsummer on Lake of the Clouds was a reminder of the long winters and brief summers in the high peaks. I approached an ice shelf hugging the western shore, evidence of the lake's cobalt waters slow emergence from a long slumber. A faint tinkling sound caught my ear. At the margin where open water and ice met, waves from a brisk breeze separated long daggers of ice that now danced and bumped in the water.

Each icicle a chime now, they numbered in the thousands. From the waters emanated a sublime symphony of tinkling bells, delicate and magnificent. Exquisite.

Winter lost its grip, and the ice did, too, breaking up as it slowly disappeared. But the loss of ice was accompanied by the gain of something beautiful. With nature, this miracle of death and rebirth happens every year, part of nature's cycle, comforting in its regularity. Human endeavors also confront change but are often accompanied with grief and stress, not comfort. So it was with the breakup of the US Forest Service's old order.



The Forest Service of the 1950s was heavily populated with men of righteous zeal, the kind described by Brokaw in The Greatest Generation. They aimed to log national forests aggressively for a wood-hungry nation. And did so. By the late 1960s, the highly acclaimed Forest Service was

engaged in a pitched battle for the soul of public lands and a decades-long, slow-motion collision with a robust and rising environmental movement.

How has the Forest Service confronted the sobering new reality? I believe the old Forest Service I knew has largely perished, along with many of their cherished traditions, but vestiges remain. My memoir Toward A Natural Forest speaks to the hope that a new Forest Service might awaken to make music with the icy shards of its past.

The book weaves two intertwined tales. The first involves my beloved Forest Service, which, stewarding a natural world with the best of intentions, managed wildness unto submission and, perhaps, death. The second tale involves my personal transformation as a forester, in my guts and in my blood. I began my career accepting without reservation the prevailing ethics of the Forest Service, then began to question,

complete for 2016. We spent two busy weekends Upper Cataract Lake and at Slate Lakes. We obliterated a total of **54 illegal campfire rings**.

[Details](#)

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Interested in becoming a **Volunteer Wilderness Ranger?** [Details](#)

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We also need volunteers

## outside the Wilderness

- **Member Relations - HELP** develop and implement communications plans to keep FENW members informed and involved... and maybe have some fun too.
- **Volunteer Recruitment - HELP** devise and deliver plans to greatly expand the field volunteer base through publicity, community outreach and partnerships.
- **Public Relations - HELP** plan and implement ongoing PR programs to raise the public profile of FENW in the community.
- **Advocacy - HELP** preserve and protect our backyard wilderness areas by developing and promoting FENW wilderness public policy positions.
- **Grant Writing - HELP** apply for grants to raise funds for FENW and Forest Service stewardship programs and special projects.

**Details:** contact **Bill Reed** (billr412@icloud.com).



**Friends, Friends, Friends!** Check out our sister 'FRIENDS'

- Friends of Dillon Ranger District (**FDRD**)
- Friends of the Lower Blue River (**FOLBR**)

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Newsletters

- August: **"Save the Colorado River"** by John Fielder
- July: **150 years on Ute Pass** by

confront, and change them, and finally arrived at a place where I felt I was unwelcome and had to leave.

Here's what I hear in the symphony of landscapes that speaks to us all: How do we get what we need from our forests without ruining them? After decades of ambitious logging in these vast, natural forests, there emerged a growing, glaring awareness of heavy environmental costs, and a citizenry clamoring for an agency that cared more about the values of common people than timber industry profits. The clash yielded a dispirited, wounded Forest Service confused about the future. Humpty Dumpty could relate.



I observed the growing animosity through an internal lens; I was actually one of those guys responsible for all the trouble. My immersion in the roiling waters of conflict left me troubled, colored, and ultimately changed to become, yes, an environmentalist. As supervisor of **Siuslaw National Forest** on Oregon's coast, I confronted an organization in free-fall with no viable vision. The Forest Service seemed lost, floundering to fashion a future.

Remarkably, in the wake of the **spotted owl** crisis, we turned our focus to improving water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities, rather than simply producing wood products. The environmental community - former foes - enthusiastically supported the changes. The timber industry, whose supply of wood was much reduced, accepted a different and smaller role. For the first time in decades, the timber wars ceased. This was a *journey from despair to hope*, building a new forestry paradigm based on restoring naturalness to a landscape. I remain hopeful of a different and better future, a future that stewards forests humbly and respectfully to sustain their inherent functionality and worth.



**A key principle in resolving conflict was finding something virtually all parties could agree on.** For the Oregon Coast, recovering iconic **salmon** served this purpose. Importantly, changing forest



Bayard Taylor

- June: "**Birds of ENW**" by Dr. Susan Bonfield
- May: "**Bikes in Wilderness**" by Tim Drescher
- April: "**After Malheur**" by Currie Craven

## Upcoming events

Join us! for our next  
**MONTHLY MEETING**

Our annual meeting, combined with the annual Volunteer Ranger Appreciation dinner - an informal get-together at the top of Vail Pass  
Wed September 28, 5:30 PM,  
Jay's Cabin, up on Vail Pass >>

**MAP**

Visit the FENW **website** for in-depth information at [www.fenw.org/](http://www.fenw.org/)



## CITY MARKET COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM

Please register your City Market Value Card in 2016. This year, City Market will once again make a contribution to area non-profit organizations. The program allocates funds (rebates) to the organizations based on purchases made using the City Market Value Card. Organization members must go online at [www.citymarket.com](http://www.citymarket.com) to register their Value Card, and link their card to FENW's organization name and/or registration number - **46910**. Individual purchases will be counted towards FENW's rewards allocation without compromising your earned fuel points. Please note that each card holder may only sign up for one tax exempt organization. **THANKS!**

**WE \*** have identified you as someone who will value our news updates. But if you do not wish to receive further emails from us, just click **unsubscribe**. \*The FENW

management practices was essential to improve salmon habitat. We used the salmon issue to mobilize change.



If my long career taught me one thing it is that Americans love their national forests, but not necessarily the Forest Service. To be trusted, the agency needs to be seen as managing public lands honorably and consistent with their inestimable worth. I remain hopeful of a different and better future, a future that stewards forests humbly and respectfully to sustain their inherent functionality and worth.

How much are our public forests worth? Far more than money. I contend they are priceless.

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### About Jim Furnish:

In 1965, Jim signed on with the U.S. Forest Service; he was enthusiastic and naive, proud to be part of such a storied and accomplished agency. Nothing could have prepared him for the crisis that would soon rock the agency to its foundation, as a burgeoning environmental movement challenged the Forest Service's legacy and legitimacy, especially in terms of timbering.

Rising through the USFS ranks, in 1994, as Supervisor of the Siuslaw National Forest, he radically changed course, steering managers, who had been "getting out the cut" for decades (and ringing up substantial income for the Forest Service), but also racking up sizeable environmental deficits. His repurposed staff reduced harvesting levels, closed down logging roads, restored battered riparian habitat and once-fertile estuaries, and protected endangered species, building a management framework whose principal goal was the **regeneration of the natural forest**.

Jim's successes did not go unnoticed, and in 1999 he was appointed Deputy Chief of the Forest Service, where he was a principle leader in creating the *Roadless Area Conservation Rule* (2001).

Jim retired from the Forest Service after 34 years of service. Currently, he is a consulting forester in the Washington D.C. and author of the **acclaimed** book, [Toward a Natural Forest](#).

Board: Currie **Craven** (Pres), George **Resseguie** (Treas/Secy), Bill **Reed**, Bill **Betz**, Ken **Harper**, Cyndi **Koop**, Mike **Mayrer**, Frank **Gutmann**, Tim **Drescher**.