

Career Notes for Susan Spear



Currently reside in Southold NY, eastern Long Island, to live near sister and her family post-retirement. I retired November 2019. I'm providing notes of my life with highlights of key events, jobs and projects throughout my career.

SUMMARY: 30 years in FS—11 years on RDs and 14 in WO; 4 NFs in 3 Regions; line officer 8 years

I grew up in southern Minnesota spending time outdoors with family and Girl Scouts on canoe trips, hiking and camping. I was a Youth Conservation Corps camper in 1974 on the Superior NF. I received my BS in Recreation Management from University of Idaho, College of Forestry in 1980. I worked a couple seasons for the FS in Idaho at the Clayton YCC camp in 1977, Challis NF and on the Nezperce NF in 1979 completing the recreation inventory for the LMP.

I earned my MS in Renewable Natural Resources at the University of Arizona in 1983. I studied landscape architecture and wildlife management. My thesis was developing a GIS model (hand-drawn maps) for elk habitat suitability for the White Mountain Apache Tribe.

I started my professional career in Arizona working for 4 state agencies: Environmental Health, Transportation, Governor's Office and Parks, 1983-1990. At all 4 agencies I did public engagement and policy analysis. Major projects in the Governor's Office included staffing Task Force on Recreation on Federal Lands (1 recommendation was to develop the Arizona Trail), coordinating review of 4 NF draft LMPs, and developing the Arizona Water Quality Act. For Arizona State Parks, I completed an economic impact analysis for the state park system and programs. During this time, I also worked 2 years in a private Engineering/Planning consulting firm responsible for recreation and environmental analysis and planning projects. Significant project was completing the Watercraft Use Study to determine gas tax funding for boating facilities.

In 1990, I started on the North Kaibab RD as GS-11 Rec/Lands/Minerals Staff Officer with full suite of recreation and lands programs. I developed a new Visitor Center; coordinated with FHWA for highway reconstruction leading to Grand Canyon National Park; completed scenery analysis for timber sales; oversaw 2 resort permits and concessioned campgrounds; and managed 2 Wilderness Areas.

In 1997 I detailed to Pike/San Isabel NFs to lead an effort to coordinate with a public collaborative group, sponsored by Denver Water Board, to develop a management plan for portions of the South Platte River to meet WSR standards while providing continued use of

corridors. The 45-member group developed a plan and I prepared the DEIS for FS consideration. After 2 years on this project, it was completed after I moved to my next position – DR on the Paonia RD of the GMUG NF. I was DR 1999-2003 spending most of my time on the 3 underground coal mines; lands adjustments and special uses; trails and Wilderness.

In late 2003, I started in the WO-EMC on LMP appeals. I completed the LMP appeal review and decision for the Wasatch-Cache NF. I spent 2 years in Legislative Affairs doing a wide variety of projects with accounts for Region 4 and the Rocky Mtn. Research Station.

I was Forest Supervisor on the Ottawa NF in Michigan May 2007-December 2010. Major programs on the Ottawa were forest management, Tribal Relations, aquatic species, developed recreation, Wilderness/WSR and trails. I completed a staff reorganization and down-sizing as post-LMP development. The reorganization was conducted with employee engagement and full Union-participation with no appeals. I received VERA authority and was able to reduce the staff by 9 positions to 120 positions.

From January 2011 through August 2014, I was Asst. Dir. of SPBA responsible for strategic planning, budget and performance. I supervised developing annual budget request, preparing witness support and all activities for all Congressional appropriations hearings, and worked with Congressional staff preparing allocations. This work included maintaining needed legal authorities for agency programs. I coordinated with USDA and OMB. I oversaw implementing the new performance management system. I lead developing the new agency Strategic Plan that is still in use today. I was acting Director of SPBA for 6 months in 2011-2012.

I was acting DRF in R3 for 5 months Sept. 2014-Jan. 2015. Major efforts were hiring 6 permanent RLT members – 2 DRFs, 2 Regional Directors, and 2 FS.

I finished my career as Director of Wilderness and Wild/Scenic Rivers supporting Regions and Forests implementing these programs and coordinating with USDI agencies. I supervised the Carhart Wilderness Training Center. I supervised developing new materials for implementing the new LMP Rule, implementing Wilderness Stewardship Performance and Wilderness Character Monitoring programs, and developing new WSR planning and management materials.

In retirement, I enjoy walking and cycling, quilting, cooking, gardening and travel. I volunteer for Southold Historical Museum in the working Horton Lighthouse welcoming visitors to the Tower (50' above ground, 100' above Long Island Sound). I work for Suffolk County Board of Elections as a poll clerk. I am on the communications team for the FSX of DC retirees group.