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NEW REGIONAL FORESTER NAMED TO LEAD NORTHERN REGION

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19, 2003 – U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth today named Gail Kimbell as the regional forester of the agency's northern region, headquartered in Missoula, Mont. Kimbell, currently associate deputy chief for the national forest system in Washington, D.C., will succeed Brad Powell who will retire.

"As associate deputy chief, Gail demonstrated tremendous leadership in helping to carry out the Healthy Forests Initiative and provided support to the Administration and Congress in the development of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, which was recently signed by President Bush," said Bosworth. "Gail will also bring to the northern region her vast experience and knowledge on the wide range of critical natural resource issues facing the Forest Service."

In April 2002, Kimbell joined the national headquarters from her position as forest supervisor of the Pike, San Isabel National Forests and the Comanche National Grasslands, Colorado. Kimbell has also held forest supervisor positions for Wyoming's Bighorn National Forest and Alaska's Tongass National Forest.

"As a native New Englander, I spent my formative years hiking, fishing and camping in the White Mountain National Forest. Over my career, I've had the privilege to work in challenging and beautiful environments and with diverse communities," said Kimbell. "I am honored to be asked to serve as the Northern Regional Forester and I look forward to continuing the region's successful efforts in the management of its national forests and grasslands with strong community involvement."

Kimbell holds a bachelor's degree in forest management from the University of Vermont and a master's degree in forest engineering from Oregon State University. She began her career in the federal government as a forester with the Bureau of Land Management in Medford, Ore. She then held a variety of forester positions with the Forest Service, serving as a district ranger in Oregon and Washington.

The national forests and grasslands of the Northern Region stretch from the prairies and badlands of the Dakotas, through eastern Montana's rolling hills and isolated ponderosa pine woodlands, to the rugged mountaintops and steep timbered canyons in western Montana and northern Idaho. The region encompasses more than 25 million acres of public land on 12 national forests and four national grasslands.

Kimbell will report to Missoula in January.

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