



United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

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Hoosier NF Highlights

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Why I Work for the Forest Service



By Patrick McClellan, Forest Budget/Administrative Officer

When people think of the US Forest Service they most often envision foresters taking care of the trees and wildlife. Like any organization, the Forest Service has many more layers and responsibilities that may or may not be visible. Sure there are a host of natural resource professionals including foresters, botanists, archaeologists, fish biologists, recreation personnel, and wildlife biologists. But there is also a support staff that keeps all of those specialists in the woods. There are budget and finance specialists, human resource specialists, contracting specialists, and administrative support.

I'm Patrick McClellan, Budget/Administrative Officer on the Hoosier National Forest. As a young man, one of my interests was seeing our national forests remaining healthy and thriving for current and future generations. My path to meet that goal took its own turns. My father always said me I took the long hard road to get where I should be. Instead of following my heart, I began my government service in 1984 with the Air National Guard. My first job was working on F-4 and F-16 fighters. From there I became a Weapons Specialist, loading bombs, missiles, and machine guns.

I deployed into combat zones many times while with the Guard. When deployed to Iraq I had had three sets of the American and Forest Service flags flown over Balad in honor of the outstanding support I received from the U.S. Forest Service. These are displayed at the

Eastern Regional Office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; the Hoosier Office in Bedford; and the Hoosier's Tell City Ranger District Office. I'll always be grateful to my Forest Service family for being there for my wife and daughter while I was deployed. This was a tremendous burden lifted off my shoulders.

In 2004, the Air National Guard base in Springfield, Illinois was slated to undergo the BRAC (Base Re-Alignment and Closure) Process. After the base closed, I continued with the Air National Guard for nine years as a Logistics Specialist where my responsibilities included transporting soldiers and equipment in support of multiple military operations worldwide.

When facing the BRAC Process, a co-worker suggested I look for jobs in the U.S. Forest Service. Following his advice I applied and started on the Hoosier National Forest in 2005. I assist in planning and executing the Hoosier National Forest annual budget of approximately \$7 million. I oversee and am involved in the acquisitions program that facilitates work being accomplished on the ground as well as contributing to local economies.

The Hoosier has approximately 55 employees that work on over 200,000 acres. We rely on local contractors and partners to assist in getting work accomplished. As Administrative Officer I assist with a variety of operational tasks. I assist with employee personnel actions, training, and getting equipment to manage the forest. Seeing that these things are provided and accomplished is very rewarding.

Being part of maintaining the health and viability of the national forest is rewarding work. For me it's seeing an annual budget fully executed in support of maintaining the health and diversity of forest lands for the people of Indiana and this country to use and enjoy. Being a good steward of the taxpayer's money is extremely rewarding. I'm sure my Father is smiling right now knowing that I'm doing what I love and enjoy. I am proud of the path I took to get here, and I am proud to be a part of the Hoosier National Forest.

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Pat McClellan (4th from left) and his team in Afghanistan.