

# Phil Janik

## Regional Forester

### 1994-1997

Phil Janik was a native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He received a Bachelor's in Forestry degree from the University of Montana, Missoula, then moved to Virginia in 1967 to join the Navy. He served as a naval officer at sea during the Vietnam conflict and was a naval ROTC instructor at Oregon State University. After his military service, he received a Master's in Wildlife Science degree from Oregon State University.



Janik began his Forest Service career in 1974. Over the years, he worked as a forester, fish biologist, and wildlife biologist in Oregon, Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, Nevada, Alaska, and Washington, D.C. He was in Oregon during the spotted owl debate, and was one of the leaders in the Pacfish work group in Washington, D.C. He was known for his extraordinary interpersonal skills and his dedication to sound land management.

Janik was the Alaska Regional Director of Wildlife, Fisheries and Subsistence from 1983 to 1989. He then moved to the Washington Office and held positions as Chief Operating Officer, Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry, and head of a national research unit.

On May 4, 1994, Janik moved to Juneau to become the 11th Regional Forester for Alaska Region. The Tongass National Forest Land Management Plan was updated during his four-year tenure. Janik believed that stewardship of the land was non-negotiable, and should be the baseline to ensure sustainability of all forest resources over time.

Janik thought scientists should be given a larger role in both the collection of data and the reinterpretation of old data; the analyses of such data should then be the driving force in determining the size of the timber cut. He warned that if such data were ignored, Alaska could become like the Pacific Northwest. There, the courts took away discretion from the government land management agencies to make decisions about the timber cut, and the timber supply from public lands dried up dramatically.

Janik was active in the Sustainable Forestry Roundtable, the Society of American Foresters, the American Fisheries Society, and numerous other conservation organizations. He served on the Board of Institute for Culture and Ecology, and on the Advisory Board for the College of Forestry and Conservation, University of Montana.

In May 2006, Janik died of pneumonia in Vancouver, Washington. His legacy to the Alaska Region is one of stewardship of the land and conservation of resources.