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FOREST SERVICE CHIEF NAMES NEW NATIONAL DIRECTOR FOR RECREATION AND HERITAGE RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, May 2, 2006 – USDA Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth today announced Jim Bedwell as the national director of recreation and heritage resources.

"Jim has outstanding leadership skills from his many challenging and diverse assignments throughout the outfit, including being the lead forest supervisor for Colorado state officials on issues of statewide importance," said Bosworth. "His exceptional skills in working collaboratively with a variety of internal and external stakeholders will serve him well in this new assignment."

The recreation and heritage resources office is situated in the National Forest System deputy area. As director, Bedwell will lead the programs that make national forests and grasslands the country's top provider of quality recreation opportunities, from primitive backcountry to highly developed activities like alpine skiing. He will also oversee programs that protect and interpret the many archaeological and historic sites found in national forests and grasslands.

"I am thrilled to be selected as the national director for recreation and heritage resources, and feel well prepared for this new challenge from my experience as a forest supervisor and in recreation management," said Bedwell. "I look forward to working with our many partners in elevating the agency's recreation and heritage programs for the benefit of the American people and their local communities."

Bedwell currently serves as forest supervisor on the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland in northern Colorado. He began his career with the Forest Service in 1979 in landscape architecture on the Coronado National Forest in Arizona. In 1983, he became the forest landscape architect and recreation program manager on the Santa Fe National Forest in New Mexico. He joined the Caribbean National Forest in Puerto Rico in 1990 as the forest recreation, lands and construction staff officer. From 1996 to 2000, Bedwell worked in the national headquarters as the chief landscape architect, during which time he also served temporarily as the director of recreation for the agency's eastern regional office in Milwaukee. In addition, Bedwell has worked extensively in international programs, most notably in Latin America and Jordan, where he trained local natural resource managers in public land management.

Bedwell holds a bachelor's in landscape architecture, with distinction, from The University of Arizona. In 2004, he received the Alfred B. LaGasse Medal from the American Society of Landscape Architects in recognition of distinguished and continuing contributions to the fields of resource conservation and public land management. He is a member of the government's senior executive service.

Bedwell will report to his new assignment on June 25.

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