



# **A Conspiracy of Optimism: Management of the National Forests since World War Two (Our Sustainable Future)**

*Paul W. Hirt*

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## **A Conspiracy of Optimism: Management of the National Forests since World War Two (Our Sustainable Future) Paul W. Hirt**

*A Conspiracy of Optimism* explains the controversy now raging over the U.S. Forest Service's management of America's national forests. Confronted with the dual mandate of production and preservation, the U.S. Forest Service decided it could achieve both goals through more intensive management. For a few decades after World War Two, this "conspiracy of optimism" masked the fact that high levels of resource extraction were destroying forest ecosystems.

The effects of intensive management—massive clear-cuts, polluted streams, declining wildlife populations, and marred scenery—initiated several decades of environmental conflict that continues to the present. Hirt documents the roots of this conflict and illuminates recent changes in administration and policy that suggest a hopeful future for federal lands.

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