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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE  
REGIONAL OFFICE  
SUITE 300-D, 2420 W. 25TH AVENUE  
DENVER, COLORADO 80211

AUG 26 1975



Mr. William H. McCrum,  
Deputy Regional Forester for  
Administration  
U. S. Forest Service 34  
P.O. Box 27127  
Lakewood, Colorado 80225

Dear Mr. McCrum:

We have completed our review of the effectiveness of the Government's energy reduction program at the Regional Office, Region 2, U. S. Forest Service (USFS). Our review at the Regional Office was part of a nationwide study conducted at selected departments and agencies to determine how effectively the Government's energy reduction program is being implemented. Although our review was primarily concerned with the Regional Office, we also obtained information on some forest activities.

We reviewed regulations, analyzed data used to measure performance of the Regional Office, and interviewed personnel, to determine the effectiveness of the management of the program. We reviewed controls to reduce fuel consumption by vehicles and in buildings, and determined the possible impact of energy conservation on mission and training operations.

In our opinion the Regional Office did not meet the President's energy conservation goal for vehicles for fiscal year 1974, but it did meet the 15 percent energy reduction goal during the first two quarters of fiscal year 1975.

ENERGY CONSERVATION GOALS

In June 1973, the President directed all Federal agencies to reduce their energy consumption by 7 percent in fiscal year 1974 and subsequently directed that additional actions be taken to reduce energy consumption still further. In October 1974, the President directed the agencies to reduce their energy consumption by 15 percent in fiscal year 1975 under that consumed in fiscal year 1973. The actual energy consumption for fiscal year 1973, adjusted to reflect changes in programs, buildings,

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facilities, and vehicle and equipment operations is used as the "baseline" against which to measure agencies' success in saving energy.

#### ENERGY CONSERVATION STATISTICS

Because the Regional Office occupied GSA space and leased space, and energy usage related to this space is reported by GSA, the Regional Office was required to report only energy conservation data on vehicles. Vehicles used by the Regional Office were GSA assigned or dispatched vehicles.

The Energy Conservation Coordinator told us that baseline data reported by the Regional Office on its Energy Conservation Reports for the first and second quarters of fiscal year 1974 were not generated by the Regional Office. The baseline data for these reports were allocated percentages of all the miles driven in U. S. Forest Service vehicles, and was received from their Washington Office.

The Director of Administrative Services, USFS told us that there was not enough time to obtain the field offices' input in developing the baseline data. However, the Regional Equipment Engineer, Region 2 said that at the time the reports were initiated, accurate fiscal year 1973 vehicle mileage could have been obtained and compiled in about 1 week.

The Energy Conservation Coordinator said that he realized the Washington data was not accurate and, upon instructions from the Washington Office, started using data generated from his office for baseline data for the third quarter fiscal year 1974 report and subsequent reports.

We computed baseline and actual vehicle mileage data for the Regional Office from source data. Based on our computations we concluded that the data reported by the Regional Office was inaccurate for all quarters. Data reported by the Regional Office and that which we computed are shown in the following tables.

<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Mileage FY 1973</u>	<u>Mileage FY 1974</u>	<u>Percent increase/ reduction</u>	<u>Mileage FY 1975</u>	<u>Percent increase/ reduction</u>
<u>Mileage reported by the Regional Office</u>					
1	530,918	258,569	-51	--	--
2	303,282	121,081	-60	--	--
3	114,800	92,200	-20		
4	165,900	170,400	+ 3		
Totals	<u>1,114,900</u>	<u>642,250</u>	<u>-42</u>		

<u>Mileage computed by GAO from source documents</u>					
1	248,173	241,597	- 3	196,913	-21
2	111,983	123,946	+11	108,222	- 3
3	64,029	60,298	- 6		
4	107,627	111,879	+ 4		
Totals	<u>531,812</u>	<u>537,720</u>	<u>+ 1</u>		
First two quarters	<u>360,156</u>			<u>305,136</u>	-15

The Regional Office did not contribute its share to the Forest Service 7 percent reduction goal in fiscal year 1974, but it did contribute its share to the 15 percent energy reduction goal during the first two quarters of fiscal year 1975.

Based on our computations we concluded that the mileage data reported by the Regional Office was inaccurate, but we did not determine the reasons for the inaccuracies.

The Forest offices report their energy usage quarterly to the Energy Conservation Coordinator in the Regional Office. He spot checks the data received and verifies only data which appears to be radically off. The coordinator then compiles the data into one report which he forwards to the Washington office.

The Regional Office reported incorrect baseline and actual mileage data. The Regional Office also reported incomplete energy consumption data because the Department of Agriculture instructed them to:

- use 1974 data as baseline data for fiscal year 1975 reports, and
- stop reporting mileage of GSA vehicles.

In our opinion, the energy-use information system does not assure that the data is complete and accurate.

## MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION PROGRAM

The Coordinator told us that the Region has no formal energy conservation plan, and his energy related functions consist of spending approximately 2 days a quarter consolidating and forwarding energy data received from the Forest offices.

The Federal Energy Administration requested energy saving examples from the Forest Service for proposed dissemination. In response to this request, Region 2 submitted an example of a method to effectively accomplish bark beetle suppression with a solution requiring a reduced amount of diesel fuel. Project Administrators of Region 2 were encouraged to use the new solution. On one project, use of this solution resulted in a savings of 1,500 gallons of diesel fuel.

The Department of Agriculture audited Region 2's energy conservation program to determine how Forest Service directives were disseminated, but the Coordinator has not received a copy of the results. This was the only energy related audit of the Regional Office.

### CONTROLS TO REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION BY VEHICLES

The Regional Equipment Engineer said that the Regional Office has made the following changes to reduce fuel consumption:

- Correspondence has replaced unnecessary trips.
- A directive has been issued requiring the use of more commercial transportation.
- People travel together when possible.
- Maintenance on vehicles has been improved.

He said that no efforts have been made to replace medium and light sedans with compact or subcompact vehicles. When their vehicles reach the maximum mileage, they are turned in to GSA and they accept whatever vehicles GSA gives them. However, they sometimes request full-size station wagons to accommodate the transportation of large groups of people. He told us that there are no controls in the Regional Office to identify excessive use of vehicles.

Fuel issued to the Forest offices is identified and controlled by means of log books at the gas pumps and in each vehicle. Monthly, these logs are compared to one another to verify usage. For Regional Office vehicles, however, GSA gasoline is used or gasoline is purchased with commercial credit cards.

The Coordinator said no parking spaces have been assigned to encourage car pooling. Spaces have been reserved for disabled employees and the mail truck. We believe that the reservation of parking spaces to encourage car pooling at this location is not feasible because there are sufficient spaces near the building.

The only action by the Regional Office to provide or improve alternate transportation means for employees is its participation in the carpool program administered by the Denver Federal Executive Board. The Coordinator said that as a result of the program, about 20 percent of the office's employees became involved in carpools.

There has been no publicity of driving techniques, as described in GSA Bulletin FPMR G-99, at the Regional Office since September 1974. The Regional Equipment Engineer said he feels a lot more could be done to publicize energy conservation in the office. He said employees are not really aware of the problem and are not trying to conserve energy.

#### CONTROLS TO REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMED IN BUILDINGS

The Regional Office occupies a building leased by GSA. GSA now requires that energy conservation operating practices be included in lease agreements; however, when the Regional Office building was leased, these were not required.

GSA personnel checked lighting levels and removed unnecessary fluorescent lamps. The building is heated and cooled by 16 self-regulating "heater pumps" located on the roof. Each pump is controlled by a thermostat. We observed on one April afternoon that the average thermostat setting was 70 degrees and the average temperature was 73.8 degrees. Federal Management Circular 74-1 requires that temperature control devices for general office space be set to maintain 65 to 68 degrees during working hours. The company which manufactured the heating equipment installed in this building recommended that thermostats be set at a "comfort point" of

IMPACT OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION ON MISSION  
AND TRAINING OPERATIONS

Mission operations

The Director of Administrative Services told us that the Regional Office mission, providing administrative support for the Forest offices, has not been modified to conserve energy. He added that the Government's emphasis on energy conservation must become more drastic to adversely affect their mission.

Although there has been no impact on the Regional Office's mission, operational and administrative policies have been changed to conserve energy:

- Regional Office personnel were directed to stop using heaters and coffee pots.
- A directive was issued requiring car pooling to meetings.
- A directive was issued requiring employees to turn off lights when leaving work.

In addition to the above directives, several practices have been initiated to conserve energy:

- Officials combined trips by Regional Office personnel and checked miles driven.
- The Washington Office and the Regional Office started selecting meeting sites based on travel criteria, and reducing the number of meetings.
- The Regional Office started holding meetings at local motels, rather than downtown.

Training operations

The Training Coordinator told us that there has been no major impact on training because of energy conservation efforts. The location of a training session was changed to save gasoline; however, training has not been reduced. There has been no study made but he told us that skill training (e.g., measuring trees) is essential to their mission. He added that the first type of training that would be cut back is supervisory and personnel development training.