

## Gary Bennett Forest Service National Outreach Office Transcript

Kimberly Ratcliff: Welcome back everyone from our lunch break. We're going to go straight into our afternoon session because we're a little bit behind, so we need to catch up. So, we're going straight into our afternoon session. Right now we have Mr. Gary Barrett who is the director of National Partnership Office For Forest Service. So, I'm going to hand it over to you.

Gary Bennett: Hey, thank you very much. Thank you so much Chair Marie for having us here today. Thank you everyone for indulging me a little bit to allow us to talk about the Forest Service. The Forest Service Partnerships Office is the office that I lead, and we are really committed to making sure that we are building genuine relationships with black and brown communities across the US. So, what I'd like to do is give you a little bit about our office and then I'm going to open it up for questions because I really want to talk about how farmers, minority farmers can benefit from some of the programs that we are now being funded by Congress, which are not farming programs, but farmers I think can participate in. So, with that, next slide. [inaudible 03:00:59]. Part of our office as you can see is set up into kind of the three core groups, building partnerships and capacity, so that means that if you are a small farmer and you wanted to be a partner with the Forest Service, we have the staff and we have the mechanism that people can talk me through about how to get more involved with the Forest Service.

A lot of times these are farmers that are doing grazing, if we're looking at out west because the Forest Service is not just the Forest Service, Forest Service and national grassland have partnered with available grasslands they give a permit that makes it [inaudible 03:01:34] raise capital. So, we can talk you through that. We try to cultivate partnerships from our office at a national level, so that means that if you are an organization like an NGO, a minority NGO or tribal NGO, you will have the ability to liaise with different sections of the US and different communities in the US utilizing our networks. And then finally, we're trying to enable a culture of innovation. We are trying to use some of the traditional knowledge that farmers, traditional communities, rural communities are bringing to the table to try to help us to meet some of the challenges of the 21st century. What we're finding is that climate is changing at a rapid pace, we're having catastrophic fires year round, and the only way we are going to be able to stave off those kind of threats to the communities are using the knowledge that the community members have. Next slide.

So, when we talk about communities and capacity one of the biggest things that we found about working with I would say traditionally

historically marginalized communities is that they don't either trust the government or they have no idea what opportunities are available. And so what we're trying to do is we're trying to change that, we're trying to build back relationships one community at a time, one person at a time. Because people can't be faulted for not knowing what they don't know. They can't be penalized for not knowing what they don't know. And what we're finding is that the folks that are able to [inaudible 03:03:21] government services, grants, maintenance, all of these things are the people who just do it all the time. It's not like they're smarter, it's not like they have better processing, they just do it all the time. And so we want to make sure that we're leveling the playing field. Under some of the new monies through bipartisan infrastructure law and the Inflation Reduction Act in legislation it is written that 40% of all of these resources should be benefiting communities of black and brown historically disenfranchised and rural communities.

40%. So, if we continue to give our resources and dollars to the same partners that we always work with, the likelihood is we're going to miss that target. So, we have to seek out and work with communities that may not historically work with the Forest Service. And I say that in a way that our leadership is really keen on it. When I talk about mistrust I'm like, why would they not trust the Forest Service? Not saying they wouldn't trust the Forest Service, I as a in person understand, coming from South, I never even thought about the Forest Service. I never thought about it. So, it's not even a mistrusting, it's not knowing. And matter of fact, when I was growing up we thought the Forest Service land was Park Service. They're so interchangeable in the way that people think about that that you miss opportunities because you're like, oh, it's the Park Service, I can't work with them.

And so we are trying to change the narrative. We are trying to change the way we communicate, we're trying to reach people where they are, which means that we have to change our strategies for communication. So, that means if we have to go to rural communities, if we have to go and sit around tables, if we have to go and go to schools in town halls, that's what we'll do. But we also want to make sure that people who look like people in the community are going about meeting people in the community. Because that's also one of the barriers that we've found to people wanting to engage with our agency. You don't see people that you can reflect with or resonate with to connect with. It is much harder to ask the really hard questions about why this is happening. One of the things that we found with our tribal brothers and sisters is that they are coming back to the table slowly because of all the outreach that OTR has done and all of the other tribal offices within the different agencies. They are

motivated to coming back to the table, they are slowly saying that hey, we see that you're trying to make amends for some of the historical kind of transgressions and that we can do some things together. Next slide.

Some of the programs that we're talking about with our office, and our office really has the largest purview of opportunity. When I say opportunity it's what is possible? We don't directly, well sometimes we can, well we don't normally directly give out money or give out grants. What we do is we help to make sure that the agreements are structured in a way that where the funding line item or the money's coming from and the eventual partner on the ground, the agreement is going to make sense for both of the entities that are involved, and also make sure that we're going to get the biggest impact. So, the interesting part about the way the Forest Service works nationally, unlike some of the USDA programs where US farmers are looking at for programs that will help to enrich your own properties, our programs mostly look to see how we can service national forests and grasslands. And you're like, well what does that mean for me? What that means for you is that it provides you opportunities if you live adjacent to Forest Service lands to make sure that there's some type of co-management, right?

So, that if something catastrophic is happening, a forest planned fire can probably be like [inaudible 03:07:32] that are affected by wildfires. That those lands are being properly managed so you will not be negatively impacted. But we also have state and private programs where we are doing direct outreach and direct stewardship with partners, people who grow trees, people who have tree farms. So, we provide resources to those folks to help them better manage their forest farm forest [inaudible 03:08:07]. One of the ways that we want to engage our forest, I mean our farm and tribal community do this with the Trillion Trees Challenge. We have the Replant Act, which is one of the funding mechanisms that is helping us to meet our climate targets. And so we have a goal of planting globally a trillion trees, which doesn't seem like a lot, but when you think about the actual sheer number of trees that have to go on the ground, it is going to take everyone's action to do that. And so we're looking at how we can work with farmers who are experts in planting, work with folks who are expert at engaging the community to figure out how we can make a bridge in those programs. Next slide.

One of the teams that we have, which is our partnership support team, and then I'm going to go through this next slide. The partnership support team really is the one that directly engages with the Forest Service Ranger districts, the Forest Service Forest districts, and then the actual regional forest offices. And that's really just to make sure that they have

adequate resources to go into partnership. So, say if dealing with someone like Elsa and she wanted to work with a small forest district but they just didn't have the capacity at that forest, they don't have enough staff. Then from the Washington office, our staff would go and try to help them actualize a partnership by figuring out what is Elsa bringing to the table? How can she help to do a project on that forest? And then we would just sit down and brainstorm that way. Or my folks do. I mean, I could do it, I could [inaudible 03:10:05]. But they would brainstorm with you to try to develop a project and then we would then try to figure out what the funding stream would be for that project. Next slide.

Some of the resources that we do, we have trainings that we do for community members and our staff, but most of this stuff is really talking about how we professionalize folks to make them think more intelligently about engaging with the communities, and how to develop partnerships from the ground up. Because partnerships are one of the things that we're trying to do with our partnerships. I would say for many years forest service partnerships were transactions, I need you to do something, RJ and you're going to get something from me because I'm going to give you money, right? But I tell people, well you have to change that. Partnerships are relationships, it's a relationship. I am cultivating a relationship as far as you understand. We are cultivating, we're planting the seed for something that may happen or may not happen. But if I form a relationship with Ms. Kim over here, we may not ever do any work together, but now she's a friend. A friend of the agency, a friend of what we're doing, and she will advocate for us in her small way, tell her friends in her community that the Forest Service is doing good work here.

And I think sometimes we miss the boat when we don't really think about the relationships that we're trying to build. We're trying to build genuine connections with the communities that we serve. And that is truly what we do, we serve communities. The lands that the Forest Service is stewarding aren't Forest Service lands, these are the nations forest. And also part of what we're trying to do is we're trying to invite black and brown folks, tribal community back to forests, enjoying the national benefit that you get from the recreational opportunities on our forest. The medicinal medicines that you can get off of our forest and other things that the forest has been. Next slide. One of the big legislative programs that we run is the Secure Rural Schools Program. This is also a \$260 million legislative program, I guess I didn't throw out that number, let's throw out that number. So, for the Bill IRA program we are managing about one, we got additional \$1.2 Billion to form the communities. And then for the infrastructure, no, the Inflation Reduction Act I think we got

another billion or two to work in priority landscapes that are experiencing extreme fire events.

So, it's a large scale of a large amount of money that's coming into the agency. We don't have the capacity to do all the work. Our partners that we've worked with over the years don't have the capacity, so we have to bring in new people to do the work. We have to bring in new communities, and we have to make sure that we are sharing these opportunities around. This program right here is a longer term program, we've had this program for like 10 years, aggressively mandated. It is to provide, it's called the Secure Rural Schools Program, and you're like, what does that have to do with forests? I'm going to tell you what it has to do with forests. There's three titles to this program. Title one, there's money from this 216 million going to schools from rural communities that used to get tax benefits from timber, but now we don't cut those trees anymore. So, Congress said, in lieu of you having tax benefits from the forests that we used to cut, we're going to allocate a budget, so that is this program. Part of that money goes to schools, then they have title three money, which goes to search and rescue and other things in the county. So, those are the two titles that just go direct to the county, counties figure out how to spend it.

Each county has a different allocation in these rural areas that are near forest service lands that were forest dependent where we don't cut anymore. Title two of this legislation is where we do projects on the ground. It's another way that we need farmers that work and live in these rural communities. Under title two we are giving money to the, allocating a certain amount, I think it's \$60 million to counties around the US to do natural resource projects. But the kicker is community members on a voluntary basis have to work with the board to decide where the money can be [inaudible 03:14:54]. So, we can't pick it, they have to. And then we work together to do the projects on the boards. The biggest problem that we're finding is that we're not able to get enough people to serve on these resource action advisory committees, they normally have 15 people, but we've got kind congressional waiver to have nine people, but we still can't get enough people. And on the panels where we do have enough people we're not getting enough of membership that truly reflects the spirit of the community, the diversity of the community, the richness of the communities.

So, when these members have to go to the secretary's office to be approved, the secretary's office is kicking them back and say, what is your diversity plan? What kind of outreach have you done? Have you spoken to the community members to see if they would volunteer? And again,

this is a volunteer thing, would they volunteer to be on these resource advisory committees? So, we're doing more outreach for that. Next slide. I'll [inaudible 03:15:59]. Next slide. We have a public facing website, but one of the things that I'm having my staff work on now is revamping all of the ways that we put stuff on the internet. Because the thing is I find, oh, before we get further than that, take out your pens right now I'm going to give you my telephone, I'll give you my personal number. If you have questions in case I missed something, my number is 202-390-1292. That's my personal number, you can call me. That is not a government number, if you call me 20 years from now, we are network [inaudible 03:16:46].

Speaker 23:

Because remember we're building relationships, right? So, even when I'm no longer with the forest service, you can call me and we can have a chat about things, because we're building relationships, we're building the community. So, we're going to redo, we're redoing our website to make sure that we are providing the resources that communities want, which means that you can't just build a website without talking to communities. Because I think that that's where we've also made lot of mistakes in the past. Next slide. This is an interesting part of my office that is trying to figure out how we can leverage private sector dollars to do some of the things that government can fund. Government has a lot of money that we can hopefully allocate and share with communities around the country, farming communities, agriculture communities. But we find that the private sector has so much in terms of resources and cash that they want to leverage with communities in the US. Next slide.

So we've been working with these communities to try to figure out where the need is and what are the opportunities. And some of the concepts, they sound bananas. Well, when we talked to these folks, like the Walton Foundation and the Bezos Foundation and Mackenzie Scott, folks are really just trying to get rid of money to, I would say, right some of the historical wrongs that they've seen. And that concept, in many ways, is kind of very strange to most folks. But the conservation of finance deal is really looking at ways that we can monetize them. And we can really go to these corporations and say we have opportunities where we can direct your money for natural resource and activities. Now, we don't just get their money. Federal governments have gone out of the way to just absorb donor money. We package it with our own money, so that we can do joint projects, where we work through partners, NGOs, non-profits, foundations, things like that. And so, we bundle those resources. And then, we put that back into the community to do natural resource projects to hopefully offset future damages and future things that we would have to repair to the environment.

And so, Citibank has a big climate finance hub. Microsoft is doing a whole bunch of climate finance work. So this is, for us, a new industry that we're trying to tap into. But while we're tapping into it, we're going to bring our minority farmers, our minority natural resource folks along with us because we can all learn together while we're doing this. Because like I said, there's billions of dollars, billions of dollars. And probably, as [inaudible 03:19:56], probably trillions of dollars that will be on the table for us to do more projects. Next slide. Next slide. And we'll... Kenya will make sure you guys get a copy of this because all of those links are live. You can click on them.

Finally, one of the main ways that we are looking to improve our communities around the nation is making sure that we have a pathway to being in government. Again, we talked about just historical mistrust and distrust of the government, which means that folks who look like us don't go into government. They won't take government jobs. They don't want to be tracked by the government. They don't want to give up their information. They don't fill out census and surveys, any of this. How do we fix that? Then, we have to start putting more folks into the workforce that can reach out to these communities, that look like the folks or actually come from these communities, to say, "Look, this is a viable opportunity, and these are viable jobs. These are viable pathways to a professional career." Next slide.

So I have a whole team in my office that's trying to transform the agent, transform the Forest Service. Then, the Forest Service, I mean, we always come to these conferences. But the Forest Service is the largest organization within USA. We're 35,000 employees. 35,000 employees, but we only have 27 jobs filled, 27,000 jobs filled. That means there's opportunities on the table that we're not utilizing. There's opportunities on the table that our kids from our communities could be taking. We have programs like Job Corp. We have programs like the resources and program in the Youth Conservation Corps, which have direct hire authority. So that means that if you've done your time, your 960 hours, and have a job that you're qualified for, I can hire you. They don't know about these opportunities because we're not out there the way we should be. We're not talking to the communities and going to the schools and sitting around to tell people in a way that makes them comfortable apply for these jobs. "I don't want to be a vet." "You don't like checks? You like working for the government. You like learning new things. You want to be a vet." Federal government employment [inaudible 03:22:25]. I wouldn't trade it for the world. Well, maybe I'd trade it for [inaudible 03:22:30]. Next slide.

So we're building new community. We're building the new workforce from the ground up. We're looking at historically marginalized community. We're looking at tribal communities. We're looking at the conservation boards, and we're going out and talking to students. We're talking to Indian youth. We're going to communities in Puerto Rico. We're going to communities in the Pacific Islands. We are saying, "Hey, I would love to see more Hawaiians in the Forest Service. Hey, we'd love to see more Puerto Rican, [inaudible 03:23:04] in the Forest Service. Or hey, in Alaska, do we have anyone that would sign up for the Forest Service and board with us? So this is the way that we think, over the course of time, we would transform agents.

And it's the story that... You've all probably heard this story, but it's about the little girl who kept throwing the crab. But it was washed up on the beach, not in the ocean. There are a lot of crabs washed out on the beach in the ocean. And her mom said, "Why do you keep throwing the crabs back? You're not going to be able to save them. They're going to be walked up on the beach." And she said, "Well, I saved that one." The one I threw back, right? So we have to continue to try. The one or two or three or five or ten kids that we convince to go into federal employment, it's transformative for the community. It's transformative for their families and their lives. This is what we're trying to do. Next slide.

And as you can see, my team, they come out with all of these goals, and they set them. But they show how we've done from 2014 all the way up. We're getting better, but this is the tip of the iceberg. We can do more. We can do more. Next slide. Next slide.

Diversity development and outreach. This speaks for itself. This is a new team that I created last year. We created this team that kind of looked at not just your normal DDO programs, where you're looking to just, how can I make the poster more diverse, so that people think we're diverse. That's not what this is. This is really looking at where's diversity baked into legislation, and are we being compliant? I think one of the things that came up was we say all of these things. We have all of these things on the books that say, "We're supposed to work with these communities. We're supposed to do this thing for 40% of the funding. Show me the numbers." And that's what this team is doing. They're looking at the numbers. They're calling out, internally calling us out, where we're not reaching our targets for hitting certain numbers of dollars spent. It's not just communities talked to, dollars spent in communities of color around the USA. Next slide.



So we talked about the executive order. And again, I'll tell you, [inaudible 03:25:41] will tell you, the executive order is very clear. President's office, the White House, they're very clear about what we're supposed to do. And sometimes you got to have people to mind the minders. Some of the folks have to be in there to keep us on our toes about things that we're supposed to do and keep us honest about how we [inaudible 03:26:05] because sometimes it just becomes... And I'm going to be honest with you, being in government for a long time, you just you have to do so many things that it's not, sometimes it's just not even intentional that you do, that you forget to do scrutiny that you should do. You're just like, "I got 10 things to do. Something's going to have to fall off." That can't fall off. We got to make sure that we are really holding these principles. Next slide. Next slide.

And then, I have a separate team that is solely looking at bipartisan infrastructure law. As I said, it's about two billion dollar of partnership activities that we're doing in priority landscapes around the US, two billion dollars. I'm going to say that one more time. Two billion dollar that we are really trying to make sure that we have... We're engaging communities that have been historically marginalized, black and brown communities, tribal communities, to make sure that they have the ability to access, not only the funding opportunities, but they can access the restorative opportunities, the work that we're doing. Because it's not enough to just say that they want to do the work, but they should also have some of the input because these communities are directly in their backyards and directly effective, especially for the tribal communities. A lot of times, they have agreements that, to be honest, the US government has straight violated over the years, in terms of the way that we engage with them. So we are trying to make every effort to do the outreach that's necessary so that they understand the opportunities that are available under the bipartisan infrastructure law and that could be [inaudible 03:27:56]. Next slide.

As you can see, I talked a little bit about what we're looking at for regional allocation. Right now, most of the money goes to priority landscapes. There are three priority landscapes here in Arizona, but they're mostly out through the west because they're looking at fire scapes, where communities are affected by fire. But we do have other opportunities where you have the wild land urban interface areas that we can do work as well. Next slide. Next slide. Keep going. Next slide. Next slide. I didn't prepare them. Next slide.

Oh, here [inaudible 03:28:42]. So we are really... The Forest Service, we understand that farmers have a very limited engagement with the forest.

We do understand, but we want you to [inaudible 03:29:02] more. We want you to be out there with us. I want you to come, Mr. Reid, I want you to come and go rapid with me in the national forest in the Chattahoochee. This is what I... This is what we want to see. We want to see more people who look like us out on the forest, getting the benefits of these public lands that we steward. Next slide.

We also want to see more people who look like us, Ms. Kim, right? We want to have access to all of the funding that's coming through because of the different legislation that have been passed lately. We want to make sure that Ms. Cotton understands that her kids, her grandkids, her nieces and nephews have an opportunity to work for the federal government. They have a pathway to [inaudible 03:29:54]. They have a pathway to create generational wealth through education and work.

So that's my spiel for the Forest Service. I'm about that life. If you ever see me not doing what I said I'm going to do, you have my number. That is my personal number. You can text me, call me, say, "Hey Gary, you said we're doing this, but you're not doing it." Or, "I can't find the information." Just call me. And I promise you, because we're building relations, I promise you if I don't have the information, I will find someone on my team, and we'll get the information for you. But I thank you so much for your time. I will take your questions because I want to make sure that I can answer some questions for you. Mr. Miller?

Speaker 26: Bill Miller from Ohio. I have a question, just related... Do you just service the federal lands? Or do you have programs that work with lands that are privately owned forest lands?

Speaker 25: Great question. And to answer your question, yes. So we have... The Forest Service is, because it's so large, broken up into the national forest system, which does the stewardship of the forest and grassland. Then, we have state and private, and that's all they do. They are dealing with urban forestry. They're dealing with private landowners, and they are going out there doing extension services. A lot of the state and private folks are based at the 1890 schools. Many of them that are based at 1890 schools are based in rural communities, so that they can do the extension directly with farm... Or with, well I guess tree farmers are farmers. They can do their extension with them or private landowners.

We also work with private landowners who aren't trying to sell their forest at all or sell their trees. They just have land. A lot of my family, we just kind of have trees. We've never sold a tree. We just have land in the south. A lot of times, it's tied up in heirs property. So it's just staying

there. Someone's paying them, even though I'm probably paying the taxes the most time, but someone's paying the taxes on it, and it just stays there. So we are working with the folks to try to figure out how we can help them come up with a strategy so that they don't have to sell their property, but they can still access programs so that they can make use of the [inaudible 03:32:04].

Speaker 26: I have a follow-up question. You mentioned taxes. And taxes happen to be a issue with farmers because some states tax forest land at a much lower rate than they do lands that's productive for growing other crops. Are you involved in any of those debates and issues?

Speaker 25: I don't debate the tax part of it, but I know that our state and private folks have been working with folks to look at an agroforestry model. So that if you do agriculture, but you have trees on the land, you could be taxed at the tree rate, not the agriculture rate, but it depends on the crop. Not all lands are available to do that, but they're doing a whole bunch of creative things with the agroforestry because you want to make sure that you are not only... I mean, the hustle is real. You got to know the loopholes. You got to know how to work the laws to your advantage. Part of it is knowing that agroforestry allows you to get the forestry rate versus the agriculture rate. Again, you can't grow corn under the trees, but you could have fruit trees and grow things that are not sunlight dependent. They're shade dependent.

Speaker 26: Yep. From a climate perspective, we're trying to preserve trees in this country or around the world. And in a lot of places, farmers are cutting down their trees because they're being taxed at the same rate as their regular farmland. And they're not making that kind of a profit on-

Speaker 25: You mean in America or overseas? Because when I look at overseas, because I lived overseas. Since I've been the divorced, I've lived and work in 79. People cut their land in many countries overseas because it's either valuable timber, or the agriculture that they're going to do on the land is going to make them a lot of money. But this is the north-south divide, the debate. Should we in the Northern Hemisphere pay countries in the Southern Hemisphere, where we have the greatest amount of biodiversity and probably some of the large forest, should we pay them to not cut their trees? Should we pay them an annuity to not cut the... Kind of how the Secure World Schools program, how we're paying people because they're not cutting. Same principles. And I think, when they did COP 22 recently, that was one of the things that was on the table. "You don't want us to cut, pay us." And that's the conservation finance model

that I talked about. Private corporations may be the funders and the financiers to offer some of these payments. Yeah. I'm sorry, go ahead.

Speaker 27: Carey June. Actually, some of my question was answered by hearing the conversation. Because one of things you mentioned earlier, I actually did a heirs property workshop earlier. And the whole idea of what the people who attended it, we wanted them to figure out what they can do with their lands. And a lot of them have forest land, [inaudible 03:35:25] that have land, forest land. But I couldn't find any specific programs in Forest Service that they could have have looked at, at the time.

Speaker 25: No, I'm trying... So I'll tell you what I'm trying to do. I'm glad you brought it up. I'm trying to do, with Jenny, I'm trying to do a cooperative agreement with the Center for Heirs Property, so we can start getting into these discussions, so we can really dig in deep. And we can talk about what needs to happen and what people can do. Because sometimes you may... If you have 30 cousins, you can't do anything. But if you have five brothers and sisters, there may be some discussions about, "Hey, if you did this to your land, it would bring in kind of revenue for [inaudible 03:36:06]." And so, we're working with Jenny Stevens and the Center for Heirs Property to try to come up with an agreement, where we can get her to just go out and help us do outreach. So she can help us do some of that outreach but also help us do the outreach to say, "Hey, there's these other programs. I need you to start applying to them and becoming more involved in this program." And then, we're also going to work with the Tuskegee Center in Tuskegee to try to do some of the outreach as well.

Speaker 27: No, no. The key thing I'm saying is getting the property owners, the heir, to realize that property has some value to it, even if it's preservative or anything else. We want to educate them on that land, so people-

Speaker 25: We definitely want to do that. But I'm going to tell you the challenge that we found. I'm going to tell you the challenge, personally, that I've known. Many of my cousins who own the property that we own in [inaudible 03:36:56] are my mama's cousins. They moved. My mother's sister... Okay. This is personal story. I like giving these stories. My mother's sister moved with her husbands to New Jersey. My cousins were born in New Jersey, and we really don't have a connection to them. So that means that I've not really had... I don't have a relationship with them. So finding folks is what we're finding challenging. But I think that as we start to talk more about it... Because I feel like for many years heirs property and even the discussion around it was something that we kept in the closets, like the dirty secret that our families didn't want to talk about.

And versus spinning it in a different way. This is generational wealth, and we just have to have a lot of folks who are... Luckily, a lot of folks own this property because someone was thoughtful enough to buy properties. Someone was able to be able to save money. It's all about how we tell the narrative around these stores to get people to know that their land has value. Because even if it doesn't have value in the things you sell on it. It has culture value. Somebody sweat and bled to buy that property. This is why it's [inaudible 03:38:01] our property. We're never going to sell, even if it's economically viable to sell it. Because I know my great-grandparents had to sacrifice a lot to get the property. So we're trying to change the narrative. We're trying to change the stories. And to your point, the Forest Service, hopefully, would be the bridge to help people understand how their property has value and even how the small timber, small [inaudible 03:38:25] timber on there may have value.

Speaker 28: You can take one last one.

Speaker 27: I'm not finished. Hold. Two more, really quick.

Speaker 25: You get two [inaudible 03:38:31].

Speaker 27: Isn't there overlap between what you all do and NRCS? Because I know NRCS is more engaged in tree planting, where as I do more preservation.

Speaker 25: They do tree planting. There is definitely overlap what we do with NRCS and... Because I'm not involved in that aspect of the Forest Service, I can't tell you. I know we work closely with them, and I'm cool with all the NRCS guys, but I don't know exactly where they stop and we start. I think sometimes it depends on what area covers, just to be honest, I think it's the area it covers. Sometimes the work that probably Forest Service folks are doing, NRCS would be doing if they were there and vice versa. I think in areas where Forest Service folks aren't... And there are some things that are distinctly different that we do. The NRCS has more money.

Speaker 27: And the last thing I want to say. I was going to recommend, in my opinion, one of the things I think if you put more your resources in getting inner city kids to go to the forest, so whether it's like go spend a week in a park or something like that, so they can get some exposure.

Speaker 25: We're doing that too.

Speaker 27: That would be the probably [inaudible 03:39:37].

Speaker 25: That's how I know you went to Morehouse because you told me [inaudible 03:39:40]. Yeah, so we are doing that already, but we're trying to expand this program. We're trying to really get more kids out doing field engagements. We have a program now that we fund called Kid in Every Park, but it's targeted really to fourth graders and fifth graders. But we want to do that expanded from K through 12 because it's a viable degree, viable option. Can I take the one? Because I know Ms. Cotton had a question.

Speaker 29: Just real quick. While forestry is not the big thing, at least I don't believe it is in Oklahoma, at least the part of Oklahoma that I am in.

Speaker 25: What part of Oklahoma are in? Are you near Tulsa?

Speaker 29: Say it again?

Speaker 25: Are you in Tulsa?

Speaker 29: 35 minutes from Tulsa.

Speaker 25: Oh, yeah. Okay. But yeah, forestry's not that big, but Grasslands are. In the Forest Service, Lyndon B. Johnson, grasslands and... I mean, I'm just saying we do grasslands too.

Speaker 29: I have a question though. It's not that Forestry Park. You meet your grandchildren. I have 11 of them. So a video game that's interactive for children who are not actually able to put their feet on the ground is something that you'll consider.

Speaker 25: We have that.

Speaker 29: You do?

Speaker 25: Yeah. [inaudible 03:41:04].

Speaker 29: We've never seen anything.

Speaker 25: It's the... I can't think of that app, but one of my close friends, she worked with the consultant to develop it. And it's kind like Pokemon Go. If you've never heard of Pokemon Go, they have the kids running crazy. It is very similar. It's on a limited amount of forest and grassland, but they go around. And you go to different places, and it pops up, an icon pops up. They're like little animals, and they tell you different things. So we do have some interactive things. We probably need better games, but

knowing kids... You'd have to make it something different. It'd have to be like if they're timing them to cut down trees or something like that to get their-

Speaker 29: They need something out. I have a grandson who will turn 14 this week or next week, and he makes video games. And his first video game, we had over a million followers. And I'm saying, if you saying-

Speaker 25: Tell your grandson to reach out to me. I mean it. You've got my number. Have him call me because we want to make sure that... And again, we'll protect him, so we don't steal his ideas, but I just want to make sure that he gets the exposure that he needs because even us featuring him on our website might be something that will allow kids to understand like, "Maybe forestry's not your thing, but having a grandmother who's in agriculture allowed me to be able to do this." Sometimes we forget about the different connection because somebody is making a sacrifice for me to be able to do... A sacrifice in agricultural forestry. We should tell the story. [inaudible 03:42:38] the tapestry we have in America.

Speaker 29: Thank you very much.

Speaker 25: [inaudible 03:42:44] But seriously, that's my number. Just call me.