

Workforce Trends in Selected Natural Resource Agencies

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**Renewable Natural Resources Foundation's
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of Federal and State Natural Resources Agencies**

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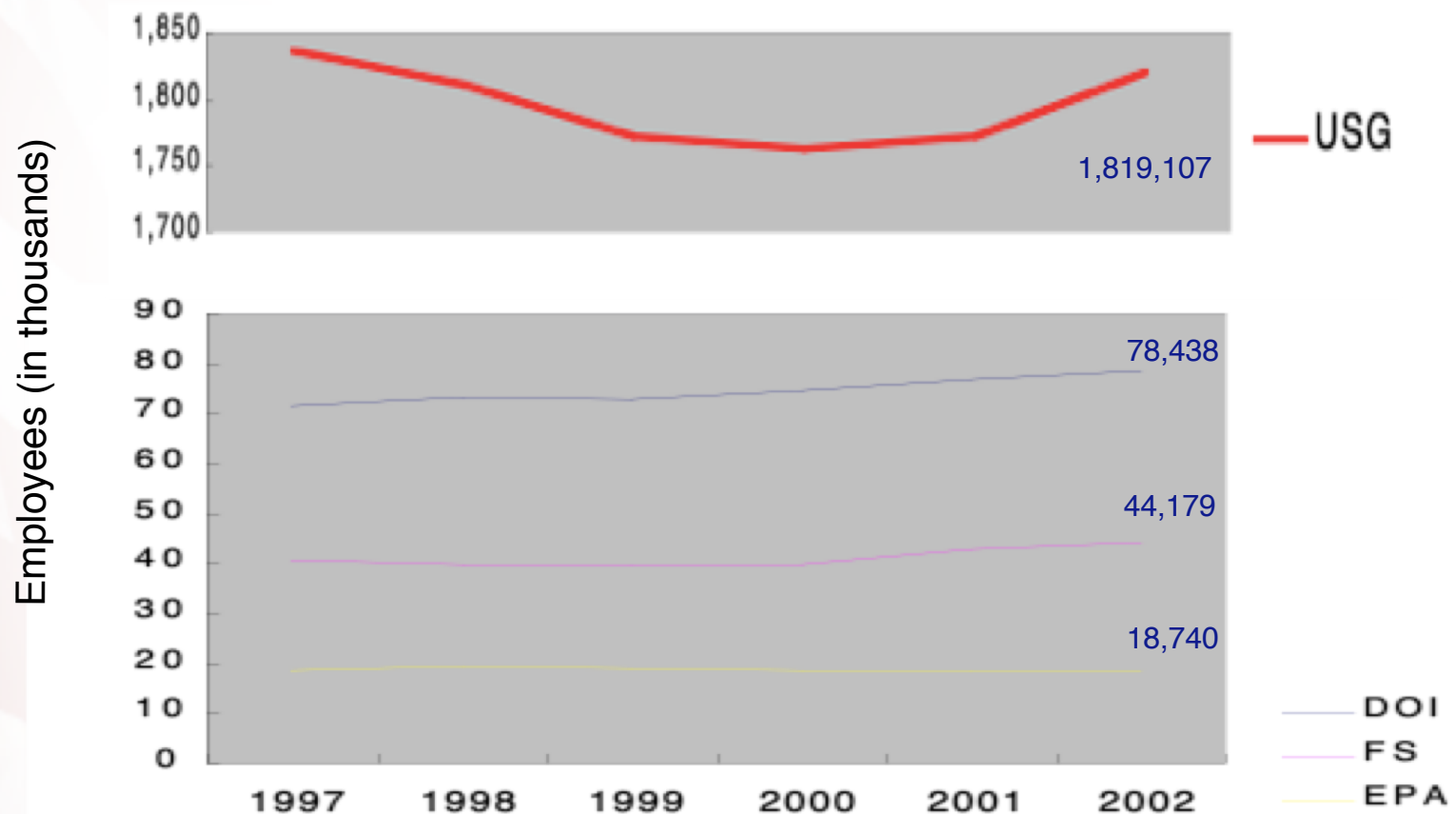
Outline of Presentation

- Federal departments and agencies reviewed
 - Highlights of workforce trends in three natural resource agencies
 - Workforce trends reviewed
 - ✓ Employment
 - ✓ Aging
 - ✓ Separations and accessions
 - ✓ Losses of scientists and experienced managers
 - ✓ Critical skill/competency needs
 - ✓ Workforce diversity
 - Concluding comments
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Federal Departments and Agencies Reviewed

- Governmentwide trends
- Department of the Interior
- U.S. Forest Service (FS)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Governmentwide Employment Trends (Fiscal Years 1997 – 2002)



Source: www.fedscope.opm.gov/index.htm

Aging of the Workforce

- Over 40 percent of government employees are over the age of 50, about 23 percent have more than 25 years of service. Only about 6 percent are under the age of 30.
- Natural resource agencies' workforce age is generally consistent with governmentwide averages; length of service is slightly higher.
- About 24 percent of the civilian labor force is over the age of 50 and about 38 percent is under the age of 30.

Separation and Accession Trends

- Over the past 5 years, federal governmentwide:
 - Separation rates averaged 7.2 percent annually
 - Accession rates averaged 6.4 percent annually
- Separation and accession rates for natural resource agencies have been at or below governmentwide rates.

Losses of Experienced Managers & Scientists

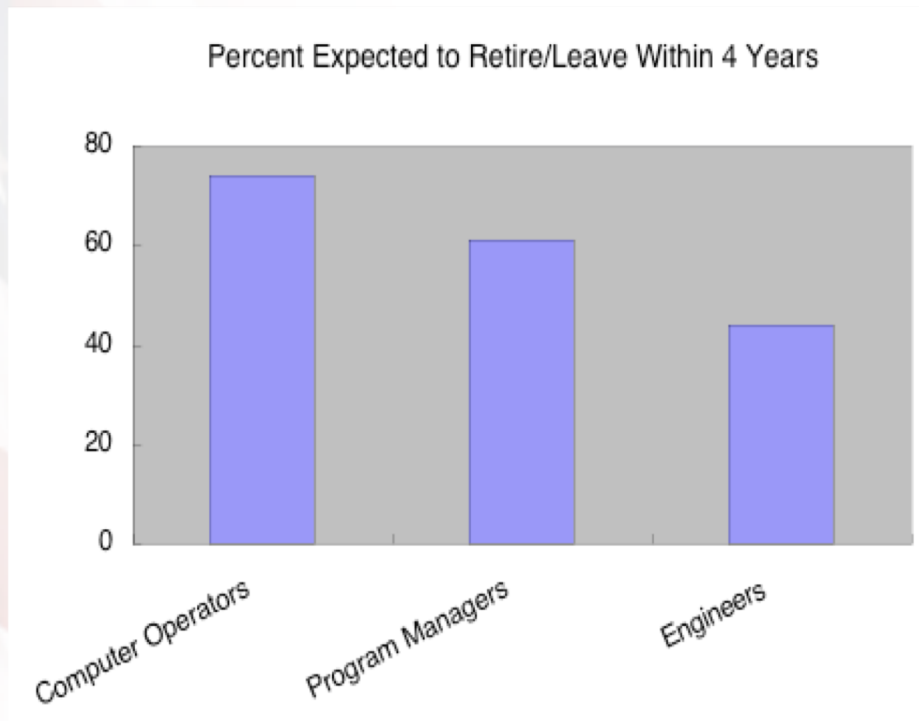
Governmentwide Trends

Percent of governmentwide senior managers employed on October 1, 2000, estimated to leave service by October 2007:

- Over 50 percent of career SES members
- About 46 percent of GS-15s
- About 34 percent of GS-14s

Losses of Experienced Managers & Scientists

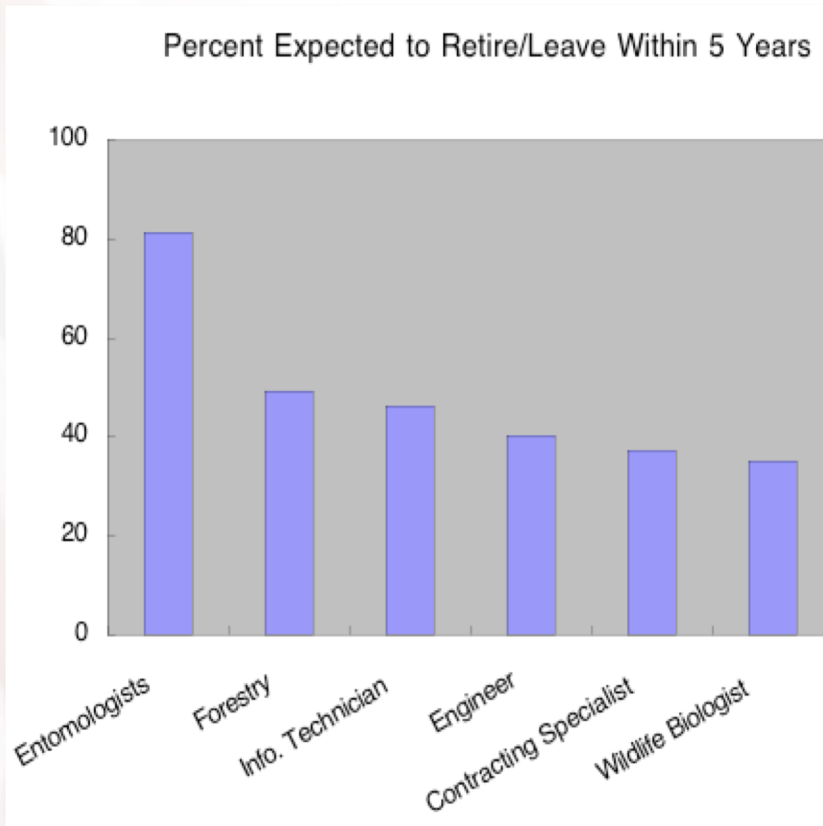
Department of the Interior



- Over 50 percent of Interior's SES members will have left service by October 1, 2007.
- Above-average retirement and attrition rates for scientists and specialists in certain key occupations

Losses of Experienced Managers & Scientists

Forest Service



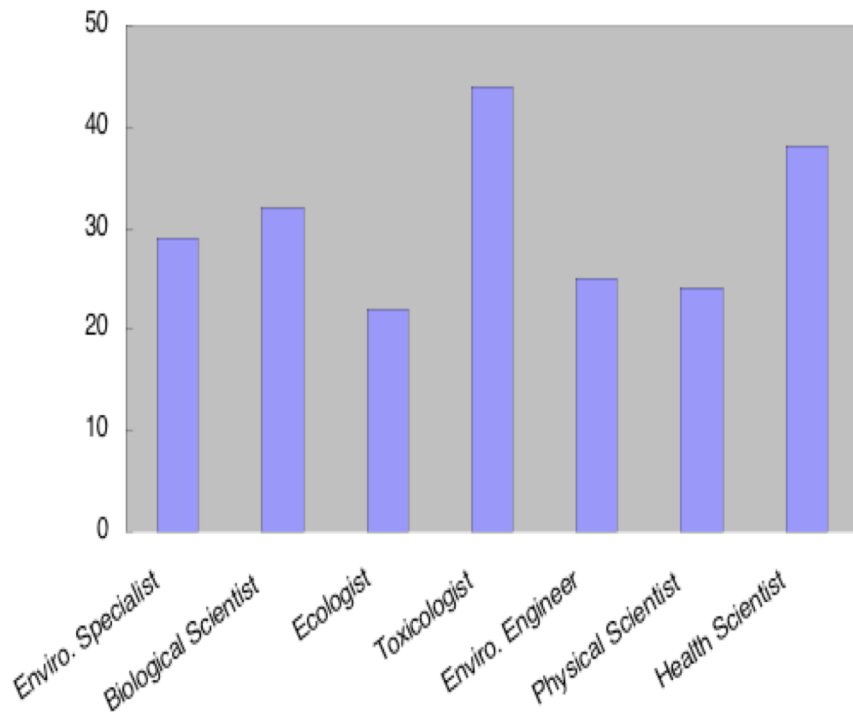
Within the next 5 years,

- 50 percent or more of the leadership team in key areas will become eligible to retire.
- Above-average retirement and attrition projections for scientists and specialists in certain key occupations.

Losses of Experienced Managers & Scientists

Environmental Protection Agency

Percent Eligible for Retirement by 2008



Within the next 5 years,

- About 52 percent of SES members will have left service by October 1, 2007.
- A significant portion of EPA's scientists and technical staff will become eligible to retire by 2008.

Critical Skill/Competency Needs

Department of the Interior

Technical skill gaps include:

- Law enforcement and security
- Information technology
- Fire management
- Natural and physical science
- Financial management
- Facilities management and engineering
- Contract management
- Mediation and negotiation
- Strategic business planning

Critical Skill/Competency Needs

Forest Service

Competency needs include:

- Information technology
- Engineering and resource management
- Contract management
- Math/computer modeling
- GIS skills
- Law enforcement
- Criminal investigators

Critical Skill/Competency Needs

Environmental Protection Agency

EPA still must determine:

- the number of employees needed;
- the technical skills required;
- effective allocation of employees among goals and locations; and
- workforce development, as it loses leadership, institutional knowledge, and scientific expertise.

Workforce Diversity

Governmentwide Trends

From 1990 through 2000,

- The ratio of women to men increased from 43:57 to 45:55.
- Minorities increased from 27 to 30 percent, with all major ethnicities showing increases in federal employment.

Workforce Diversity

Department of the Interior

According to Interior, it needs to do a better job of attracting, hiring, developing, and retaining a diverse workforce. As of September 30, 2000:

- The ratio of women to men was 40:60—below governmentwide level.
- 27 percent were minorities—below governmentwide level.
 - ✓ Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islanders populations fell short of governmentwide levels.
 - ✓ Employment of American Indians was above governmentwide level.

Workforce Diversity

Forest Service

According to the Forest Service, the agency has made limited progress toward meeting diversity goals. As of September 30, 2000:

- The ratio of women to men was 38:62—below governmentwide level.
- 15 percent were minorities—below governmentwide level.
 - ✓ Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islanders populations fell short of governmentwide levels.
 - ✓ Employment of American Indians was above governmentwide level.

Workforce Diversity

Environmental Protection Agency

As of September 30, 2000:

- The ratio of women to men was 49:51 —better than governmentwide level.
- 29 percent were minorities—slightly below governmentwide level.
 - ✓ Black and Asian/Pacific Islanders populations were consistent with governmentwide level.
 - ✓ Hispanic and American Indian populations were below governmentwide level.

Concluding Comments

- Like the federal government as a whole, natural resource agencies face challenges dealing with an aging workforce.
 - These agencies face losses of experienced managers and key technical staff, in many cases above the governmentwide average.
 - Interior and Forest Service have identified their future skill gaps and critical needs, while EPA has not yet done so.
 - Each agency must take steps to meet diversity goals.
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Strategic Human Capital Management

GAO's model for strategic human capital management provides a framework for addressing human capital challenges facing the federal government:

- Leadership, continuity, and succession planning
- Strategic human capital planning and organizational alignment
- Acquiring and developing a workforce whose size, skills, and deployment meet agency needs
- Creating results-oriented organizational cultures

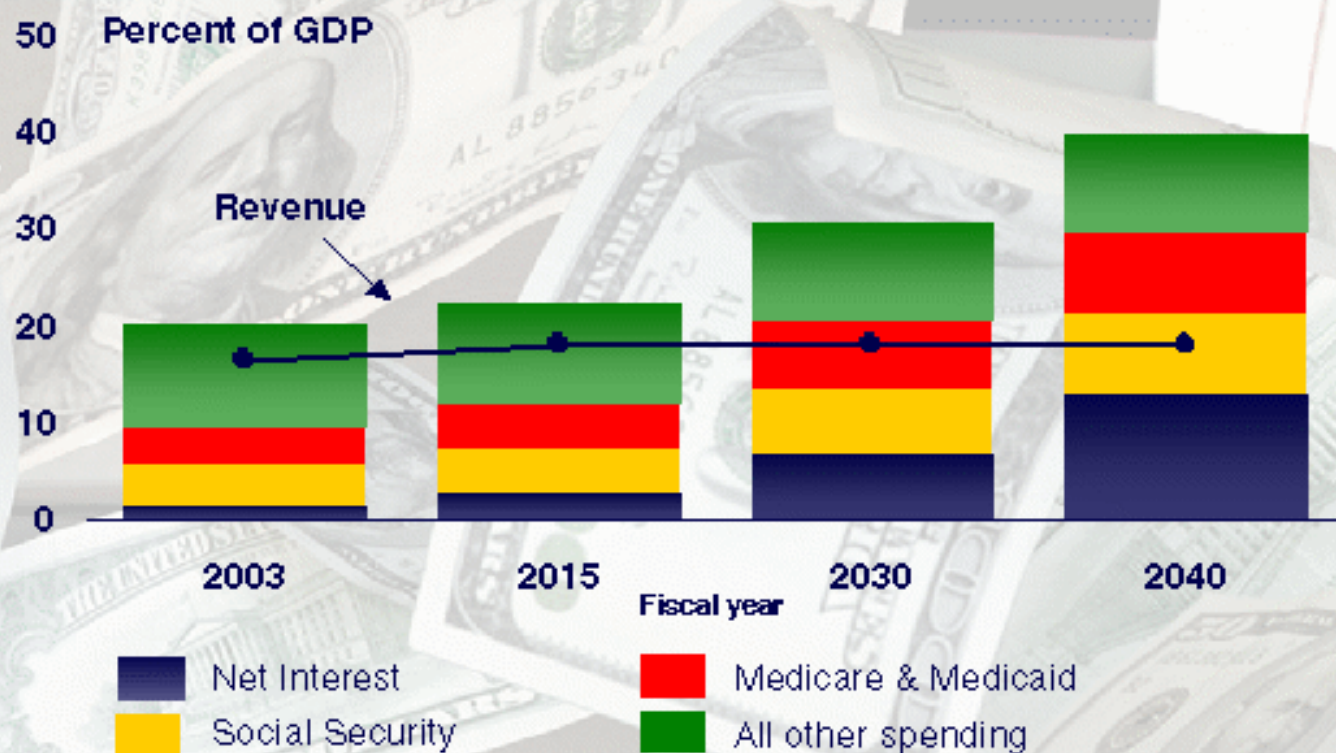
Human Capital Challenges in an Increasingly Difficult Fiscal Environment

The human capital challenges that natural resource agencies face must be addressed in the context of a dismal fiscal picture:

- The Government faces an accumulated deficit of approximately \$7 trillion.
- CBO estimates that, excluding Social Security surpluses, the total deficit for fiscal years 2003 and 2004 will be \$562 billion and \$644 billion, respectively.
- Discretionary spending has decreased substantially over the last several decades, and this trend is projected to continue.

Composition of Spending as a Share of GDP

Assuming Discretionary Spending Grows with GDP after 2003
and All Expiring Tax Provisions Are Extended



Notes: Although all expiring tax cuts are extended, revenue as a share of GDP increases through 2013 due to (1) real bracket creep, (2) more taxpayers becoming subject to the AMT, and (3) increased revenue from tax-deferred retirement accounts. After 2013, revenue as a share of GDP is held constant. This simulation assumes that currently scheduled Social Security benefits are paid in full throughout the simulation period.

Source: GAO's August 2003 analysis.