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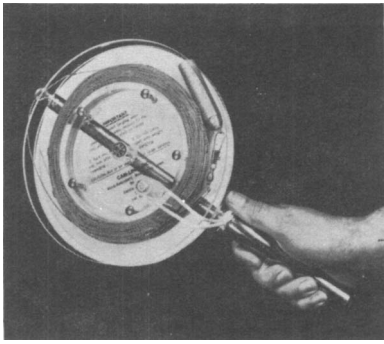
**Cover:** July 1, 1988, marked the 100th anniversary of the birth of Walter Clay Lowdermilk, one of the world's true conservation pioneers. See page 286.

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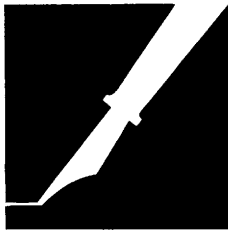
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## PEN POINTS

### People skills needed

The opinion reflected in the "SWCS View" in the March-April 1988 issue (page 116) of the *JSWC* addressed one of the most pressing needs for the conservationist today: developing the people skills to go along with the technical skills that are the cornerstone of good resource planning and implementation.

It is unfortunate that there are still some people who feel that these views are for "someone who is in the private sector." Conservationists are selling conservation every day, and the value of conservation is being determined in the eyes of those who control the use of our natural resources by the skill of those "conservation salespeople."

It has been my pleasure consulting with the Soil Conservation Service for the past 10 years, and during that time, those whom I have worked with have the highest ethics and stewardship mission, combined with excellent technical training. I hope that they will heed the advice offered and couple that training with the skills outlined in the article.

John D. Hennings  
The AVATAR Group  
Boystown, Nebraska

### Remember the purpose!

The conservation of soil and management of water are for one single purpose, the growing of plants. Yet the conservation of plants is not even held to be pertinent. That is, of course, a quite different matter. But we need to be pragmatic; while spending millions on soil, we ought to be aware of what we are doing that for.

Horticulture, agriculture, and forestry are at the beginning of plant conservation. The philosophy of conservation needs to encompass these great human activities and watch over all phases, including such things as governmental support, research, and long-term management.

My interest in this comes from my "history" as a botanist and nurseryman. My firm, a nursery, is 98 years old. I was a co-author of the International Code of Horticulture Nomenclature and the system of plant family authorities adopted in 1951. I was also chairman of

the American Association of Nurserymen Nomenclature Committee for over 30 years.

I find the botanical fraternity remarkably unaffected by the loss of plant species, so conservation is up to other agencies. Here and there, groups are concerned with endangered species. But concerted attack on the steady reduction of plant life in general is nonexistent.

This journal, while not undertaking to cover plant conservation as it does soil and water, could in some way keep an eye on that as it expands, as is very likely. In the land grant universities there will be many scientific areas of interaction.

J. Franklin Styer  
J. Franklin Styer Nurseries  
Concordville, Pennsylvania

### Forest Service is listening

We appreciate your review of the "Report of the Forest Service" [*JSWC* March-April 1988, pp. 155-156]. Constructive suggestions on ways to improve the value of the report are helpful.

The annual report has become a key document for the agency, reporting our accomplishments and outputs in relation to budget commitments and the agency's progress in carrying out the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA).

Each year we seek to make improvements in the report in an effort to supply better information to the wide variety of users. For example, we included a new chapter in the 1987 report highlighting the RPA program. This chapter was precipitated by comments received from outside parties brought together by The Conservation Foundation at a workshop. The viewpoints of the participants echoed your impression—the "Report of the Forest Service" should be more responsive to the RPA Program.

We are continuing to seek ways to improve future annual reports, and will consider the comments offered in your journal article during the development of the fiscal year 1988 report.

Jeff M. Sirmon  
Deputy Chief  
U.S. Forest Service  
Washington, D.C.

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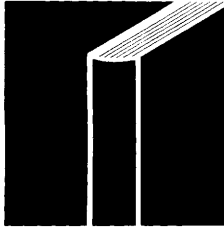
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