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Black Hills Forestry: A History. By John F. Freeman. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2015. 336 pp., \$34.95, hardback, ISBN 978-1-60732-299-3.

Nearly every American recognizes Mt. Rushmore, but how many realize it was carved out of the national forest in 1912 as a pet project of South Dakota Senator Peter Norbeck to transform the Black Hills into a “playground of all the people” (89)? Recreational development at the behest of local boosters and politicians such as Norbeck shaped much of the present-day landscape of the Black Hills, but as John Freeman details in this comprehensive history, so did the local timber industry and federal forest policies.

In 1897 the Black Hills became part of the US Forest Reserve system and garnered Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot’s attention as “the reserve most urgently in need of federal management” as a result of the overexploitation of timber by the mining industry (45). Indeed, the Black Hills played a pivotal role in US forest policy in the first half of the twentieth century, and Freeman’s discussion of how Pinchot and South Dakota Senator Richard Pettigrew negotiated the Organic Act of 1897 will be of interest to scholars of US forest history.

For the first four chapters, Freeman does an excellent job of placing the Black Hills within the greater national context, providing the book with a wider audience than one might expect with a focus on a single forest, similar to Nancy Langston’s *Forest Dreams, Forest Nightmares* (1995). The national context begins to fade by Chapter 5, and the book becomes increasingly focused on issues and policies within the Black Hills National Forest itself. Nonetheless, the Black Hills with its private inholdings, long tradition of timber harvest, motorized recreation, and various interest groups underscores the complexity of issues facing many national forests. Freeman tracks the various forest supervisors and even district rangers as they face new and continuing challenges with management of this largely commodity-driven national forest. Addressing the changing political, economic, and social landscape of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries becomes a major concern of forest managers and constitutes Chapters 9–12.

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Black Hills Forestry is well researched, thoroughly detailed, and will long serve as a key resource for those interested in the management history of the Black Hills National Forest. Unfortunately, the book lacks much analysis, limiting its appeal to a larger audience. For example, Freeman discusses forest fires in great detail, but he neglects the role that logging played in creating the conditions for catastrophic wildfires. Another rather glaring omission from the book is any discussion of presettlement Native American management of the ponderosa forest through intentional burning. Some degree of analysis, either through the text or in a conclusion, would help readers better appreciate Freeman's premise: "managing the national forest is inexorably intertwined with the social and economic well-being of the region" (233).

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