

Joel D. Holtrop

Board of Directors Chair

Retired as Deputy Chief, National Forest System, USDA Forest Service

Joel D. Holtrop served as the Deputy Chief of the National Forest System Deputy Area at agency headquarters in Washington D.C., from March 2005 until October 2011.

In this capacity, he oversaw the strategic and national program leadership for the 193 million acre National Forest System of forests and grasslands located in 42 states and Puerto Rico. His natural resource management emphasis areas include ecosystem management, engineering, forest management, rangeland management, lands, minerals, geology management, recreation, heritage, wilderness, wild-scenic rivers management, watersheds, fish, wildlife, air, and rare plants.

Holtrop's love for the outdoors and natural resources started at an early age—11 years old to be exact—when he chose his life's work after he met a park ranger on a family camping trip. His distinguished Forest Service career spanned more than 34 years. He launched it on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Washington. He later served on the Eldorado National Forest, California, Mt. Hood National Forest, Oregon, and Hiawatha National Forest, Michigan. Subsequently he became deputy forest supervisor on the Nicolet National Forest, Wisconsin, and forest supervisor on the Flathead National Forest, Montana. He joined national headquarters in 1996 as deputy director of Rangeland Management, moving on to become director of Watershed, Fish, Wildlife, Air and Rare Plants. He later served as deputy chief of State and Private Forestry for three years.

A Michigan native, Deputy Chief Holtrop earned a bachelor's degree in forestry at Michigan State University, and a master's in forest management at the University of Washington. He received the Distinguished Alumnus Award for his alma mater Calvin College in 2007. He has served in a number of natural resource, conservation and leadership organizations throughout the country. Joel is married to Julie and they have three daughters: Katie, Laura and Jessica. His hobbies include distance running, kayaking and hiking.