



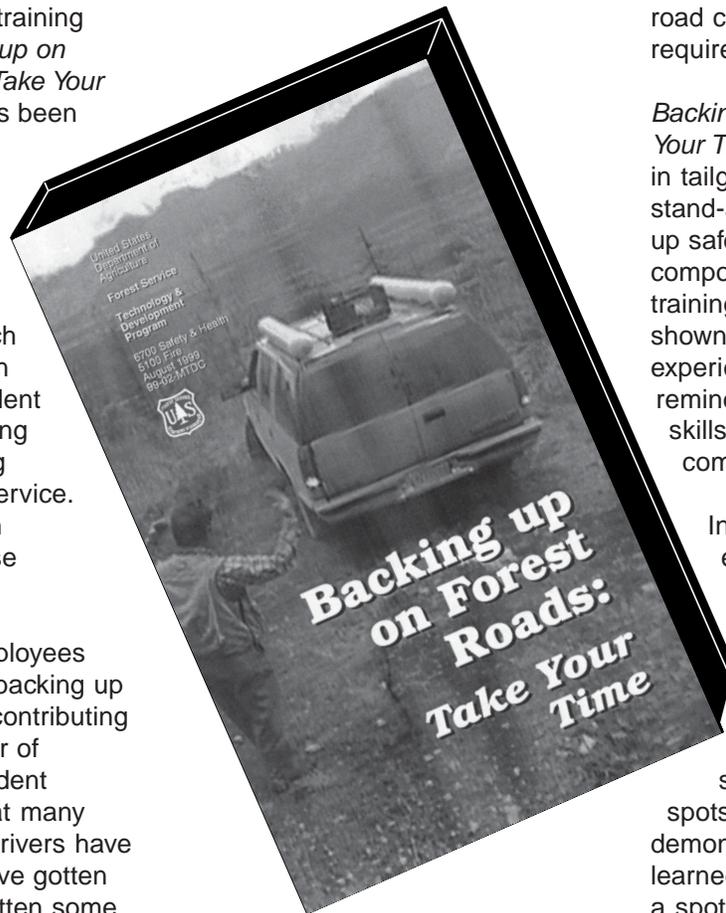
## Backing up on Forest Roads: *Take Your Time*

*Jon Driessen, Project Leader*

A new 12-minute training video, *Backing up on Forest Roads: Take Your Time* (99-01-MTDC), has been distributed by the Missoula Technology and Development Center. This new video was sponsored by the Washington Office Safety and Health Branch and the Fire and Aviation Management Unit. Accident records show that backing accidents are increasing throughout the Forest Service. The new video has been produced to reduce these accidents.

New Forest Service employees who lack experience in backing up on mountain roads are contributing to the increasing number of backing accidents. Accident reports also indicate that many experienced mountain drivers have become complacent, have gotten in a hurry, or have forgotten some of the basic procedures and techniques needed to back up and turn around safely on mountain roads.

The new video is the second in a series of safe driving videos produced by the Missoula Center. This first video in the series is: *Driving Mountain Roads: Slowing Down* (97-05-MTDC). Both videos are based on interviews with



Forest Service employees who have had years of experience turning around and backing up on mountain roads. The backing video shows techniques experienced mountain drivers use to prevent backing accidents. The video footage was shot on actual forest

road conditions where backing was required.

*Backing up on Forest Roads: Take Your Time* is designed to be used in tailgate safety sessions as a stand-alone introduction to backing up safely. It may also be used as a component of defensive driving training. Finally, the video can be shown as a refresher for experienced mountain drivers, reminding them of basic backing skills and warning them against complacency.

In this short video, experienced drivers talk about the hazards they face when backing—hidden dangers such as rocks; soft shoulders; jill pokes (branches sticking out); brush; narrow, slippery, steep, rutted roads; and blind spots. Experienced drivers demonstrate skills they have learned backing up alone and with a spotter. Critical skills include not getting in a hurry, facing the danger, getting out of the vehicle and checking for hazards, using mirrors, relying on a spotter, and maintaining voice and visual contact.

The overall theme of the video is to make inherently unsafe backing situations safe by encouraging drivers to take their time and use proper backing techniques.



## About the Author...

**Jon Driessen** received his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Colorado in 1969. Since then he has been a professor of sociology at The University of Montana, Missoula. Since 1977, he has worked as a faculty affiliate at the Missoula Technology and Development Center.

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