farm than in the early 1980s.

"Many farmers come to planting time weakened by floods and frees last year, and some parts of our sar have been suffering from droug for the past several years," Bentte

Forest Service boasts job boost; environmentalist cries devastation

WASHINGTON (AP) - Tim ber sales from Texas' four

But an environmentalist clair the Forest Service's logging par-tices threaten fauna and flora East Texas and should changed.

According to the Forest Sen ice, timber sales from the An

Actual sales resulted in \$86 million in revenue, a 21 perceincrease from fiscal 1989, with million board feet harves Timber was harvested from 9, acres, which account for 1.5 per cent of the 635,687 acres in the four forests, the Forest Service

East Texas communities. But Ned Fritz, a Dallas em ronmentalist and attorney has filed suit to change the the Forest Service harvests tim in East Texas, said the system courages clear-cutting and get padding, and escapes d congressional scrutiny.

Lenders tighten belts

Farmers face crunch

WASHINGTON (AP) - Farmers ting time weakened by floods, face a severe credit crunch as the spring planting season nears because of escalating fuel costs, a drought in bank lending and tougher restric-

Page 16

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tions on government assistance, offi-cials said Wednesday.

Members of Congress and spokesmen for farm groups in Texas say a crisis in farm credit could develop during the next 60 to 90 days, as farmers who have been hit by the recession seek loans to get their 1991 crops in the ground this

But bank lenders and the Farmers Home Administration are tightening the clamps on loans, officials said. And farmers who come to plan-

freezes and droughts last year may not find a willing lender. Steve Pringle, director of national

affairs for the Texas Farm Bureau, said he knows of one farmer in Coryell County who went to 12 bankers before finding a lender 75 miles

Just across the board, there is a financial crisis facing producers in the state today," Pringle said Wednesday. "The financial crisis facing farmers right now is going to become even more evident here in the next 60 to 90 days.

Bush proposes plan to improve highways

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush proposed on Wednesday a \$105.4 billion, five-year plan to prepare the nation's highways and mass transit systems "for the next American century.

But state highway officials said the proposal was inadequate, would raise state taxpayers' costs and will be rewritten in Congress.

Mass transit officials said they

have been shortchanged. Environmentalists contended the continued emphasis on highways will dramati-cally increase oil consumption and threaten air-quality improvements.

Others criticized the bill's encour-

agement of tolls to pay for new and repaired bridges and highways.

But Bush and Transportation Secretary Samuel K. Skinner said they believe that the legislation is properly balanced and that its highway provisions are needed to fix deteriorated roads and bridges "so that America can stay competitive in the global economy of the 21st century."

Skinner said each \$1 billion spent on highway construction creates 30,000 to 50,000 jobs.

and added, "On a scale of 1 to 10, we give the administration bill a

"It is not dead on arrival" on Capitol Hill, "but it will not pass as arrived," said Frank Francois, executive director of the association.
"The concept is good," said Rives,

who is Georgia's transportation com-missioner. "It streamlines the entire program. But the funding is clearly inadequate to meet our national transportation needs. And what money is there is not fairly distrib-

The bill proposes spending, in addition to several minor programs, \$87.17 billion on highways and \$16.3 billion for mass transit over the next five years.

In a series of policy shifts, the legislation proposes giving priority for federal highway aid to a 150,000-mile National Highway System, which would be composed of the 42,000-mile interstate highway system and other highways important to the economy and the national de-

The federal government would pay 75 percent of the cost of repairing existing roads and building new roads in this system.

The annual federal share would rise in each of the five years from \$7.7 billion in 1992 to \$11.2 billion

The only higher priority would go to completing the unbuilt 1 percent of the interstate system and to making critical repairs. Such projects would continue to be financed by the federal government on a 90 percent-10 percent basis. lower priority would be given to

700,000 miles of important roads that would be grouped in an Urban and Rural Program. State govern-ments would have to pay 40 percent of repairs and construction of such

Federal spending on this program would rise from \$3.9 billion in 1992 to \$5.7 billion in 1996.

Bush and Skinner said that, in a tradeoff for imposing greater costs on states and cities, the bill offers regional and local transportation plan-ners much more flexibility.

tional forests generated hur dreds of jobs and \$25.7 millio for the East Texas economy la year, the U.S. Forest Service say

gelina, Davy Crockett, Sabine Sam Houston national fore netted the federal government little more than \$1 million in f cal 1990, after expenses of \$5 million and a \$2.18 million pa ment to area counties for school and roads.

It said sales from its logging operations last year general 998 jobs and \$25.7 million





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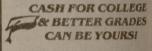
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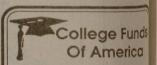
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