

Left to fight the oil and gas giant practically on their own, the forestry enterprises have not been in a position to counter it, or to preserve and protect the stands effectively. They are still understaffed. They have little in the way of transport and suffer from a high labour turnover. There are, for example, only 67 foresters working in the 18 million hectares of state forest lands in the four forestry enterprises located on the right "oil-rich" bank of the Ob' river. The average area per beat is 300,000 hectares. It is laughable, under these circumstances, to suggest that the forest protection service could even begin to do its job properly.

Foresters should no longer have to represent these interests in the oil and gas region. We are not dealing with something trivial like stealing logs for personal needs. This is a completely different type of infringement of forestry rules both in terms of scale and character. In order to ascertain what the problem is, to analyse the situation and take action, one requires a good knowledge of economics, technology and law.

The coming of the oil workers has brought with it a change in the activities of the forestry enterprises' engineering and technical staff. The amount of time spent on registering surveys, and on checking on the activities of numerous industrial operations that have sprung up on the state forest lands, has increased many times over. Yet the forestry experts are still being paid the same. Land management work increases with each year that passes and becomes more and more hopelessly muddled up. This is very dangerous, particularly when using out-of-date planning, cartographical and inventory materials. After all, only one third of the state forest lands in the Tyumen' Oblast have been charted out in forest management studies.