

The Forest Resources of Saskatchewan

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and plowing fireguards; requiring burning permits to be secured from the forest ranger before starting a clearing fire during dangerous periods. Posters and personal contact between the rangers and the settlers.

Detection is secured by observation from lookout towers, patrol on the ground, and rapid communication by telephone, heliograph or motor conveyance. Aeroplanes are now playing a large part in other parts of the country in this field. At every ranger station there is located a lookout tower from which the ranger can see over his district. As fast as possible lookout stations are built and equipped, which look over a whole reserve or several districts. At these points a man is kept continually during the fire season, whose sole duty is to observe fires and report them to the proper forest officers. These towers are equipped with fire finders, map, glasses, telephone or heliograph and function exceptionally well until the air becomes so smoky or hazy that only fires originating at short distance can be located. Usually, however, the range extends from 30 to 50 miles.

Suppression is one of the most difficult tasks unless the fire is in its infancy. Time is the most important factor, as minutes count the same as with a city fire department. Immediately a ranger observes a fire or one is reported to him, he is expected to concentrate all his resources to the end of getting it out with the least possible delay. To this end he has already a supply of tools and provisions on hand or immediately available, he knows where he can secure help usually by a pre-arranged agreement with the settlers and if he finds out that he needs further assistance he calls upon the Supervisor for extra help. During the fire season his saddle horse or team are standing ready for him to be off in a few moments notice or his speeder or car are in readiness. Many aids are provided to help him with his task such as special fire fighting tools, plows, water buckets, pack sacks, fire fighting pumps, special camp cooking equipment, tents, etc. This equipment he is required to keep in proper shape for use at any time and to use for no other purpose.

Until we have controlled the fire situation even in our most severe years, there is little use expending large sums on planting, thinning or other silvicultural operations. Fire losses can be kept to a minimum but

not prevented altogether. The matter rests largely with public opinion which has to be aroused not only locally but generally. Carelessness is the greatest sin and the subject has to be kept continually in the limelight in order to secure results.

Silviculture is next to fire protection the most important of forest management. Silviculture of forest crop production is the business of the professional forester. The For-

estry Branch is the only organization in the province who attempt to carry on work of this nature. Results are not immediately obtainable as the forest crop takes a number of decades to mature and be ready to harvest as compared with farm crops which are an annual occurrence. As before stated the forest reserves are for regulated use and to this end the timber which is mature and marketable is for sale.



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