

case it is not advisable to undertake large planting operations until the fire preventive system is thoroughly organized and equipped.

Experimental planting has been done on the following reserves:

	Acres
Spruce woods.. . . .	129½
Riding mountain.. . . .	6½
Duck mountain.. . . .	2
Turtle mountain.. . . .	1
Manito.. . . .	4
Elbow.. . . .	18
Dunburn.. . . .	17
Beaver Mills.. . . .	1
Pines.. . . .	16
Nisbet.. . . .	4
Cypress hills.. . . .	1½
Cooking lake.. . . .	5

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Seeding has been done on the Spruce woods, Riding mountain and Cooking lake reserves.

Most of the stock for planting is grown at the forest nursery station at Indian Head, Saskatchewan.

Mr. STEVENS: That is all in the prairie provinces.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Yes, practically all of it. There is not any doubt that steps should be taken in a more adequate way to preserve our forests. I have some knowledge of this in my own province, from the devastation by fire in our spruce timbered areas. One can realize what a terrific amount of damage fire can do in a very short period. I know considerable criticism has been offered with respect to fire ranging, and last year the fire patrol at High river—that is the aerial patrol—located 57 fires. I have not the report with me, but I think the report I have at the office states that in a short season they were able to locate fifty-seven fires. I am somewhat anxious that that should be continued, because I think millions of dollars are lost annually by forest fires, and some more adequate steps should be taken to protect our forest areas. I do not believe it is necessary, in many parts of Canada, to replant, because I think the natural growth, if fire prevention is undertaken, will take care of reforestation. But we have allowed our timber areas to be reduced almost to the danger point, and it will be wise on the part of the Government to take whatever steps seem to be necessary for the prevention of fire, and the reforestation of many areas in Canada that are unfitted for any other purpose. I expect to make a personal investigation as well as to get all the information I can on this matter, and, perhaps, on another occasion I may ask for an increased grant.

The aerial patrol is very expensive, and yet, after all, perhaps, it is not so expensive as it appears to be at first sight, inasmuch as it covers so much more territory than can be done by a man on horseback or on foot, and can locate fires at a time when it is much easier to control and extinguish them than when they have gathered considerable headway and done considerable damage.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I am glad to hear the minister say a good word about the air patrol. I had the honour, last year and the year before, of presenting to this House the estimates in respect of the Canadian Air Service, and I endeavoured, in my humble way, to emphasize the great usefulness of the air service as regards forest patrol. I regret, at that time, my views did not meet with ready approval from the Opposition benches, and I am glad, indeed, to hear the minister say tonight that, in his judgment, the air service, as a means of fire control, is a particularly good service and that although expensive at first glance, upon examination, it need not be so expensive on account of the great extent of territory which the air patrol covers. I believe, that last year, prior to Christmas, over fifty incipient fires were discovered by that part of the air service located at High River. The air service has a great opportunity to discover fires; and when fire is discovered in its incipient stages, it can be very easily dealt with; whereas, if a day elapses or even a few hours elapse before it is discovered, it may become an uncontrollable force and tremendous destruction of property may ensue. I sincerely hope that the Government, in view of the statement of the minister, will see to it that the air service of this country is continued upon a proper basis, in order that it may be utilized for the purposes for which it has been utilized during the past two or three years, in the protection of the forests of this country. I know it was argued, last session and the session before, that the Dominion government should not take part in this work; that it was essentially a provincial work, and that the provinces, if they wanted to protect their timber, should protect it at their own expense. There are, however, in this Dominion, forests of which the timber belongs to this Government. Surely it is the duty of this country to protect that timber, and the most efficient way of discovering fire is by means of the air service. I am afraid the estimates for the air