

British Columbia Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests Victoria,
Forests and Chief B.C.
Forester

In each province, the department responsible for forest administration usually performs other duties in connection with lands, mines or other natural resources. In most cases a branch form of organization is used, with the senior forestry officer directly responsible to the Deputy Minister. In Quebec there are separate services concerned with forestry and forest protection, each having its own chief. In Nova Scotia, Ontario and British Columbia, a divisional form of organization is used in which the Deputy Minister is, in effect, in direct charge of forestry work.

In addition to Departmental headquarters, usually located at the provincial capital, each forest service maintains administrative districts with a district officer in charge of each. Large districts may be further divided into sub-districts, each in charge of a field officer or forest ranger. The district chiefs and their field staffs carry on the administration according to instructions issued from head office, and important questions outside the ordinary routine are referred to head office for consideration. Ordinary business, however, can be conducted more efficiently by district officials who are thoroughly familiar with conditions in their own localities.

Senior staffs of the forest services are made up largely of men who have received university training in forestry. However, during the past 20 years several provinces have established special ranger-training schools, which give systematic instruction in the many and varied tasks the field men are called upon to perform. Increase in facilities for ranger-training is one of the most important forestry developments in recent years.

Forest Protection

Protection of the forests against fire is the most urgent duty of any forest administration and, at the same time, the most difficult and costly. The vast extent of Canada's forests, lack of adequate access roads in many regions, and climatic conditions combine to make fire protection a problem of primary importance.

Although many improvements in fire-protection organization and methods have been effected over the past 30 years, the fire menace is still a major obstacle to the introduction of better forest management. Carelessness with camp fires and smoking materials, and improper burning of slash when clearing land, are still far too common in Canada. An average of over 5,000 fires are reported each year, almost 4,000 of which are known to be caused by human agency.

In Quebec and Newfoundland, forest protective associations have been formed to handle fire protection on licensed Crown lands. The other provincial fire-protection services provide protection for all forests except those lying within organized municipalities.

Field work in the provinces is controlled from District Offices, where these exist, or by district fire rangers. Subdivisions of districts are looked after by fire rangers, who may be assisted by lookout men and patrolmen. The observers in lookout towers report the appearance of smoke to a central office by telephone or radio. Patrolmen carry out regular patrols along roads or waterways and warn travellers against carelessness with fire, as well as suppress or report fires that break out. Special crews construct improvements needed for protection purposes, such as roads, trails, telephone lines, lookout towers and ranger cabins. Usually these crews are kept on duty throughout the fire season and are used as