

## Decreased Losses on B. C. Coast

### In British Columbia Coast Forests.

1915 forest fire damage .....	\$85,000
1916 forest fire damage .....	10,505
Merchantable timber killed in 1915.....	73 million feet
Merchantable timber killed in 1916.....	1,135,000 feet

Of these amounts, over one-half has been regarded as salvable.

Victoria, B.C., October 30th, 1916.

The fire season of 1916 has been an extraordinary one on the British Columbia coast. Until the last week of July the weather was particularly favorable, so that during July no fires occurred in the Vancouver and Island Forest districts. The expenditure for fire-fighting during May and June was about normal. Commencing about the end of July a long drought set in, which was not broken until October 25th, making about three months with hardly any rain. In these months logging debris became dangerously dry, and the hazard was intensified by dying vegetation in the woods and on cut-over areas.

The close season ended on September 15th, and many settlers set out clearing fires after the season, which in a few cases got out of control, although little actual damage was caused. The opening of the hunting season increased the human hazard very considerably, numerous fires in outlying districts being ascribed to that source.

At the end of the close season (Sept. 15) it was found inadvisable to dismiss all the patrol force, as conditions at that time were more hazardous than they had been at any previous time this year. Twelve or fifteen guards were kept on duty until Sept. 30th, and

a smaller number until rain came on October 25th.

In September and October the spread of fires was checked by damp, cold nights, and also partly by heavy fogs. In green timber fires would not run to any serious extent, and were easily held in check by small fire-fighting forces. Logging slash was frequently set on fire by the unavoidable hazards incident to logging, and considerable areas were in several cases cleaned up without any damage to timber and equipment, although in other cases cut logs, logging equipment and camp buildings were destroyed.

The fire-fighting expense in Vancouver and Island districts was about \$7,500, which is only half the amount spent in 1915.

The area burned over this year in these two districts is 10,000 acres, compared with 140,729 acres in 1915. Included in the area burned this season is 300 acres merchantable timber and 8,648 acres logging slash, etc.

The damage done last year amounted to \$85,000, so that this year's loss, amounting to \$10,505, compares very favorably with the previous season.

In all, 1,135,000 feet of merchantable timber was killed on the British Columbia coast in 1916, of which about one-half will be logged without much loss. Last year 73 million feet were killed, of which about 43 million feet was reckoned to be salvable, being accessible for immediate logging.