

Forest stand improvement measures include control of fire, disease, and insect damage; cutting out weak trees and excessive vegetative cover; replanting harvested or burned-out areas promptly with commercially superior varieties; and harvesting overage stands of trees, which have a negative growth rate, before the harvest of younger stands in which the net volume of usable wood is still increasing.

The harvest of dead or fallen timber also adds significantly to commercially usable timber supplies.

At present, roughly 35 percent of the annual growth of our forest inventories are lost to fire, disease, and other sources of timber mortality.

An intensified forest stand improvement program can, according to the Forest Service, considerably reduce these mortality losses. In a recent public letter (copy attached) to Congressman Wyatt, the Forest Service estimated that the annual allowable cut could be increased by about 500 million board feet (log scale) per year. The budgetary cost is estimated at \$80 million, spread over 10 years. The balance of payments value of this increase in harvest is in the range of:

- \$40 to \$80 million per year, in the form of log exports (depending upon species and grade of log, etc.)
- \$70 to \$100 million per year, in the form of sawn lumber and plywood exports.

In addition, the Forest Service has an aerial balloon logging technology under development, as do the Canadians. This technique is considered promising, particularly for logging presently commercially inaccessible steep slopes (areas supporting very substantial timber volumes not currently a part of the annual allowable cut). A 1.0 billion board feet increase in the allowable cut in Washington, Oregon, and Alaska should be possible as a result, according to published Forest Service estimates. The budgetary cost of the necessary final developmental work is estimated at \$2-3 million.