

SURPLUS TIMBER AREAS

In the course of Deputy Assistant Secretary Greenwald's testimony on the subject of the softwood log export problem, a request was made that information be provided in support of his comments to the effect that there are surplus timber areas which with additional investment would yield a greater log supply. The information is as follows:

In his comments on the subject of surplus timber areas the Department of State representative had in mind three lodgepole pine areas where the Forest Service is making plans to increase cutting in the hope of harvesting the timber before it is damaged and lost to use by insect destruction. According to the Forest Service, two of these three areas are in regions where the established forest industry has smaller manufacturing capacity than the amount which would result from the desired increase in cutting.

The names and a brief description of the areas prepared by the Forest Service follow:

Lodgepole pine in eastern Oregon

There is a body of commercial lodgepole pine in Oregon located between Bend and Klamath Falls on the east slope of the Cascade Mountains. This timber is in the southern Deschutes and northern Winema and Fremont National Forests. Some of these stands are on Bureau of Land Management lands in the vicinity of La Pine. There are about 130,000 acres of private lodgepole timber in this vicinity which are owned by the Crown Zellerbach and Boise Cascade Corporations.

This area is served by the Southern Pacific and Great Northern Railways. It is about 200 rail-miles from Portland, Oregon.

The average lodgepole pine in this area is approximately 12 inches in diameter at breast height and contains about three 16-foot logs to an 8-inch top.

Total commercial volume on these three National Forests is estimated at 2.4 billion board feet in trees 9 inches and over. About 75 percent of these lodgepole stands are considered to have sufficient quality for sawlog utilization. About 70 percent of the outturn from a typical sawlog is in standard or better lumber grades.

Because of bark beetle problems, the Forest Service is scheduling the cutting of substantial volumes of the mature lodgepole stands on these National Forests within the next 20 to 30 years. The current sales program is at the rate of 100 million board feet per year. Present installed capacity is about 45 million board feet per year and is expected to increase. The National Forest cut last year was about 25 million board feet.

Targhee National Forest

The Targhee National Forest is located in southeastern Idaho. Lodgepole pine is the major species of the Targhee National Forest. Lodgepole pine sawtimber volume is 3.236 billion board feet on 374,000 acres. This timber stands on a rolling high plateau south and west of Yellowstone National Park. The area is served by the West Yellowstone branch of the Union Pacific Railroad. For export, logs would be hauled south to Pocatello, Idaho, and then west on the Union Pacific mainline to Portland or other Columbia River ports. Rail distance from Ashton, Idaho, to Portland, Oregon, is 830 miles.

Normal allowable cut of lodgepole pine for the Targhee Forest is 51 million board feet annually. The current annual cut is about 20 million board feet per year. Because of bark beetle problems, the Forest Service is planning to accelerate cutting of mature lodgepole pine. Practically all sawtimber-sized stands are considered mature. The Forest Service is now developing a sales program to obtain lodgepole pine cutting at a rate of 100 to 150 million board feet per year above current cutting rates for the next 10 years.

Wasatch and Ashley National Forests

These two forests are located in northeastern Utah. There is need to accelerate cutting of lodgepole pine because of bark beetle problems on the portion of these two Forests which lie on the north slope of the Uinta Mountains. Total volume of lodgepole pine in this area is 920 million board feet.

The portion of the north slope of the Uinta Mountains which is covered with lodgepole is generally smooth and gentle. It is close to ideal terrain for logging.

The nearest railheads for this timber are on the Union Pacific mainline from Evanston to Green River, Wyoming. Rail distance from Evanston to Sacramento, California, is 770 miles and from Green River to Portland, Oregon, is 970 miles.

Normal allowable cut of lodgepole pine on the Ashley and Wasatch Forests is