There is great promise in precommercial thinning of young stands. This treatment not only shortens the time needed to produce tree sizes which can be commercially thinned, but also increases the gross wood yield. Other direct benefits are stand quality improvement, wildlife enhancement and improved aesthetics. BLM has 85,000 acres of young growth stands in western Oregon which need precommercial thinning.

BLM is cooperating in studies on the use of fertilizer. However, before any program can be recommended, we first need to know more about fertilizing costs, nutrient needs, duration of effect, soils and site, application methods and growth response.

In the field of forest genetics, slow but solid progress is being made. BLM has ten seed producing areas in western Oregon which are providing increased amounts of superior seed for nursery produced seedlings. Two seed orchards are being developed to produce tree seed from selected "plus" trees. We are actively participating with the OSU Forest Laboratory in improving trees through hybrid development.

On the more promising side, however, is the development of rust resistant strains of white and sugar pine. If current tests prove out, these two threatened valuable commercial species will again be available for reforestation on the sites where they grow best.