

The Growing Demand for Timber

The 1965 "Timber Trends in the United States" forecasts a doubling in the domestic use of timber by the year 2000. Western Oregon and Washington are now supplying 45 percent of the national softwood requirements for forest products. However, log exports from this area have risen from about 100 million board feet in 1960 to an estimated 1.6 billion board feet in 1967, and this has been projected to 3.0 billion board feet in 1970. About 95 percent of these logs go to Japan. Domestic and foreign demand for timber is adding to severe strains upon timber supplies in this region.

This in turn produces the request by the domestic timber industry for protection by limiting the export of timber cut from Federal lands. This action is urged by industry to curb stumpage costs and increase supplies in the hope it will alleviate their problems.

The log supply in the Douglas fir region given present access facilities is inelastic. The installed mill capacity exceeds available log supplies. Demand, particularly for preferred species, exceeds supply as evidenced by the decade-long gap between appraised and bid prices and the activity of bidders. Further increases in log exports intensify this situation.

No specific study has been made to determine the precise source of logs exported. It is estimated that one-third of log exports from western Oregon and western Washington come from National Forest and BLM lands