

"STAGE CONSTRUCTION" OF A ROAD IS NOT AN ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE

Our records show that we have built, and unfortunately are continuing to build, too many miles of road which are not suitable for full multiple use management of Forest resources. At the present time the cost of bringing existing roads up to desirable standards would exceed \$4,000,000,000. This situation exists at the same time we are faced with the necessity of opening up vast new areas to get presently unproductive timber stands under management. Quite contrary to some industry comments our primary roads deficiency has been our inability to build roads to handle even the present traffic volumes in the most economic manner. We do not consider stage construction as a desirable approach to developing an effective economic transportation system.

RELATIONSHIP OF "PRUDENT OPERATOR" ROADS TO "MAXIMUM ECONOMY" ROADS

The House Committee Report #1920 on S. 1147 Sept. 30, 1964 "Under its existing statutory authority to sell timber, the Forest Service may not require a purchaser of Federal timber as an incident of his timber purchase contract to build a road to a standard higher than necessary for harvesting the timber involved in the particular sale. Nor may the excess cost of such higher standard road be charged against the timber sold, even if the purchaser agreed to build it. Roads which a prudent operator would deem necessary to harvest timber in a particular sale are called "prudent operator" roads.

The prudent operator concept cannot be equated with practices by private timber land owners or purchasers of private timber on private lands.

Certain practices such as improper clearing, inadequate drainage, impingement upon live streams and unstable cut and fill areas are incompatible with the management of National Forest lands. Road construction by any Forest permittee, licensee, or purchaser of government timber must comply with minimum "prudent" management concepts on National Forest lands. These land husbandry requirements must be basic for any permanent facility constructed as part of a government timber sale.

We must recognize, however, that we are developing and managing public lands and roads to be retained on the permanent road system which are used (or will be used) for more than one particular sale. Such roads must be planned, designed, and constructed to meet all of the needs (including future timber sales), and also to protect all the resources of the lands. Where the cost of such a "maximum economy" road is greater than that of a prudent operator road, we use the method of supplementing the construction with appropriated funds to develop a road system which will make its full contribution to the resources and users of the National Forests.

RECONSTRUCTION OF EXISTING ROADS AS A REQUIREMENT OF A TIMBER SALE CONTRACT

Some timber industry spokesmen have taken the position that a road which has been constructed as a condition of a timber sale could never in the future be upgraded as a requirement of a future timber sale.

Following are some examples of such situations: Following the first timber sale, which built the road and prior to additional sales Forest users such as hunters, fishermen and other recreationists start using the road and use it to nearly its full design capacity. When the next sale is proposed in the area there is a requirement that the purchaser of the government timber rebuild the existing road to increase the capacity necessary for that sale prior to hauling timber over the road. This condition may also occur when there is a larger sale or the haul distance is greater. This can occur where there is little or no "other" traffic but there is a change in the economics of the haul, i.e., new types of hauling equipment, a higher rate of log removal is anticipated or a longer hauling season.

We know that the best cure for this problem is to build the "maximum economy" road in the first place. If we had the necessary financing this would be the usual procedure. Another alternative in some instances is to close the road to all public traffic other than timber hauling. The third alternative would be not to make sales where the existing road is inadequate. The prudent operator concept should not prevent such a road from being rebuilt to a standard desirable to remove the timber from the current sale under existing conditions as a requirement of the timber sale contract.