

## “ECW AND CCC”

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With all of the popular publicity on the Emergency Conservation Work in the daily papers and elsewhere it is refreshing, to say the least, to have a straightforward account of the undertaking, and a frank appraisal of it, from our own over-busy president, who, since April last has been keeping no N. R. A. code hours, but has been devoting his nights and Sundays in addition, to helping get the conservation camps started and their work properly organized. We are indebted also to Robley Evans and Basil Wales that they have thought it worth while to take a bit of time off and tell us about the “stand improvement” activities in their respective territories, what there is to be done and how they are going about it. These three stories, supplemented by Leon Kneipp’s summary of the federal forest acquisition program constitute a concise symposium on the E. C. W. and its significance to the American forestry movement which no member of the profession should miss.

**I**N the early part of last April the best-known member of the Society of American Foresters said to the chief of the Forest Service and his nine regional foresters: “Get all the foresters you can to help you on this Emergency Conservation Work; I doubt if there are enough foresters in the country to fill the need.”

And so it proved to be. The President was right. The scene changed magically from one in which hundreds of foresters were looking for jobs to one of scarcity. On August 1 there were 2,100 foresters employed in supervisory positions in the 1,257 camps under the general jurisdiction of the U. S. Forest Service. One would not suppose there were that many jobless foresters in the United States. Perhaps some men have been incorrectly classified as foresters in response to our inquiry as to the number of foresters employed, but the fact remains that except for an occasional member of the profession who turns up still out of a job, there is a scarcity of real, trademarked foresters. True, the President kept the pay rates modest, but foresters have reason to hail “ECW” both as an opportunity to recontact the payroll and as a dramatization of forestry and an ad-

vancement of many of its objectives the like of which no man has seen before.

Because almost every forester in the land is directly or indirectly connected with the project, it seems like carrying coals to Newcastle to write for forester consumption an article about Emergency Conservation Work, but who am I to gainsay the editor? Perhaps it will be new to some of our Canadian members and foreign readers.

Those close to the President say that for several years he has had close to his heart the idea of bringing workless men and work-hungry forests together for mutual benefit. Seventeen days after his inauguration he asked Congress to give effect to his plan. Ten days later the Act of March 31, 1933, “An act for the relief of unemployment through the performance of useful public work, and for other purposes” was on the books. In five days more the President had a Director of Emergency Conservation Work on the job, aided and advised by a four-man council representing the Departments of War, Labor, Agriculture and Interior—Colonel Major of the General Staff, W. Frank Persons, Chief Forester Stuart, National Parks Director Albright (now Cammerer).

The heart of the popularly-dubbed "re-forestation act" is in the first two sections, quoted below:

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That for the purpose of relieving the acute condition of wide-spread distress and unemployment now existing in the United States, and in order to provide for the restoration of the country's depleted natural resources and the advancement of an orderly program of useful public works, the President is authorized, under such rules and regulations as he may prescribe and by utilizing such existing departments or agencies as he may designate, to provide for employing citizens of the United States who are unemployed, in the construction, maintenance and carrying on of works of a public nature in connection with the forestation of lands belonging to the United States or to the several States which are suitable for timber production, the prevention of forest fires, floods and soil erosion, plant pest and disease control, the construction, maintenance or repair of paths, trails and fire-lanes in the national parks and national forests, and such other work on the public domain, national and State, and Government reservations incidental to or necessary in connection with any projects of the character enumerated, as the President may determine to be desirable: Provided, That the President may in his discretion extend the provisions of this Act to lands owned by counties and municipalities and lands in private ownership, but only for the purpose of doing thereon such kinds of coöperative work as are now provided for by Acts of Congress in preventing and controlling forest fires and the attacks of forest tree pests and diseases and such work as is necessary in the public interest to control floods. The President is further authorized, by regulation, to provide for housing the persons so employed and for furnishing them with such subsistence, clothing, medical attendance and hos-

pitalization, and cash allowance, as may be necessary, during the period they are so employed, and, in his discretion, to provide for the transportation of such persons to and from the places of employment. That in employing citizens for the purposes of this Act no discrimination shall be made on account of race, color, or creed; and no person under conviction for crime and serving sentence therefor shall be employed under the provisions of this Act. The President is further authorized to allocate funds available for the purpose of this Act, for forest research, including forest products investigations, by the Forest Products Laboratory.

Sec. 2. For the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act the President is authorized to enter into such contracts or agreements with States as may be necessary, including provisions for utilization of existing State administrative agencies, and the President, or the head of any department or agency authorized by him to construct any project or to carry on any such public works, shall be authorized to acquire real property by purchase, donation, condemnation, or otherwise, but the provisions of section 355 of the Revised Statutes shall not apply to any property so acquired."

At once decision was reached to enroll 250,000 men and confine the enrollment to young unmarried men between 18 and 25, unemployed, and willing to allot most of their monthly cash allowance of \$30.00 to dependents. The enrollment was divided between states in proportion to population. A little later it was decided to enroll approximately 35,000 unemployed so-called "local woodsmen" in the immediate vicinity of the work projects, without regard to age or marital status, in order to give the local men a fair break and to insure a friendly neighborhood for the "imported" workers. Ten thousand of this quota were taken from the 250,000, leaving 240,000 younger men, while 25,000 were added, making a total enrollment of

275,000, later increased to 300,000 by a quota of 25,000 war veterans.

The Department of Labor, acting through W. Frank Persons, promptly began the selection of the young men, enlisting the services of state relief agencies. The local woodsmen were selected by the federal or state forestry or park services in collaboration with relief agencies.

The War Department was commissioned by the President to physically examine the selected men, enroll them, condition them at temporary concentration camps, provide work clothing, transport the men to the forest camps, erect and service the camps, care for the men's physical and spiritual needs, and develop recreational and educational opportunities. The Army had all men in forest camps by July 1, except the veterans, who were enrolled in July. Likewise, during the first half of July, additional enrollments of local men were made to replace losses and bring each camp up to an enrolled strength of approximately 200 men.

Here it should be stated that the President decided on the 200-man camp unit as best suited to the need for adequate care and discipline of the men. Many foresters preferred smaller camps, but this new, untried combination of city men and the backwoods work actuated the President to decide otherwise.

Meanwhile, federal and state foresters and park officers were laying out work projects, hiring supervisory and technical personnel, laying in stocks of equipment and supplies, collaborating with the Army in selecting exact camp locations and aiding the Army in procuring equipment and supplies for camp construction. The U. S. Forest Service had fortified itself for such a contingency by assembling during the fall of the preceding year a program of work which might be done in the national forests if a forest work relief plan should be adopted on a large scale, and had gathered some similar data from

state foresters. The National Park Service promptly assembled work programs for the national parks and monuments, and for state parks in collaboration with state park agencies.

Naturally there was some confusion at the outset as to just what activities would be permissible under the Act. A meeting of federal regional foresters and state forestry representatives held in Washington on April 6, at the call of the Secretary of Agriculture, struggled with the interpretation of the scope of the Act, and prepared the first draft of a program of work and camp locations. There followed the steady development of "finishing touches" and interpretations and soon emerged the following decisions on permissible work on forest lands:

#### NATIONAL FOREST LANDS

Preventing and controlling forest fires.  
Controlling the attacks of blister rust and other forest tree diseases.

Controlling the attacks of insects which harm or kill forest trees.

Forest planting.

Improvement of the timber stands by thinnings and removal of undesirable trees.

Removal of fire hazards such as standing dead trees, old logs and brush along roads and trails, etc.

Preparation of fire breaks.

Control of soil erosion, particularly in the interest of flood control.

Eradication of poisonous plants which prevent or diminish the use of the forest ranges by permitted range livestock.

Eradication of rodents destructive of forest growth or forest ranges.

Revegetation of overgrazed forest ranges.

Installation of simple means of communication and transportation for use in fire protection and forest administration, such as foot, horse and truck trails, tele-

phone lines, simple shelters for the protection and administration force, etc.

Forest timber and range surveys incidental to furthering the major purposes of the Act and the general development of the forest lands.

#### STATE-OWNED FOREST LANDS

Same classes of work as for national forest lands under the conditions established by the President whereby the state agrees to share with the federal government such profits as may result from the sale of the land or its products as a result of the work done, on the basis of the state paying for the work done at the rate of one dollar per man per day for the time spent on projects, subject to a maximum of three dollars per acre.

#### PRIVATE LANDS

The Act restricts activities on private lands as follows:

That the President may, in his discretion, extend the provisions of this Act to lands owned by counties and municipalities and lands in private ownership, but only for the purpose of doing thereon such kinds of coöperative work as are now provided for by Acts of Congress in preventing and controlling forest fires and the attacks of forest tree pests and diseases and such work as is necessary in the public interest to control floods.

Under this provision the President stated that work done on private lands is to be limited to that which is in the public interest for regional or state-wide forest protection against fire, insects and disease, and/or simple flood control measures to arrest gully erosion and flash run-off at the headwaters of mountain streams, the flood control measures to be limited to those which exert a measurable influence on the reduction of floods affecting the general public interest and ex-

cluding work done mainly or entirely for the benefit of the individual landowner.

Under the foregoing limitation, the following classes of work are permissible:

Preventing and controlling forest fires.

Removal of fire hazards such as standing dead trees, old logs and brush along roads and trails, etc. (This excludes any slash disposal or other hazard removal required of the landowner under state law.)

Controlling the attacks of blister rust and other forest tree diseases.

Controlling the attacks of insects which harm or kill forest trees.

Control of gullies and flash run-off at stream headwaters by means of simple check dams made of native materials and revegetation and keeping entirely out of the field of major flood control works such as are constructed by the Corps of Engineers of the United States Army.

Installation of simple means of communication and transportation, such as telephone lines, foot, horse, and truck trails, etc., and simple shelters for the protective organization, all as needed for protection purposes.

For national parks and monuments and state parks comparable classes of work were approved, adapted to the primary purpose of such reservation, which is preservation and development for educational and recreational use as opposed to economic use on the other classes of forest lands.

Except for minor modifications, the foregoing classes of work have been adhered to rigidly. This has been a disappointment to many petitioners who have wanted levees built, streams straightened, roadsides beautified, puncture weeds eradicated, wheat fields protected against rust by barberry eradication, farm lands terraced, highways built, and scores of other things done, all worthy enough, but not included in the purposes of the Act.

As specific camp locations were approved by the President, the Army built the camps and manned them, and men were turned over to the technical services for work in the woods as they were released from camp construction work. There were a good many exasperating delays in completion of camp construction, leaving few men for woods work, and in obtaining tools and equipment for the field work, so that in many cases, forest work accomplishments accumulated very slowly. Some of this delay was inevitable, some just bad management, but it is unnecessary to dwell on it here. Out of it, all concerned learned a lot about how to do better the next time, and with a relatively small and diminishing number of exceptions, the field officers of collaborating agencies have got together to attain the utmost in woods work accomplished.

The national forest work has been directly handled by the U. S. Forest Service. Work on state forests and on private forest lands has been immediately directed by state foresters or other state officers designated by the governor, with supervision by the U. S. Forest Service under the general plan followed under the Clarke-McNary Law. Similar arrangements prevail on the national parks and monuments and the state parks under the National Park Service. Other services have coöperated in their fields, such as the Bureau of Entomology, Bureau of Plant Industry, Bureaus of Agricultural Engineering and Chemistry and Soils (on erosion control), Bureau of Plant Quarantine and Control Administration and the Biological Survey.

Exclusive of 27 camps (companies of 200 men each) assigned to a special flood control project in Vermont, directed by the Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army, the division of camps for the first and second enrollment periods, by land ownership, is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
DIVISION OF CAMPS FOR THE FIRST AND SECOND  
ENROLLMENT PERIODS BY LAND OWNERSHIP

	April- September 1933	October 1933 -March 1934
National forest .....	586	432
O & C grant lands, Ore.....	6	8
Federal migratory bird refuges .....	3	2
National parks and monu- ments .....	70	61
Other federal .....	9	3
State forests .....	321	332
State parks .....	105	239
Private land (forest).....	217	236
Private land (erosion control) .....	122	101
Tennessee Valley Authority		25
	1439	1439

It is too early for quantitative expressions of results in work accomplished. An average of ten pounds gain in weight, deep tans from the waist up, restored spirits, testify to what it has done for the enrollees. For the forest lands of the country it has provided the means of speeding up protective measures and improvements so that in many places ten years' normal accomplishments will have been telescoped into less than one year. The statistics, as they accumulate, will be impressive, of miles of truck, horse and foot trails, telephone lines and fire breaks, numbers of lookout towers and houses, guard cabins, acres of white pine protected against blister rust and gypsy moth, fire carrying snags laid flat, range-ruining rodents poisoned, gullies dammed and/or planted, acres planted to trees, and—one of the President's particular objectives, acres and acres of forest stands thinned and improved.

Some of these jobs found foresters not fully equipped to handle them on a sudden gigantic scale. Lacking previous opportunity to do more than experiment with thinnings and stand improvement, there was only a comparative handful of foresters skilled in the technique. Training schools in the woods had to be hasti-

ly assembled and the men chosen for leaders given intensive training in a short time. Erosion control found us least prepared, that, too, for lack of previous chance to go in for it in a big way. The Bureaus of Agricultural Engineering and Chemistry and Soils have been a tower of strength to us by detailing men and helping to plan, direct, and inspect the work. The gap between objective and accomplishment is still the widest here, but is being steadily narrowed.

"ECW" is costing a lot of money. Viewed as a straight work project, it could never be justified in its present form. Likewise, as a straight relief project, it would be far too costly. But it is neither. Rather, it is a combination designed by the President to afford work relief to men involuntarily idle at the threshold of their lives by putting them to work on projects badly needed in the forests and long prayed for by forest managers. Work hours limited to 40 per week, including travel and lunch time, often resulting in only four or five hours per day on the job, naturally will not result in as much accomplished in the woods as under normal employment. (Incidentally, a minimum of six hours a day on the job will be the rule for the second enrollment period.) Some men have been slackers, and have been discharged. Others have just wanted to "get by"; but the great majority has caught the spirit of the thing and has turned out results, and if not equal to experienced woodsmen, at least not discreditably below their performance. It has been gratifying to see men develop a pride and competency in handling the superior tools, like axe and saw, leaving behind exultantly the shovel and pick. Astute foremen have almost made men cry by sending them back to the lowly tools when they have botched a job with axe or saw, or dulled or broken these tools carelessly.

So, the appraisal of results is not a

task for the cold analysis of a certified public accountant. The results of the ECW experiment should be appraised by a wise administrator versed and responsible in the field of both social and economic values.

There are many who think that some permanent adaptation of the Civilian Conservation Corps may emerge from this trial. If so, foresters should be developing suggestions for the best form of such a project. It is my hope that our annual meeting discussions will contribute substantially to the development of the idea, if it is one practical and worthy.

So much for the main show. There are two ECW side-shows which in ordinary times would qualify as major exhibits. One is the \$20,000,000 forest land acquisition program initiated by the President, the other the ECW forest research program approved by the President.

Having in mind the desirability of acquiring additional national forest land in the eastern part of the country, the South particularly, on which part of the CCC could be employed, especially during the winter, the President was not long in authorizing a fund of \$20,000,000 for this purpose under the authority of Section 2 of the Emergency Conservation Work Act. This money was set up for national forest acquisition in the territory east of the Great Plains within units heretofore or hereafter established by the National Forest Reservation Commission. Purchasing is under way and is expected to result in the acquisition of between 7 million and 8 million acres of land within two years, which will approximately double the acreage of the eastern national forests.

In the field of forest research the President approved ECW funds for a program estimated to cost \$348,000 for the Forest Service, \$30,000 for the Bureau of Plant Industry and \$20,000 for the Bureau of Entomology, all to be ex-

pended on projects which would tie in with the work being done from the CCC Camps. This coupled with NRA funds allotted to research gives that line of work a big boost.

To all who are thinking of long-term plans for the development of forestry in this country, the bearing of ECW on a

national plan must be apparent. Fundamental things like the improvement of forest protection and stand improvements, vital factors in any such plan, are being accelerated to a marked degree. It is essential that any such large effort as the ECW be well coördinated with a national plan.



A forest of more than 3,000 acres and securities valued at about \$200,000 have been bequeathed to the University of Virginia under the will of Dr. Walter M. Seward, of Brunswick County, Va. The land is to be used by the University for "Practical demonstrations in the art of forestry" and the money "toward the maintenance and upbuilding of the school of forestry."