



Ogden, Utah

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FOREST SERVICE DISCLOSES INSECT CONTROL AND RESEARCH PLANS

The Department of Agriculture's Forest Service today announced program plans for spraying 500,000 acres of Salmon National Forest lands in Idaho this spring to curb a serious epidemic of spruce budworm threatening valuable stands of timber.

The 1964 program has been studied and approved by the Federal Pest Control Review Board which was organized in 1961. This board is composed of two members each from the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Defense, and Health, Education and Welfare. It recommends approval or rejection of any and all Federally-proposed pesticide control programs.

Before approving a program, the Board thoroughly studies each proposal from the standpoint of problems arising from pesticide use which pose hazards to human health, livestock, crops, fish, wildlife and to the economic well-being of business, industry, agriculture and the public.

The Forest Service, which has observed the Salmon National Forest infestation for four years and has deferred action in the hope that natural disease or parasites would halt the epidemic, reports that this has failed to develop and it is now forced to spray to save the trees in the area.

Preliminary to the 1964 program, a 16,000-acre demonstration of procedures

and techniques to be followed on the 500,000-acre project was successfully performed in 1963. This was monitored by fish and game conservationists and many others.

Insect and other forest pests annually destroy more timber than fire, damage wildlife habitat, and frequently leave vast areas of ghost forest. Dead snags which create dangerous forest fire conditions put a blight on the beauty of the landscape and could retard the Forest Service's timber growing timetable by a hundred years or more in the affected area.

During the past decade, Forest Service aerial spraying has successfully controlled insect epidemics on 16,000,000 acres of forest and park lands in America.

With full awareness of the national concern over pesticide use, the Forest Service has drawn on its 15 years of experience in aerial spraying to produce this year its most thoroughly planned and carefully screened control program.

The Forest Service consults regularly with Federal and State fish and wildlife services and with State and Federal public health agencies before applying pesticides.

To combat epidemics of tree defoliators, such as the spruce budworm, insecticides applied by low-flying aircraft are the only presently available weapons which can effectively do the job. As added protection for fish in aerial spray areas, the normal dosage of one pound of DDT per acre will be cut to 1/2 pound near lakes and streams. Within 100 feet

or more, depending on the slope, no spraying will be done.

Forest Service research scientists are searching for new non-persistent chemicals as well as non-chemical methods for combating forest insects and diseases. A new pesticide laboratory at Berkeley, California, is giving full attention to accelerating progress in this field.

As part of this research effort, the Forest Service plans to conduct a pilot test this year to determine effectiveness of one of the newer insecticides called Dimethoate against the spruce budworm. A heavily-infested area of about 2,000 acres on the Salmon National Forest has been selected for the study. This non-persistent chemical will be sprayed by helicopter. Four ounces of the insecticide in one gallon of fuel oil will be applied at the rate of one gallon per acre. This important test is another attempt by the Forest Service to find an acceptable substitute for DDT, the most effective pesticide to knock out a spruce budworm epidemic with a single application. Scientists have determined that 95 percent or more of the insect population must be killed in the operation to be successful.

This is in line with a major effort by the U. S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior to find an effective non-persistent substitute for DDT. In western Montana the two Departments are conducting, this year, the first large-scale experimental use of Malathion. It is the hope of forestry officials that from the various tests being run this year, an effective non-persistent forest insecticide will be found. (Details of the precautions being followed on the Salmon National Forest DDT spray project are attached.)

The following precautions will be exercised in applying insecticides on all forest pest control projects in 1964:

1. A non-spray strip varying in width from 100 feet to one-quarter mile depending on slope to the stream and forest cover will be left along main streams, lakes, and other sensitive areas.
2. The dosage rate of DDT will not exceed $1/2\#$ per acre along another strip up to about 400 feet adjoining the spray-free zones. The remainder of the area will receive treatment at the rate of one pound per acre.
3. Helicopters will be used for applying insecticides in most sensitive areas.
4. To the extent possible, spray blocks will be laid out in a manner to minimize spray drift into water, and other non-forested areas, and spraying timed to catch air currents moving away from and not into sensitive areas.
5. Spraying will be restricted to times when wind velocity is less than six miles per hour and temperatures below 68 degrees. These are usually the early morning hours following daybreak.
6. Aerial observers will be on constant duty during spraying operations to see that pilots are applying insecticides as instructed. The observers are empowered to ground a pilot for infractions of rules and to suspend operations when the spray pattern begins to break up.
7. Spraying aircraft will be accurately calibrated to discharge prescribed amounts of pesticides and checked frequently to assure that the application rate is correct.
8. Aircraft will be rigidly checked to see that plane and spraying equipment are in good mechanical condition.

9. Spray pilots will be carefully briefed to avoid to the extent possible flying over lakes, pastures and residential areas, or parallel to streams. They will also be instructed to avoid overlaps and skips in making spray runs and to turn around on ridge tops rather than stream bottoms.
10. When fill-in spraying is needed, care will be taken to avoid retreating an area adequately covered initially.
11. To minimize drift spray planes will fly as close to tree-top level as safety requirements permit.
12. Major spraying projects will be monitored and evaluated from the standpoint of effects of spraying on the environment.

