

Fall Fire Weather Worst Since 1936

Fall forest fire weather in western Washington and western Oregon this year was more severe than in any fall since 1936, according to Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station Director R. W. Cowlin. Spring and summer fire weather was near normal.

Considering the April through October fire season as a whole, PNW station forest fire researchers found that in terms of rainless days the 1952 season was as dry as any of the past 17 in western Washington and drier than any of the previous 30 seasons in western Oregon. Rainfall totals for the season were also low with only June having normal amounts west of the Cascade divide.

In contrast to this year, fire weather in 1951 was less severe in the fall and much more severe in spring and summer.

Lightning storms, always responsible for a large number of forest fires in the Pacific Northwest, were fewer than normal this year in Oregon's coastal mountains but more frequent than normal in the southern Oregon Cascades. They were near the normal number in the northern Cascades and in eastern Oregon in June through September.

Fire weather in the fall period September 16 to October 31, was unusually severe. Total number of rainless days was the greatest since 1936. Average time since a wetting rain (.25 inch or more)

was the greatest since 1936 in western Oregon and since 1942 in western Washington. The burn-index in western Oregon was exceeded only by that of 1936 and in western Washington it was the highest since records were begun in 1944.

Burning index is a measure of the combined effect of relative humidity and wind speed on the rate at which a forest fire spreads. Burning index, total number of days with no rain, and average number of days since a wetting rain are ratings used by forest fire protection men to measure the effectiveness of their work.

Even in November the weather continued to follow the unusual pattern of 1936. Frequent parching east winds during normally rainy October and November greatly concerned forest fire protection agencies.

The fall of 1936 was a black period in northwest fire history. On many days that fall, strong drying east winds drove debris and logging slash fires out of control. Major fires raged west of the Cascades and many fire crews spent Thanksgiving on the fire line. Residents of Bandon on the southern Oregon coast recall the night of Sep. 26, 1936, when fire swirled out of the hills to destroy their homes and business establishments. Although 1952 fall weather was almost as severe, serious fires were not nearly as numerous.

Although rainy days were few in both Oregon and Washington during the summer period of 1952, general rains in late June and

Oregon 4-H'ers Win National Honors

HIGHEST honors were accorded six 4-H Club members recently when they were named national winners in their project work. Pictured here are Oregon's national winners in Girls' Record, Health, Achievement, Tractor Maintenance, Poultry and Canning.



Joanne Lehman



Lee Glaske



Frances Hughson



Cecil Thames

Joanne Lehman, 17, of Dayton, a 9-year 4-H'er has prepared 717 meals, 183 dishes, 62 baked items and canned 212 quarts, 162 pints, 75 containers of pickles and relishes, 261 containers of jellies and jams, and prepared 585 pounds and 613 containers of frozen foods. Joanne has won 5 championships at the state fair in food preservation. She also has made 20 garments, 9 articles, and remodeled 4 garments in clothing. She has 5 registered Jersey heifers. Joanne is a freshman at Oregon State College.

Lee Glaske, 15, Hillsboro, leads a 4-H health group and spoke over the radio on the program. Members tested wells and surveyed hazards. At school they cleaned the first aid room and obtained the names of children not vaccinated for the county nurse and doctor. He plans to study medicine. Lee received a \$100 Savings Bond. Awards donor is Kellogg Co. of Battle Creek.

Frances Hughson, 18, of Albany, in nine 4-H years worked in 14 different homemaking projects, but the barnyard knows her too for successfully handling sheep, pigs and steers and for a very tidy income. As state clothing winner she attended the 1951 Club Congress. This year she headed the committee raising funds for the International Farm Youth Exchange.

Cecil Thames, 17, of Medford, kept service and cost records on more than 800 hours of operation on 2 tractors. He applied fuel conservation practices, proper lubrication, tire service, storage and many other services for more efficient tractor operation. Cecil has received awards for his tractor demonstrations at county and state fairs. He has served as president and vice president of the



Glen Klock



Carol Ann Burgin

Jackson County Tractor Club.

Glen Klock, 15, of Troutdale, had the distinct advantage in his poultry work of strong backing and expert guidance from his parents, the Orval A. Klocks. Both were 4-H members of note, especially his mother, the former Dorothy Wheeler. A desire to earn some money and the availability of 2 acres induced Glen to buy New Hampshire chicks locally. They turned out well as layers and show birds, but in 1949 he bought chicks of registered ancestry and since has sold eggs to hatcheries. Surplus goes to special customers. In six years the boy has contributed \$645.38 worth of poultry products to the family's living.

Carol Ann Burgin, 18, of Days Creek, freshman at Oregon State College, has carried an individual canning project for six years under the instruction of her mother, Mrs. H. D. Burgin. Betty has canned 1304 pints of garden produce, meats, jam, jellies and relishes and has led her own canning club for a number of years. She has made 6 local, 22 county, 17 state and 3 interstate exhibits, winning blue ribbons or championships every year since 1949. Five demonstrations on canning techniques have received county championships since 1949.

In addition to the all-expense trip to National 4-H Club Congress at Chicago, awarded to each, the following members received a \$300 college scholarship from their awards donors: Joanne Lehman, Girls' Record, Montgomery Ward; Frances Hughson, Achievement, Ford Motor Co.; Cecil Thames, Tractor Maintenance, General Petroleum; Glen Klock, Poultry, Dearborn Motors; and Carol Ann Burgin, Canning, Kerr Glass Mfg. Co. All these programs are conducted under the direction of the Cooperative Extension Service.

early September decreased the average time since a wetting rain. In Western Washington, these were supplemented by wetting rains in late July and again in late August so that the summer was effectively broken into comparatively short dry periods. Summer burning index was slightly below normal in western Oregon but above normal in western Washington.

"The comparatively low acreage burned this year as compared with 1936 is testimony to the excellent progress made by all agencies in reducing forest fire losses and to the fine cooperation received from forest users," Cowlin said. "Particularly in the period since mid-September when burning conditions approximated those of the disastrous 1936 fall, the record shows a job well done."

John B. Veach, chairman of the National Lumber Manufacturers association, predicts that consumers will get greater value and better service for their lumber dollars during 1953.

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