

# Coquille Valley Sentinel

COQUILLE, OREGON

FEBRUARY 24, 1949.

## Lowered Returns From Wagon Grant Timber Lands, Prompt Interest

By L. D. FELSHEIM, Coos County Judge

Diminishing returns, year after year, from the federally-owned reconveyed Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant lands in Coos county, have prompted keen interest in the reappraisal of these lands which is now in progress.

Coos county revenues from federally-owned timber lands come from three different sources, each based on a different method of payment.

O. & C. lands pay on a basis of 50 per cent of the revenue from the lands distributed by the government, between the 18 counties in Oregon in which the land is situated, each county receiving a proportion comparable to the acreage existing in that county in 1915. An additional 25 per cent is credited to the account of the counties with the U. S. treasurer in payment of reversionary debt. When the debt is paid this 25 per cent will be divided between the counties.

U. S. Forest Service pays to the counties 25 per cent of revenues, distributed according to the acreage each county has within each of the various forest areas.

Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands pay each year the amount of the county's combined tax levy for the district in which the land is situated, based on the original valuation placed on the federal lands in 1939. The act of congress, however, provides that a reappraisal shall be made every 10 years. The 10 year period is up in November, 1949.

### Lands in Two Counties

All of the Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands lie in Coos and Douglas counties. About two-thirds, or to be exact, 58,501.15 acres (as of 1947) are in Coos county.

In accordance with the reappraisal terms of the act, the county courts of Coos and Douglas counties requested the federal Bureau of Land Management to authorize a reappraisal. The bureau's recommendation to Secretary of the Interior Krug was accepted and Krug appointed an appraisal committee of three: Howard Conkle, Salem, timber specialist for

the state tax commission; G. C. Taylor, Portland, representing bureau of land management; Judge L. D. Felsheim, representing Coos and Douglas counties.

Secretary Krug also accepted the committee's recommendation that the field work for the reappraisal be done by the Coos county forestry department. This work, under direction of A. F. Moorehead, county forester, has been in progress during the past two summers. Appraisal crews were recruited largely from graduate students of Oregon State college and University of Washington forestry schools.

### Cause of Revenue Reductions

Reduction of revenues to the county has been caused by two factors: reduction in valuation due to timber sales, and reduction in tax levies in the county.

Here are some figures: In 1940 the valuation was \$593,839.00; the county levy was 21.9 mills; the average combined tax levy was 39.7 mills; and the tax revenue was \$25,544.51.

In 1947 the valuation had dropped to \$535,395.00, the county millage was down to 12.3, the combined millage 34.5, and the tax revenue was down to \$17,625.70.

Average for the eight years including 1940 to 1947 shows a valuation of \$570,270.00; county tax levy, 15.1 mills; combined tax levy 31.6 mills; average tax revenue \$16,260.81.

### Valuations Differ Widely

What valuations under the new appraisal will be is still problematical, but a comparison between 1939 valuations on Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant lands and adjacent privately owned timber lands may be used as a criterion.

Five timbered sections of CBWR grant lands, chosen to make a



**WHITE WATER MEN**—That's what they used to call these rivermen who ride the annual Coos Bay Lumber log drive down the Coquille. Caught by the camera here are some of the men helping to straighten out a minor log jam in the bend of the Coquille. (Coquille Studio Photo)

comparison, have valuation as of 1939 amounting to \$57,770.00; valuation of adjacent lands of similar type, \$106,433.22, or 83 per cent more.

If rates of land sold in 1946 were used in establishing valuation, it would be \$693,099.00, or almost 12 times as much. This indicates that the CBWR valuation should be increased 183 per cent for a valuation of \$1,043,594.10 to be equal in valuation to adjacent privately-owned lands.

### How Payment Compares

Interesting comparison as to methods of paying counties between O. & C. lands and CBWR grant lands is drawn from the following figures:

Tax revenue to Coos county from CBWR lands for the eight years from 1940 to and including 1947, was \$140,083.31, while timber sales from those lands (up to June 30, 1947) amounted to \$961,598.85. Under the O. & C. method of distribution, Coos county would have received \$480,799.42.

Through fair appraisal it is estimated that CBWR lands will bring increased revenues to Coos county in future years. The reappraisal must be made on a basis comparable to valuations existing on similar privately-owned timber lands. In order to secure a universal county-wide appraisal, the crews in the field for the CBWR lands have also appraised the alternate sections of privately-owned lands.

### Complete Appraisal Planned

It is the plan of the county court,

through its forestry department, to secure a complete reappraisal of all timber lands in the county in order that a continuous inventory might be established. This inventory, with growth of timber added from time to time, reductions made from cut reports and fire losses, can become a valuable permanent record upon which country-wide equitable assessment valuations can be based.

This does not necessarily mean that there will be a general advance in timber valuations, but rather that there will be a more equitable application of values, so that all timber will carry its rightful share of the tax burden. At the same time, the valuations to be placed must be with the knowledge that nothing should be done to make it impossible for private

enterprise to own and maintain lands for the purpose of growing timber in support of a sustained industry.

## Coast Publicity

Oregon Coast publicity folders for 1949, just off the press, have been released by the Oregon Coast association, Tillamook, for free distribution. These folders will be distributed to travel agents, automobile clubs, chambers of commerce and tour directors for distribution to the traveling public.

This year's publicity folder has been revised and displays a new cover design, designed by Frank Merrill of Merrill and Merrill of Albany. The front cover is a

**Robinson Hood**  
The Adventures of  
**ROBIN FLYNN**  
OLIVIA  
deNAVILLAND  
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scene, of Tillamook Head, taken in Clatsop county. The back cover shows scenes of Neahkahnie Mountain, a fishing fleet at Astoria and rocky coastline at Harris State Park in Curry county just north of Brookings. Scattered throughout the text are scenes of interesting coastal points. Airports or landing strips have been indicated on the center spread map for the convenience of sportsmen pilots as air travel by private plane is sufficient at the present time to make it mandatory. Mileage between points is indicated on the map as well as throughout the text which gives historical data, information, and points of interest to direct and aid the tourist.

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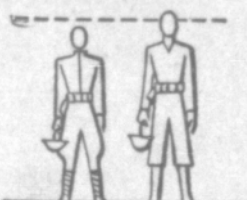
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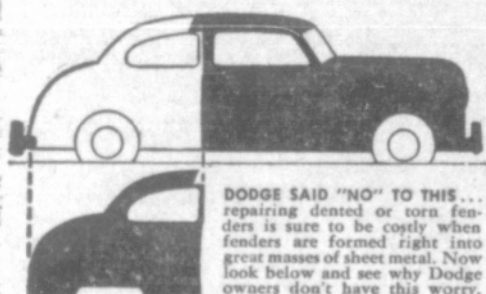
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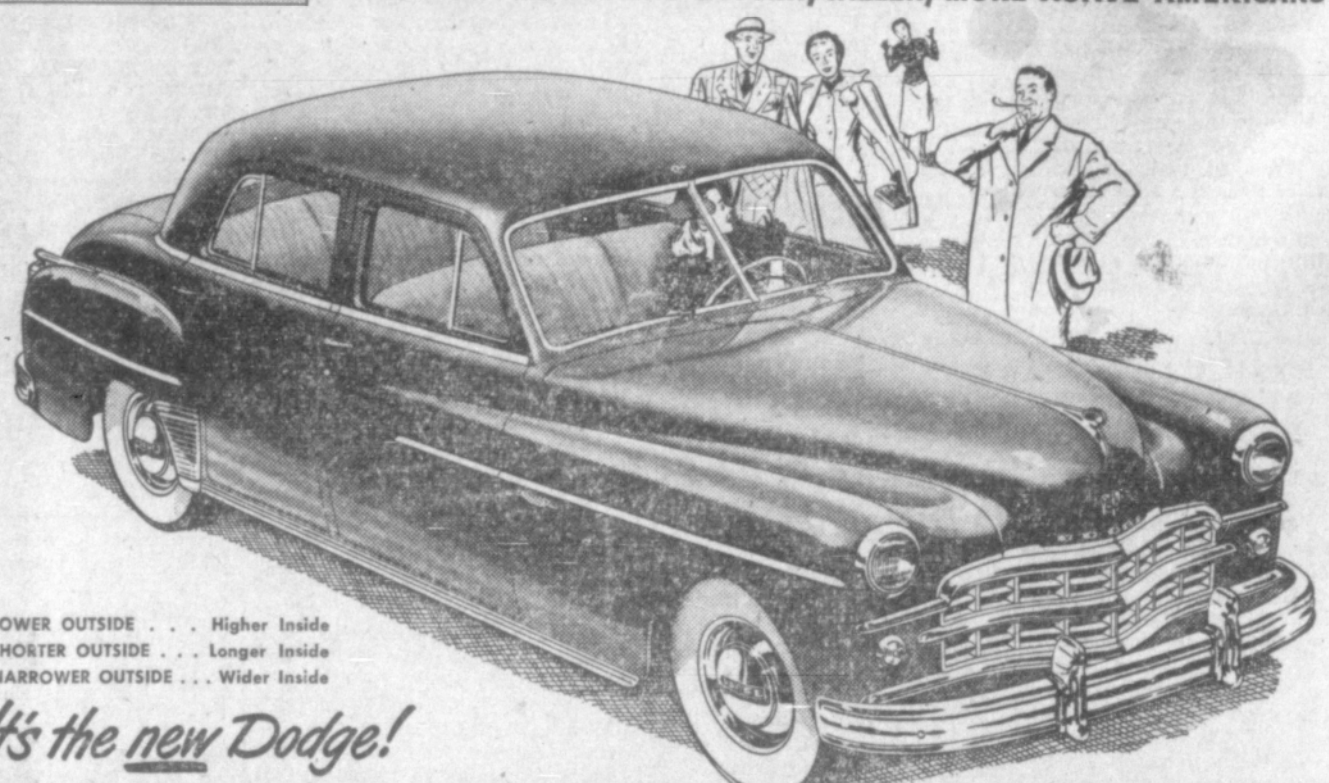
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