

Reforestation Program Carried Out On Slopes Of Mt. Shasta

By J. O. McKINNEY

A tree farm was begun on Mt. Shasta 20 years ago, and is expected to be in full development 20 years hence. By that time, experts say, most of the suitable land on the mountain will be growing pine trees that in time will supply food for sawmills of the area. That food supply is now beginning to show thin.

It is estimated that by the year 2000 there will be 86 per cent more logging being done here than at present. That is a long range view, but if the old-timers had taken such a look, there would be more timber here now.

The Mt. Shasta area was denuded of most of its virgin forests early in California's history. Logging without regard to what happened to timber not ready for harvest, disregarding slash, and carelessness with fire, resulted in a waste of potential lumber that rivaled the kill of the buffalo. All that is now changed but even time can never bring back the timber that was here in the long ago.

Twenty years ago the U.S. Forest Service decided to bring the mountain back into timber production. A planting campaign was put into effect. Various methods were tried, and some results were secured. Today there are scattered trees through the brush on the mountainside that survived the hazards confronting them, and some good stands of timber resulted. But most of the effort resulted only in learning what to do — and not to do.

One lesson learned well was that a little pine stood a poor chance of survival if planted among native shrubs and left to its fate. What the shrubs didn't smother, rabbits, squirrels, porcupines, and other animals usually destroyed. Competition for food against established root systems was the worst enemy.

In 1957, the Forest Service stripped brush from small rectangular plots, one chain wide, two chains long, and scattered so that no bare ground was a large enough spot for wind to whip away the silt-like soil, and the spots had a windbreak on every side. These plots were contoured so that water would not erode the small places. That method is successful to a high degree. One hundred and three such plots were planted with yearling seedlings eight feet apart, with a high survival rate. How high can not be told until they are larger.

During the spring of 1958, 50 acres were stripped, and planted. These strips are longer, wider than the first cleared areas, as the nature of the ground, and location away from the heavy winds made erosion less a problem.

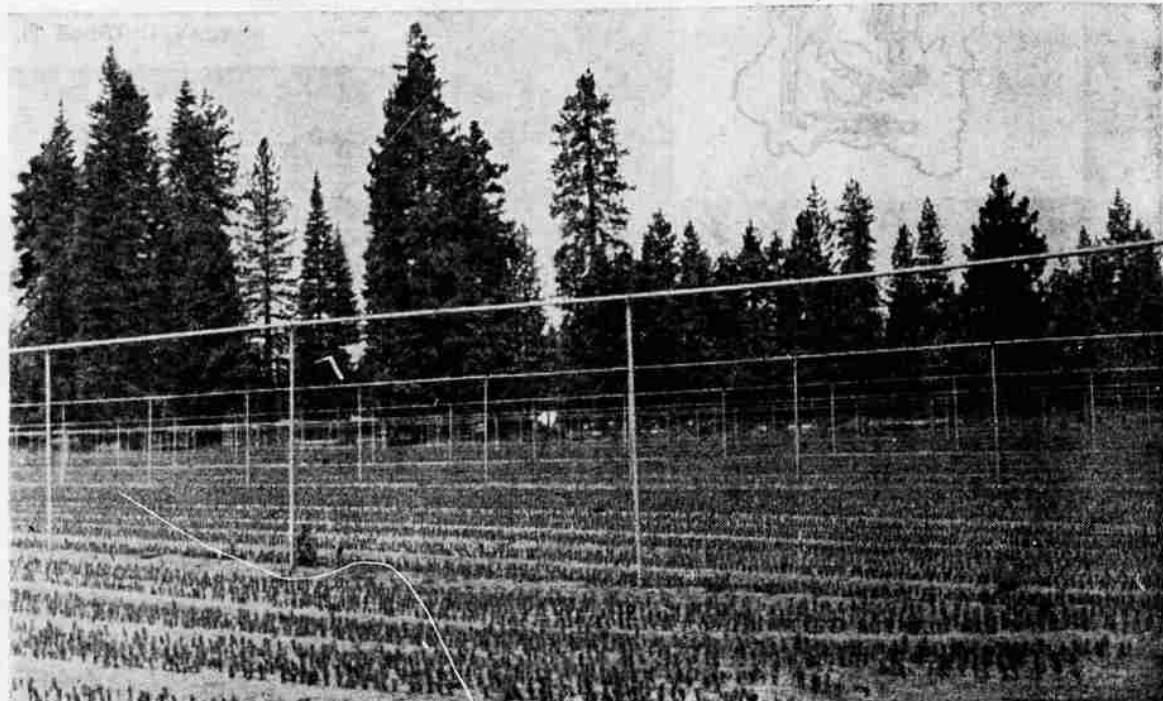
To date there appears to be almost no loss of the small trees due partly to a favorable growing season, but their losses may come later as insects, animals, and general dieback take their toll.

A heavy planting program for future years is now being planned. Soil surveys are being made, and within 20 years most of the suitable acreage will have been replanted to the trees best suited to that area.

Another thing learned through trial-and-error is that an experimental plot does not tell a true story of what trees will do best in a given area. The location of a plot may be favorable to one variety, unfavorable to another. Another such plot may reverse results because of changed conditions.

The public reaction to this reforestation plan is favorable. An organization of sportswomen's clubs of the San Francisco area, promises to help out with 10,000 trees each year over a five-year span. This has resulted in a nice planting in memory of Agnes Alice Zehender that is marked by a billboard by the side of the Everett Memorial Highway up Mt. Shasta.

Boy Scouts, too, have aided the cause by planting plots of seedling



SEEDLINGS FROM THIS NURSERY south of McCloud are used in plantings on Mt. Shasta. The nursery is under the supervision of the U.S. Forest Service.

supplied by the Forest Service. This planting, too, is beside the mountain highway.

Trees for this planting are grown at the federal nursery east of McCloud where millions of trees suitable for growing in Northern California are produced from seed.

The entire plan is now a scientific program based on factual knowledge gained through experience and study. Rainfall varies from 15 inches a year in some spots on the mountain to 35 inches in other locations. Soils run from highly productive volcanic ash, to clay bases that will grow little vegetation. These factors are considered, and evaluated in the planting program.

Mark your calendar, and check. The Forest Service promises 86 per cent more lumbering in the year 2000.

Some who read this will surely be in position to judge how true the prophecy is. Some won't.

THE COVER

Nine-year-old Craig Evans, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe F. Evans, 845 South Alameda, is starting his career as a young businessman. The first project is to build a fund to pay for his college education. He is a fourth grader at Roosevelt School and his ambition is to be a scientist.

The first year of the long range program was his summer garden on land at the rear of the family home. He had the assistance of his mother who was raised on a ranch and they planned a fall harvest which would require a minimum amount of work. The crops planted were Indian corn, gourds and pumpkins.

A minimum yield was received on Indian corn and the gourds because they had to fight garden bugs and insects all summer and had an early frost. There were sufficient gourds and colorful ears of corn, however, to combine with pine cones and make table ornaments and centerpieces.

The pumpkins turned out better and all 70 of the big, round potential jack-o-lanterns were sold under contract and delivered last week.

During the winter months, Craig will study and choose the project for making money during next summer vacation.



CONTOUR PLANTING of pine seedlings has been carried out on the slopes of Mt. Shasta by local Boy Scout units. This picture shows some of the carefully spaced trees in a long plowed strip on the lower slopes.



THIS SIGN HAS BEEN ERECTED on the memorial highway going up the slopes of Mt. Shasta and explains the sponsorship of the reforestation plan by sportswomen's clubs of San Francisco.