

Christmas Tree Patrol To Crack Down On Illegal Operators Here

By BILL JENKINS

Christmas tree thieves are going to face some organized resistance this year.

And with the area patrol and check system that has been organized by the various timber owners in the area it will be a sharp operator indeed who manages to get away with illegal trees.

Before anyone jumps to the wrong conclusion let us point out right here that the plan is not designed to prohibit anyone from going out into the woods and cutting a Christmas tree for his family. If you want to go out and get the family tree from Forest Service land all you have to do is contact the local ranger station and get a permit. Weyerhaeuser Company will open certain areas to cutting under permit. These areas will be announced within the next week and advertised in this paper.

The purpose of the intensive patrol is the discouragement of large scale cutting of trees by illegal operators. A practice which in recent years has cost the communities and the landowners untold millions of dollars.

A meeting was held early last month attended by some 50 interested persons representing private landowners, the Forest Service, federal and FBI officers, local law enforcement officers, the district

attorney and others. Out of this meeting came the framework for the protective patrol.

Oregon and California authorities will cooperate closely in the effort to halt such illegal cutting. Roads will be checked, all operators in the area will be required to operate under proper permit. Planes will be used to seek out signs of recent and possibly illegal cutting. A coordinated plan with KFPA as the central point will enable contact between points and insure swift action where suspicious circumstances are uncovered.

None of this policing is aimed at the legitimate operator. Many firms including Weyerhaeuser, the Forest Service and others have issued cutting permits. Responsible operators, after all, are as much a part of the forest industry as any other timber operation.

The market for illegal trees is greatest in California. H. C. Erbert, an investigator for the U.S. Forest Service, estimated recently that less than 20 per cent of the Christmas trees sold in that state are grown within the borders of California. This makes it difficult to check on the legality of the tree after it hits the Bay Area or the booming Los Angeles market. Therefore the enforcement is pretty much up to the authorities in

Oregon and Washington where the bulk of Pacific Coast Yule trees are cut.

It must be realized that the damage is not limited to the loss of the Christmas tree itself but lies in the potential loss of sawlog timber which would be available were the tree left growing. Thus it is the prevention of illegal cutting that is of prime importance

THE COVER

First step in the war on Christmas tree thieves was taken last week when these signs were posted on the timber properties of the companies named offering a reward for the apprehension and conviction of tree thieves. Here, George Wardell, district warden, KFPA, squares one of the signs away on Weyerhaeuser property lying in the Aspen Lake District.

rather than the apprehension and punishment of thieves after the trees have been cut.

Thusly the main efforts of the patrol will be to stop the operation before it has a chance to get well under way. Not as easy a task as it might sound, either.

Christmas tree thieves work swiftly and can be in and out of an area with amazing speed. It is doubtless that spotters for these illegal operators are already roaming the woods looking for prime spots in which to cut. Deer season affords them a splendid excuse to cruise the timber roads, keeping their eyes peeled for trees rather than game. Once having spotted such an area which is far enough from the main roads to avoid notice but still on a road that affords truck travel they move in, often doing their dirty work at night, cut and run.

Experienced operators can cut a big truckload of trees and be on their way with a forged bill of sale within one night. In the more remote areas they sometimes work for several days secure in the knowledge that they will probably avoid detection because of the sparse travel in that section.

As a further incentive to stopping this annual theft several operators have offered a \$250 reward to any person or persons who

"... cause to be apprehended and convicted any person or persons who wrongfully cuts and or removes any Christmas trees from any of the landowners...."

Operators joining in the reward plan are C. E. Cox, Page Lamoreaux, Loveness Company, Modoc Lumber Company, Puckett and Scherer, Stewart and Chapman, US National Bank-Trustee, Klamath Lumber and Box, Fir E' Nuff Farm, Inc., E. H. and A. H. Loveness Timber Company, Micky Wampler, Weyerhaeuser Company, Harold E. Williams, Leroy Gienger and Crown Zellerbach.

If you have a well founded suspicion that illegal cutting is going on somewhere a call to George Wardell, district warden at Klamath Forest Protective Association will be appreciated.

What it all boils down to is that open season has been declared on Christmas tree thieves and a vigilance committee of no mean proportions is standing by ready and willing to crack down when and if such operations are uncovered.

A move in the right direction and one that will undoubtedly spread from its relatively small source to a statewide if not a coastwide organization.

I predict black days ahead for those who would ravage our forest properties.



TED HYDE

Car Club Offers Tips

CHICAGO (UPI) — Planning an automobile vacation trip? The Chicago Motor Club estimates that two persons who intend to drive 300 miles a day should figure on a budget of \$36 a day.

The club's breakdown of the average couple's daily budget shows about \$9 to operate the car, \$10 on meals, \$8.50 for lodging, \$2 in tips, \$2 for admissions, amusements and tolls along the way, and \$4.50 for incidentals, souvenirs and unplanned expenses.

The club offered three tips for stretching the vacation budget:

—Drive during the early part of the day and stop in the late afternoon with plenty of time to find the type of accommodations you want at the price you can afford.

—Visit travel attractions that offer something worthwhile for the admission price. Avoid tourist traps. Authentic tour books list only legitimate attractions.

—If possible, don't visit areas during their peak seasons when prices likely are higher than at other times of the year.

Oregon Beef Council Kicks Off Voluntary Fund Drive

The first contribution, under the new voluntary 10-cent-per-head program being inaugurated by the Oregon Beef Council, has been made in October, according to Ted Hyde, council chairman.

The contribution was received from Frank and Matt Obenchain and Dave Campbell on the sale of calves to Yamsay Land and Cattle Company, giving Klamath County credit for the kick-off of the program.

"Actual statewide collection of the voluntary 10 cents per head on cattle sold is being postponed until about December 1," Hyde said. "However, earlier contributions are welcome."

The decision was reached, Hyde said, at a mid-October meeting of the council members at Salem. Other members of the council appointed by Gov. Mark Hatfield in October are Leland Jacobsmuhlen, Cornelius, vice chairman; Mrs. Carolyn Magruder, Clatskanie, secretary-treasurer; Otto Schild, Tillamook; Richard Westerberg, Ashland; and Jack Wilson, North Powder.

It is felt by the council that additional study must be given to the mechanics of collection and further education on a statewide basis is indicated. In addition to making collections through brand inspection at points of shipment, co-operation of auction yards is being sought.

"Thirty to 40 per cent of the cattle in the state are not brand inspected at the time of sale," Hyde said. "Of the million and a half head of cattle in Oregon, approximately 900,000 are brand inspected annually."

An effort will be made to extend the program to cover all cattle sales, including dairy cattle sold for beef, Hyde said.

It is hoped that a budget of

\$50,000 can be set up as a start under the new program.

What to do with the money collected under the new program is also under discussion by the council.

It has been suggested that 20 per cent of the receipts may be contributed to the National Live Stock and Meat Board for its program on promotion of meat.

Another 20 per cent might go to the National Beef Council. It was agreed that a good share of the amount collected should be spent to work with other Western states on a regional basis. In this way, there would be a tie-in with programs already underway such as the one California has developed. California's state council is in its third year of operation, it was

noted.

Thought is being given to making financial assistance available to the Oregon Cow Belles, also, Hyde said.

Beef, Inc., which was a voluntary organization set up for the state's centennial year, is being disbanded. It has been decided that the funds remaining from the booth at the centennial exposition and other projects of the year should be turned over to the state Cow Belles. The amount is expected to be nearly \$5,000 when all the bills are paid.

In connection with the educational phase of the Oregon Beef Council, Hyde reports that Walter Rodman, manager of the California Beef Council, will be a member of a panel at the Oregon Cattlemen's

Association meeting. The convention will be held at Portland on November 11, 12 and 13. The beef panel discussion will start at 1:30 p.m. on November 12.

Other panel members will be Robert Lister of Prineville, American National Cattlemen's Association committee on beef products and research; V. H. Brandenburg of Denver, executive secretary of the National Beef Council; Dick Nolan, western representative of the National Live Stock and Meat Board, and Arlene Oliver of John Day, a past president of Oregon Cow Belles.

There will be discussion of the council's program at the Klamath County Cattlemen's Association's convention on November 5, too, in all probability, Hyde said.



MEMBERS of the new Oregon Beef Council met in Salem recently and set December 1 as the official start of voluntary contributions of 10 cents per head on all cattle sold in Oregon. Shown, seated, from left, are Carolyn Magruder, Clatskanie, secretary; Ted Hyde, Klamath County, chairman; J. H. Tippett, Enterprise; Leland Jacobsmuhlen, Cornelius, vice chairman; standing, same order, Richard Westerberg, Ashland; Otto Schild, Tillamook, and Jack Wilson, North Powder.