

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

COMMUNITY FORESTS?

★ SEP 14 1939 ★
U. S. Department of Agriculture

1
F76Wc
Regave

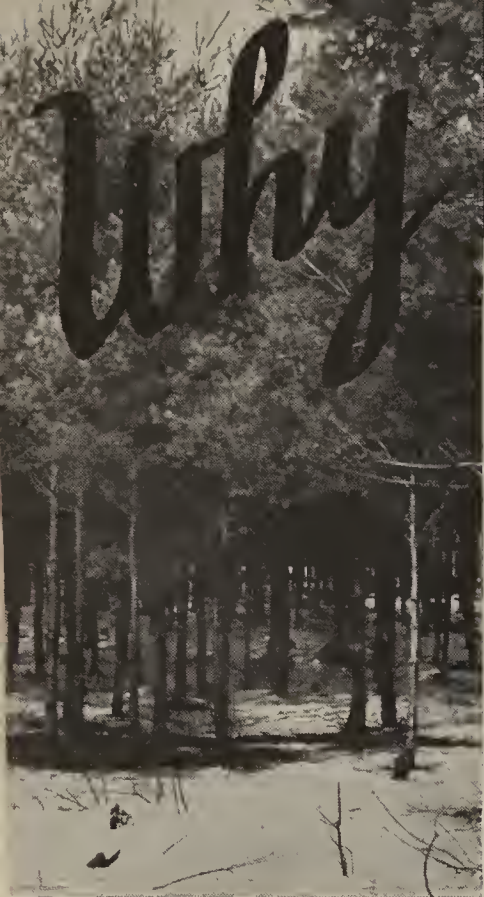
FOR MORE than 300 years many of our forests have been chopped, burned, and depleted. Instead of being cropped, large areas have been thriftlessly exploited and mismanaged.

As a consequence of misuse, millions of acres of land once fertile and productive are now denuded and unproductive. Each year an average of more than 1½ million acres of worn-out agricultural lands are being dropped from use. The natural resources of a great many American communities have been used with little thought of the future and are no longer adequate to support the population as they once did. Millions of Americans have lost their jobs directly or indirectly through this policy of wasteful exploitation.

One way to regain some of those lost jobs is by rebuilding depleted natural resources. The rebuilding of these resources may well start with the local community. Idle and misused acres should be put back to work producing raw material. Community forests offer one practical method.

Many farsighted communities already own and operate nearby forest properties. Others are becoming interested in doing so.

Some of the community-owned forests are already yielding substantial returns. Nearly all are being used for recreation and other purposes while, at the same time, they are producing valuable timber crops.



F-363048

Scene in the Newington, N. H.,
Community Forest.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SEVEN ways to use

1. For Profits from Timber Crops.

Not all newly established community forests will yield immediate cash returns. If the forest results from reforestation of an abandoned farm, for example, it may be 50 years before it makes a return. On the other hand, there are in this country community forests that have already paid substantial profits. As an illustration, the 75-acre church forest in Danville, N. H., has for the last 100 years yielded a net profit of \$4.45 per acre per year from forest products and interest on invested income from the property. Profits in some communities have been set aside in trust funds for benefit of school, church, hospital, or similar enterprise.



2. For Health and Recreation.

A forest can be used for recreation while the trees are growing into a profitable cash crop. For example more than 500,000 persons have visited the Onondaga County forest in New York for recreational purposes in a single year. This forest has two large lodges equipped for week-end use by the churches and civic organizations. Other equipment for recreation includes swings, nature walks, swimming pools, horseshoe and shuffleboard courts, and teeter-totters.



3. For Scenic Improvements.

The community forest idea can be used in converting wide strips of land along highways to forest purposes. Such areas can be reforested and improved with numerous convenient picnic grounds, thus adding to the pleasure of motoring. In many States stream and lake shore properties can be improved with forests, and scenic values may thus be added which will not necessarily be lost when the trees have begun to yield cash income.



a Community Forest

4. For Protecting Watersheds.

Adequate water supplies are necessary for towns and cities, and a community forest can help to regulate the stream and spring flow serving a reservoir. Reading, Pa., has 5,000 acres in forests which are the source of its water supply, yet certain parts of the forests are also used as playgrounds by the community. While growing, the trees provide a protective cover for the drainage area. When mature, they can be cut for timber under good forest management without harm to the watershed values.



5. For Hunting and Fishing.

Community forests are being used as wild-life and game refuges and in them streams are being stocked with fish. Where this is being done, hunting and fishing possibilities are being improved in areas adjacent to living centers. The public value of the forest for these purposes does not in any way hurt the growing trees. While contributing to the steady flow of clear streams, such forests may at the same time aid in solving the larger national problem of flood control.

6. For Local Employment.

Once established and properly managed, the community forest may provide jobs for men who cut the logs, pulpwood, fence posts, telephone poles, piling, ties, mining timber, bolts, Christmas trees, cordwood, or other products. Others may haul these to market. Still others may be employed in sawmills, excelsior mills, paper mills, furniture factories, woodworking plants, conversion establishments, or charcoal kilns, dependent upon the forest resources for continuous operation.





7. For Community Welfare.

Happy, prosperous communities result when people are gainfully employed, when tax rates are low, and when there is a convenient source of raw material to perpetuate local industries. Many communities might find the establishment of nearby forests on misused lands a means for building up the natural resources, creating new raw materials. The production, harvesting, and manufacture of the forest crops may provide more employment, help stabilize local industries, and possibly lower local taxes. The community forest thus may offer one way to greater community welfare.

Community Forests Defined

Properties owned and operated for forestry purposes by a village, city, town, school district, township, county, or other political subdivision, or by other community or group enterprises, such as schools, hospitals, churches, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Y. M. C. A., Camp Fire Girls, etc., are considered as community forests. They may locally be known by such names as town, city, municipal, neighborhood, school, church, or city watershed forests, or as village or town woods, as well as community forests.