

Conservation For Southern Pulp Mills

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EVERYONE interested in forest conservation is aware of the action recently taken by the Pulp industry of the South through its own organization, the American Pulpwood Association. Not everyone, however, realizes that these conservation steps were conceived and taken by the industry itself.

In April, 1937, just before the Conservation Convention held by the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association in Washington, a group of men representing Southern pulp and paper mills gathered to discuss the pulpwood situation in the South. These gentlemen knew the figures which gave such facts as—sixteen mills in the South in 1934 produced daily approximately 3,600 tons of pulp, and in 1937 some 46 mills, either in operation or under construction, would increase this daily production to approximately 7,000 tons per day. Naturally they began to be concerned over the supplies of wood in the South.

TALK led to more talk, finally resulting in action. It was decided to invite representatives of all mills operating in the South to attend a meeting in New Orleans on May 3rd, 1937, to discuss and formulate a program of forest utilization and conservation which will assure a continuing supply of raw material and to which all mills can subscribe.

At the New Orleans meeting the following statement of conservation policy for the Southern Pine Pulpwood Industry was adopted:

1. It is agreed that all land, including non-company land, must be cut over in a manner which will maintain and build up the forest growing stock.
2. It is agreed that each pulp mill operator will employ the necessary qualified personnel to insure proper compliance with agreement No. 1.

3. It is agreed that the southern pulpwood consumers shall be divided into working groups for the purpose of preparing proper regional rules of forest practice.
4. It is agreed that a working committee shall be appointed for each regional group in cooperation with Federal and State Agencies to formulate and place into effect the cutting procedure for each group in order to carry out agreement No. 1.
5. Agree to satisfy to the fullest practicable extent, the requirements of each mill from improvement cuttings, worked out turpented timber and salvage from saw timber cuttings.
6. The industry recognizes that Federal and State forest fire protective organizations, as now constituted, are inadequate, and urges their extension and pledges the industry's cooperation in securing more effective forest fire control.
7. The Industry agrees to secure insofar as possible the full compliance of its wood producers with the procedure of forest practice as established for each group.

AS PROVIDED for in Article No. 3 the Southern Region was divided into four groups or districts, which as near as possible constituted working groups all having somewhat the same physical and economic conditions. For each group a temporary chairman was appointed and charged with the responsibility of holding a meeting within his own group for the purpose of formulating and adopting rules of forest practice for that group.

In due course of time group meetings were held in Richmond, Va., Mobile, Ala., Savannah, Ga., and finally by June 11th, 1937, the fourth and last was held in Alexandria, La. At each one of these meetings a permanent chairman was elected and rules of forest practice were formulated and adopted. In general the points covered by each group in the rules adopted included these items—Fire Protection, Cutting Practice, Utilization, Cooperation with State Foresters, Enforcement, Educational Recommendations, and Future Meetings.

To give the reader a more definite idea the rules as adopted for Group IV, which covers the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas, are as follows:

1. FIRE PROTECTION

We recognize the necessity of complete and absolute fire protection on all forest areas, as a fundamental for the success of forest conservation in this region; therefore, the companies concerned will give full cooperation to State and Federal fire protection agencies, including the working for adequate Federal and State funds for fire control work.

2. GROWING STOCK

a. Selective or Partial Cutting

We recognize that partial cutting designed to maintain and improve the forest growing stock is a highly desirable practice and we will use every practicable means of securing the adoption of such practice.

b. As a first step in carrying out this policy, no trees under 8 inches in diameter at stump (12 inches above the ground) will be cut, except for stand improvement purposes.

(Note: Stand improvement consists of the removal of defective or damaged trees and necessary thinnings for improved growth.)

c. If partial cutting is not practiced, not less than four (4) seed trees per acre, well distributed over the area, will be left unless the area is already well stocked with young growth. A seed tree is defined as a thrifty tree with a well formed crown and not less than 8 inches in diameter.

3. UTILIZATION

Defective, badly formed or damaged trees, worked-out turpentine trees and tops from sawtimber operations will be utilized to the fullest practicable extent.

4. PERIOD OF CUTTING

Cuttings on the same area for pulpwood will not be made more often than once in 5 years except for such cuttings as may be necessary to salvage timber damaged by storms, insects, etc.

5. MODIFICATION OF RULES

Modifications of the above rules may be approved by the State Forester to meet the requirement of special conditions where the rules cannot be applied.

6. ENFORCEMENT

Each company represented in this Group agrees to observe these rules of cutting practices.

7. REVISION OF RULES

It is agreed that the Committee should meet again within six months on call of the President of the American Pulpwood Association, or on call of the Group Chairman, for the purpose of considering revision of the rules.

8. EDUCATIONAL AND DEMONSTRATION WORK

We recognize that the permanent success of our efforts to promote good cutting practices on non-company lands will depend on changing the present attitude of many such land owners and we urge that the Federal and State forestry agencies undertake a greatly enlarged campaign of education and demonstration.

IT MUST be admitted that the step toward conservation as taken by the Southern Pulp Mills is a large one and is undoubtedly in the right direction. No one can possibly expect

the pulp industry of the South to be successful in conservation unless all of the wood-using industries cooperate toward the same end. True, the pulp industry has made the first step alone, not because they fail to consider the importance of other wood-using industries, but simply to be able to present a united front with a record which will stand scrutiny when the proper time comes to ask for the necessary cooperation.

The history of forest fire protection is known to everyone. We must not forget that it has required some twenty years and an expenditure of millions of dollars to put fire protection where it is today. Education of the public played a huge role in putting fire protection over. Education must play a major role in conservation if the wood using industries are to succeed in the application of rules of forest practice which will assure a continuing supply of raw material.

It is not to be expected that anything like the same period of time should be required to attain success with conservation that was required for fire protection, yet any educational campaign requires time. Conservation as set forth by the rules of forest practice, as adopted by the industry, recognizes that upon these rules depends the future of the industry's supply of its major raw material and if the industry is to be perpetuated and investments properly retired success in conservation must be attained.

