

WELCOME TO MINNESOTA

By
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Thanks, George. I'm not used to all that fanfare. I'm very happy to be here in place of Mr. Prout. He's down in Wisconsin at the Bankers' Meeting, and I'm sure that a number of the State Foresters are there with him. This is a week when there happens to be quite a few things going on. He did wish me to convey to you his regret that he was not able to be here, since the meeting is being held in our State.

I notice that George Gaylord referred to this meeting as he thought it was a good selection that you would be meeting here in northeastern Minnesota, and spoke of this area in rather glowing terms. I suppose you could say he's slightly prejudiced because George happens to be the Regional Forester for this northeastern region, so he probably thinks this is the best part of the State. I'd like to tell you a little bit about all of our State, about our forestry program, so that you can understand us better. We are organized here in Minnesota at present on what we call a modified line and staff basis, which means simply that we are not an organization of functional staffs any more - we at onetime were until **1957**. We reorganized then, and we adopted a line and staff organization so that everything channels from St. Paul - all programs, through the field operations, and the field personnel have the responsibility for all programs. We have in St. Paul a staff who work with and for the Director on the various special programs. These are generally divided into two major categories - those programs which are part of State land management, and more particularly State forests, and those programs which are cooperative in nature, and deal with other agencies and private landowners. However, from the staff to the field, everything goes down the one line to our field operating group, which starts at the Regional Forester. We have three Regional Foresters, all three of them are here today, George Gaylord, Art Keenan and Jim Sprangler. The regions in turn are divided into 16 areas - I don't know if I see any Area Foresters here as yet, but you will meet them tomorrow and possibly on Thursday if they are not here now. The Area Foresters have several districts in their administration, and they in turn administer the programs of the districts - all programs. The districts finally are administered by District Foresters. The District Foresters may or may not have help - we are, of course, trying to get help for all of them but we have not succeeded yet. District Foresters may work alone or they may have a Forest Ranger assistant, or they may have a forest guard, a seasonal forest guard - or in some cases they may have both.

We have a Grand Rapids Service Center located at Grand Rapids. I see Art Anderson who is our Buildings and Equipment Coordinator who directs the Service Center, and the allied things of supplies, equipment, repair building, etc. Our programs - probably you might say four main programs that we are concerned with - fire, of course, is the original program in this State as it probably was in all of your States - our present Division of Forestry organization dates back to 1911, so in 1961 we celebrated our 50th anniversary. It started basically as a protection organization, - even today we project in round figures 17,000,000 acres. Gradually, of course, other jobs were added - for example, State land management came into the picture - marking originally in the 20's, marking on State lands, cutting operations, then coming into the appraisal, sales work in early 1930's. Today there are about 5,000,000 acres of State lands under the administration of the Commissioner of Conservation, and we in forestry have the responsibility for the sales of timber for many of these lands. I am not implying, for instance, that game lands regularly have a timber harvest program nor a part, but if they have any need of blowdown or something like that, our fellows do this job for them. There are 3,000,000 acres roughly in State forests in Minnesota which is quite a large job, a large part of our total workload in any given year. We have about 5,000,000 acres of tax-forfeited land in Minnesota, and all of our fellows who have tax-forfeited land in their areas and districts have a certain responsibility for these lands. The Commissioner is charged with the responsibility for the approval of the values of timber sold and in the case of timber sales, the methods of cutting. So our fellows are involved in any of the land sales of these tax-forfeited lands or timber sales. This is quite a large program. In Minnesota we have about 7,000,000 acres of private land - privately-owned forest land, of which 4-1/2 million we roughly catalog in the small owner variety. We in Minnesota are only allowed to give advice and assistance on ownerships up to a" thousand acres, so we have a limitation there.

Our nursery program is very important in Minnesota. We have a large acreage of forest land and a considerable demand for seedlings on private land, the tax-forfeited lands which I mentioned, and certainly on our State lands. We also have supplied seedling stock to federal agencies. The last one I can think of, I guess, was the Indian Service last fall that I know of. There were probably some last spring that I don't recall. We have distribution to quite a variety of agencies. Our production has fluctuated considerably. We have been building. Our largest year, as I recall, was in 1961 - about 41,000,000 seedlings. We had some losses and it's dropped down - I guess it's crawling back up - you'll hear more of the details, I'm sure, later.

Our State land management program, which I think you're going to hear more about, is quite large now in Minnesota. Fortunately, we have some funds available that we can carry on our work. We have the natural resources fund which is quite similar to the fund in Wisconsin in which a penny a pack tax on cigarettes has been levied on cigarettes,

and this goes in with the natural resources fund. This money is divided up into various conservation projects, much of it is, of course, for land acquisition, particularly parks, some of it for land acquisition in a new, memorial hardwood forest down in south-eastern Minnesota which is a program that's getting started. I guess that there are around 8,000 acres acquired down there so far, out of what might eventually be as much as 175,000 to 200,000 acres. This will put us into more hardwood planting programs, I'm sure, as we get these lands. Currently most of our planting has been in the conifer species.

We have also a State forest development fund. Within our State forests are trust fund lands which are school lands, and so on, and we now have a fund which is established. We determine the cost of managing these lands and these costs are placed in a separate State forest development fund which we in turn can use for development of these trust fund lands in State forests. It's limited to the trust fund lands. This makes it possible to do a lot of development work, planting, etc. We have Title IV funds, as I'm sure most of you do, and then we have some funds from our regular appropriations. Roughly, our planting program on these State lands has been about 10,000,000 trees in recent years. I don't want to bore you with too many statistics but I thought that you could understand our program better in the State if I gave you some of this information.

This is my first meeting, nurserymen's meeting, that's been held in other States. I myself am very happy to be here because it gives me a chance to see what goes on. There are a number of things of interest and I am sure a lot of informational material which you can get as the result of attending the meeting. I personally look forward to meeting all of you from other States. I'd like to have you make yourselves at home here in Minnesota, and as I said, we will have a lot of fellows from our organization here today, tomorrow and the next day. If you have any questions about our programs, about Minnesota, why please don't hesitate to ask. And I welcome you to our State, and hope you have a good meeting.