

Although wise planning can result in greatly increased wildlife populations associated with various land uses, this will not be the complete answer for future demands in this phase of outdoor recreation. Maximum wildlife production can only be attained when such is a specific land use for a specific kind of wildlife. Farmers in the Southeast are capable of meeting public needs in hunting and fishing when this becomes a profitable income-producing land use.

MULTIPLE USE ON FOREST INDUSTRY LANDS

By EDWARD L. KOZICKY

Director of Conservation

OLIN E. ALTON, Illinois

Even today, industry is often depicted as the "spoiler" in the conservation of natural resources. Resource management historians like to cite the exploitation of timberlands by the lumber industry in New England, then the Lake States, then the South, and finally the Northwest. It's true that in our nation's early years great quantities of timber were available for the taking, and competitive prices dictated the "clear cut and move" policy. To some extent, our vast timberlands were obstacles to transportation and agriculture. It was no easy task to clear a piece of land of timber and develop the soil into agricultural production; hence, there was little objection to this type of forestry practice.

Exploitation of our wildlife resource was also part of the price we paid to buy "progress." Game was sold on the open market. Buffalo hides and beaver pelts were used as common exchange by pioneers. Drainage of potholes reduced our waterfowl populations; fencing the range and plowing the prairies relegated the buffalo and prairie chicken to remnant species. The growth of our national population demanded greater use of each individual acre of land, and any change in habitat has a resultant effect on wildlife populations.

Too often the public assumes that the only solution to a resource problem is government ownership or supervision. But industry has also met the challenge of conservation of our forest and wildlife resources.

As virgin timber disappeared, it became necessary for the timber industry to become stabilized in a given community. In some cases this meant the development of a forestry program that would provide a sustained yield of forest production for the mills; in other instances it meant organizing private landowners into groups which agreed to follow good timber management practices. Such programs gave a sense of permanence to the industry and to the local economy.

The management of timber production on industry-owned lands was not complicated. Professional foresters were hired and the best modern forestry practices were employed. However, industry found it economically impossible and undesirable from a public relations standpoint to buy all of the timberlands needed and manage them properly. Private landowners were indifferent to timber management and little was being done to encourage private timberland owners to practice good forestry. Their small tracts of land amounted to millions of acres in the aggregate, and on an individual basis it was impossible to employ professional assistance.

But since 1941, the American Forest Products Industries, Inc.—an organization of private industries utilizing forest products—has sponsored and coordinated the national Tree Farm Program. A Tree Farm is a private forest being managed under modern forest practices, and a Tree Farmer agrees: (1) to hold his land for permanent forest production; (2) to provide adequate protection against fire, insects, disease and damage by destructive grazing; (3) to harvest his timber crops properly; and (4) to allow professional foresters to inspect his property and help him raise a better tree crop in his own interest.

The primary purpose of Tree Farms is to grow continuing supplies of raw materials for wood utilization plants; but like all forest land under management,

Tree Farms can and do produce game and fish crops and serve as reservoirs for our water resources.

Today, there are over 23 thousand landowners, including industry and private individuals, in the Tree Farm Program. This involves over 58 million acres of land and is a shining example of industry providing leadership in the management of an important natural resource.

Current requirements of an increasing population on a shrinking supply of available land acreage demands multiple use. Our timber must yield not only forest products, but also water, recreation and other commodities. Here again the forest industry has taken the initiative.

Back in 1956, there was an ill-founded rumor (as usually is the case) that hunting was not permitted on the Olin Forests in Louisiana. Nothing could have been further from the truth, but the rumor persisted.

To offset the adverse publicity, our Packaging Division published in local newspapers our corporate policy governing the recreational use of the Olin Forests. Soon after that, working with the Packaging Division, our Conservation Department developed a brochure entitled, "The OLIN Forest—Timber and Recreation."

While we were in the process of writing this brochure, it occurred to us that other industries were confronted with similar problems, and perhaps a national program could be initiated to emphasize the availability of these lands for limited recreational use.

The FAIR project was a natural outgrowth of a fixed land acreage and the current population explosion. Multiple use of land and water (timber and recreation in this case) by private enterprise is a necessity where possible. The Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission recommends that government agencies should promote greater public recreational use of private lands and waters. Public access to private lands and waters—as opposed to outright ownership—can be acquired through mutual agreements between landowners and recreation seekers. This is the basis of the FAIR Program.

In 1960, the American Forest Products Industries sponsored a study that reported over 300 developed recreation sites on private forest lands, most of which had been opened since 1955. In a 1960 U. S. Chamber of Commerce study, 63 business firms, other than forest products companies, reported that 94.6 percent of their 1,721,280 acres of land and water—or 1,660,426 acres—were open to public use. Hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, riding, and water and winter sports were allowed on these lands. Consequently, the FAIR Program has not initiated a new movement to provide acreage for public use; it merely serves as a vehicle to publicize the availability of these lands and provide the mechanism for a segment of the public—the state wildlife federation, in this instance—to become a partner in the venture.

Because of its interest in natural resources and recreation, the National Wildlife Federation was a logical organization to launch the FAIR Program through its fifty statewide affiliates. The Federation is composed largely of civic-minded sportsmen who share a special interest in outdoor recreation and resource management. Through personal experience gained in their outdoor avocations, they are aware of the necessity of cooperating with landowners to keep lands open for public use. However, all recreational developments under the FAIR concept are for the pleasure of the general public—the local federated sportsmen's club has no special privileges.

Good projects are vital to a state wildlife federation and its local clubs. Nothing leads to the disintegration of a sportsmen's club quicker than lack of purpose. On the other hand, nothing unites or builds a club faster than a common cause. The FAIR Program provides a worthwhile project for the good of the general public. The more the FAIR concept grows, the greater will be the public relations value to the National Wildlife Federation and its cause in the conservation of our natural resources.

The National Wildlife Federation in Washington, D. C., the home office of the fifty affiliates, limits its efforts in the FAIR Program to (1) endorsement of the program, (2) planning guidance and assistance, (3) publicity and (4) information on existing agreements. The state affiliate enters into the contractual agreements, or memoranda of understanding, with the various local industries.

From our industry's standpoint, the public is considered to be "permittees" and not "invitees." The Memorandum of Understanding entered into with the state affiliate of the Federation indicates this distinction, which is important to our legal staff. Without a doubt, the problem of liability has been the greatest deterrent to advertising the availability of industrial lands for limited public use. The word "limited" implies that recreational use must be compatible with the management of the acreage by the industry concerned. Thus, there may be certain portions of land closed permanently or for varying periods of time to public use because of timber cutting operations, fire hazard, manufacturing operations, road conditions, etc. Such local problems are settled by a coordinating committee.

Any improvement or construction of a recreational facility is a cooperative effort between the industry and the local club of the Federation. The benefits of such an effort are obvious. Recreational facilities are carefully planned and executed. With the local club taking the initiative and investing time, money and manpower, the members develop a sense of pride in the new facilities. This sense of pride and accomplishment makes the project self-policing. It is a deterrent to vandalism but not a guarantee. However, vandalism by a few is no reason to penalize the American public.

Through local club activities, the highest type of public relations is established within the communities where the land is located; and, of course, regionally and nationally through the Federation's activities.

Officials of the Federation and Olin Mathieson considered these benefits and approved the FAIR Program on an experimental basis. The next step was a meeting with the executive board of the National Wildlife Federation, where it was decided to initiate a pilot project of the FAIR Program on the Olin Forests in January 1959. On May 20th, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Olin Mathieson and the Louisiana Wildlife Federation.

Soon after the Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation and Olin Mathieson, a Coordinating Committee was formed. Its first act was to develop a suitable sign for the project and to erect these signs on the Olin Forests along routes of public access.

At the same time, an inventory of current recreational facilities and potential recreational projects was made—including remarks on timber and soil types, game and fish species and forest management practices.

The potential recreational projects were designated by parishes and the information made available to local sportsmen's clubs for their consideration and action. For approximately a year, little was done except consider the projects; however, last year things started to happen. The Ouachita and Caldwell parish wildlife units constructed a camping and picnic site. This installation includes two barbecue pits, one large picnic shelter, tables and other conveniences. Other areas are being considered by the various parish affiliates and developments of recreational facilities are proceeding as time and funds become available.

The potential of the FAIR Program is unlimited and could well expand into a national effort to the mutual benefit of the Federation and industry; or if you prefer, private enterprise. Changes in the basic Memorandum of Understanding may be necessary to fit specific local conditions.

Multiple use of forest industry lands is a reality. The growth of this concept depends on the initiative of individuals at the "grass roots" level. Everything is possible where individuals tackle a problem with a positive rather than a negative attitude!