

The Bureau of Forestry Spurs A National Forestry Program under the Joint PHILCUSA-MSA Financial Aid

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The Bureau of Forestry has launched a national gigantic forestry program to complement, among other things, the industrial and agricultural development program of the country. The program consists of the management of the forest, soil and water to place these important natural resources in a condition that will provide the greatest benefits to the greatest number of people in the longest time. It includes the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the U.P. College of Forestry, the only institution of its kind in the Far East that has gained prominence in training forestry professionals. The project is an expansion of the Bureau's activities and is entitled: *Forest, Soil and Water Management, Including College of Forestry*. This comprehensive project has, among other things, the following objectives:

1. To inventory the growing stocks and to conduct forest surveys or demarcate the boundaries of public forests for protection recreation, exploitation, sustained yield, pasture purposes and conservation of wild life. This activity will enable the Bureau of Forestry to determine the extent and area of potential agricultural land that may be programmed for clear cutting practices so that lands that shall have been cut-over may be classified and disposed of according to the needs of the increasing population for agricultural land.

On the other hand, the area needed for the stabilization of the lumber industry and other land uses mentioned may be surveyed, and protected from the wanton destruction done

by settlers and thus, complete the long felt need for statistical data on land uses. Statistical data on land uses are paramount in the economic and industrial development of the nation to obviate forest bankruptcy and national disaster experienced by other countries in the misuse of their valuable natural resources. Before going too far it would be worth-while to explain what is meant by forest inventory from the point of view of the layman.

Forest inventory in forest management is not entirely the same as the taking of inventory of stocks in a large department store. The equipment for inventory of growing stocks consists of surveying and mapping instruments, volume tables, papers and pencils. The work may last for years depending upon the density of the stand, area of the forest, climate, topography and kind of maps desired. A map of a forest to be managed under sustained yield shows the topography, drainage systems, types of forest, the species and their volume by business subdivisions, the road plan, method used in taking the inventory and accuracy and the annual cutting budget spread over the length of time required to have a mature forest crop again. A glance at the map should give an idea of the volume of forest engineering work, the technical personnel, labor and fund needed before a forest reserve could be placed under efficient forest management.

2. In the protection of public forests from fires and any form of illegal use, impetus in the implementation of the forest laws, rules

and regulations, for the utilization of forest products, shall be given due consideration to the point that the forest could be conserved through wise utilization and to increase the present collection of over six million pesos by two million pesos which is the estimated yearly leakage due to lack of facilities and funds to defray the expenses of forest officers engaged in field work. A good forest management includes not only the establishment and development of forest business which covers the phases of tending forests and growing forests from seed germination to maturity, but also proper methods of harvesting of mature timber and general forest protection to assure the maturity of the residual stand for the purpose of the second cut. This means that forest management should cover the proper methods of logging, reproducing the forest by natural or artificial means and that harvesting must be done in such a way that the schedules for the annual cutting budget must be spread over the length of time required by immature stands or the newly reproduced stands to become mature again. From the foregoing, it might be said that our well-developed methods of mechanical logging and lumbering as practised, are the direct antithesis of forest management procedure because generally the aim of the lumberman in this country is just to exploit the capital value of our forests without due regard to the future use of the land, without taking precautions necessary to insure a future crop. This unsound practice of logging and lumbering together with illegal cañgin will undoubtedly lead us into forest bankruptcy in the very near future if no drastic action is taken.

To solve the problems of illegal cañgin, land squatting, burning of pine forests, timber smuggling, and implementation of the regulations for timber utilization and to be able to start in the first quarter of 1953-1954, the PHILCUSA is screening the peso budget needed to activate the technical personnel to conduct the survey for the location sites for

lookout stations and their construction in the Benguet Pine Region. The radiophone equipment will be purchased from local producers to patronize local products. This equipment will be installed in the lookout stations. It will be used for reporting outbreaks of forest fires and for directing the fire fighting force to the burning spots.

The cooperation of municipal officials in apprehending timber smugglers is necessary to carry on the general protection program. Forest management is bound to fail in our country if all government officials, elected and appointed, will not cooperate with one another in the implementation of the forest and internal revenue laws. There is a need for a system of forest protection that shall insure the success of forest management. This means the practical implementation of the forest laws irrespective of political reprisal or consequences. With sufficient personnel, transportation facilities and funds to pay for their traveling expenses, vigilant patrols can prevent the people from violating forest laws. We all know the old saying that "an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure."

3. The stimulation of reforestation denuded watersheds, cut-over lands or non-restocking areas, barren or marginal lands and grasslands will hasten the restoration of forest productivity and promote the inherent protection value of vegetated watersheds in flood runoff, soil erosion and lowland agriculture. Reforestation and water control is a complementary project of gravity irrigation, river, water and flood control and water works also under the MSA assistance program. It is to be noted that these projects—forestry and public works—are inseparable in the acceleration of industry, commerce and agriculture. The forestry project consists of watershed management through reforestation of denuded catchment areas, protection from fires, and illegal uses, such as excessive grazing, cañgin making and unreasonable timber cutting; whereas the public works projects

consists of the construction of water structures, such as dams, reservoirs, revetment, floodgates, cut-off earth dikes and concrete embankments. Hydraulic functions of the watersheds in water and flood control and in the prevention of silting of water structures have long been recognized.

4. The forest experiment stations will enhance studies on the determination of the factors responsible for the establishment of natural and artificial reproduction in the cut-over areas; growth and yield needed with data on growing stocks in the determination of annual allowable cut and in the formulation of rules and sound practices of cutting and logging in areas for permanent forest purposes. Last but not least is the development of basic and fundamental forest research, the results of which, aside from being useful as material for instruction in the College of Forestry, can serve as basis for a more systematized forest investigation work.

In the light of what have been stated above, it is conceivable that forest management is faced by intricate problems which, however, can be solved by (1) silvicultural research or research in the growing of the desired products and tending our virgin commercial forests to perpetuity, (2) utilization research or research in making good logging and silviculture profitable, and (3) by a system of forest protection that shall insure the safety of the residual stands, and reproductions to maturity. It is evident that the methods of approach toward this direction is through well equipped laboratories and forest experiment stations.

The American financial assistance is in the form of laboratory equipment and the counterpart fund is now being screened to implement the forest research program. As soon as the screened peso budget shall have been released, we can activate the technical personnel and begin the construction of the forest experiment station buildings in the first quarter.

The forest experiment stations will be es-

tablished where there are old existing reforestation projects so that the results that will be obtained will serve as the guiding principles in the choice of species and methods of planting. The criteria in the selection of the location of the experiment stations are the differences in climate, types of forest to be restored and exceptional importance of the existing reforestation project. The Central Forest Experiment Station will be established in the College of Forestry campus.

It will be the policy to allow the students and members of the faculty of the College of Forestry to use the facilities of the Central Forest Experiment Station. The experiment station personnel will also be allowed to use the laboratory facilities of the College. Similarly, the stations and the reforestation projects shall take advantage of each other's equipment.

5. The reconstruction of the U.P. College of Forestry and the rehabilitation of the laboratory facilities will enable it to accommodate more students and turn out more graduates with the advanced forestry training needed by the Bureau of Forestry and the lumber industry. The amount of \$54,000.00 has been appropriated from the American financial fund to purchase the much needed laboratory equipment and PHILCUSA appropriated ₱165,000.00 which should be matched with an equal amount by the University of the Philippines to finish the reconstruction of the building according to the plan and bill of estimated cost of materials submitted to PHILCUSA.

It will be noted from the above objectives that, while the functions of the project are closely related with each other, none of which overlaps. It will result in inefficiency in the attainment of any particular objective if one of the subprojects is not fully implemented.

Inasmuch as the preparation of the report on the dollar specifications was begun only last April and the screened dollar specifications submitted by MSA in Manila to MSA

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OUR SERVICE . . .

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classification work, how much has your Bureau accomplished to date?

Mr. San Buenaventura—Of the total land area of 29,740,972 hectares of the Philippines, we have classified and certified to the Bureau of Lands as of June 30, 1952, 10,107,286 hectares (or 34%) as alienable and disposable land; 1,799,308 hectares (or 6%) has been declared as timber-lands; 17,834,378 hectares are still unclassified. In our long-range plan, about 42 to 45 % of the Philippines shall be permanently kept as forest or timberlands. With the aid of the MSA and PHILCUSA we now have 40 land classification parties distributed all over the Philippines, and a few smaller parties from our regular appropriations. Our aim is to classify 400,000 hectares a year. The greater part of these lands are in Mindanao, Cagayan Valley, Samar, Mindoro, Negros and Palawan.

Mr. Canciller—I see that your Bureau is a money-making office in the Government, but do you think the forest revenue can be increased?

Mr. San Buenaventura—I think so, if the Bureau is given more facilities. As an example, I may cite this: Our allotment for travelling expenses is about ₱139,000.00 a year. We have over 700 forest officers (Foresters, Rangers and Forest Guards) in the field, so each Officer has only about ₱15.00 per month for traveling expenses. This means that he can work in the field for only 3 to 4 days per month. Under our policy, a forest officer should be in the field at least 20 days a month. The longer a forest officer can go on field inspection, the more the forest taxes he would cause to be collected. In short, I can say this: for every additional peso given in our appropriations, at least two pesos would be returned to be National Treasury.

FLASH!

A communication received from Mexico City informs that Director Florencio Tamesis was admitted into the Society of American Foresters.

THE BUREAU OF . . .

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in Washington, D.C., last May and the peso requirements, description of the project and the guiding principles were just recently submitted to the PHILCUSA, it can be considered commendable work on the part of the PHILCUSA and MSA that within a short time, the Bureau of Forestry was informed that soon, the project agreements shall have been signed by the Chief of the U.S. Mission and the Chairman of PHILCUSA, and the project will start functioning within the first quarter of the fiscal year 1953-1954. The total American financial assistance for the purchase of vehicles and other equipment is \$204,000.00 and the PHILCUSA counterpart fund is ₱1,197,200.00. To this end we shall endeavor to collect the estimated two million pesos which the Bureau has failed to collect due to lack of transportation facilities, personnel and funds to defray the sundry expenses of the field personnel.

The Bureau of Forestry should endeavor to include in its 1954-1955 appropriation the running expenses of the project.

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LT DEAN FLORENCIO TAMESIS

DIRECTOR OF FORESTRY

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