

SS
District - Studies

February 3, 1909.

RECORD OF CUT-OVER AREAS

To the Forest Officers:-

Your earnest attention is called to the circular letter of the Branch of Silviculture of May 20, 1907, entitled "Record of Cut-over Areas", and to the note on the same subject on page 62 of the Field Program for September 1908. I am sure that if the real value of these records is fully realized you will make a particular effort to examine the cut-over areas on your Forest from time to time and to keep the records accurately and up to date. The practice of forestry is still young in this district, and we have much to learn regarding the practical management of forests. We do not yet know under just what conditions the best second growth of Douglas fir is secured, whether reproduction in the dry yellow pine region takes place best when the brush is burned or when it is scattered over the ground, how to obtain a good reproduction of spruce, fir and cedar where the young trees have dense brush to contend with, whether it is practical to leave isolated seed trees of Douglas fir or whether they are quickly windthrown if left standing alone. These and many other practical silvicultural questions cannot be answered from theory but only in the field by looking into the results already attained. Thus we can learn our mistakes, benefit by experience, and adapt our methods of management to suit local conditions. The forest descriptions and records of cut-over areas should be so complete that, if twenty years after a couple of timber sales were made, we find on one sale-area good reproduction and on the other little, we could turn to the records and find out just what conditions were different on the two areas. Was this difference in reproduction due to the distribution of the seed trees, to the effects of grazing, fires, the disposal of brush, or to differences in exposure, brush or soil cover? These questions can all be answered from proper records of the cut-over area; without these records in black and white we could not benefit by our past experience in conducting future sales.

The advantage of having a good description of the condition of each sale area before cutting, made according to the outline on Form 578A, and of having the sale area distinctly located by land lines or topography, are very apparent.

I wish that you would prepare a Form 248 (Record of Cut-over Areas) for each of your important sales if you have not already done so. Each of the cut-over areas should then be examined every three or four years by a competent officer of your Forest who should write a clear, concise description of the forest conditions on the area, such as is fully outlined in the letter of May 20, 1907. The date of each examination and the name of the examiner will then be entered on the index card, Form 248. I think it is clear that each descriptive report on the condition of the cut-over areas should be filed in the timber sale folder to which it belongs, clipped to the forest description. The Forms 248 are simply index cards and should be kept by themselves, and arranged according to the year in which each sale took place. One copy of each report should be sent to this

office, for I am particularly anxious to know what the present condition is on the cut-over areas on the National Forests.

If you desire more detailed suggestions in regard to making the description and record of cut-over areas, I shall gladly furnish you with further information.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) F.E. Ames
Chief of Silviculture