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PRIVATE PROPERTY?

Major Producers Threatened In California

Recent developments in California's redwood region, viewed within the context of a national trend, are part of a broad pattern which threatens one of the basic rights of every American—the right to own the land itself. And if allowed to continue this trend will dilute the powers of the local governments making these areas more dependent on the federal government and crowding private enterprise out of the picture.

One out of every three acres of land in the United States is already owned by the federal government. These vast holdings totaling 769,900,000 acres are increasing by more than one-half million acres annually, taking it from the local tax rolls and greatly increasing the tax burden on owners of private land. This government "land grab" is a fast growing problem that affects every citizen and is a threatening step toward socialism.

This movement, if not checked, can completely overturn the historic American privilege of owning land. "It is contrary to the principle of individual independence and personal responsibility. It negates the concept of private enterprise," according to the American Forest Products Industries, Inc.

The cry has been going up lately from so-called conservation groups for the government to acquire more land for recreational purposes, and specifically forest land. So, though this problem is one for concern for every person in the nation, substantial efforts to acquire more federal land are being aimed directly at the lumber industry.

Arcata Redwood in Middle

The most flagrant example of this action is happening right now in the redwood forest area of Northern California where one company, Arcata Redwood, is threatened with complete destruction if these efforts are successful. The National Park Service backed by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, President Johnson and other vocal preservation groups have pinpointed a sizable portion of Arcata's valuable timberland to be taken over by the government for a na-

tional redwood park. The necessity of this park, that could have serious consequences on the economy of that area, has been questioned by many. There are already 26 state parks and one national monument in this region in which more than 100,000 acres of prime redwood forest is preserved (but largely not available) for public use. Since the greater percentage of the existing redwood parks are not used by the public, how can the government possibly justify the creation of another one if it considers all the facts? President Johnson said in a recent statement concerning the establishment of this park, "The current rate of logging will cut nearly all of the old growth within the next five decades." And the group in question claims the park is needed to preserve redwood forests that are being completely devastated by private logging and lumber interests.

Redwoods Forever

However, in a recent report prepared for the National Park Service after much research, noted forester John Miles contradicted this claim and said, "Redwood is being grown almost as fast as it is being cut. There is no danger whatever of redwood becoming extinct. Redwood cutting started in California almost 150 years ago. It will continue almost indefinitely because the old forests have been replaced by vigorous young trees which are growing rapidly. (editor's note: Young redwood stands are among the fastest growing in the world and should reach economic maturity within a period of 40 to 50 years.) Data supplied by the U.S. Forest Survey indicate that total annual growth will equal the annual cut by 1975. Developed properly our commercial forest lands can sustain an industrial economy greater and more stable than we ever have had before and provide these other resources (water, fish, wildlife and recreation) in beauty and abundance."

Equally important is the fact that 92.4% of the total redwood young growth is on privately-owned productive forest land. Here are tomor-

row's trees that the group advocating the park are so concerned about. These trees promise redwood timber crops for the future.

Miller Redwood Another Target

A typical example of the pressure being applied to the redwood industry is that of the relatively new Miller Redwood Company near Crescent City, California. This company acquired most of its timber in 1942. Realizing that there was a lot to be learned about the redwood business, experiments were conducted to determine what the logs in the Miller forest area would produce and how to log the area most efficiently on a sustained-yield basis. A long range plan was then developed for the harvesting of the timber under the Miller Redwood control. Road systems were developed and constructed that would aid the natural process of watershed management. It is the stated intent of the company to have a healthy, vigorous forest that replenishes its supply of logs adding to broader utilization of its timber resources. Only after this study was completed, to find the best forest management practices to develop this timber area, was timber harvesting started.

The Miller Redwood Company has started a unique \$8 million complex with the recent opening of a sawmill. The operation will utilize all the products of the forest from the bark to its basic chemicals. Also planned is a planing mill, dry kiln facilities and plants to convert bark, chips, fiber and chemicals into marketable products.

The company's timber lands are of sufficient size to support and justify a permanent, multi-million dollar forest products operation. "Controlled cutting based on scientific knowledge of redwood re-growth rate will mean this forest will last and remain productive forever," according to Darrell Schroeder, general manager of Miller Redwood.



THE TREES IN THIS PICTURE are approximately 10 years old. This growth rate in a well managed forest will assure a permanent supply of timber.

No Sustained Yield If Timber Taken

One influential private group has chosen as its prime target, 20% of the Miller Redwood holdings to be taken for use as a park. It has spared little effort in its attacks on the redwood industry taking its plea as far as the governor of California and the White House.

"Any subtraction from our current timber holding," Schroeder said, "would completely shatter our plans for a long-term sustained yield operation. Add to that the loss of jobs, taxes and contingent economic activity, and the cost for such a move becomes exceeding high."

The Crescent City area, near the Miller lands, has been described by the government as an "economically depressed area", yet on the other hand, a private group is petitioning to remove from the tax rolls a sizable portion of taxable timberland adding to the already heavy burden of the Del Norte county taxpayers and meaning severe loss of jobs for many people dependent on the redwood industry.

Let's look at some facts that the preservationist group has neglected to bring forth in its emotional appeal to take valuable private timber land for use in this particular park.

Look At The Facts

Fact #1—This area already has two redwood parks totaling 15,471 acres, but only about 1% of this is accessible to the public.

Fact #2—The national average of private land ownership to public land ownership is about 67% private to 33% public. However, in this county the opposite is true with 67% of the land off the tax rolls as public land meaning that the remaining 33% of private land must carry the entire tax burden of that area. Any further loss of tax base in this county would result in a significant tax increase for all taxpayers as well as acting to discourage new business in an area that is already depressed.

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SECOND GROWTH TIMBER GROUPS such as this in various age groups provide a future source of raw materials. As older trees are cut, newer trees will become merchantable providing a sustained yield from the forest.

Fact #3—The economy of this area is already suffering. The area was declared a disaster area by the federal government following the tidal wave caused by the recent Alaskan earthquake. Many thousands of dollars were lost from the tax rolls when property was destroyed during this disaster.

Fact #4—The Area Rehabilitation Administration has recognized the area as a depressed area with the approval of a \$1.5 million loan to be used to aid the lagging economy. This action was taken *before* the tidal wave disaster.

Fact #5—With the opening of its sawmill and plans for an \$8 million complex, the Miller Redwood Company, if its land is left intact, will provide a stabilizing influence to the economy of the area.

Fact #6—Any sizeable reduction in the Miller Redwood forest would upset plans for a sustained yield and make further developments of the company's planned complex impractical.

Fact #7—Miller Redwood, with the completion of just its sawmill and with continuing construction work, already employs 150 persons with an annual payroll of more than 3/4-million dollars. When the entire Miller organization is in operation, the company's contribution to the economy will be substantially greater.

Fact #8—The forest products industry is almost exclusively responsible for the economy of the area.

Fact #9—In 1963, Miller Redwood Company contributed almost 10% of the total tax base of the county. If the company's activities were curtailed because of loss of land, it would mean a loss of additional taxes to the county in two ways—first, it would place a limit on the life of the company, and second, it would be a loss of tax dollars because future development would be impractical.

In short, the economy of this area is totally dependent on the production of its forests. And this production is in the hands of the redwood industry. Certainly no private business whose basic purpose is profit would involve this much time, money and effort into developing an industry if its goals were not for a permanent operation. The loss of any of the redwood industry to Northern California would severely effect the economy.

More Parks Necessary?

Is another park necessary when the existing ones are not developed and used? Is another park necessary when the creation of this park will jeopardize many companies, an industry and an economy?

And is it not time for the entire nation to realize that what is happening here in the redwood area of California could happen to each and everyone of us as private landowners who support our communities?

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