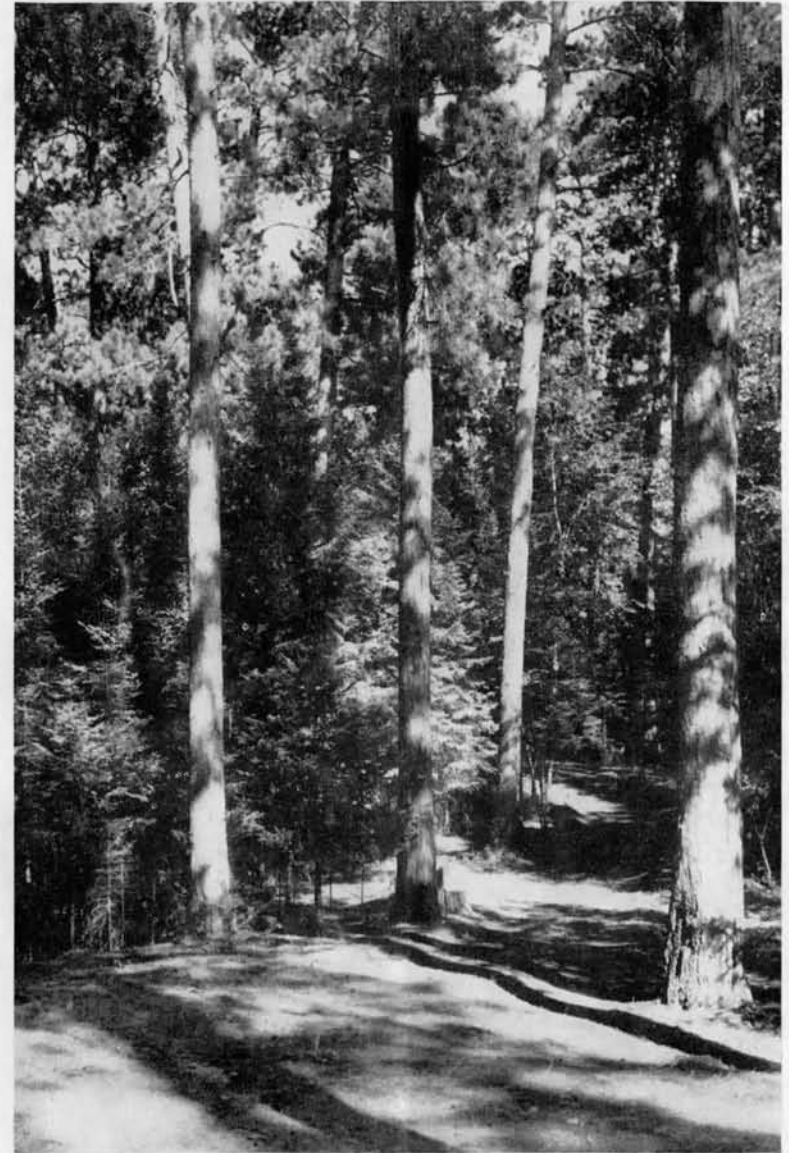


# Planning The Community Forest

*"Stranger, if thou hast learned a truth  
which needs no school of long experience,  
that the world is full of guilt and misery,  
and hast seen enough of all its sorrows,  
crimes and cares to tire thee of it, enter  
this wild wood and view the haunts of  
Nature. The calm shade shall bring a  
kindred calm, and the sweet breeze that  
makes the green leaves dance shall waft  
a balm to thy sick heart."*

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

*Inscription for the  
Entrance to a Wood*



STATE OF MINNESOTA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
CHESTER S. WILSON, *Commissioner*  
DIVISION OF FORESTRY  
H. G. WEBER, *Director*



Prepared by  
RAYMOND CLEMENT  
*Division of Forestry*

COVER PICTURE—*Trails through the woods are as romantic now in the atomic age as in the days of the covered wagon.*

## FOREWORD

Natural resources are the foundation of the wealth of Minnesota. Whether it be the water resources, the timber assets, the tourist attractions, the abundant game and fish, or our soil for farming — they are all an integral part of a basic wealth that makes a great state. Conservation and maximum development of this natural wealth should receive our untiring efforts.

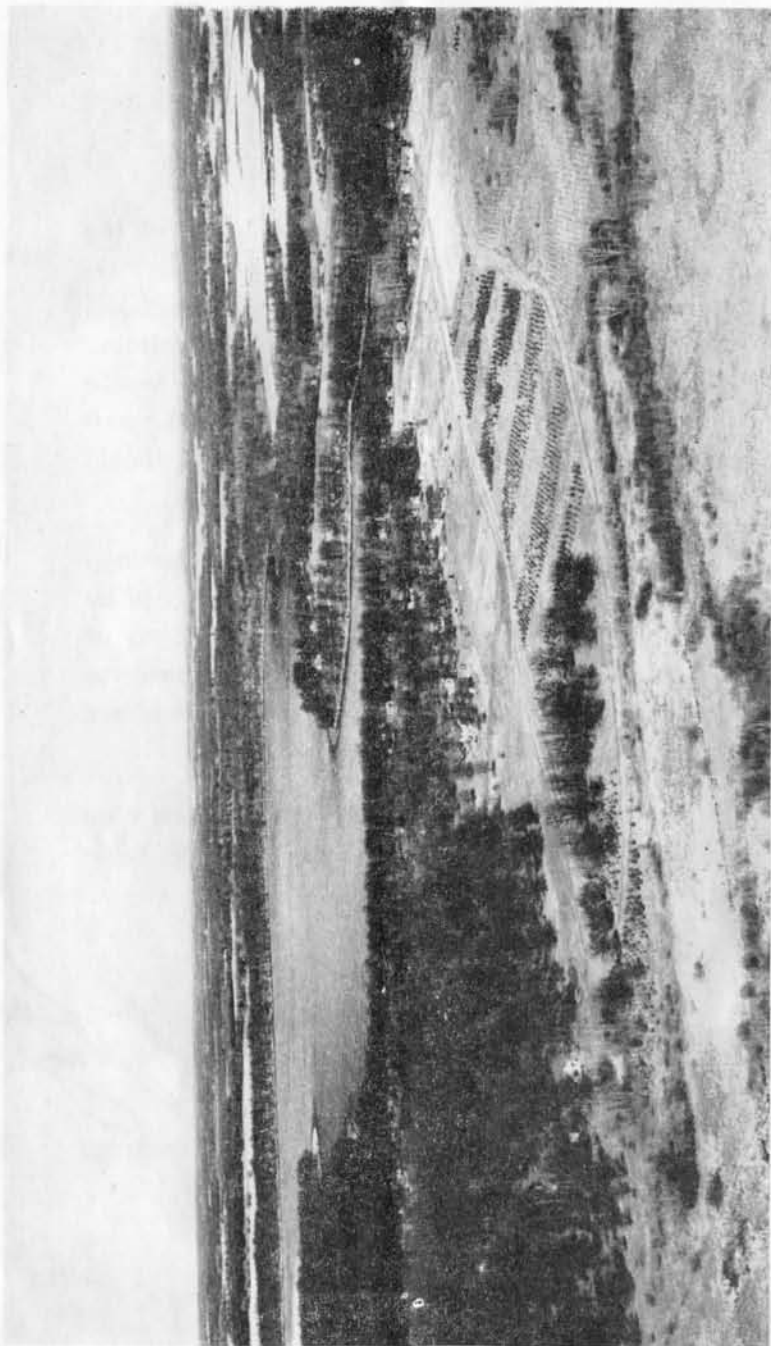
The establishment of local forests by the communities of Minnesota, under a plan sponsored by the Division of Forestry, will unite the efforts of towns, counties, and the state in a great conservation program that will benefit all the people of our State, now, and in the years to come.

The plan has my enthusiastic approval and wide participation therein will be of immeasurable value to our communities and to the State.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Edward J. Thye".

Governor.

October 3, 1946.



*A community forest which includes a lake provides bathing, boating, fishing and other recreation. Plantations made by 4-H Club groups will beautify an otherwise barren hillside and increase the forest wealth for the years to come.*

## PLANNING THE COMMUNITY FOREST

### Introduction

In 1913 the Minnesota State Legislature passed an act providing for the establishment of community or municipal forests upon lands donated to the community or purchased for that purpose. The intent of the act was to legally enable counties and municipalities to establish forests providing recreation, revenue, and education, and to authorize municipalities to collect taxes to maintain such forests. The act was amended in 1945 to provide for the dedication of tax forfeited lands as community forests to memorialize those fallen in World War II.

The text of the act, Minnesota Statutes of 1945, Section 459.06, first passed in 1913, as amended in 1945, is as follows:

**MUNICIPAL FORESTS.** Subdivision 1. **Accept Donations.** Any county, city, village, or town in this state, by resolution of the governing body thereof, may accept donations of land that such governing body may deem to be better adapted to the production of timber and wood than for any other purpose, for a forest, and may manage the same on forestry principles. The donor of not less than 100 acres of any such land shall be entitled to have the same perpetually bear his or her name. The governing body of any city, village, or town in this state, when funds are available or have been levied therefor, may, when authorized by a majority vote by ballot of the voters voting at any general or special city or village election or town meeting where such question is properly submitted, purchase or obtain by condemnation proceedings, and preferably at the sources of streams, any tract of land for a forest which is better adapted for the production of timber and wood than for any other purpose, and which is conveniently located for the purpose, and manage the same on forestry principles; the selection of such lands and the plan of

management thereof shall have the approval of the commissioner. Such city, village, or town is authorized to levy and collect an annual tax of not exceeding five mills on the dollar of its assessed real estate valuation, in addition to all other taxes authorized or permitted by law, to procure and maintain such forests. (1913, c. 211)

Subdivision 2. **Tax Forfeited Lands.** Any county may by resolution of the county board set aside tax forfeited land which is more suitable for forest purposes than for any other purpose and dedicate said lands as a memorial forest and manage the same on forestry principles. Any moneys received as income from the land so dedicated and set aside may be expended from the forfeited tax fund for the development and maintenance of the dedicated forest. (1945, c. 347)

The Division of Forestry of the Minnesota Conservation Department, through its various forest area offices throughout the state, is prepared to assist communities interested in establishing such local forests, and will be glad to act in an advisory capacity in the selection of suitable land, public relations campaigns, and as technicians as far as forestry problems are concerned.

The Division can also help in a material way through the furnishing of young trees, at little cost, for planting upon such lands designated as community forests.

In this bulletin, the Division of Forestry has endeavored to provide suggestions and guidance leading toward the establishment and development of such a forest.



*Good forestry practices in harvesting your timber crop will bring profit to your community without destroying the basic value of the forest.*



## Purpose of the Community Forest

We present herewith some objectives in establishing a community forest, a combination of which may apply to your particular locality and forest.

1. The Creation of a War Memorial. It is proper at this time to create fitting memorials to our men and women who gave their services and their lives in World War II. It is in keeping with the spirit of the times that memorials shall not only be lasting in character, but also useful and attractive. Community forests are memorials which contribute to the health, security and general well-being of the people, and which, by progressively serving humanity, will constantly remind people of the heroism and sacrifice which they commemorate.

American G.I.'s love the out-of-doors. They love woods and water, and all that nature offers. They, themselves, would choose a forest as an appropriate memorial.

2. The Growing of Timber to Produce a Community Income. A large percentage of forests in western Europe are owned by communities, rather than by private, state or national agencies, and the revenues received from these forests in many instances pay a large proportion of the local tax bill. The forest may also provide additional income for the inhabitants of a community through the work of cutting timber, and in the care and maintenance of the forest.

In the United States, usually the primary objective of the forest is a timber crop. Thus, the community forest may be self-supporting, and in many instances provide timber for construction and maintenance of municipal buildings, as well as fuel wood for heating.

In selecting a site for your community forest, the economic return from its wood products, as well as other assets, is a factor to definitely bear in mind.

3. The Creation of Outdoor Recreation Areas. The field of recreation in a forest is so diverse that one could not possibly cover the subject in a short paragraph. Depending upon the type of forest, picnicking facilities, bathing, boating, perhaps fishing, a natural amphitheatre — any of these will bring the people into

the outdoors for healthful recreation, whether it be a strenuous active sport, or just lazing under a tree with a book.

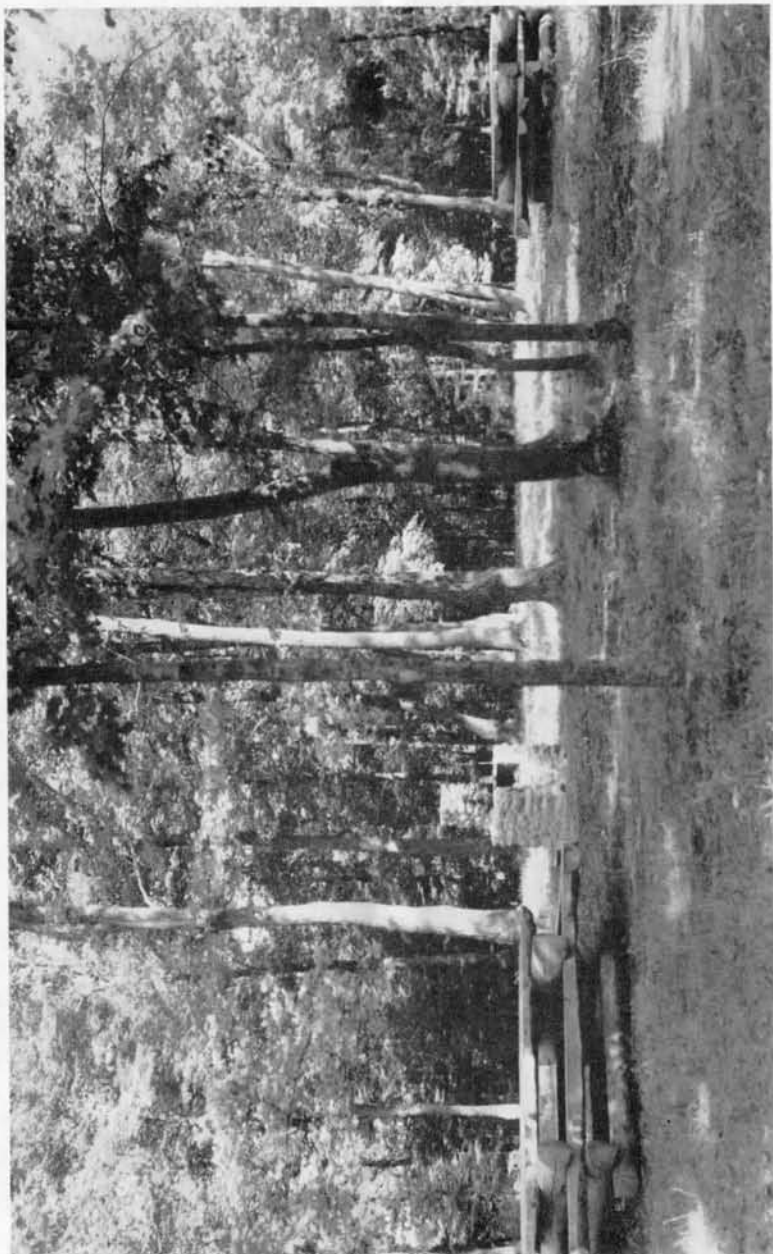
4. To Develop Youths' Summer Camp Sites. Many civic organizations maintain summer camp sites for the youth of their communities, where the boys and girls can enjoy a week or two in the woods. Woodcraft, swimming, archery, nature study, and good fellowship are learned, and these activities contribute to the development of fine American men and women of the future.

5. The Beautification of Town Environs. Often the approaches to a town are inartistic and barren. Attractive wooded areas along the highways entering a town welcome more warmly the visiting stranger.

6. The Elimination of Unsightly Areas. The planting of trees upon barren and unsightly areas around or near a town will within a few years pay well in fine stands of young timber, and be the beginning of a real community forest for the enjoyment of the local people.

7. The Preservation of Wooded Areas Threatened by Exploitation. In the past, many of Minnesota's natural beauty spots have been destroyed by industry or desecrated by commercialization. It behooves us to keep for the enjoyment of the people a little of the loveliness that is our state's heritage.

8. A Windbreak for a Town. Many small towns experience wind and snow problems that could be alleviated through the establishment of a properly planned windbreak.



*Unpretentious picnic and campground facilities provide inexpensive recreation for small or large groups.*

9. To Provide a Wildlife Sanctuary. This is an objective which appeals to the heart of every sportsman. The community forest will be a haven for game animals and birds of every description and will provide a natural classroom for the study of nature's wonders for the youth of the community.

10. To Provide an Arboretum or Laboratory for the Study of Botany and Conservation.

11. To Protect a Community Water Supply. Many of the community forests in the country were created to protect the water supply of municipalities, and this is an important objective in Minnesota. Forests already established, or planted, on the watershed lands of your area will help to maintain a pure and steady supply of water. In addition, the recreational opportunities afforded in such a forest are considerably greater than in one which has no aquatic features.

12. To Establish Productive Conditions on Idle Lands. Tax forfeiture of lands agriculturally unproductive creates an ideal situation for the dedication of such lands for community forest purposes, and the revenue derived therefrom will again bring income to the community treasury.

13. To Provide Productive Work for Relief Labor. In many communities, the winter that brings idleness also brings poverty. Fuel wood cut in the community forest by labor under a relief program will heat the homes of the needy, as well as provide income for food and clothing.

14. To Develop a Source of Evergreens and Christmas Trees for Community Decoration.

15. To Establish Demonstration Areas for Private Owners' Benefit. The forest management plan of a community forest should be so made as to create an example and demonstrate to the private owners of woodlots and timberlands of the surrounding countryside the profitable operation and advantages of such a plan.

### **Planning the Community Forest**

With the objectives specifically chosen, it may be well to consider the size and kind of forest. Is the forest to be four,



*Eagle Scouts building trail in the forest. Group activities such as this in a community forest contribute to the well-being and health of our future citizens.*



*The tempering of winter winds and the control of snow may be a desirable attribute of the community forest.*



forty, or four hundred acres in size? Is it to be developed principally for revenue or for recreation? Will the land be given, purchased, or tax forfeited? Are structures contemplated? What recreational facilities are to be developed? These qualifications and others may influence your plan.

Recognizing the public nature of such an undertaking, success will depend in a large measure upon the wholehearted support of the community.

The initiators of a movement for the development of a community forest should set up committees in such a manner that a smooth running organization is formed and the project brought to a satisfactory conclusion, so that the forest and its facilities become available to the public within a reasonable length of time after the inception of the plan.

A public relations committee should:

- a. Present the project through the local newspapers and other printed mediums.
- b. Obtain the cooperation of such "booster" organizations as Chambers of Commerce; the American Legion; Lions, Kiwanis, social, church, literary and women's clubs; and others.
- c. Organize public meetings as well as appoint a joint committee to be composed of members of the various interested groups. This will give diverse popular interest to the necessary educational campaign.

The primary function of the public relations committee is to create and maintain interest in the community forest through publicity means. This is especially important if funds are involved in the development of the forest.

Other committees should be:

1. Land Committee
2. Legal Committee
3. Finance Committee
4. Management Committee

Land Committee. The function of this group would be to select the site of the forest. Real estate values should be borne in mind, and the suitability of the site for the objectives desired in the community forest.

Legal Committee. This committee will examine land titles, arrange for the setting aside of tax forfeited lands by the local government, handle the legal problems of finance, if the land is to be purchased, arrange for acceptance by the county, village or town of any gift of land, and see that all legal requirements are complied with.

Finance Committee. Funds, undoubtedly, will be needed, if not for the purchase of land, then, perhaps, for the initial improvements, structures, or other developments. It may be the function of this committee, also, to set up a budget and finance plan for the permanent care and maintenance of the forest.

Management Committee. Upon this group falls the responsibility of the establishment of a permanent board for the development and management of the forest along the lines of the objectives chosen. Members of this board should be non-partisan and non-political and dedicated to the project. Policies of operation should be made which are compatible with the objectives of the forest and with forestry practices, and this board should handle all matters of finance, care and maintenance, once the forest is established. Permanent records should be kept. A pictorial and statistical history of the forest in the form of annual reports may be made as a guide for future programs.

Professional guidance in the management of such a forest program may be desirable. If the forest is large enough, perhaps the services of a professional forester will be in order.

The Minnesota Division of Forestry will be pleased to assist interested groups in planning community forests. Trained foresters can help you in the selection of land sites, suggest recreational facilities, and formulate management or work plans for improvement of present timber stands. The Division may also furnish small coniferous trees for afforestation and reforestation of publicly owned lands at a minimum cost. The populace of your community in the future will benefit by your planting efforts of





*The young forest on the banks of this river reduces the possibility of erosion and preserves the water for its ultimate users.*

today. Their heritage will be a truly great memorial to be preserved for all time.

The Minnesota Division of Forestry maintains forest area headquarters in the following cities:

Cambridge	Arago
Moose Lake	Warroad
Cloquet	Baudette
Brainerd	Blackduck
Hibbing	Littlefork
Hill City	Orr
Bemidji	Hovland
Park Rapids	Duluth
Grand Rapids	(304 Builders Exchange)

Supervisors of these areas will be pleased to have you consult with them on any and all of your community forest problems. Application blanks for forest tree planting stock may be obtained from them, and they will advise you as to suitable species and quantities of trees needed, as well as planting procedure.

Communities in the southern part of the state and those too far removed from the above area headquarters may contact the Minnesota Division of Forestry at 338 State Office Building, Saint Paul.



*Thirty years ago this forest was non-existent. Plantations of young trees periodically will insure a continuous timber crop from your community forest.*

