

Surry Farm Woods Offer Challenge To Farmers

By R. W. Graeber, Extension Forester North Carolina State College.

"Can the more than 4,300 farmers of Surry County make an abundant living on the 66,270 acres of crop land and ignore the opportunity offered by us on the 136,461 acres of land which we now control?" is the challenge of the farm woods to the Surry farmers.

These farm woodland acres have in the past given you your homes, barns and other buildings, now valued at \$4,045,355 as reported by 9,296 farmers. If a reasonable standard of living is to be maintained, these buildings must be kept in repair and be replaced occasionally. To do this requires material equal to 5 per cent of the value of the buildings each year, or approximately \$202,267. The farm woods can supply these building requirements, if given a chance to grow timber. Otherwise the so-called cash crops must supply funds with which to purchase the necessary building needs.

Again the farm woods give Surry farmers 72,211 cords of fire wood each year for home use, an average of 16.7 cords per farm. Many farmers make wood products a cash crop. As an example, 395 Surry farmers report sales of forest products to the amount of \$45,946, while all farmers report cutting \$214,807 worth of wood products for home use and for sale. This is an average of \$49.68 per farm, an amount equivalent to more than twice the average tax bill of the farmer on all his holdings, both real and personal.

The woods make use of the poorer, rocky soil types and steep, rolling lands not suitable for annual crops. They protect your lands from erosion, aid in control of water run-off and regulate stream flow, give your open fields protection from wind and aid in preventing drought.

If you, as a farmer, concede the above facts to be true, then, is it not reasonable to give these woodland acres reasonable protection and management, on the same basis as you handle other farm crops? You can't grow a crop of corn by cutting down the good stalks and leaving the cripples and the weeds, neither can you expect a future crop of good timber by cutting all the better trees, leaving only the culls, cripples, and weeds to carry on. In Surry county you will find many types and conditions of forests. Some areas have old growths of mature or virgin timber which should be cut when market conditions are right. This may call for a clear-cutting operation. If so, all crippled and otherwise poor trees should be taken, as well as the choice merchantable timber. However, to provide for a continued timber crop, two to four good seed trees should be left on each acre, also any straight young trees which might be present.

Surry farmers have many acres of second growth pines, which come in abandoned fields, and are now in need of thinning. This is just a common sense operation like thinning corn. You take out the poorest, overcrowded trees and leave the choicer ones for a future crop of timber. Oh, yes, I know many will say, "It's no use to thin timber, nature will do that." By the same line of reasoning, there is no need for a motorist to ask for help to get his car out of a mud-hole. He can just wait on Nature until the mud-hole dries and then drive out. Thinning can begin at any time, but good results can be secured by making the first thinning when the pines are 15 to 20 years old, leaving 700 to 1200 trees per acre, and repeat the operation each 5 to 7 years when the trees get crowded again. A good guide for all conditions is to take out all crippled and crowded

trees, thinning just enough to leave a little "daylight" around the crowns of the choicer trees left.

Following this system, farmers should produce 175 to 200 choice timber trees per acre and shorten the time for growing a crop of saw timber by 20 to 25 years. During this time, he would harvest as much as 50 per cent more total wood products. In other words, you shorten the time and increase the crop both in quantity and quality.

Your mixed hardwoods of varying ages will require a common sense treatment of cutting mature trees for market, and at the same time remove the crippled trees and poorer species to promote both growth and reseedling of the better kinds.

Surry county has 19,337 acres of idle fields, much of which is eroding and too poor for crops. Again some one will say, "Leave it to nature—pines will come in just a year or two." This is very often not true, especially when the openings are large, the seed trees scarce or on the wrong side of the fields for the seed to be scattered by the wind. In many cases farmers will find it good business to plant these idle fields by artificial means. By this method no time is lost, trees are spaced evenly. Even though it is not absolutely necessary often 5 to 10 years' time can be saved by planting seedling trees. Your native shortleaf and white pines and black locust are recommended. Yellow poplar, on moist sites, may do equally as well. I would try a few acres of these. Trees are nature's best cure for eroding soils. My suggestion is, "Plant trees—Give these Wandering Soils the binding influence of tree roots and put them to sleep under a blanket of leaf litter."

See your county agent, ask him to help you solve your timber and waste land problems.

LOVELACE GIVES POLITICAL VIEWS

May Be Candidate For Lieutenant-Governor; Dooms Roosevelt

(The following article, reprinted from The Greensboro Daily News of Friday, July 12, should be of interest locally):

"President Roosevelt will receive less than 50 electoral votes in November, 1936, and he will be unable to carry North Carolina," Robert L. Lovelace, of Elkin, predicted while a visitor in Greensboro yesterday.

"I am looking for a complete overturn next year in North Carolina," continued Mr. Lovelace in response to questioning. "There is every indication that we are going to have in 1936 the strongest resurgence of Republican doctrine in North Carolina and elsewhere in the nation since the days of Abraham Lincoln. It is my confident expectation that Republican victories next year will include a return to power in the state government as well as nationally."

Mr. Lovelace readily qualifies as a man who has devoted some active attention to politics. Last year he was the Republican nominee for state senator in the 23rd district, composed of Surry and Stokes counties, and Republicans say that he reduced the Democratic majority in that district very materially.

While in the city the Elkin man called on James S. Duncan, Greensboro attorney, former state senator and former Republican state chairman, and he chatted with a number of other friends here. He did not attempt to conceal his keen interest in the political situation and he promptly asserted his faith in "the early return of the country to Republican leadership."

State politics also received attention from the visitor when he was interviewed. "I am for Clifford Frazier, of Greensboro, for governor of North Carolina and hope that he will be nominated again in 1936," said Mr. Lovelace. "He made a vigorous and statesmanlike campaign in 1932 and in the event of his selection as our standard bearer next year he should be elected. He is eminently fitted for the high office of governor. He is a man of exceptionally large caliber and he will not desert bedrock principles. There also is strong sentiment for Frank C. Patton, of Morganton, for governor. He is considered a very able young leader and has a strong following."

Mr. Lovelace proclaimed himself strongly in favor of the re-election of Charles A. Jonas, of Lincolnton, former member of the national house of representatives and former United States district attorney, as Republican national committeeman from North Carolina. "He is a worthy leader, tried and true, and

he will not surrender to the forces of expediency," the visitor maintained.

Although he modestly refrained from discussion of the matter, Mr. Lovelace is being mentioned in political speculation as a potential Republican candidate for lieutenant governor of North Carolina in 1936. His friends say that in the event of his nomination he will unquestionably make a vigorous campaign.

Reverting to the national situation, Mr. Lovelace declared himself quite apprehensive over "alien influences which have been making themselves felt in high places" recently. "We are in a hell of a fix," he said, disclaiming any intention to be really profane but seeking to place emphasis on his conviction that "very vital changes are very vitally needed," and that some of the trends witnessed in this country during the last few years impel serious consideration.

"When we try to make the United States constitution elastic it is a dangerous condition," the Elkin man asserted. "That sacred document is intimately related to the sound development of the country over a long period of years and we must preserve it. We are going to have a rebirth of constitutional government reflecting the principles enunciated by Lincoln. Many of the ideas that are seeping into the government are communistic and alien in character and had their beginning in soviet Russia. We are not going to allow our country to be sovietized."

In 1932 "the Republicans erred," said Mr. Lovelace, "but they will return to the fold in 1936. We reserve the right to do our own thinking and we are going to think our way through to a great Republican victory next year."

"Who is your choice for President?" the visitor was asked.

"Senator L. J. Dickinson, of Iowa," he replied, "or Gov. Alfred M. Landon, of Kansas, or Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, of Michigan."

Incidentally Mrs. Lovelace, the former Miss Minnie Hunt, of North Wilkesboro, is a granddaughter of Sidney Stokes, who distinguished himself in the Confederate army; a great-granddaughter of Gov. Montgomery Stokes, and also a great-granddaughter of United States Senator Jonathan Hunt, Mr. Lovelace is a cousin of Gen. Robert E. Lee.

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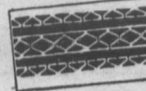
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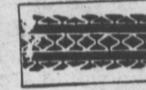
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