

BRIEF INSTRUCTIONS

TO

MASSACHUSETTS

FOREST WARDENS



A valuable fifteen-year old stand destroyed by a ground fire. Mostly white pine.

BY

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INSTRUCTIONS

TO

MASSACHUSETT'S FOREST WARDENS

FOREST WARDENS may be assured that their work is one of great economic and æsthetic importance to the future welfare of this Commonwealth. A forest warden understanding the object of his office and faithful to the honor bestowed upon him becomes a trusted public servant not only of his town, but of the state and nation.

I. Forest Fires

The prevention of forest fires is a very important part, one of the fundamentals in practical forestry.

Organi- This cannot be done unless there is
zation a well-organized force, in which the duties of each person are well defined and clearly understood. For this reason, careful attention should be paid to the following instructions:—

It is the duty of the forest wardens to see that their deputies are fully supplied with printed notices containing forest fire laws. Early in the season, fire notices are sent to all wardens, but more can be obtained at any time from the State Forester. The forest wardens should see that these notices are properly posted in public places and along forest trails and locations frequented by fishing, hunting and camping parties.

**Posting
fire
notices**

During the dry seasons, which occur in the spring before the trees are in leaf, and in the fall, after the leaves have fallen, the forest wardens should keep sharp watch out for any sign of fire, and everything should be kept in readiness so that no time will be lost in reaching the spot where smoke is seen or an outbreak reported. Fishermen, hunters and campers should be cautioned at every opportunity offered to be careful in the use of fire; to refrain from throwing lighted matches, pipe ashes, cigars and cigarettes on the ground, and especially to completely extinguish their camp fires before leaving them.

**Caution in
dry times**

**Hunters
and
campers**

The forest wardens must use their own judgment as to how the work at a forest fire should be conducted, as it is assumed they have had ample experience in this line. **Back firing** should, however, be attempted only as a last resort, and even then the situation should be carefully examined and clearly understood.

It is important to remember that one hour's work in the early morning or late evening is worth six hours in the middle of the day in controlling a forest fire. **Fires over night** If a fire, therefore, is not extinguished at evening the men should remain on the ground all night, and arrangements should be made for their comfort by the forest wardens. If a fire is left at night, much valuable time may be lost.

Especial pains should be taken to learn the cause of the fire, and the person or persons starting same. **Cause of fires** At the present time the answer to the questions as to the origin of the fire is "cause unknown." If the matter is attended to promptly there should be very little trouble in learning the point from which

the fire originated, and the cause. The facts, if obtainable, should be fully reported, regardless of whom they concern. If no definite facts can be obtained the forest warden is at liberty to give his opinion as to the origin.

In answering the printed questions in the report, the forest warden should furnish such further information as may relate directly or indirectly to the matter.

After a fire has occurred, the forest warden should immediately fill out and mail the report of the same to the State Forester, using the
Reports printed form furnished for the purpose. An examination of the burned area should be made, however, so that the number of acres burned over, the extent and nature of the damage, and the amount and kinds of timber destroyed, may be approximately given.

Each forest warden should read carefully the
Forest laws Massachusetts forest laws, which for convenience are published in a small booklet, and will be sent upon request, if you have not already received it.

Hereafter, the forest warden will represent not only the town, but individuals in all dealings with the railroads relative to forest fires and their suppression. (Chapter 431, section 2, Acts of 1907.)

Rail-roads

In towns without definite facilities for combating forest fires, the forest warden should bring the matter before the town and emphasize the importance of having some fire-extinguishers and other equipment in readiness. There are few towns but would adopt more modern methods, it is believed, if they had a well-defined practical plan placed before them.

Equip-ment

No forest warden should hesitate in doing his full duty, as he has the laws of the State of Massachusetts back of him to carry out his work successfully.

Author-ity

II. Forest Management, Reforestation, etc.

The forest wardens shall investigate the values of forest lands, the character and extent of wood-cutting operations, the methods of reforestation and the prevalence of insect pests injurious to forest growth. He should be able to answer inquiries regarding seeds and seedlings of the various species, where they can be obtained, when and how to collect, and time and method of planting best adapted to the species. He should refer to the State Forester parties in his town desiring examinations and working plans of woodlots.

Especial care should be taken to note the presence of Gypsy and Brown-Tail moths and other insect outbreaks, and if discovered should report the same immediately, so that they may be combated before firmly established.

Any other matters which affect the extent and conditions of forestry, in general, in the respective towns, as over-taxation, etc., should be studied and reported upon as they come under the notice of the forest wardens.

As soon as the appointments of forest wardens have become sufficiently permanent to guarantee results, and the State Forester can procure necessary funds to meet the expenses, arrangements will be made to have an occasional convention of forest wardens, according to chapter 475, section 8, Acts of 1907. At such conventions, besides having discussions and lectures by strong forest experts on various subjects, each warden will have ample opportunity to compare his results and experience with those of others. Such conventions will tend to strengthen and make more effective the whole forestry environment in the State.

With a live central organization in the State Forester's office at the State House, alert to what is being accomplished by the forest service of the national government and other State organizations, and with a corps of 320 forest wardens (one in each town), besides those in the cities, each with an organized working force of deputies, and a constantly growing public-spirited constituency of townsmen, we have splendid possibilities for accomplishing much in bettering our forestry conditions.

III. Conclusions to Forest Wardens

It may appear that the duties of the forest warden, as outlined, are numerous, of a broad nature and exacting, and they are to one who is attempting the work, if it is properly done. However, the whole subject of forestry is a new undertaking in this country, and the work in hand (1) to reclothe our waste and unsightly lands, (2) care properly for the forest growth already standing, (3) put a stop to wanton recklessness and great waste caused by forest fires, and (4) educate our people to thinking and doing in the light of forest economy, cannot be done in a day or year.

The State of Massachusetts does not expect impossibilities of you, and in outlining the above instructions and in formulating the forest laws passed by the recent General Court, the aim has been to devise ways and means whereby we may be able to accomplish ultimate results, in keeping with modern progress. Great economic good is to come from rational forestry methods, to say nothing of the æsthetic side, which likewise is worthy of our efforts.

That the forest warden has a definite field of usefulness in each town in Massachusetts, there can be

no question, and that his work is one of great possibilities, I trust is made clear.

In behalf of the position which I hold as State Forester, I therefore extend to each warden, and through you to your deputies, a cordial invitation to consult my office at any and all times on forestry matters, and let it be generally known that the office is established by the State to accomplish great good for the whole State in general, and each town and individual in so far as practicable.

Yours very sincerely,

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STATE FORESTER

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*A thirsty young hardwood growth severely hurt
by a ground fire.*

While a ground fire does not kill all of the young hardwoods, as in the case of the white pine, it nevertheless dwarfs the trees and destroys far more value than is ordinarily realized.

The loss by fire of the forest floor, or spongy leaf mould, which renders ideal conditions of moisture, etc., for root development, is very damaging to good results.

We must protect and encourage these young and promising forest growths everywhere throughout the Commonwealth.