

The Journal and Republican

LOWVILLE, N. Y., THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1922.

MEASURES TO PREVENT AND EXTINGUISH FOREST FIRES

The Fisher Forestry and Realty Company Establishes New Fire Observation Tower on a Rock Mountain East of Half Moon Lake—Protection of the Forests the Crying Need.

The Fisher Forestry and Realty Company (formerly the M. L. Fisher estate.) of Lyons Falls, is taking substantial measures to prevent and extinguish fire in the woods. The company has just completed the establishment of a new fire observation tower on a rock mountain south east of Half Moon-Lake in the town of Watson, Lewis county. The station has telephone connection with the line from Lowville to Number Four. The Conservation Commission and Fenton & Dence, of Lowville, have co-operated in putting up the tower. This look out will be used as a secondary and emergency station, the Fisher Co. maintaining an observer to watch for fire during dry periods, and will supplement the Beaver Lake Mountain and Stillwater Mountain observations stations. From the Half Moon station a large acreage of various owners in the towns of Watson and Greig can be observed. This area has been in considerable danger every year and much land burnt because of the carelessness of fishermen, campers and hunters in leaving fire.

The Fisher Forestry and Realty Co. have also purchased a powerful gasoline pump for fighting forest fire where water is available. It is provided with 500 feet of one and a half inch hose, and has been shown by test capable of pumping water through 1,500 feet of hose to a height of 85 feet at the rate of 20 gallons a minute. Considering its power, the pump is light, weighing 130 pounds, and, with iron pipe rack attached, can be carried without difficulty by two men in the woods.

These remarkable little pumps have been used extensively in Canada, and in many forest regions in the United States. They have proven so effective in fighting fire that some have been purchased by the Conservation Commission for use in the Adirondacks. The pump purchased by the Fisher Forestry and Realty Co. is the first one to be bought by any timber land owner in this section.

Forest products and dairy products comprise the two chief industries in Lewis county, and protection of the forests from fire means much to the welfare and prosperity of Lewis county and adjoining country.

This is the season of forest fires. Statistics gathered by the Conservation Commission, and published in its annual report, show that out of a total of 726 fires in the last calendar year, 119 occurred in April, 174 in May, 108 in June. The frequency of spring fires in the mountains is due in a large measure to the fishermen and campers who visit the woods at this season.

Whether impelled to smoke by the ever present flies or because smoking is a common attribute to those who love the woods, it is regrettably true that more forest fires are due to smokers than to any other single cause. Out of 726 fires of the last calendar year 212 were due to smokers, 120 to fishermen, and 66 to campers.

The fires of 1921—most of them preventable—burned 28,663 acres (approximately as many acres as were reforested privately in the last decade); did damage to the extent of \$50,000 and cost over \$60,000 to extinguish.

New York is justly proud of her advancement in forestry and conservation, but to burn in one year more than is privately planted in ten years is making progress backwards!

No wonder that the Empire State Forest Products Association at its last annual meeting appointed a special committee to confer with the Conservation Commission on legislation for forest fire protection. This committee consisting of W. C. Hull, of Tupper Lake; Clarence L. Fisher, of Lyons Falls, and Prof. A. B. Rocknagel, of Cornell University, met with the Assistant Superintendent of State Forests Howard recently and decided that the need is not so much for additional legislation as for more education and support of existing legislation. Until the public is fully aroused to the need of stopping forest fires the red demon will continue his ravages. Only as each and every citizen of the state is informed of the danger and resolves to do his or her share in preventing forest fires will this menace be eliminated. When the people of New York state really value forests, they will protect them from fire.