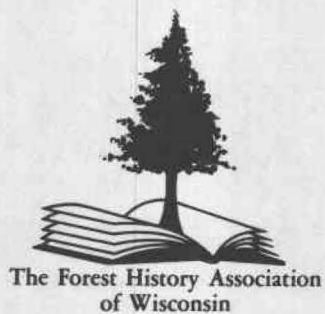


# History of Nicolet National Forest 1928-1976



# **HISTORY OF THE NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST 1928—1976**

by  
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(July-1977)



A cooperative publication of the Forest  
Service, U.S.D.A., and the Forest History  
Association of Wisconsin, Inc.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Appreciation is extended to all of the Nicolet National Forest personnel, both past and present, who have been so helpful in securing and giving information and statistics used in writing this history.

Special acknowledgment goes to the following people who wrote some of the stories included in the history, and who were a big help by giving additional information and dates. It would have been impossible to put the history together without their help.

Ray C. Iverson  
Donald Kelsey  
William Wolfe, Jr.  
Herpert Schipper  
Nels Sandberg

Wesley White  
David Stover  
Horace Nixon  
William Cook  
Norman Cole

George Strickler  
Edward Anderson  
Kenneth Wills  
Lloyd Schroeder  
Stanley Novak

## I. EARLY HISTORY OF THE AREA

Any history of the Nicolet National Forest must include a look at the surrounding area, for the Forest is not a separate entity. Rather, it is an integral part of the Nation's overall resource base, and holds special meaning for the people living within and near its boundaries.

The 973,000-plus acre Nicolet Forest is located in northeastern Wisconsin -- a State named for the long, meandering river which traverses it. The exact meaning of the word "Wisconsin" is not known, but some of the proposed definitions for the Indian word are "Wild," "Rushing River," and "Gathering of the Waters." The earliest written record of this word is on a 1673 map made by the French explorer Louis Joliet. Inscribed along the river line is "Riviere Misconsing."

The Wisconsin River starts at Lake Lac Vieux Desert at the Wisconsin-Michigan line on the Eastern Continental Divide. It runs southwest in a meandering direction for a distance of about 450 miles, emptying into the Mississippi River at Prairie Du Chein, Wisconsin. This river is considered one of the hardest working rivers in the Nation, with 26 power dams, paper mills and other industries using its waters.

The earliest settlers in this forested area were members of several northern Indian tribes -- Chippewas, Potawatomies, Menominees and Brother-toms. The Indians' first encounters with "pale face" came in the middle of the 17th Century, as French explorers pushed their way north via the rivers.

The French were the first to explore the Great Lakes region. In 1634, Jean Nicolet was sent out by the Governor of New France to promote trade with the Indians. He landed at Red Banks, near where the modern City of Green Bay is, and ascended the Fox River to a point about 20 miles west of Lake Winnebago. When he came ashore, Nicolet was met by friendly Winnebago Indians.



JEAN NICOLET AND WINNEBAGO INDIANS



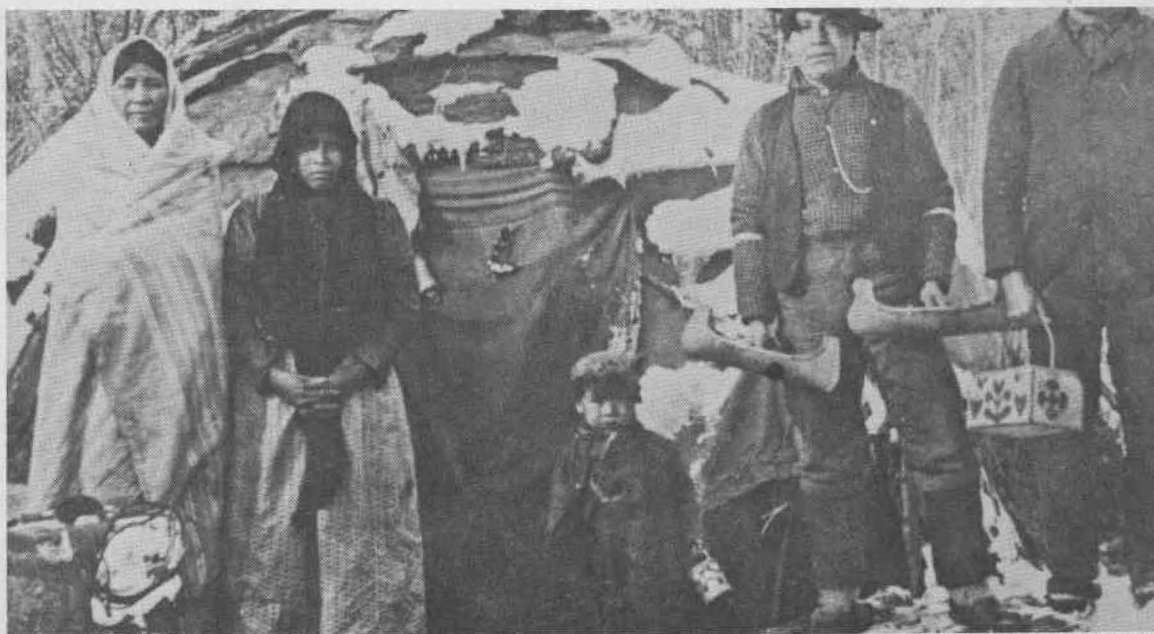
Jean Nicolet is believed to have been the first European to enter Lake Michigan and travel the Great Lakes. Little was known of his explorations until the middle 1800's, when an account of his western journey was found. From this early writing, historians deduced that Nicolet traveled through the Straits of Mackinac on his way to Lake Michigan. Nicolet's party crossed the Lake to the western shore, where they met a tribe of Winnebago Indians, with whom Nicolet made a peace treaty.

Nicolet was born in Cherbourg, France. He came to America for the first time at the age of 20, with explorer Samuel D. Champlain. Nicolet settled in Canada with a tribe of Indians. He studied their language and later served as an interpreter for Champlain. Nicolet's Lake Michigan crossing was his first and last venture on the Great Lakes. His boat overturned on the St. Lawrence River during a storm and he drowned.

The Nicolet National Forest is named in honor of this early explorer.

Twenty years after Nicolet set foot on the Wisconsin shorelines, two fur traders, Radisson and Groseilliers, took to the Fox River. Their excursions encouraged river travel and gave a push to the first real "industry" of the north woods -- fur trading.

The many lakes and streams which dot and criss-cross this northern Forest, at one time provided an ideal habitat for a multitude of fur bearing animals, as well as a natural transportation system. Trading posts soon dotted the shores, and, in 1669, a mission was established a few miles above the mouth of the Fox River. This was the first permanent settlement within the present Wisconsin boundaries. Today the City of DePere is located here.



INDIANS IN FRONT OF THEIR HOMEMADE TEPEE OR SHELTER

Early trading posts were located on the Wolf River between the villages of Langlade and Hollister; on Pine Lake at Hiles; on the shore of Virgin Lake (6 miles east of Three Lakes); on the east shore of Catfish Lake in the Chain of Lakes; and, at the old Indian village on Lake Lac Vieux Desert. Here, the art of bartering was kept alive, as the traders obtained furs from the Indians in exchange for trinkets, guns, ammunition and "fire water" (whiskey). The furs were then transported, via the waterways, to a post where they were sold and shipped to Europe.

As explorers, fur traders, and finally the settlers advanced into the area, the Indians were driven from the land.

Misdealings between fur traders, settlers and the Indians caused bad feelings, which culminated in the French and Indian War. In 1765, the war ended, and French possessions east of the Mississippi River were ceded to England.

Several years later, the colonists went to war with England. At the end of the American Revolution, the territory northwest of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi River was given to the new United States by Great Britain. However, England did not relinquish its hold immediately, and it was not until the close of the War of 1812, that she ceased to exercise some degree of control in this territory.

In 1787, the region bounded by Pennsylvania, the Ohio River, the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes was organized as the Northwest Territory. The claims of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Virginia, as based on their early charters, were returned to the United States between 1781 and 1786. The Wisconsin area was originally included in the organized territory of Indiana in 1800. In 1809, it became a part of the Illinois Territory, and in 1818, when Illinois became a State, the area was added to the Michigan Territory.

No recounting of those early fur trading days would be complete without mentioning Daniel Gagen. He was one of the notable pioneers of northern Wisconsin. The Village of Gagen, in Oneida County, is named in his honor.

Dan Gagen was born in England in 1834. He came to America in 1851, at the age of 17. Although he had obtained a good business education in England, he spent his first year working in the copper mines of northern Michigan. The country was wild in those days, with the Indians and settlers tolerating each other because of their interdependence. The Indians depended on the settlers for supplies, while the furs procured by Indian hunters and trappers found a ready sale in civilized marts, providing the settlers with a source of income.

The fur trading profession appealed to Gagen, and he soon quit his job in the mines, and built a log cabin trading post about 2 miles from the present town of Eagle River.

During the early 1860's, Gagen carried on an extensive business with the Indians. He made horse team trips from his post to Berlin, in Green Lake County, where he sold his furs to L. S. Cohn. (Cohn later built an addition to the City of Rhinelander, which is still known as Cohn's addition.)

Gagen was also a good friend of the Indians, and he often acted as arbitrator or judge in matters of dispute between the Indians and other residents. His fame extended throughout the State.

Toward the close of the Civil War, the fur business began to drop off, and Gagen drifted into the lumber business. He also took up farming and established a home at Pine Lake. For years, Gagen was a member of the county board. He was a man of such prominence and influence, that he was often referred to as "King of the North." Around 1896, Gagen moved his family to Three Lakes, Wisconsin. This town remained his home until his death on November 25, 1908. His wife and two sons, James, a former resident of Antigo, and Henry of Three Lakes, were with him when he died.

Wisconsin was organized as a separate territory in 1836. At that time, it included the area which makes up the present States of Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa, as well as those portions of North and South Dakota lying east of the Missouri and White Earth Rivers. Wisconsin, with its present boundaries, became a State of the Union in May 1848.



JOHN SHOPODOCK

One of the most colorful figures from the pages of Nicolet Forest history was John Shopodock, a Potawatomi Indian Chief.

I met the Chief for the first time while on a fishing trip at Windsor Dam on the North Branch of the Pine River in 1929. He spoke fairly good English and was quite inquisitive, though he gave very little information out about himself during the course of our conversation.

Up until his death in 1940, Chief Shopodock lived on the North Branch of the Pine River, within the Nicolet National Forest boundary. Although the government gave him 40 acres of land in the NE NE, Section 22, T40N, R13E, and built him a large frame building on the site, the Chief continued to live in his hillside dugout. He did, however, use the frame structure in the fall of the year to house

from 6 to 8 squaws while they stayed with him and cut marsh hay for his wild Indian ponies.

Around 1930, the Humane Society made the Chief sell his wild ponies, because he didn't have enough hay to feed them, nor a shelter to keep them in during the harsh winter months. A man from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, came in the spring of that year and offered to purchase the horses. After the man captured the herd, he took them away to resell. He failed to pay Chief Shopodock. When the Chief didn't get his money as promised, he began walking to Milwaukee to collect it in person. En route, the Chief stopped in Marion, where he hoped to borrow some money until his return. When the banker asked him for collateral, the Chief said, "What you mean collateral?" The banker explained, and the Chief said, "I got 100 horses."

Chief Shopodock got the loan and continued on to Milwaukee, where he collected his money. Upon his return, the Chief stopped at the Marion bank to repay his loan. He had quite a lot of money left over, and the banker suggested he leave some of it at the bank for safe keeping. The Chief looked at the banker and said to him, "How many horses you got?" Needless to say, the bank didn't get a "loan." The last time I saw Chief Shopodock was at the Alvin Civilian Conservation Corps Camp in 1937. He ate a meal in the mess hall with us, and was given a loaf of bread to take with him.

On January 28, 1940, Chief Shopodock walked to Kelsey's store on State Highway 55 near the Pine River to buy supplies. After making his purchases, Chief Shopodock was given a ride to the road leading to his cabin by the Kelseys, and left off in a snowstorm. When the Chief did not return the following week for supplies, the Kelseys went in search of him. They found his frozen body February 6, some 30 feet from his cabin door.

Chief Shopodock is buried in the Indian Cemetery at Wabeno, Wisconsin. His heirs still own the 40 acres of land given the Chief by the Government.



## II. SETTLING THE AREA

### EARLY TRAILS

Vital to any frontier establishment was a transportation system which provided residents with relatively fast and efficient access to other civilization strongholds. Although the waterways of the north were the first travel routes, as people moved farther inland, they became less accessible. A series of foot and horse trails soon developed between the frontier villages.

The Ontonagon Mail Trail was a well trodden trail in the 1800's. The road began where the City of Wausau is today, and ran through Jenny (now Merrill), north through Pelican Rapids (now Rhinelander), along the west side of Columbus Lake (an old bachelor named Alex Columbus had built a log shanty on the west side of the lake, hence the name), then north to Gagen Hill. The road crossed the Eagle River near Morey's Resort. A mail route was established along this trail, running between Wausau, Wisconsin, and Ontonagon, Michigan. In those days, mail was back packed by men during the milder months, and dog teams used in the winter.

Due to the regular use of the Ontonagon Mail Trail, resting stations were set up. John Curran, formerly of Rhinelander, manned the Pelican Rapids station. Dan Gagen, who was mentioned earlier, managed the next station which was located about 30 miles away at Gagen Hill.

In 1854, A. B. Smith lead a crew of men who cut out a road from Wausau to Jenny; the section from Stevens Point to Wausau was completed the year before. In the fall of 1857, Helms Company of Stevens Point cut out a "tote" road from Grandfather Falls to Eagle River. The Government appropriated certain lands in 1860 for the construction of a road from Jenny to Lac Vieux Desert, via Pelican Rapids and Eagle River. The road was turned over to the County, which in turn, appropriated \$3,000 in tax certificates for the work. This completed route was known as the Wausau and North State Line Road.

The Lake Superior Trail was used only during the winter months for hauling mail and supplies and driving cattle to the copper mines in Michigan. The trail started at Shawano, Wisconsin, and followed the west side of the Wolf River north to the Wisconsin State line. Much of this section was impassable during the summer because there were no bridges or water crossings and many of the swamp areas were too wet to cross. The trail crossed to the east side of the River at what is commonly known as the "Henry Strauss Crossing." It then ran between Twin Lakes, crossing Pickeral Creek and continuing on to Rockland, Michigan. The Lake Superior Trail was built between 1861 and 1862.

When the timber companies penetrated Langlade County, it was essential that the camps keep in touch with their supply bases, which were usually located at Wausau, Appleton or Shawano, This opened the "tote" road era.

The hardy lumberjacks cut out a narrow path that was barely wide enough to accommodate the yokes of oxen and horses. These tote roads were not straightened until some time after the General Land Office survey was completed in the 1860's. The old Indian trails were gradually forced out of existence by the tote roads, which, have themselves, become a thing of the past.

The Military Road is of major historical importance to the Nicolet Forest, and it is still a popular Forest route. It was built to transport military forces from Fort Howard in Green Bay, Wisconsin, to Fort Wilkins in Keweenaw County, Michigan, during the Civil War.

In the early days of the War Between the States, the North had no way of transporting troops from the interior to the Canadian boundary, should trouble break out with the Indians. Thus, on March 3, 1863, Congress passed an Act approving the construction of a military road from Fort Howard to Fort Wilkins. Public lands were granted to the States of Wisconsin and Michigan to aid in the construction.

On April 4, 1864, the Wisconsin Legislature accepted the land grant and appointed commissioners to lay out the road, advertise for bids and award the contract. All construction work was paid for with land grants, 3 sections for each mile of completed road.

James M. Winslow was given the contract on August 24, 1864. He transferred it to the U. S. Military Road Company, a corporation organized under Wisconsin law. This company, in turn, assigned the contract to Jackson Hadley, with the transfer being approved by the legislature. Hadley died March 2, 1867, having completed only 30 miles of the road. Ninety sections of land were turned over to Mrs. Augusta Hadley, widow and administrator of the deceased's affairs. Mrs. Hadley later turned the 90 sections of land over to A. G. Crowell, with whom she had entered into a contract for the remaining road construction.



EARLY MILITARY ROAD



PLAQUE OF MILITARY ROAD - 1965

Meanwhile, Congress extended the completion date from August 24, 1868, to March 1, 1870. Crowell and his business partners, John W. Babcock and B. N. Fletcher, completed 52.5 miles of the road by January 1, 1868. They then entered a contract with Alanson J. Fox and Abijah Weston of Painted Post, New York, giving them half interest in the uncompleted road. On February 20, 1870, the commissioners reported to Governor Fairchild, that Babcock, Fox and Weston had completed the unconstructed portion of the road within the allotted time. Crowell and his heirs were granted 38,017.17 acres of land in Langlade County (then part of Oconto County).

More than any other wagon road, the "Old Militaire" opened up a vast expanse of the Wolf River country to early traders, stimulating and increasing the momentum of the great lumbering industry in eastern Langlade County and the now Nicolet National Forest. While the Military Road was originally intended for military defense of the Nation, woodsmen who worked in the Wisconsin pineries a half century ago refute this; they insist the Military Road was a land and timber conspiracy.

The old Military Road ran through a region rich in natural resources. For example, it was not uncommon for a fur trader to purchase \$10,000 worth of furs from the Indians in a single season, obtaining bear, wolf, beaver, otter, fisher, marten, and mink pelts. Faced with a market hungry for quality furs, the hunters and trappers stepped up their activities, and within a few years, the fur industry was destroyed. Today, the fur bearing animals have nearly disappeared, and efforts are being made to restore the delicate balance of long ago.

Although the wildlife populations of Wisconsin's north woods had been ravaged and the fur traders forced to move to other parts of the Country, the forests were not yet safe from man. Towering pine trees stood at the mercy of the saw.

## TIMBER TALES

Following close behind the fur traders were the lumbermen. The timber industry was established in northern Wisconsin over 100 years ago, with the first pines being harvested on the upper waters of the Wolf and Wisconsin Rivers.

The first timber cut on lands now making up the Nicolet National Forest consisted of pine logs taken around 1835. A sawmill firm in Neenah took the first pines from the northern part of Oconto County and floated them down the Wolf River to the mill. In 1838, a water power mill was built at Peshtigo in Marinette County. Pine logs cut from the northern part of Oconto County were floated down the Peshtigo River to this mill. Several sawmills were built at Green Bay and Oconto between 1840 and 1860. Pine logs were driven down the waterways, from what is today the Nicolet National Forest's Lakewood District, to supply these mills.

In 1842, the first raft of pine logs from Forest County was floated down the Rat River. By the mid-1840's, four mills were in operation in Neenah. Oshkosh had half a dozen sawmills by 1850.





THE VIRGIN NORTH WOODS



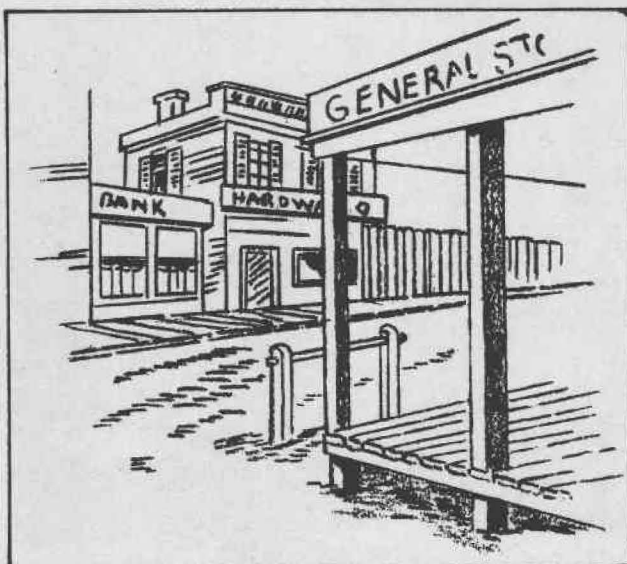
LOG DRIVE ON ONE OF THE RIVERS

The first logging in Vilas County was done adjacent to the Eagle Chain of Lakes in the spring of 1856, by Fox & Helms. Their first logging camp was located just west of where the present iron bridge crosses Eagle River on the approach to Hemlock Resort.

Logging activities moved north of the Tomahawk River in the winter of 1857-58. In the fall of 1857, Helms & Company cut the first "tote" road from Grandfather Falls to Eagle River. The crew arrived at Eagle Lake on New Year's Day, 1858. The company banked about 20,000 logs that winter, and drove them to Mosinee to be sawed. In the winter of 1859-60, Hurley & Burns began logging along the shore of Eagle River and the Three Lakes Chain of Lakes. The Edwards & Clinton Timber Company also began operations in this area that same year. Both companies had mills below Grand Rapids (now Wisconsin Rapids) and drove the logs to their mills.

By 1866, all the pine timber located close to streams and lakes had been cut. With the coming of the railroad, the door was opened for heavy exploitation of the wood resource in northern Wisconsin. As the railroad companies laid their tracks, they also created the means for full scale logging of the area's hardwoods. The Soo Line Railroad was built through the middle of the not yet designated Nicolet Forest in 1887, going through Cavour, Argonne and on to Gagen. Later, a spur was built from Argonne to Shawano, going south along the west side of the now Nicolet Forest. Today, this main line runs from the Michigan Soo line to Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. The Chicago Northwestern built lines from Monico to Three Lakes in the early 1880's. The company then put down track north through Eagle River, Conover, Land O'Lakes, and on to Watersmeet, Michigan. Spur lines were later built by this company into Hiles and Phelps, Wisconsin.





EARLY VIEW OF MAIN STREET



GETTING THE LOGS TO MARKET

The Hiles spur was abandoned around 1934, but the Phelps spur is still in existence. Towns developed along the Chicago Northwestern Railroad, and some of these still exist today: Mountain, Lakewood, Townsend, Carter, Soperton, Wabeno, Padus, Blackwell Junction, Laona, Cavour, Newald, Popple River, Long Lake and Tipler. All of these towns began as logging or saw-mill centers along this railway system.

Great lumber firms, such as Hackley-Phelps-Bonnell; Paine Lumber Company; Sawyer-Goodman; Wells Lumber Company; Connor, Holt, Oconto Company; and many others flourished. Of these firms, only Connor is still operating its mill in the town of Laona within the Nicolet National Forest. The Goodman mill is still operating under another ownership in the Town of Goodman east of the Forest.

Pine lumbering activities continued to increase, until by the late 1800's, all the principal rivers and tributaries draining the current Nicolet Forest area were packed full each spring with choice pine logs destined for mills in Oshkosh, Oconto, Green Bay, Menominee and Marinette.

Many dams were constructed on rivers in northern Wisconsin to help hold back the water until needed to carry the pine sawlogs down the streams. In fact, a ditch was dug between Franklin and Butternut Lakes to supply the North Branch of the Pine River with a large volume of water during floating time. Many of these old dam sites are still visible, with some of the old dam timbers still in their original places in the streams, fastened with large drift pins.

Lumbering reached its peak in 1899, thanks to the railroads. In that year, Wisconsin produced more than 3 billion board feet of lumber. The timber industry continued at a high level until the early 1900's, when the great stands of pine, which many people thought were inexhaustible, disappeared.

Following the decline of the pine lumbering industry, two other forest industries sprang up, pushing man farther into the northern forests. The hardwood-hemlock lumber and the wood pulp and paper industries encouraged new sawmill towns, which were transient in character. Hardwood logs could not be driven downstream because they didn't float well and the cost of rail transportation gradually became too high; therefore, the sawmills had to follow the harvesters. Early pulp and paper mills were built upriver at water power sites. The Fox, Menominee, Oconto, Wisconsin and Chippewa Rivers furnished power for many of these early pulp and paper mills.

After the timber was cut, fires were set to the slash to eliminate the threat of uncontrolled forest fires. Many of the lands were burned repeatedly, permitting the introduction of such pioneer species as aspen, white birch and jack pine. Aspen was considered a weed tree until the 1930's, when research developed methods for making paper from hardwoods. Today, in the Lake States, more paper is made from aspen than any other species.

History is made, not so much by events, as by people. The following is a list of some of those people who worked as timber cruisers during the heyday of northern Wisconsin's timber industry:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>HOME TOWN</u>
John Emmett Nelligan	Oconto
James (Jimmy) George	Shawano
J. L. Whitehouse	Shawano
Charles Bacon	Crandon
Robert Delaney	Antigo
Ernest Norm (also local storekeeper)	Bryant
George Jackson	Pickeral
Fred Kalkofen	Antigo
Charles Larselere	Lily
W. J. Zahl	Langlade County
Dave Edick	Antigo
Charles Ainsworth	Pearson
Charles Worden	Menasha
Earl Weed	Menasha
B. F. Dorr (also surveyor)	Langlade County
E. S. Brooks (also surveyor)	Kempster
Nate Bruce	Parish
S. A. Taylor	-
W. C. Webley	Wausau
Chester Bennett	Green Bay
Abner Rollo, Sr.	Antigo
Reuben Vaughn	-
Peter O'Connor	Menasha
Dan Graham	Eagle River
James Hafner	Wausau
Phil Ryan	Summit Lake
A. J. Miltmore	Town of Vilas

Cassius Smith	-
Gates Saxton	-
George Schultz	-
Jess Calwell	Oconto
Malcolm Hutchinson	Malcolm
Oso Campbell	Antigo
Joe Fermanich	Mattoon
George Stout	Rhineland
M. I. McEachin	Rhineland
George Baldwin	Appleton
Bryon Kent	Oconto
George Glenn	Crandon
John Gayheart	Wabeno
John Hammes	Padus
Pat Sullivan	Three Lakes

John Emmett Nelligan was one of the earliest cruisers in the area. He worked for many different logging companies and later became a logger himself. His logging camps were along the Oconto, Waupee, Wolf, and Pine Rivers. Nelligan Lake is named after him.

Many of the early employees on the Nicolet National Forest knew John Hammes and Byron Kent as two of the old wood cruisers. I examined lands for purchase on the Nicolet in the winters of 1933 and 1934 with them.

There are many others who were early timber cruisers - too many, in fact, to list. These old timers were sometimes called timber "lookers" and usually worked with a compassman. Plots were randomly selected, and the number of trees per species were then tallied. The number of logs per tree was estimated next. The cruiser then figured out how many logs would make a thousand board feet, and arrive at the final estimate.

The following poem appeared in the Forest Republican of Crandon, Wisconsin, in 1965. It reflects much of the jargon, lifestyle and attitudes of the timbering years.

## TIMBER

by

Bruce H. Schmidt

Timber! . . . . . Ho!  
 Oh come all you buck-ohs and lend me an ear  
 As we turn back the pages for many a year.  
 To the days when the jacks were cutting tall timber.  
 It's part of the past, but the memory's linger.  
 To sing of the cross-cut, the whang of the axe,  
 The sweat of the brow and the ache in the back.  
 Then hitch Dan and Mag get-ee-up, get, ee-awmp.  
 The sun isn't up, but it's light in the swamp.  
 It's up in the morning to rise and to shine,  
 And start down the tote road that leads to the pine.  
 Now here comes a jack we remember as Hank;  
 With an old team of nags and a full water tank.



*It's frosty and cold as clear as a bell.  
And he ices the tracks 'til they're slippery as hell.  
Then hook to the jammer and jerk the logs high.  
And deck the sleigh loads 'til they're up to the sky.  
Then crawl up on top, and it's crowing eleven;  
As you start for the landing at two-forty-seven.  
(The old ways of logging aren't found in a book.  
Now, who can throw cats paw, or set a swamp hook?  
The hydraulic loader's the tool of the time--  
Jack moved bigger logs with a double deck-line.)  
Off on the right, two jacks make a dash.  
You hear the cry - tim - ber, and see the tree crash.  
Mag picks up her ears, and lets out a neigh.  
And a horse with a travois comes down the skid-way.  
The pads of the snowshoe have made fairy rings,  
Yon wiley weasel wears coat for a king.  
From a flurry of fluff comes a Chick-a-dee-dee.  
And a whiskey-jack shrills from a yellow birch tree.  
As you pull into the spur on the Soo,  
The cookee is beating the triangle, too.  
He throws back his head and yells, "Come and get it."  
You'd better be quick, or you might well forget it.  
Then loosen the binders and let the logs roll,  
To the man on the cross-haul, Resinski, the Pole.  
With hammer on anvil the smith makes it ring.  
And the crew in the sawmill are making it sing.  
The carriage is rolling; the saw slabs the pine,  
and the clerk in the office is keeping the time.  
At the end of the day it's to the bunk shack;  
There's mittens and socks drying out on the rack.  
The air's full of smoke, and it gets rather dense.*



Mixed with many a yarn spun from the deacon's bench.  
You work and you work, that's all that you do.  
'Til spring break-up comes, and you know that you're through.  
They figger your time, and you draw up your pay  
At ten cents an hour; ten hours a day.  
Then you pack up your turkey and head into town.  
Every jack in the country side's sure to be found.  
Jack Holland, Jack Toole, and Jack the Sinard.  
And dozens of others lined up at the bars.  
There's Black Joe and Red Jim, and Dick the Saville.  
And Big Hans and Shorty, and the one-armed Bill.  
There's Irishers, Bo-hunks and there are the Swedes,  
And a salt shaker sprinkling of all other breeds.  
They're rugged and tough and rough as a cob.  
And they'll fight one another, or all in a mob.  
In the world of lumberjacks, women were few.  
There was trapper Nora, whom likely you knew;  
As Swamp Angel or Spirit of Two Forty Seven.  
And Polly, whose cooking, full attention was given.  
The jacks in the region of Porcupine Hill,  
Who hankered for something that came from a still.  
And also the sight of a woman again,  
Found whiskey and Marge at the old Old Pine Tree Inn.  
There were loggers who hired the crews.  
The list is too long to name but a few.  
The big ones like Connors, Brown Bros., and Hiles  
Whose holdings spread out over the miles.  
And small ones like Rindal, Garlock and Hess, Palmer and Tyler  
and Johnny the Jess.  
And down through the years on the end of the list,  
A little Swede jobber, called Maggie the Quist.  
The life of the lumberjack wasn't a joke.  
He'd liquor and rampage until he was broke.  
And we can't recollect if ever we knew,  
How in the devil he'd summer it through.  
But along in the fall when things came alive  
It was back to the camps, like bees to a hive!  
Back to the woods he'd head like a bee,  
Though the life was a hard one his spirit was free.  
One thing we think we can state as a fact,  
There were many exploited the low lumberjack.  
We're not here to judge - was it right - was it wrong?  
Just to tell you their story - that's all of the song.  
In the woods of the north, we have lumberjacks yet.  
A second growth crop of a different set.  
The original timber has passed through the landing;  
Except gnarled rampikes; that still may be standing.  
Jack, as we know him, has taken his fall.  
And has faded away with the echoing call . . .  
Tim - ber!

### Early Loggers Referred to in Poem

Albert Hess - Cavour, Wisconsin  
George Palmer - Argonne, Wisconsin  
Tom Tyler - Crandon, Wisconsin  
John Jessie, Argonne, Wisconsin  
Magnus Soquist, Argonne, Wisconsin  
Burt Garlock, Argonne, Wisconsin

It wasn't long after the mills were built and running that the logging camps began to be replaced by permanent settlements. Many of these early logging towns now lay within the Nicolet Forest boundaries and have played a vital role in the area's history. The following towns offer an over-all look at early forest settlement: Lakewood, Wabeno, Laona, Hiles, Phelps, Cavour and Tipler.

### LAKWOOD

Lakewood is located in the southern portion of the Nicolet National Forest, where some of the first pine logging was underway by the late 1800's. Originally organized as Wheeler, Wisconsin, in 1890, the name was changed to Lakewood in 1930. The town's first school was built on the site of an old Holt & Balcomb logging camp, about 1.5 miles east of the present town. This original log building is still standing and serves as a small museum.



VILLAGE OF LAKEWOOD - 1920

Chicago & Northwestern Railroad track was laid north into the area in 1898. Later, State Highway 32 was built into the area, forcing the citizens to gradually relocate to the town's present location. The Nicolet National Forest's Lakewood Ranger District is headquartered here.

## WABENO

The early history of Wabeno centers around the development of three lumber companies -- Menominee Bay Shore Lumber Company, A. E. Rusch Company and the Jones Lumber Company.

In the closing years of the 1800's, the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad pushed north into the area, which had already been exploited by the pine lumbering interests. Sawmills were soon built along the tracks, and a town sprang up around them. Wood fueled the community's economy. Together, the Menominee Bay Shore, A. E. Rusch, and Jones companies produced more than 35 million feet of lumber a year.

All but the Menominee Bay Shore mill shut down between 1920 and 1930. In 1936, it, too, was forced to close its door, being faced with hundreds of slashed and burned acres. This company is considered one of the most destructive ever to have operated in northern Wisconsin, its slash and burn policy leaving much of the land devastated. Company officials had hoped to sell these cutover and burned lands to prospective farmers, but the market never developed.

On June 2, 1880, a tornado swept across northern Wisconsin from Antigo to Lake Superior, causing timber to blow down in a strip that measured one-half to one mile wide. This area was called "Waubeno," or "The Coming of the Winds" by the Indians. The town took its name from this event.

## LAONA

The turn of the Century marked the founding of Laona -- just 20 years prior to logging's heyday. Around 1876, the pine loggers came into the area and cleared off the pine stands which were scattered throughout the hardwoods. Not until the railroad came to Laona in 1900, however, did the great logging operations in the hardwoods begin. Exploratory expeditions into this area by pine loggers and a few other individuals took place between 1870 and 1890. The area was not very accessible, and few men ventured this far from the last outposts. Eventually, logging expeditions moved into the area, with pine being hauled on sleighs to Roberts Lake and floated down the Wolf River, or put in the Peshtigo River below Taylor Falls.

During the last decade of the 19th Century, W. D. Connor hiked, with his cruisers, examining the fine stands of hardwood timber which he later purchased. Also, during this period the Chicago Northwestern Railroad was moving northward into the Laona area, a project which benefited from receiving huge Federal land grants. The initial logging of the area occurred between 1900 and 1910. Oxen were used to skid the logs, while the hauling was done with sleighs and horses on iced roads. In later years, the "snow



"TRAIN'S A'COMIN!"



EARLY LUMBERJACKS



SURVEYING THE NORTH





THE STEAM HAULER - CALLED SNOW SNAKE



LAONA SAWMILL

snake" was used on some operations. The "snow snake" was a steam powered caterpillar with front-end runners for steering. Used on ice roads, it could haul several sleighs of logs at one time.

The Connor Lumber and Land Company built its first sawmill in 1901, and had two band saws and one re-saw. The mill later burned to the ground, but was rebuilt. Logging camps sprang up throughout the entire area and encouraged the rapid development of Laona.

During the second decade, 1910 to 1920, railroad logging was expanded, and rapidly replaced the sleigh and "snow snake." This was the "heyday" of logging in the Laona area, with millions of board feet of timber felled by hundreds of lumberjacks who worked from dawn to dark. The lumber production of the Connor mill steadily increased until its maximum capacity had been reached.

The first settler in Laona was Norman Johnson. His daughter, Laona, was the first white child born in this town, and the town was named in her honor.

## HILES

Although the timber industry eventually played a big part in putting Hiles on the map, this town had its first beginnings as a trading post. In 1860, Dan Gagen established a trading post on the banks of Pine Lake along the Military Road. Gagen sold the post to J. B. Thompson of Wausau in 1863, at which time H. B. Fessenden of Argonne moved in, making him the first settler in the area. Fessenden bought the site, and sold it to Franklin P. Hiles of Milwaukee in 1902.

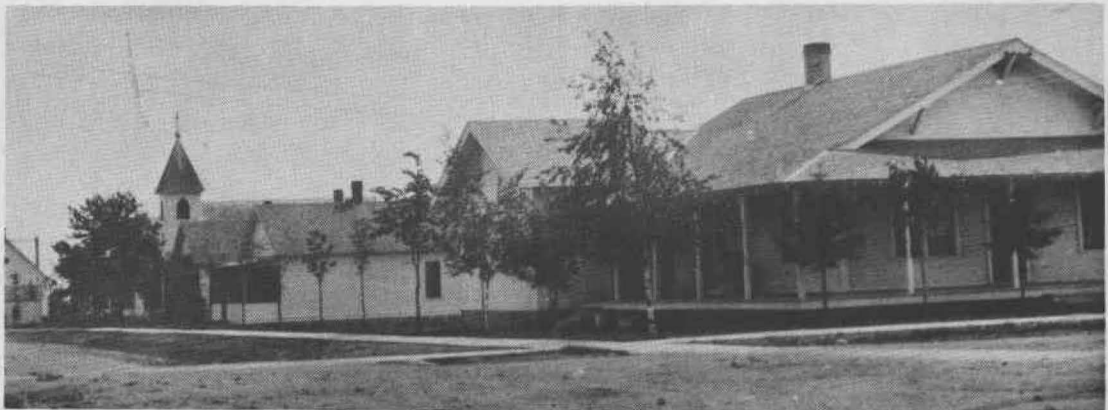
Hiles was instrumental in bringing a branch railroad from the Chicago and Northwestern's main line into the area. Once he erected a sawmill, store and hotel, Hiles was on its way to becoming a thriving frontier town.

Hiles was organized in 1903. The first town officers were: E. Tarbox, chairman; Paul Rayfield, treasurer; Jack Nolan, assessor; and C. Walaken, clerk. Land was taken from the towns of Crandon and North Crandon to help organize Hiles; but, in 1906, two townships were taken away from the area and added to Vilas County. Within a few years, Hiles sold all his business and personal holdings to the Foerster Whitman Lumber Company. Whitman later sold out to a Mr. Mueller, and the company became the Foerster Mueller Lumber Company of Milwaukee. This firm made considerable improvements in Hiles, including building many homes for its employees.

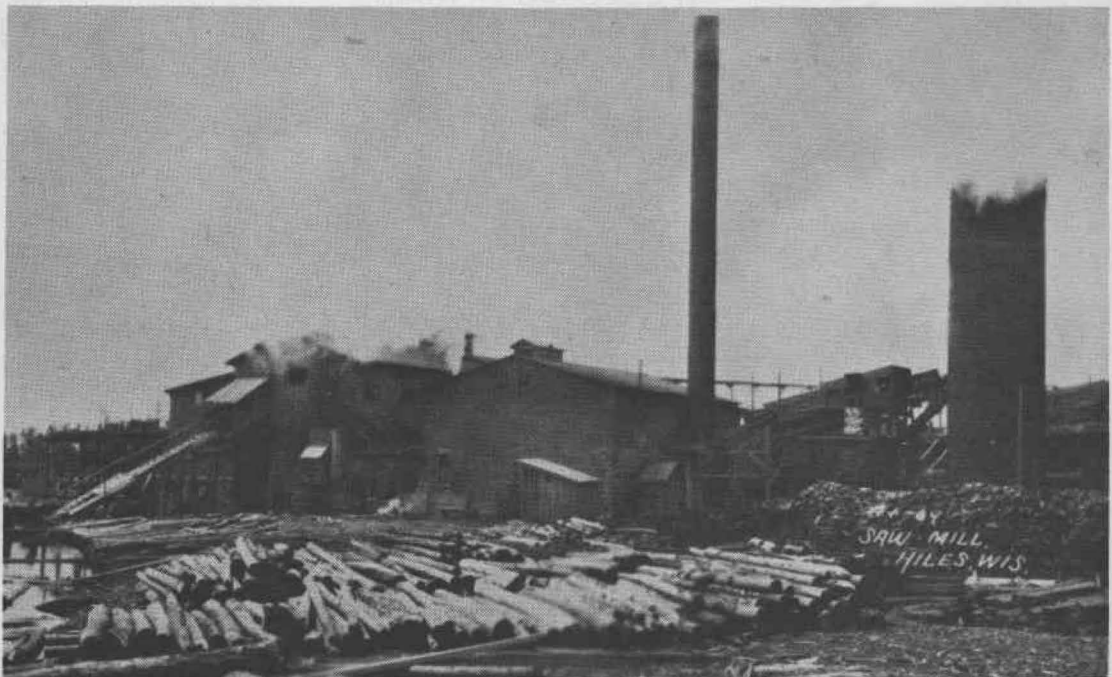
In 1919, C. W. Fish bought the entire Hiles property. Under his management, the town was given great care; streets were repaired, sidewalks put in and trees planted. A new church was built in 1924, along with a modern school building. The old street lights were replaced by a "white way" of electric lights which ran on power generated at the sawmill, the town's only source of electricity at the time. They shone brightly from 6:00 a.m. to 9:50 p.m., when they were blinked as a signal that the lights would be turned off at 10:00 p.m.



MAKING UP THE LOG TRAIN



COMPANY HOUSES AND CHURCH IN HILES - 1928



HILES SAWMILL





TRAINLOAD OF LOGS BEING BROUGHT INTO HILES SAWMILL

Hiles continued as a modern, thriving town until the Depression hit the area in 1932. The lumber mill finally shut down in August 1932, leaving only part of the company in operation for sporadic periods of time from then on. The Depression forced Hiles to become a summer resort and farm town, rather than a lumber manufacturing center.

The Federal Government established a home for unemployed transients in Hiles in 1933. From 300 to 500 men were housed in the old boarding house and post office building, while they worked on roadside cleanup projects in the Nicolet National Forest. Unfortunately, the transient home was destroyed by fire in February, 1934, and it was finally closed in June, 1934.

## PHELPS

Phelps, Wisconsin began as a post office, erected in 1903. The town was known as Hackley, until 1910, when the name was changed to Phelps, after the owner of the local sawmill.

Lumbering was the sole industry in those early years. Hackley, Phelps, Bonnell Lumber Company built a sawmill in 1903, adding a large chemical plant 3 years later. Logs were processed at the Phelps mill, after being brought in by company-owned railroads. The original mill burned in October, 1916, but was rebuilt. It resumed operations November 11, 1917.

(Note: Today, the Rideout Farm is located at the site of Logging Camp #1.)





TOWN OF HACKLEY - LATER NAMED PHELPS - 1908



FIRST SAWMILL IN HACKLEY - NAME LATER CHANGED TO PHELPS

William A. Phelps, company general manager, died in 1912. His son, Charles A. Phelps assumed the general manager's duties, but with little success. In May 1915, C. M. Christenson became manager of the Hackley, Phelps, Bonnell Company. Transportation and equipment advancements were implemented, and in September 1928, Christenson bought out the company's assets.

The Phelps sawmill operated until 1957, when the cost of manual labor made it financially obsolete.

The town experienced a spurt of growth between 1908 and 1912, when the Finns moved to the area and began farming. In clearing the land, the Finns produced many cords of chemical wood for the plant. Finns left their mark in the area, in the form of many fine barns and saunas, which attest to their artistic abilities and wood craftsmanship.

In reality, it has been recreation, not timber, that has been the economic backbone of Phelps. The Twin Lake Hunting and Fishing Club was formed in the 1880's, and later became the Lakota Resort on North Twin Lake. The Louis Thomas Trading Post, established in the 1870's, has since become a recreation area. The Eagle River Rod and Gun Club originated in 1890, on Big Sand Lake, and today is the Big Sand Lake Club. The local Hazen's Resort on Long Lake opened for business in 1900. Sylvester Caskey also operated a resort during the early 1900's.

After C. M. Christenson's death, his son, Phil, took over the management of the property and land holdings. He has since developed the Smokey Lake Game Preserve, and today he owns and manages the Smokey Lake Realty Company in Phelps.

Today, the Town of Phelps is a lovely, small community located in the Nicolet National Forest on the northeast end of North Twin Lake. Some small industries still exist in the area, such as Sylvan Products, and the Four Seasons, a pre-cut summer home construction company. However, Phelps is still primarily a northern woods tourist center.

## CAVOUR

The Forest County community of Cavour has a citizenry today of about 60, compared to its early population of about 600. Lumbering activities put the boom in town business in those days; in fact, one company took out 2 trainloads of logs each day, with the trains being made up of 40 or 50 cars.

The young town of Cavour boasted a general store, sawmill, hotel and saloon, all owned by Albert Hess. Business was brisk. For example, during one Sunday morning in 1917, Hess took in \$600 across the bar in the hotel. That same year, the general store did \$90,000 worth of business. Hess House was always crowded in those days, sometimes hosting as many as 100 people. Built in 1914, Hess House was in business for 23 years, until Cavour's population and popularity began to wane. Today, many of these early business structures stand empty.



HESS HOUSE - 1965

Albert Hess came to Wisconsin with his parents in the boom days of 1903. He was a vigorous lumberman with firm ideas on conservation. In his heyday, Hess employed some 300 people and built 15 miles of his own railroad.

Local legend says Cavour was named for a "Count" Cavour, a timekeeper on the Soo Line Railroad, which first came through the area in 1887. But, it is more likely that the town was named for the Italian statesman, Count Camillo Benso di Cavour, whose diplomacy made him very popular in the United States a few years prior to the birth of this community.

## TIPLER

The community of Tipler got its start when a small crew of sawmill hands came to Siding-83, thanks to the efforts of Arthur J. Tipler of Soperton, Wisconsin.

Tipler was a former mill superintendent with the Jones Lumber Company. William Grossman, an accountant and lumber salesman from Green Bay, became his partner in the summer of 1916 when they formed the Tipler-Grossman Lumber Company. A sawmill was erected on a site about 275 yards west of the railroad tracks, on an area now used for pulpwood stock piling. Portions of the concrete vault located in the mill office, along with concrete pillars from drying sheds, are still in evidence today.

The first lumber produced at the mill was used for the construction of a bunk house-boarding house complex for the single mill hands. Additional



buildings were soon needed, and a horse barn, blacksmith shop, tool sheds and an office were constructed. The area south of the mill was cleared and "company" houses for the married men and their families were built. A half box car was used for the railway depot, and Adam Strom served as the depot agent. Following the construction of the depot, the town's name was changed to Tipler.

The Tipler-Grossman Lumber Company negotiated deals which enabled them to acquire vast tracts of virgin pine and hardwoods. In 1917, the company owned 39 sections of timber, and held purchase options on an additional 24 sections. These timber holdings ran for many miles in all directions. They reached into western Florence Township and eastern Long Lake Township, then west beyond Stevens Lake and south to the Pine River.

The first grocery and clothing store in Tipler was built by M. J. Dickenson in 1916. The building housed the store and post office, and stood just south of the company boarding house. In a small log cabin near the rear of the store lived Dr. Pintch, the town doctor. He provided limited medical service to the mill hands and their families for a one-dollar a month service charge.

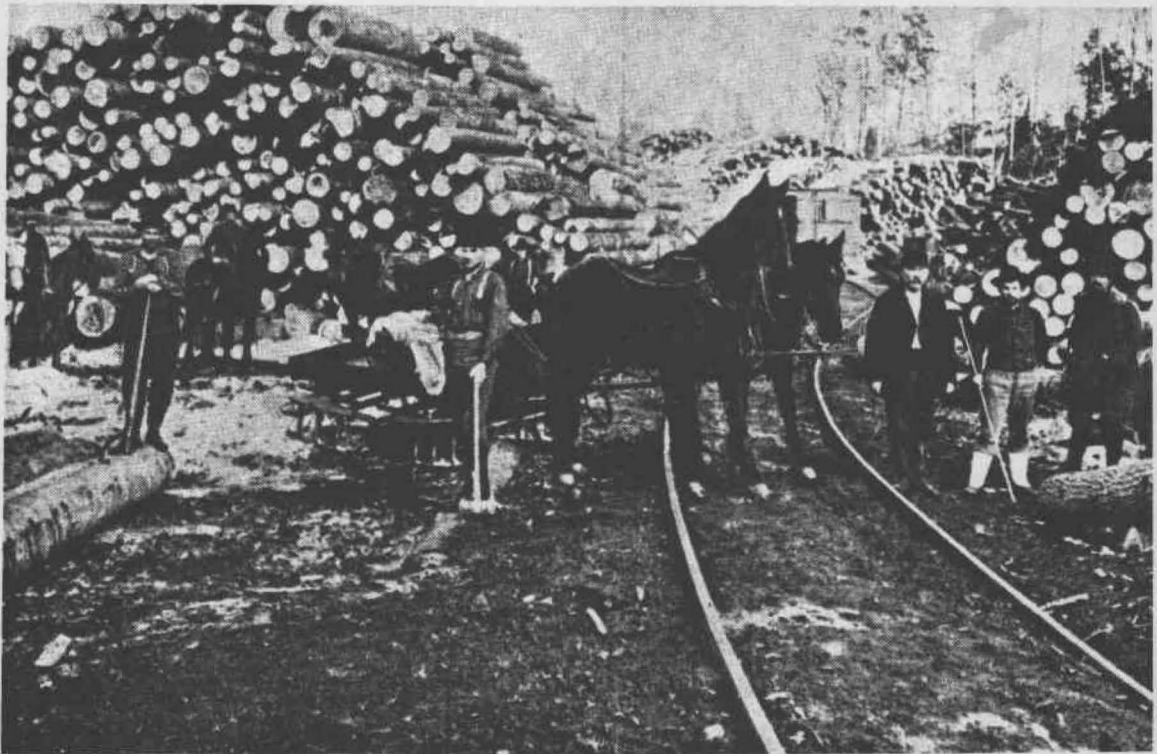
In the housing area south of the store stood the first school house. It was a one-room, one-teacher frame structure. A fire caused by an overheated stove destroyed this building in the spring of 1922, forcing the school to move to a small movie theater at the north end of town. A modern, four-room brick school building was constructed in 1923.

The large building which today sits on the hill east of the tracks was built by Jess Gilmore in 1920. Gilmore operated a store and a very profitable moonshine whiskey business. He eventually sold his saloon and moved to Lakewood where he set up a fish-guiding business. In 1922, another grocery store was built by Lee Labelle of Laona, at the north end of town, south of where Mr. Earl's restaurant is today. A short distance north of LaBelle's store, a meat market was opened by Ed Kugel. Both businesses closed in 1929. Next to Kugel's store, there was a saloon run by Chris Boerger. From 1927 until 1938, Boerger did a profitable business in moonshine whiskey and home brew. After the prohibition was lifted in 1934, Boerger's saloon became a popular local meeting place.

Another grocery store was built at the north end of town by Lester Dickson. Smith's grocery now stands on the site. After two years, Dickson sold the store to Anna Tipler. She sweated out the Depression years, fighting bad credit risks and the County Welfare Department. Her son, Harvey, later took over the business which he operated for several years before selling it to an insurance company following a fire. In the jungle of business enterprises at the town's north end, Jim O'Connor operated another saloon and gambling establishment. After amassing a fortune, he sold out and moved to Florence.

The Tipler-Grossman mill closed for repairs and installation of more machinery in the summer of 1919. Upon the mill's reopening, the daily output of lumber exceeded 100,000 board feet per 10-hour shift.





EARLY LOGGING IN TIPLER AREA



HARVESTING THE "BIG ONES"

As the sawmill operation expanded, the need for additional laborers was met by an influx of part-time farmers, lumberjacks and unemployed city dwellers. During 1919, a log house settlement of Kentuckians, from the foothills of Oklahoma and Kentucky, sprang up about four miles north of town.

In late 1928, the town's brightness began to dim, with the exhaustion of the timber supply. The mill owners tried desperately to negotiate for more timber holdings, but to no avail. The mill whistle sounded its last mournful blast in the fall of 1928. For many, it was the end of what had been a very profitable and comfortable life.

Many individuals left their mark on the Wisconsin northwoods. Here are a few Tipler citizens whose way of life left some lasting impressions:

A. J. Tipler - founder of the town and principal employer  
William Grossman - Tipler's business partner  
Bob Mazlein - mill superintendent  
Carl Benninghaus - lumber yard foreman  
Chris Peterson - railroad engineer  
George "Peggy" Suring - part-time engineer on Tipler's railway and fireman  
Merle Quimby - succeeded Mazlein as mill superintendent and was later appointed postmaster. Quimby also operated Dickson's store until the fire.  
Adam Strom - first and only Tipler depot agent  
Albert Schroder - barn boss  
Charley O'Connor - company blacksmith and machinist  
Lucille Kimball - school teacher  
Otto Daumitz - town chairman in the early 1930's  
Henry Henning - influential farmer  
Herman LaBine - pioneer, farmer and woodsman  
Lewis Smith - farmer and logger  
Archie Shannon - local citizen

As evidenced by much of northern Wisconsin's frontier town history, lumber companies were often more than just places where people made a living. Rather, these companies gave life to the town, and as often, were the cause of its death.

At one time, many logging firms operated within the boundaries of today's Nicolet National Forest, including:

<u>Name of Company or Owner</u>	<u>Headquarters</u>
Thunder Lake Lumber Company	Rhineland
Holt Lumber Company	Oconto
Connor Lumber Company	Laona
Goodman Lumber Company	Goodman
Christensen Lumber Company	Phelps
Menominee Bay Shore Company	Soperton
Hiles Lumber Company	Hiles



Menasha Wooden Ware  
Oconto Company  
Minor Brothers (originally called Minor Town)  
G. W. Jones Lumber Company  
Flannery Steager Lumber Company  
Siever Anderson  
Peter Lundquist

Menasha  
Oconto  
Carter  
Wabeno  
Blackwell  
Mountain  
Mountain

The Thunder Lake Lumber Company was organized and incorporated in Wisconsin on August 25, 1919. John D. Mylrea and his associates, Charles E. Lovett, J. O. Moen, and S. D. Sutliff, bought out the Robbins' Rhinelander sawmill and all their timber holdings. Originally, a contract was drawn up with the Robbins Railroad Company for use of the Narrow Gauge Railroad in transporting goods into the area. Thunder Lake Lumber Company eventually took over the railroad, and remodeled and rebuilt much of the main line for use in hauling sawlogs to their Boom Lake mill in Rhinelander.

The company established a new woods headquarters near Virgin Lake where the railroad grade crossed State Highway 32. Known as the Thunder Lake Store, it handled groceries, clothing, meat and other sundries. For many years, the store was managed by Roy Cunningham, who in later years became a Forest Service employee. A small community grew up near the store. Roy Cunningham, Ed Synnot, woods superintendent, Frank McClellan, shovel and steam loader operator, Pat Sullivan, timber cruiser, and several other people had their homes here.



CAMP #14 -1933





STOCKPILED LOGS



A TRAINLOAD OF LOGS BEING HAULED ON THE NARROW GAUGE RAILROAD

From the Thunder Lake Store, the company tracks were extended northeast around Lake Julia, east across the Pine River to within a few hundred feet of State Highway 55, north to the Butternut and Franklin Lake areas, and finally into the Brule Springs, Kentuck Lake and Spectacle Lake areas. This was hilly, rough country, requiring a lot of cut and fill before the tracks could be sloped low enough to permit travel by the railroad engines. A lima engine (geared drive wheels) was used to bring loaded log cars off the spur tracks to the main line.

The company completed most of the log cutting by 1940, with some scattered cutting through 1941. Following this, the track rails were pulled up, a job which was completed by mid-summer 1941. However, the Boom Lake mill near Rhinelander operated until 1943 on a stock of logs and a minimal amount of logs which were purchased.

The store at Virgin Lake was sold, and is still in operation as a grocery store. Mr. Mylrea's private railroad car, which was left sitting near the store was used for years as living quarters by Jack Bell, a former camp boss for the company, and his wife. The car and Railroad Engine No. 5 were later moved to the logging museum in Rhinelander, where they can still be seen.

## THE LAND ABLAZE

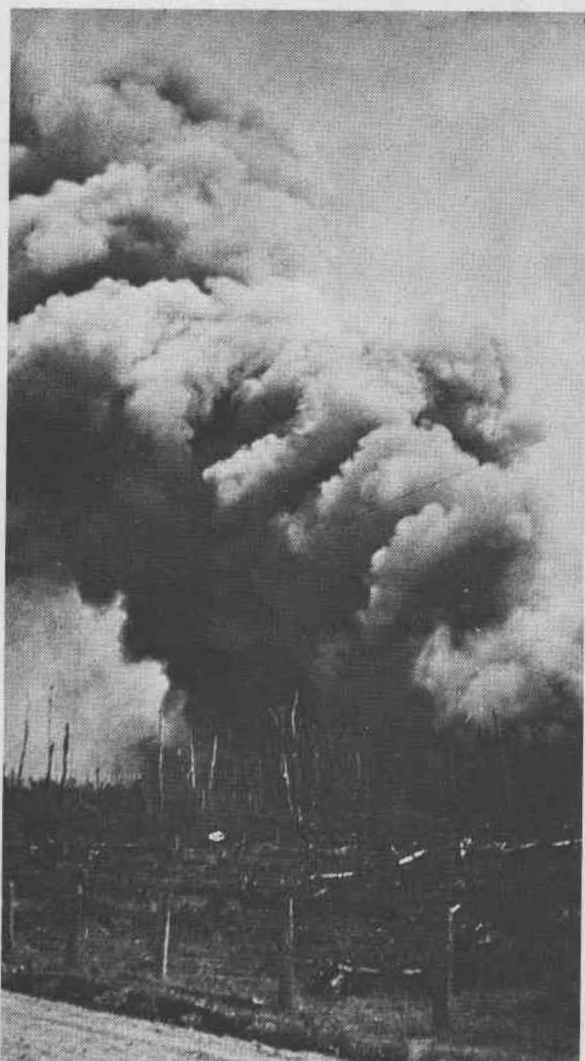
Drought conditions stretched over many months, combined with hundreds of acres of slash that were left following the vast timber harvesting activities, turned Wisconsin's north woods into an explosive tinder box. Beginning in the late 1800's and continuing for more than half a century, forest fires were "Public Enemy #1."

One of the most devastating fires ever recorded in history was the Peshtigo Fire.

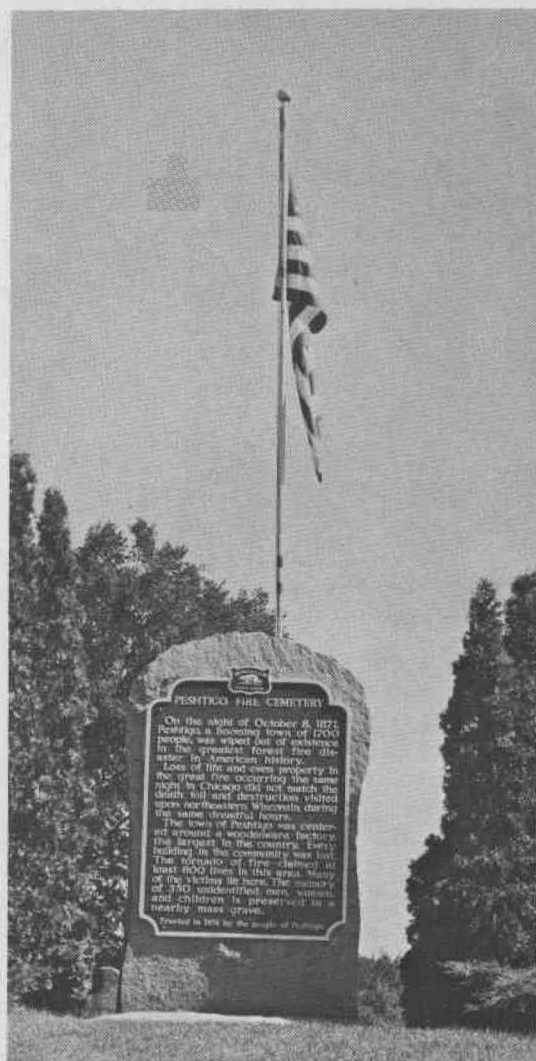
Peshtigo, Wisconsin, was a boom town during the logging era. There were numerous logging camps in operation nearby, and every spring large log drives jammed the Peshtigo River as the winter log cut was taken to market. In the northeastern corner of Wisconsin, the spring and summer of 1871 were dry and hot, with below normal amounts of precipitation.

Little or no concern for fire prevention, along with a prevailing attitude that there was more than enough forest lands to meet the Nation's needs, resulted in numerous wild fires being allowed to burn.

On Sunday, October 8, 1871, the area surrounding Peshtigo was hot, dry and windy. The air was filled with smoke from wild fires burning in nearby slashings and woodlands. Otherwise, life was routine -- town residents went to church, while the lumberjacks nursed their hangovers from Saturday night. As nightfall approached, many of the town's people sat on their porches and watched the sun set in a red sky filled with smoke and bits of ash. As the evening wore on, groups of men were called out to try and stop a fire that was approaching the village limits. Their attempts were



THE PESHTIGO FIRE



MEMORIAL TO FIRE VICTIMS

futile. It was evident that the village could not be saved; only then did the town's people realize that their lives were in danger. The fire roared into the village about midnight.

Stories are told of people being burned to death in their homes, on the streets while trying to get others out of houses, and while fleeing to the river where many tried to take refuge from the flames. All in all, the fire burned an area of more than 1.25 million acres, and killed some 1,000 people - taking more human lives than any other single fire on record.

Communications were not very good in those days, and news of the fire and the destruction was slow in reaching the public. Also hindering reports of the Peshtigo blaze was the Chicago fire, which had occurred the same day, killing 300 people. Slowly, word reached Marinette and Green Bay. Help was sent to the village of Peshtigo; food and medical supplies were taken by wagon from Marinette and railroad from Green Bay.



Today, Peshtigo, Wisconsin, has a population of about 3,000. The area has been restored and sports beautiful scenery, giving the town a thriving tourist trade. A memorial marker has been erected where the temporary tent shelters were set up to house the survivors.

Poor land management practices and weather did as much to spur the Great Depression as bad business judgment. All across the Country, the land had been left defenseless against the natural scourages of water, wind and fire.

In 1931, near the community of Tipler, Wisconsin, the snow disappeared early in March. Hot, dry weather followed, creating a severe fire danger. Fire fighting tools and equipment were scarce in those days, thus many forest fires in the area were allowed to burn with little effort made to bring them under control.

Huge clouds of smoke covered the sun for weeks prior to April 18. On that day, 80 mile-per-hour winds blew in from the southwest, driving a widespread ball of fire before it. In its path was Tipler.

People ran in terror, leaving all their possessions behind. Company houses caught fire and exploded, scattering flames to other buildings. In less than three hours, the wild fire destroyed all but seven buildings in the community. For days, the people walked through the smoke and ashes of the burned-over village to view what they had once owned. The town of Tipler never fully recovered from this calamity.



AFTER THE TIPLER FIRE



One of the first cooperative Federal-State-local fire suppression efforts ever to take place within the Nicolet National Forest occurred in 1931 on the Hiles fire. The fire burned a large area, beginning near Hiles, and running east across Highway 55. The blaze was fought largely by the State of Wisconsin, because the Forest Service did not have the equipment nor the organization. During Wisconsin's first fire protection period, the county covered one-half the costs, with the State picking up the remainder. However, on the Hiles fire, costs were divided equally between the Forest Service, State of Wisconsin, and the county.

The Hiles fire also marked the first time airplanes were used in fire suppression activities on the then young Nicolet National Forest. The Forest Service contracted a plane for one week to aid in scouting and suppression tactics.

By 1933, when fire threatened the town of Nelma, Wisconsin, the Civilian Conservation Corps was in full swing. CCC enrollees helped on this fire in the evacuation of Nelma residents, fire suppression and mop-up activities. The fire began May 10, and burned for nearly two months. The flames burned over 2,000 acres before being brought under control.

Fire continued to take its toll on the land, but with the establishment of the Nicolet National Forest in 1933, fire suppression became a number one concern.



SOME OF THE BURNED AREA

### III. NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST BEGINNINGS

Federal forestry had its beginning 100 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, when Congress authorized the appointment of a special forestry agent in 1876. In 1898, Gifford Pinchot assumed the top position of what was then the Forestry Division in the Department of Agriculture. Finally, in 1905, Congress established a national forest conservation and management policy, along with the basic structure of today's Forest Service. When the Forest Service took charge of the forest reserves, they numbered 60 and covered 56 million acres of federally owned land. The forest reserves became National Forests in 1907. The Forest Service, under the leadership of Chief Forester Pinchot, was made responsible for managing the National Forests, ". . . for the greatest good of the largest number of people in the long run."

In Wisconsin, much of the northern timber stands had been clearcut by the early 1900's. The lumber companies were followed by fire, and the flames licked the unprotected earth until it lay black and ashen. Between 1918 and 1925, numerous land speculation companies sprang into existence. Having purchased the abandoned lands at very low prices, the companies then printed maps and pamphlets which promised "satisfaction guaranteed", good soil, healthful climate, good market facilities, plentiful lakes and streams, and a location where droughts were unknown. Much of this, of course, was not true.

However, many families were lured into buying much of the land. Those who tried farming soon found the land to be generally unproductive, transportation poor and the area with very limited access to markets. Many were forced to sell out or abandon their lands because they could not pay the taxes.

It was from these scraps of land -- cut-over, scarred by fire, worked to the point of infertility -- that the Nicolet National Forest began to take shape. Both the State of Wisconsin and the Federal Government realized that something had to be done if these lands were to receive the protection and reforestation necessary to return them to their original productiveness.

On December 12, 1928, the National Forest Reservation Commission approved the Oneida Purchase Unit, consisting of 151,680 acres in Oneida, Forest and Vilas counties. Much of this land was purchased under the authority of the Weeks Law of 1911, which enabled the Government to purchase those lands necessary for the protection of the flow of navigable streams. The first lands in the newly established Oneida Purchase Unit were bought from the Thunder Lake Lumber Company.

A Forest Service office was set up in Park Falls in 1929. S. D. Anderson headed that office, overseeing the management of the unit along with the acquisition of new lands.



RAY IVERSON

In 1932, Ray Iverson became the first ranger on the Forest. His office was over the Vilas Theatre in Eagle River. He moved to a new ranger station on Highway 32 near Virgin Lake with his wife Helen in November of that year. (Today, the assistant ranger's dwelling is on the site.) Years later, the ranger station was moved across the highway, and was used as a bachelor's quarters.

Ray Iverson's first help on the Argonne District came in 1929 and consisted of Henry Gagen who served as compassman while examining lands, and Don Kelsey, who helped on land purchases and fire control. A graduate of the Iowa Forestry School, Sam Battel came to work on the district in 1930, and was employed as a general district assistant and fire guard. I assisted some in those days as a fire fighter, crew foreman, timekeeper,



ARGONNE (THREE LAKES) RANGER DISTRICT OFFICE



truck driver, and in other ways. The same organization continued until 1931 - the big job being fire control and custodial duties to see that Government lands were not trespassed on, especially the cutting of timber.

I will never forget some of my first days working for Ray Iverson who was a man who wanted to get things done and got satisfaction out of doing so. He never carried a watch, and this was so you could keep right on working until the sun went down. Also, at that time we were all on salary - no overtime. We were supposed to work a 44-hour week, and I worked six months before learning no one was supposed to work Saturday afternoons. Jobs were not plentiful during those depression days, and one gratefully accepted almost any conditions of employment

On March 10, 1932, the National Forest Reservation Commission approved a 68,000-acre addition to the Oneida Purchase Unit and the establishment of the 204,800-acre Oconto Unit. This new acreage covered portions of Forest, Vilas, Oconto and Langlade Counties.

One year later, on March 2, 1933, a proclamation was issued changing the name of the Oneida Unit to Argonne, and designating the area the Nicolet National Forest.

On July 1 of that year, headquarters for the Nicolet National Forest were established in Rhinelander. The headquarters office was located in rented space above DeByle's store. Park Falls remained a Forest headquarters, with the designation of the Chequamegon National Forest in November.

S. Duval Anderson was the first supervisor of Forest Service activities in the Nicolet National Forest area, and served from 1928 to 1932. He was followed by Raymond Harmon in 1932, and by Paul Wohlen in 1934.

The National Forest Reservation Commission extended the Nicolet Forest boundaries into Vilas, Florence, Forest and Oconto Counties on March 26, 1934. The first three districts and rangers were: Argonne District, Ray Iverson; Peshtigo District, V. C. Sheffield; and, Oconto District, Rene LaRocque. Two more districts were established in 1936. The Florence District was headquartered at Keyes Lake and Louis Tausch, Jr. was named Ranger. The Phelps Ranger District office was in Eagle River, with Walter Nicewander as Ranger.

A major job of the Nicolet National Forest managers was acquisition of new lands. In the spring of 1934, acquisition crews were organized to examine lands for purchase under the Emergency Conservation Work Program. Members of one of the first crews included: William Emerson, Pete Super and John Riss, foresters; and, Gordon Baken, Larry Williams and myself, Ken Elliott (author), compassmen.

The crew stayed in a cabin on Elvoy Creek, about 4 miles west of the Town of Nelma. With no maps, every day was an adventure as the crew knew little about the area they would be examining until they actually arrived on the site. Evenings were spent computing volumes, matching map lines,



and completing the necessary paperwork. Although the Country was under prohibition, crew members would take turns walking the half mile to Madam June's saloon to buy "beverages" for the camp.

In the fall of 1934, I was promoted to Forest Land Estimator. The crew started examining lands of the Thunder Lake Lumber Company in Townships 40 and 41N, Ranges 12 and 13E. We had to ride the company's Narrow Gauge Railroad train from the Thunder Lake store on State Highway 32 to Camp #14 in the SW SW, Section 11, T40N, R13E, where we ate our meals.

We slept a few nights in Jack Mylrea's private railroad car until a cabin was completed to use as sleeping quarters and an office. Later, the Forest Service purchased some railroad speeders that we were able to travel to and from camp with, and to also get closer to the work area by traveling some of the railroad spur lines. John Hammes, an old woods cruiser from Patus, Wisconsin, and Byron Kent, an old woods cruiser for Holt Lumber Company, and Ed Anderson, a Forest Service employee from Lakewood, joined the crew.

The acquisition team gradually increased until, in the summer of 1935, a Chief of Acquisition was appointed to head the 18-member group. Vernon C. Sheffield was the chief, and he worked out of the Supervisor's Rhinelander office. Much of the land acquired during this early period was purchased at \$0.50 to \$1.00 per acre. A complete cover type and general type map for the Nicolet National Forest was completed by the end of 1936.

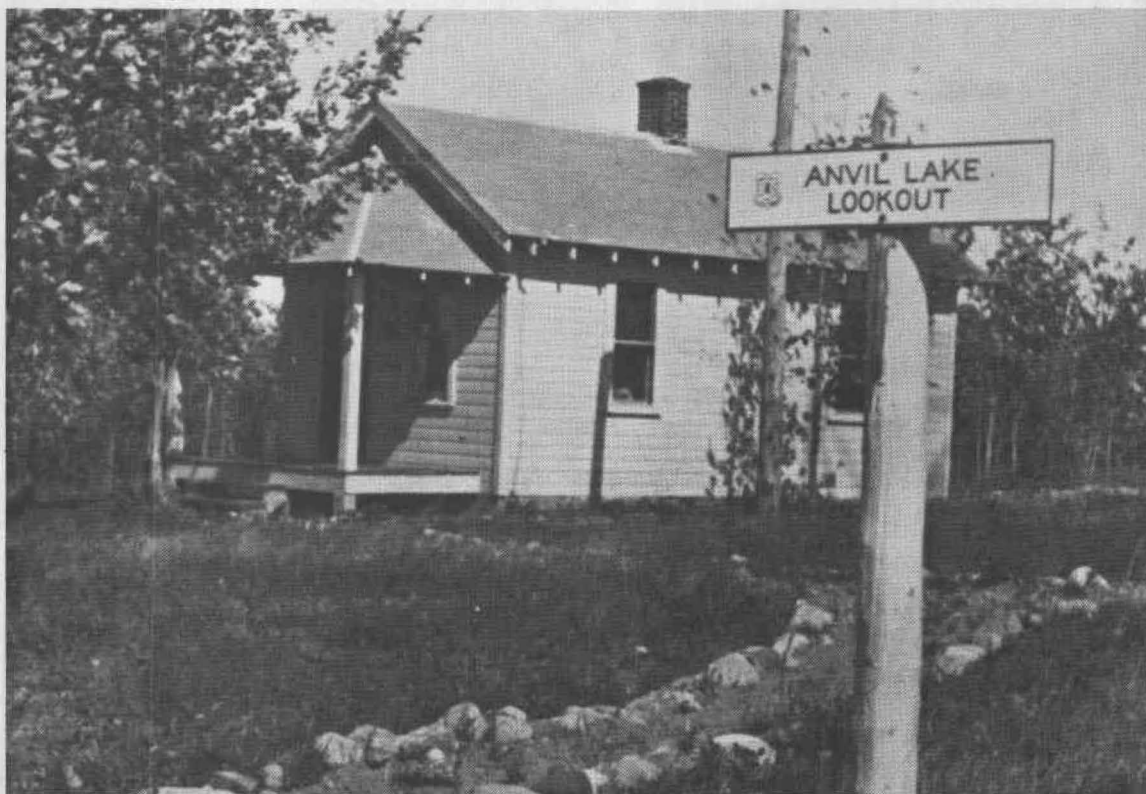
Once the Government began to purchase lands for inclusion in the National Forest System, fire prevention became a major concern. In 1932, funds were allocated for construction of fire towers at Hiles, Lake Julia and Anvil Lake. Money was also set aside for fire access roads and road crews.



EARLY FIRE TRAIL

The first fire trail was built from Virgin Lake on Highway 32, into the east side of Lake Julia. It was later extended to the Scott Lake area. Today, this is Forest Road #2183. Pine River Road was constructed next. It began at Old Military Road about 2 miles north of the ranger station, then east to Thunder Lake Lumber Company's railroad grade, and on east to the Pine River. This road, which is currently Forest Road #2183, was completed and graded to within about 1 mile of Highway 55 in 1932.

On a road crew, every day things were often an inconvenience. For example, food! A supply truck would usually go for fresh food once a week. The only refrigeration at camp was a metal box that was stored in a nearby spring. Therefore, there was fresh meat just once a week, when the truck returned. The men ate ham or bacon the remaining 6 days.



ANVIL LAKE FIRE LOOKOUT

With construction of the towers and roads completed, foresters were hired to man the three fire towers in the spring of 1933. Ed Lee (he later became a Nicolet National Forest Supervisor) was stationed at Anvil Lake Lookout. Allen Jackson kept guard at the Lake Julia Tower, while Robert Sowash manned the Hiles Lookout. Communication between lookouts and the ranger stations was limited to a single ground wire telephone system. The wire ran through the woods or along roads and was fastened to trees. Split insulators were used to let the wire slide through, thus avoiding breakage should a tree fall on the line. Portable telephones were used in emergencies, and were hooked onto the line near a pole with wires. Each station had its own signal consisting of a series of short and/or long rings.



VISITORS TO THE YOUNG NICOLET FOREST

The establishment of a good transportation system was important to overall Nicolet Forest management. In the early 1930's, the main travel routes consisted of State Highways 55, 32, 64, and 139, and county and town roads. None of the roads were surfaced, making many of them impassable by auto during the spring of the year due to the thaw. Winter driving was also hazardous; snow plowing equipment was primitive. Often, an individual would be forced to abandon his vehicle and walk to the nearest residence to await the snow plows.

Located at the end of one of these forest roads was Mrs. Carrie ("Shorty") Fournier's resort. It was situated on the north end of Franklin Lake, where Camp Nicolet for girls is today. Mrs. Fournier was quite a north woods personality, and she had numerous friends. She came to northern Wisconsin with her first husband, Jack Mann, a whiskey salesman. After his death, she married "Shorty" Fournier. "Shorty" was killed in a car accident in 1919, and ever after Carrie was called Mrs. "Shorty."

The Fourniers purchased land on the south shore of Butternut Lake around 1902, and constructed a resort. They also built a cabin on the north shore of Franklin Lake, bringing the building materials across the lake by boat. After "Shorty"'s death, Carrie sold the Butternut Resort to Gus Griswald.





BUTTERNUT-FRANKLIN LAKE LODGE NEAR THREE LAKES, WISCONSIN

Some of the first guests came to "Shorty" Fournier's Resort on Franklin Lake by boat. Carrie later located a road by herself. The Town of Hiles eventually constructed a rut road into her resort area. Mrs. Shorty's daily attire consisted of corduroy knickers or blue and white striped overalls, a man's shirt, a bandana tied around her hair and Indian moccasins. Her nearest neighbor was 15 miles away. Her only regular company was a pet deer named "Junie".

Carrie operated the resort for 44 years, before selling it to Wendell Schroeder in 1953. She died in 1963, at the age of 91.



## IV. THE PEOPLE RESOURCE

The Civilian Conservation Corps played an important role in helping establish the Nicolet National Forest as a viable and productive area. Created on March 31, 1933, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the CCC was a peace time army made up of unemployed men who were fighting to get the Nation's natural resources back into good shape through restoration and protection projects.

To be eligible for CCC, men had to be 18 to 25 years of age, single and with some member of their family receiving public relief. Enrollees received \$30 per month, \$24 of which had to be sent home to help support their families. In addition, enrollees received clothing, food, housing, and needed medical care.

The enrollees slept in barracks that were heated by large barrel type wood heaters. Army and Forest Service personnel had their own quarters, with orderlies to clean them and keep them heated.

CCC enrollees working on the Nicolet Forest performed many duties, including forest fire control, tree planting, road construction, recreation area construction and maintenance, installation of telephone lines, fish and wildlife habitat improvement, timber stand improvement and surveying. Much of the work done by the CCC is still evident today. Many roads,



CCC ENROLEES PLANTING SEEDLINGS

recreation areas, ranger stations, the Trees for Tomorrow training center and countless timber plantations exist because of the corpsmen's hard work.

At the peak of the CCC program, the Nicolet Forest had 22 camps, with about 200 enrollees per camp. The Army was responsible for the enrollees' housing, clothing, feeding, and medical care. The Forest Service, in turn, was in charge of the work program and furnishing supervision, materials and the necessary equipment for carrying out the projects. The Forest Service's camp organization consisted of a camp superintendent, three to six foresters, three to four construction foremen and two to three sub-foremen. The Army also had an educational advisor on their staff who set up evening classes. Forest Service personnel would teach classes several evenings a week.

After the CCC program had been in operation for awhile, Congress authorized the establishment of camps for World War I veterans. Phelps Camp on the Nicolet Forest was a veteran's camp.

#### CCC CAMPS ON THE NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST

<u>CAMP NAME</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DISTRICT</u>
Virgin Lake	F-1	S31,T39N,R12E	Argonne
Nine Mile	F-2	S35,T40N,R11E	Phelps
Pine River	F-8	S30,T39N,R13E	Argonne
Scott Lake	F-9 Co. 645	S22,T38N,R12E	Argonne
Mountain	F-19	S4,T31N,R16E	Oconto-Lakewood
Blackwell	F-34	S9,T35N,R15E	Peshtigo
Cavour	F-39	S15,T36N,R15E	Peshtigo
Rainbow	F-40	S10,T40N,R16E	Florence
Phelps	F-26 Co. 1680	S27,T42N,R11E	Phelps
Alvin	F-27	S3,T40N,R13E	Phelps
Long Lake	F-29	S31,T39N,R15E	Florence
Boot Lake	F-30	S8,T32N,R15E	Oconto-Lakewood
Trump Lake	F-28	S16,T34N,R16E	Oconto-Lakewood
Double Bend	F-41	S32,T38N,R15E	Argonne
Himley Lake	F-45	S9,T34N,R14E	Peshtigo
Newald	F-102	S26,T38N,R15E	Florence
Section Eleven	F-	S11,T39N,R12E	Argonne
Lily Pad	F-	S22,T40N,R14E	Phelps
Wolf River	F-	S28,T31N,R15E	Oconto-Lakewood
Bear Paw	F-	S22,T31N,R17E	Oconto-Lakewood
Dream	F-	S34,T40N,R15E	Florence
Lakewood	F-	S36,T33N,R16E	Oconto-Lakewood
Thunder River	F-	S16,T33N,R17E	Oconto-Lakewood

Whenever the CCC days on the Nicolet National Forest are being discussed, it leads to the telling of Roy Nettleton's fate.

Roy Nettleton came to work on the Nicolet Forest in 1933, as a junior forester at the Scott Lake CCC Camp. He worked his way up the ladder, and was appointed camp superintendent.



CCC TENT CAMP

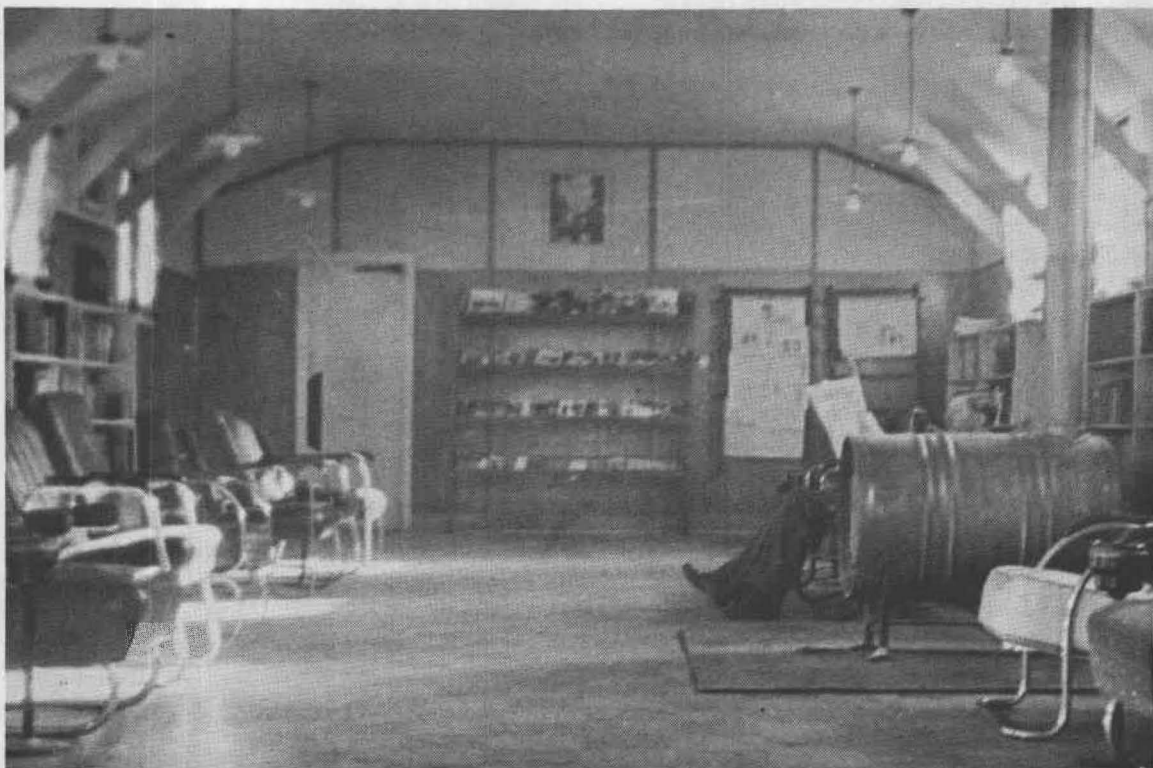


WINTER AT SECTION ELEVEN CCC CAMP





ALVIN CCC CAMP



A CCC CAMP RECREATION HALL





ROY NETTLETON

Nettleton later transferred to Long Lake CCC Camp on the Florence District to serve as superintendent there. On November 24, 1937, while working at the Long Lake Camp, Nettleton went out to do some area mapping. He had climbed a tree to orient himself and get a better view when two shots rang out. Both bullets hit Nettleton; the second one hit him in the groin and knocked him out of the tree. Nettleton was left to crawl to the road, where he was picked up by a passing lumberjack and taken to the Iron River Hospital. Nettleton died 3 days later of gangrene.

An investigation was conducted by the Forest Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. A man by the name of Cox, from Crandon, Wisconsin, was charged with the shooting. Cox testified that he mistook Nettleton for a bear. Cox was

acquitted on the murder charge, but found guilty of hunting out of season. He had to pay a fine and serve time in jail. This incident encouraged passage of legislation that led to similar offenses being tried in Federal Court.

The Nettleton Fire Tower on the Argonne District was named after Roy Nettleton, and the research station put in several experimental hardwood plots that were named after him.

Although the CCC was the largest, and hence the most often remembered resource-oriented work program of the Depression years, other conservation programs did exist. For example, the National Industry Recovery Act program.

The Nicolet Forest had one NIRA Camp that was constructed in 1934 near the historical site of the Jones Logging Company Camp of the late 1800's, which had also constructed the dam on the Pine River to hold back spring waters for the floating of pine logs down the river in the spring. The Jones Company employed more than 200 men at the Camp, and the towns competed for the Camp's business. The village of North Crandon (now Argonne) constructed a tote road from the town to the camp that was called the Old North Road. Evidence of this old road is still visible. The village of Three Lakes also constructed a trail to the camp site with a halfway station at McKinley Hill.

This NIRA Camp operated for about only one year before closing down. Approximately 50 men, plus a staff, lived and worked at the camp. Timber stand improvement projects, road clearings and campground construction were

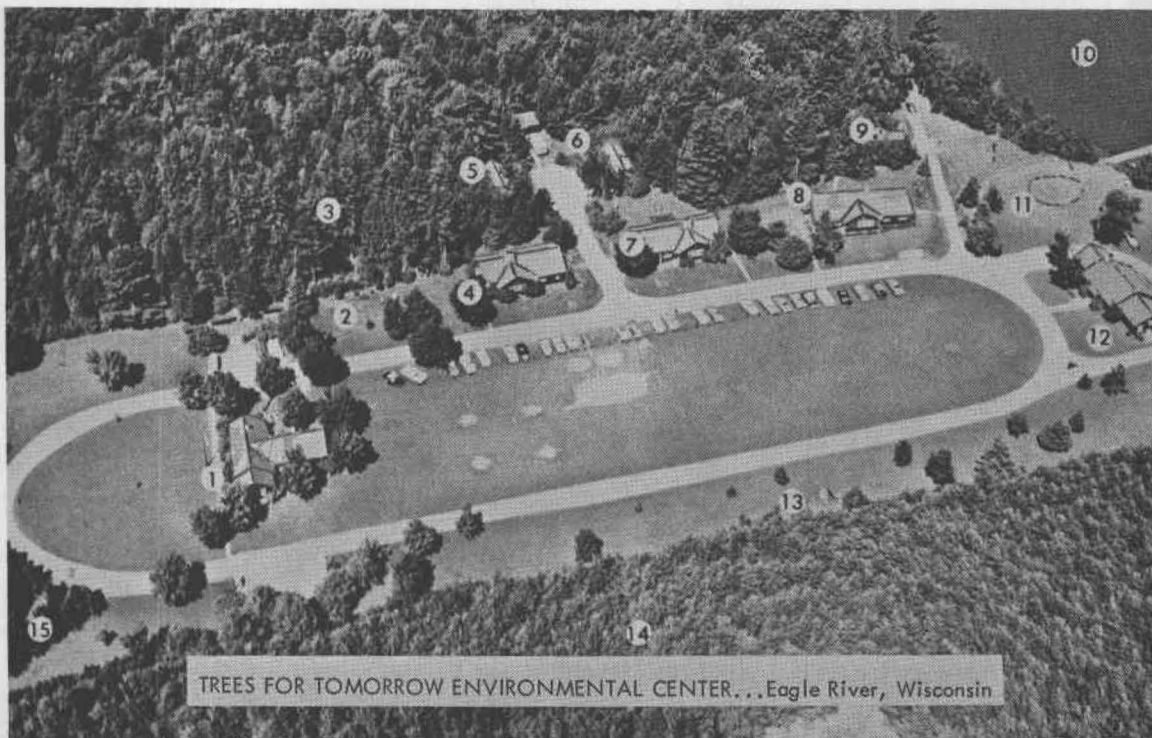
the major tasks handled by camp residents. The Jones Dam Campground was constructed by these NIRA crews, and is named after the logging company.

Camp Imogene is another of the unique work camps located on the Nicolet Forest. The property was owned by the State of Wisconsin. The camp site was that of an old C. M. Christiansen Company logging camp on Lake Imogene. Facilities at Camp Kentuck, a former boys' camp on Kentuck Lake, were also utilized as part of the Camp Imogene operation.

Originally, Camp Imogene was a State honor prison farm. However, when the transient camp located at Hiles became overcrowded, the prisoners were sent back to the formal jail and transients took over the facilities. In the fall of 1934, the Forest Service began providing work projects. At the end of the year, the State of Wisconsin turned over all management to the Forest Service.

Camp residents came from the State's transient population. The men ranged in age from 30 to 70 years of age, and represented all walks of life -- cooks, bakers, barbers, construction workers, lumberjacks, bookkeepers, circus performers, etc.

Among the projects completed on the Nicolet National Forest by Camp Imogene crews were the Anvil Lake Campground, Franklin Lake Campground, and



1. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
2. FOREST TREE NURSERY BEDS
3. DEMONSTRATION FOREST
4. DORM SPRUCE
5. DORM BALSAM

6. FOREST PRODUCTS BUILDING
7. DORM PINE
8. DORM HEMLOCK
9. LIBRARY IN THE WOODS
10. EAGLE CHAIN OF 27 LAKES

11. COUNCIL RING
12. DINING HALL
13. ARCHERY RANGE
14. PINE PLANTATION
15. MEMORIAL GROVE

clearing the right-of-way for State Highway 70. In addition, camp residents raised all their own vegetables, along with some hogs.

Approximately 250 men lived at Camp Imogene. Camp costs averaged 32 cents per man per day. The camp closed in July 1937, when the monies ran out.

The Trees for Tomorrow Environmental Center near the town of Eagle River was also constructed during the Civilian Conservation Corps era. The Center was originally used as a training base for forest managers working in the Eastern Region of the Forest Service.

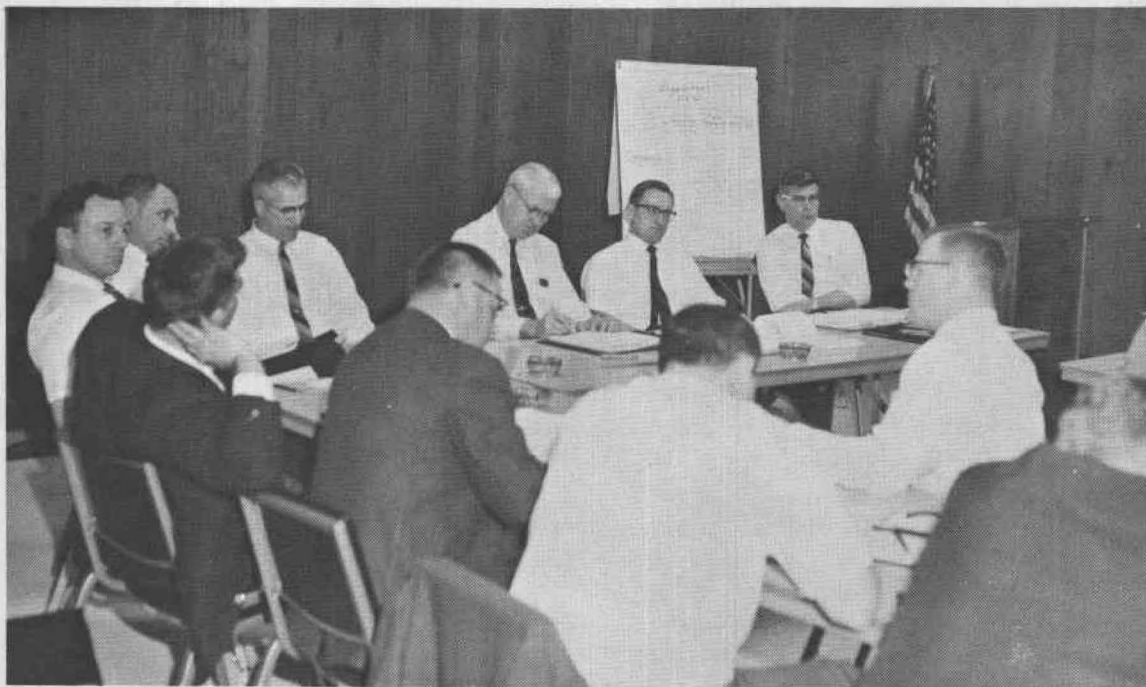
In 1942, the Center was closed as a training facility. Four years later, the property was placed under a special use permit to Trees for Tomorrow, Inc. The corporation represents a unique example of cooperation between Federal and State Government and private industry. During World War II, a team of resource managers worked out of the Trees for Tomorrow Center advising small landowners on proper resource management and tree growing procedures, as well as conducting special training for Federal and State land managers. Eventually, a center program evolved reflecting a wide range of outdoor and natural resource subjects.

Today, the Trees for Tomorrow Center operates year round, offering seminars and programs on such subjects as winter ecology, outdoor sports, safety, environmental education training, orienteering and survival skills.

The Nicolet National Forest is used extensively for field tours by Center groups. For many who visit the Trees for Tomorrow Center, it is an introduction to the world of natural resource management.

## V. THE NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST TODAY— A MULTIPLE OF RESOURCES

### PLANNING



PLANNING FOR THE NICOLET FOREST'S FUTURE

Today, managers of the Nicolet National Forest must work to balance the boundless needs and wants of an ever-growing Nation with a finite natural resource base.

Since 1960, Congress has passed numerous pieces of legislation which gave guidance to the Forest Service on how best to meet those needs. The Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act of 1960, formalized the Forest Service's long unspoken management philosophy -- management of the Nation's renewable resources (wood, water, forage, wildlife and recreation) in such a way as to provide for the greatest good, of the greatest number in the long run.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) followed a decade of unprecedented concern for the natural environment. An expanded Forest Service land use planning program was just one of the many off-shoots of NEPA.

Planning has been an integral part of Nicolet National Forest management since the late 1930's. By that time, custodial and fire protection activities had done much to restore the forests and they were no longer the number one concern. Rather, the demand for pulpwood and sawtimber from the second growth timber stands dictated a need for more comprehensive planning, if an allowable cut was to be established and the Forest managed for sustained yield.



The first land and timber survey on the Nicolet Forest was initiated in 1937. The survey included timber and soil types, timber growth, fire hazard conditions, areas requiring planting and needed timber species. Also estimated, were timber stand improvement and insect and disease control needs. The first aerial photos of the Nicolet National Forest were made in 1938, for inventory purposes. Once the photos were interpreted, ground points were checked, plots marked for accuracy, timber yields estimated, acreage of timber types determined and a final summary drawn up. Also considered in these early planning efforts were recreation demands, wildlife needs, and watershed protection projects. This information, along with management suggestions, made up the first real comprehensive timber management plan for the Nicolet Forest.

The next timber management plan was prepared for the period of 1953-1963, and was much improved. Compartments were designated on each Forest district, and a schedule for compartment examinations was set up. The plan also gave consideration to timber types, size classes, growth, planting needs, recreation possibilities, transportation, resident population, forest protection, land surveys and forest industries.

A new timber management plan was developed to cover the years 1964-1975. In addition to the areas given consideration by earlier planning efforts, this document included road and waterfront zones, wild and scenic areas and necessary wildlife openings.

Currently, Nicolet National Forest managers are in the second phase of a 3 part regional planning scheme. A team of individuals, representing a multiple of land management professions, has been appointed and charged with the responsibility of putting together a long-range Forest Plan. This plan will contain specific land management direction for the Forest's overall natural resource base, and will reflect Service-wide policies and Regional direction as outlined in the Lake States Area Guide. The third and final phase of the land use planning process is the development of plans for individual Forest units. A unit is a section on the Forest which has a unique set of resources or which can fulfill a specific need.

Although early Nicolet National Forest planning efforts emphasized timber, today's plans give equal recognition to all of the Forest's resource systems. The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resource Planning Act of 1974 recognizes six specific resource systems: outdoor recreation and wilderness; wildlife and fish habitat; range; timber; land and water; and, human and community development. This Act calls on the Forest Service to make an assessment of all of the Nation's forest, range and related lands, public and privately owned. The first assessment was made in 1974, and is to be updated in 1979, and again every 10 years. Based on the findings of the assessment, the Forest Service is then responsible for developing a long-range management program for the National Forest System, Research and State and Private activities. These programs cover a 45-year period and are updated every 5 years. In 1976, President Gerald R. Ford signed into law the National Forest Management Act. This Act gave new policy direction to the Forest Service. When signing the bill, President Ford spoke of the

importance of the legislation. He stated, "It encourages balanced consideration of all resources in the land management process."

Broad policies were outlined for land-management planning, timber management actions and public participation in Forest Service decision making. All in all, the NFMA strengthens RPA and points to systematic congressional review of public land management activities.

These changing national trends, projected needs and new policies will be reflected on the Nicolet National Forest through its land management programs and Forest level planning activities.

## TIMBER

The timber resource on the Nicolet National Forest has come a long way in the last 40-45 years. The once burned-over areas have, for the most part, been reforested. Today, some of these plantations are being thinned for the second time. The cut-over hardwood slashings, known as maple brush in the 1930's are now pole-size stands of young hardwoods. This, of course, is due to the surveillance and protection of these areas from fire, insects and disease. Aspen was once considered a weed tree species, but today it is managed for its fiber. It is easily renewed through natural regeneration and has a short rotation. The Nicolet Forest has a current allowable cut of 50 million board feet a year, compared with only a few cords for the first wood sale back in 1931.



RED PINE PLANTATION

The Hugo Sauer Nursery played an important role in the replenishing of the Forest's timber resource. The Nursery was started in 1931, under the auspices of the Federated Kiwanis Clubs. Hugo Sauer, for whom the nursery is named, was chairman of the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Kiwanis District's Conservation and Reforestation Committee in 1931 and 1932. He spearheaded a fund drive which resulted in several thousand dollars being donated to the Nicolet National Forest for the purpose of establishing a nursery.

G. Willard Jones was the first nurseryman, and he supervised much of the construction of the seedling beds, sprinkling system and buildings. The Nursery expanded rapidly, until it covered approximately 125 acres. By 1935, it was producing 8 million seedlings annually. The Nursery was located southwest of County Trunk K, about 4 miles northwest of Rhinelander.

The Forest Service leased the Nursery to Wisconsin in the mid-1940's. The State operated a portion of the Nursery until 1974, when it phased-out seedling production.



HUGO SAUER NURSERY MARKER



Today, the Hugo Sauer Nursery site is used in part by the Nicolet National Forest, the Forest Service's Lake States Research Experiment Station and the State of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin uses several of the buildings for a tree distribution center, a district warehouse and storage areas; the Nicolet Forest has adopted some of the area for daily Forest uses; and, the Lake States Research Experiment Station has headquartered the Institute of Forest Genetics here. The Institute has greenhouses, laboratories and offices. Much of the area is used for field tests under the tree improvement program.

## **WATER AND LAND**

Water is another of the five renewable resources listed under the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act, and it is an element of the land and water resource system under RPA. The Eastern Continental Divide is located on the Nicolet National Forest. Many tributaries leading into the Mississippi River, and Lake Michigan make the area an important watershed. In addition, the 235 miles of streams, 607 miles of rivers and 34,613 acres of lakes are vital to the Forest's recreational resource.

A systematic and regular water monitoring system helps guarantee that all land management activities are executed in such a way as to prevent damage of the water resource.

As for the land resource, the Nicolet Forest boundaries encompass a gross area of more than 973,000 acres, of which approximately 652,000 are federally owned. Aside from the general Forest activities which occur here, more than 300 special use permits have been issued to businesses, communities and individuals.

## **WILDLIFE**

In recent years, the wildlife community has become of great concern to man. Gradually, man has come to realize that the inability of a wildlife species to adapt and cope with the changing world, might, in fact, be signalling his own demise. Thus, there is a sincere effort to help all wildlife gain a stronger hold on life.

A successful wildlife management program on the 1.5 million acres of National Forest land in Wisconsin depends on cooperation between the Forest Service and the State, because while the Forest Service is responsible for habitat management, the State is in charge of population controls. The Sikes Act of 1973 encourages greater Federal-State cooperation in the area of wildlife habitat management by guaranteeing Federal funding for cooperative programs.

A cooperative wildlife habitat management program was agreed on between the State of Wisconsin and the Forest Service in the Fall of 1976. The overall objective of the 5 year program is, "to improve the ecological diversity of the forest environment so as to meet the habitat needs of all





**RELEASING A FISHER DURING THE INTRODUCTION PROGRAM**

wildlife species associated with the forest habitat." Program activities are concerned with forest habitat management, aquatic resources and endangered and threatened wildlife.

Recently, on the Nicolet National Forest, several special wildlife projects have been conducted. The fisher was reintroduced on the Forest, and according to surveys is doing well. The success of the fisher project led to the reintroduction of the Pine Marten during the 1974-75 winter. Both of these animals were once found in abundance in the area, but man's activities forced a drastic decline in their populations. Today, they are reestablishing themselves in their original territory.

## **RECREATION**

The recreation resource on the National Forests presents a multitude of complex and conflicting management alternatives. The types of recreation facilities and degree of development in demand by the public vary for each individual. On the Nicolet National Forest, the visitor has many recreation experiences to choose from, from visiting a wild area to camping in one of 23 developed campgrounds. In between these two extremes, are facilities for self-guided nature walks, auto tours, picnicking, boating, swimming, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, and skiing. And, all at recreation areas which have been developed with the visitors' enjoyment and safety in mind. In 1975, people spent more than 15.3 million hours recreating on the Nicolet National Forest.



RECREATION -- A VALUABLE RESOURCE

## THE HUMAN AND COMMUNITY RESOURCE

But, people are more than just consumers of the Nation's natural resources. They are, in fact, a resource themselves -- the human and community resource.

One national program that recognizes the renewability of the human resource is Job Corps. The Job Corps program was established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. This legislation sought "to mobilize the human and financial resources of the Nation to combat poverty." Job Corps was created to, "prepare for the responsibilities of citizenship, and to increase the employability of young men and women aged 16 to 21 by providing them, in rural and urban residential centers, with education, vocational training, useful work experience, including work directed toward the conservation of natural resources."

The Forest Service was only one of several agencies selected to participate in the Job Corps program. In 1965, the Blackwell Job Corps Center was established on the Nicolet Forest's Laona District, on the same site that had supported a Civilian Conservation Corps Camp some 30 years earlier. The Blackwell Civilian Conservation Center is located 1 mile north of the small community of Blackwell, on Forest County Highway H.

The first Blackwell Center staff consisted of: Roger Johnson, center director; Milo Stefan, deputy director for the work program; George Zarcoff,



ENTRANCE TO THE BLACKWELL JOB CORPS CENTER



1976 BLACKWELL STAFF, RECIPIENTS OF THE 1977 USDA SUPERIOR SERVICE AWARD



deputy director of the education and corpsman supervisor program; and, William Wolff, Jr., administrative officer. Eventually, the staff grew to 42 people.

The early program at the Blackwell Center revolved around helping enrollees finish their high school education, and repairing and reestablishing the Forest's natural resources. Reforestation, timber stand improvement, rehabilitation of spring ponds, recreation area construction and repair, fire prevention and community assistance projects were the major activities handled by the corpsmen. The program began changing in 1968, and vocational training in the building and construction trades was emphasized. The new program also benefits the Nicolet Forest, and has resulted in construction of new recreation areas and administrative site improvements.

Today, Blackwell has seven skill training programs, conducted by Forest Service employees and contractors, including four construction trade unions. Included in the Center's training roster are carpentry, heavy equipment operation, painting, welding, masonry, cooking and building maintenance. The Center is equipped to handle approximately 200 resident corpsmen, and has a 55-member staff. Of the young men who completed a training program and left the Center between July 1, 1974, and June 30, 1975, 70 percent were placed in jobs; 25 percent went on to further their education; and, 5 percent entered the military.

The Center Directors have played a major role in helping the Nicolet National Forest's Job Corps Program become a success. Center Directors include:

1965-1966	Roger Johnson
1966-1967	John Pager
1967-1969	Thomas Fulk
1969-1970	Edmund Vandermillen
1970-1973	William Erickson
1973-	Harold Godlevske

On August 13, 1970, a "cousin" of the Civilian Conservation Corps was born when President Richard Nixon signed Public Law 91-378. This Act established a 3 year pilot summer employment program for young people, ages 15 through 18. The main objective of the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) was to gainfully employ young people in a conservation, work-education program on public lands and waters which were administered by the Departments of Agriculture and Interior. It was hoped that the YCC would "create an opportunity for understanding and appreciation of the Nation's natural environment and heritage . . . and further the development and maintenance of the natural resources of the United States by the youth, upon whom will fall the ultimate responsibility for maintaining and managing these resources for the American people."

The YCC Program proved so successful, that Congress expanded it and made it a permanent national endeavor on September 3, 1974. The new legislation authorized \$60 million annually for the Youth Conservation Corps.



ENROLLEES WORKING ON A YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS PROJECT

The Nicolet National Forest has been involved with the YCC Program since its beginning. In 1971, a 35-man residential camp was set up on the shore of Trump Lake and put under the direction of Stanley "Stosh" Novak. During the 8-week program, the campers completed a large number of projects which were valued at more than \$82,000.

The Forest's program was expanded in 1972, and included two sessions and 70 male campers. Nicolet College and Technical Institute also became involved that year, providing an assistant director, the residential living staff, and conducting the environmental education program.

P. James Steffen, a member of the Blackwell Job Corps Center teaching staff, was loaned to the YCC Program in 1973, and took over the directorship. That year also marked the beginning of a co-educational program. Eighteen girls and 17 boys participated in the one, 8-week session.

In 1974, Jerry Anderson, a speech therapist from Florence, Wisconsin, and part-time warden with the State's Department of Natural Resources, took over the camp director position. The 6-week program provided 55 young men and women with an opportunity to "work, earn, and learn" in the Nicolet National Forest. The 1975 YCC Program started out with 50 young men and women reporting for a 6-week session in June. However, midway through the summer, Congress appropriated additional funds and 40 new campers were recruited for a 4-week stint. The YCC Camp has been located at several sites, including: Trump Lake, 1971 and 1972; Clearwater Lake, 1973; and, Lost Lake, 1974 and 1975.

The Youth Conservation Corps is a successful and well-received manpower program. The enthusiasm and energy put forth by YCC campers is surpassed only by the high volume of work accomplished and top quality workmanship exhibited. A synopsis of the Nicolet National Forest's Youth Conservation Corps Program follows.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>*NO. OF CAMPERS/WEEK</u>	<u>NO. SESSIONS</u>	<u>SEX</u>	<u>VALUE OF WORK ACCOMPLISHED</u>
1971	280	1 8-week	Male	\$82,336
1972	280	2 4-week	Male	\$31,950
1973	280	1 8-week	Co-ed	\$44,849
1974	330	1 6-week	Co-ed	\$42,700
1975	460	1 6-week 1 4-week	Co-ed	\$77,677

\*One Camper For One Week



## VI. IN CLOSING

Management of the Nicolet National Forest grows more complex and more challenging for the public land manager every day. It is not a one person or one staff job. Rather, everyone must feel responsible for the Nation's natural resources and work to ensure proper management and future supplies of all of them -- wood, water, wildlife, forage, recreation and, of course, people.

The following Environmental Pledge was written by me, Kennell Elliott (Nicolet History author), and has been adopted for use by the U.S. Forest Service and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Won't you make it your pledge, too?

I pledge to do the following:

- prevent air pollution;
- not pollute water;
- do all I can to reduce solid wastes;
- not create excessive noise.

- I will not litter or be destructive to the landscape;
- I will work to keep the scenic beauty of our country;

- I will consider the effects of my actions on other people, wildlife, aesthetics, waters, air, land and the total environment.

## VII. STATISTICS

This section contains dates, names, facts and figures which are important and basic to any written history of the Nicolet National Forest. The subjects covered and their order is as follows:

### Nicolet National Forest Supervisors

District Rangers -- Three Lakes (Argonne)  
Eagle River (Phelps)  
Laona (Peshtigo)  
Lakewood (Oconto)  
Florence

Field Personnel Register -- March 1937

Resource Statistics -- Net Acreage  
Fires  
Recreational visits  
Timber

25% Fund Returns

### *NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST SUPERVISORS*

S. Duval Anderson	1928 - 1932
Raymond U. Harmon	1932 - 1934
Paul A. Wohlen	1934 - 1936
Axel G. Lindh	1936 - 1938
Warren T. Murphy	1938 - 1940
Galen W. Pike	1940 - 1945
Donald P. Ball	1945 - 1951
Dan E. Bulfer	1951 - 1955
Edward N. Lee	1955 - 1957
Kenneth P. Butterfield	1957 - 1965
Phillip L. Archibald	1965 - 1968
John W. Chaffin	1968 - 1972
Thomas A. Fulk	1972 -

### *THREE LAKES (ARGONNE) RANGER DISTRICT RANGERS*

Ray Iverson	1929 - 1934
Rene La Rocque	1934 - 1939
Louis Tausch, Jr.	1939 - 1944
Richard Smith	1944 - 1954
Robert Steideman	1954 - 1955
Ed Bober	1955 - 1959
Phil Daughtery	1959 - 1962
Jack Wolter	1962 - 1965
Larry Henson	1965 - 1966
Richard Brewster	1966 - 1972
Edward Johnson	1972 - 1975

*EAGLE RIVER (PHELPS) RANGER DISTRICT RANGERS*

Walter Nicewander	1936 - 1945
James Jay	1945 - 1947
George Frisbie	1947 - 1949
Donald Smith	1949 - 1952
Warren Livens	1952 - 1955
Anthony Quinkert	1955 - 1962
Leon Kridelbaugh	1962 - 1964
Gary Keppen	1964 - 1976
Carl Stein	1976 -

*LAONA (PESHTIGO) RANGER DISTRICT RANGERS*

V. C. Sheffield	1934 - 1935
W. W. Intermill	1935 - 1942 & 1947
Horace O. Nixon	1943 - 1944
Louis Tausch, Jr.	1945 - 1946
Eliot W. Zimmerman	1948 - 1954
Ed Crook	1955 - 1957
David Seaberg	1958 - 1967
Lowell Patterson	1967 - 1974
Dale B. Staeger	1974 -

*LAKEWOOD (OCONTO) RANGER DISTRICT RANGERS*

Rene La Rocque	1933 - 1934
Kenneth Pomeroy	1934 - 1937
Paul Kohlmire	1937 - 1944
Ferris Green	1944 - 1953
Virgil Stephens	1953 - 1956
Rudy Hedland	1956 - 1958
Clifford Crosby	1958 - 1965
Harry Mahoney	1965 - 1967
Arden Mikich	1967 - 1973
Evans Lutz	1973 - 1976

*FLORENCE RANGER DISTRICT RANGERS*

Louis Tausch, Jr.	1936 - 1939
Austin Zapp (Acting)	1939
Rene La Rocque	1939 - 1941
James W. Jay	1941 - 1943
Ed Iverson	1943 - 1944
F. Fehlberg	1944 - 1945
J. Mason (Acting)	1945 - 1946
Horace O. Nixon	1946 - 1951
E. F. Biebesheimer	1951 - 1956
R. A. White	1956 - 1957
Albert J. Anderson	1957 - 1967
Donald P. Footer	1967 -



NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST  
FIELD PERSONNEL REGISTER - MARCH 1937

Argonne District - Ranger Station

Rene La Rocque - Ranger  
Paul N. Seastrom - ECW Assistant  
Edward R. Stóltz - Junior Clerk  
Ervin L. Sickler - Mechanic  
Leroy G. Cunningham - Warehouseman

Double Bend Camp, F-41

Morris Hancock, Junior Forester - Superintendent  
Ragner Romnes, Junior Forester  
Horace O. Nixon, Junior Forester  
William E. Dent - Assistant to Technician  
Edmund E. Kluck - Jr. Foreman C&M  
Phillip H. Spies - Jr. Foreman C&M  
Albert E. Saltzberry - Mechanic

Scott Lake Camp, F-9

Lincoln A. Mueller, Junior Forester - Superintendent  
Harry J. Blitstein, Junior Forester  
Frank N. Fixmer, Junior Forester  
Oscar G. Peterson - Foreman C&M  
Carl Boettger - Jr. Foreman C&M  
Lewis R. Calhoun - Jr. Foreman C&M  
Ernest J. Allen - Squad Foreman  
George F. Colburn - Squad Foreman  
William H. Moyer - Carpenter  
William E. Neu - Mechanic  
Maskiel B. Swett - Mechanic

Florence District - Ranger Station

Louis Tausch, Jr. - Ranger  
Walter E. Poole, Junior Forester - ECW Assistant  
Raymond A. Tetzlaff - Junior Clerk  
John Mason - Warehouseman

Long Lake Camp, F-29

Lloyd A. Rickel, Jr., Junior Forester - Superintendent  
Clarence J. Lovin, Junior Forester  
Warren H. Livens, Junior Forester  
Tom Kleve - Junior Foreman  
Ronald M. Elvidge - Squad Foreman

Newald Camp, F-102

Sumner W. Farnham - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
Ralph L. Neafus, Junior Forester  
Everett A. Shipek, Junior Forester  
Benjamin P. Moss, Junior Forester  
Martin Hawrylow - Assistant to Technician  
Joseph C. Steinfest - Jr. Foreman

Rainbow Camp, F-40

Raymond E. Stevens - Principal Foreman, Superintendent  
Stewart Morey, Junior Forester  
John J. Zaylskie, Junior Forester  
Harry Bartz - Foreman  
Adam Korbas - Foreman  
Frederick V. Evert - Jr. Foreman  
Edward Grissom - Squad Foreman  
Frank Kelm - Assistant to Technician  
John H. Denn - Machine Operator  
Earl J. Hoar - Mechanic

Oconto District - Ranger Station

Kenneth Pomeroy - Ranger  
Austin C. Zapp, Junior Forester  
Claude D. Marks - Junior Stenographer  
Charles J. Vogt, Warehouseman  
Frank A. Kutil, Jr. - Supervising Mechanic

Boot Lake Camp, F-30

John C. Neumoier - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
Walter L. Saffran - Junior Foreman  
James W. Stoddard - Junior Foreman  
Jack S. Trust, Junior Forester  
Carl J. Ahlgrim - Squad Foreman  
Arthur E. Karnopp - Mechanic  
Fred W. Vonau - Machine Operator  
Karl Wild - Assistant to Technician

Mountain Camp, F-19

Calvin E. Rusch - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
William H. Meyer, Junior Forester  
Royal M. Nettleton, Junior Forester  
Edward A. Anderson - Assistant to Technician  
Fred C. Dunlap - Junior Foreman  
Albert J. Pung - Skilled Worker, Model Construction  
Benjamin Fortin - Blacksmith

Peshtigo District - Ranger Station

W. W. Intermill - Ranger  
Carl Arbogast, Junior Forester - ECW Assistant  
George A. Weidner - Junior Clerk  
Henry J. Larguin - Warehouseman  
Carl P. Olson - Mechanic  
Robert L. White - Squad Foreman  
Rachael Schmitt - ERA Sr. Clerk

Blackwell Camp, F-34

Edmund F. Rasmussen - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
Theo W. Agnew, Junior Forester  
Claude O. Morin, Junior Forester  
Edwin R. Warner, Junior Forester  
Norman A. Dittmar - Foreman  
John F. Hammes - Junior Foreman  
Wildred O. Bolongia - Squad Foreman  
Virgil Licklitor - Mechanic  
Emil G. Olson - Mechanic  
Kenneth G. Sedgwick - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
Mauric W. Day, Junior Forester  
Perry O. Donaldson, Jr., Junior Forester  
Paul H. Lane, Junior Forester  
Otto W. Koch - Junior Foreman  
Edward A. Mueller - Junior Foreman  
Clyde C. Emden - Mechanic

Himley Lake Camp, F-45

Elbridge E. Ball - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
Harold G. Powell, Junior Forester  
James Jorgenson - Junior Foreman  
John M. McCullough - Junior Foreman  
Ray Schroder - Squad Foreman  
George W. Zimmerman - Mechanic

Phelps District - Ranger Station

Walter Nicewander - Ranger  
Rudolph Benson, Junior Forester  
Fred A. Woleben - Jr. Landscape Architect  
Harry E. Krueger - Jr. Stenographer  
George H. Erwin - Supplyman  
Neleta J. Pearson - ERA Sr. Clerk

Alvin Camp, F-27

Otto Hackbarth - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
Kenneth H. Juringius, Junior Forester  
Oscar P. Stabe, Junior Forester  
Thomas W. Hanson - Junior Foreman  
Clarence J. Priegel - Junior Foreman  
Theodore J. Aarstad - Machine Operator

Phelps Camp, F-26

Harry J. Welch - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
Edward J. Smithburg, Junior Forester  
Edward W. Smith, Junior Forester  
Ralph Morris - Assistant to Technician  
Kennell M. Elliott - Junior Foreman  
Herman C. Korth - Carpenter

Nine Mile Camp, F-2

Raymond L. Leigh - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
Charles H. Diebold, Junior Forester  
Dmitri K. Maisserow, Junior Forester  
Edmund H. Schroeder - Foreman  
Kenneth L. Keach - Junior Foreman  
Mark J. Synnott - Junior Foreman  
Herman E. Erlitz - Mechanic  
Arthur L. Ketz - Mechanic  
Lloyd Punches - Machine Operator

Imogene Transient Camp

Donald Kelsey - Chief Foreman, Superintendent  
Angus R. Mayo - Foreman C&M  
John G. Jaaska - Junior Foreman  
Julius Pfeiffer - Foreman  
Basil W. Prather - Mechanic  
Oliver Clarence Jensen - Carpenter

Custodians

Section Eleven Camp - Patrick J. Sullivan  
Trump Lake Camp - Herbert J. Strong  
Lily Pad Camp - Frederick Mackmiller  
Thunder River Camp - Clifford Elkey  
Wolf River Camp - Christ E. Meyer  
Bear Paw Camp - Helmer Olson



### RESOURCE STATISTICS

#### *NET ACREAGE OF NICOLET*

1930 -	0
1933 -	219,428
1935 -	348,905
1940 -	554,247
1945 -	601,903
1950 -	627,693
1955 -	638,218
1960 -	640,409
1965 -	641,906
1970 -	649,679
1974 -	651,721
1976 -	652,721

#### *NICOLET FIRE STATISTICS*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Fires</u>	<u>Acres Burned</u>
1934	25	504.3 (earliest year of record)
1935	53	107.9
1940	32	229.0
1945	38	622.6
1950	23	43.9
1955	21	14.4
1960	15	30.5
1965	11	42.0
1970	33	228.0
1975	29	72.0

Large acreages were burned in 1933 and 1934 by such fires as Hiles and Nelma fires, plus others.

#### *RECREATION VISITS ON NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Visits</u>
1961	300,000 (earliest record)
1964	409,200
1966	868,000 *VDU
1970	1,270,400 *VDU
1975	1,275,200 *VDU

\*One Visitor Day = 12 hours of use.

*TIMBER SOLD*

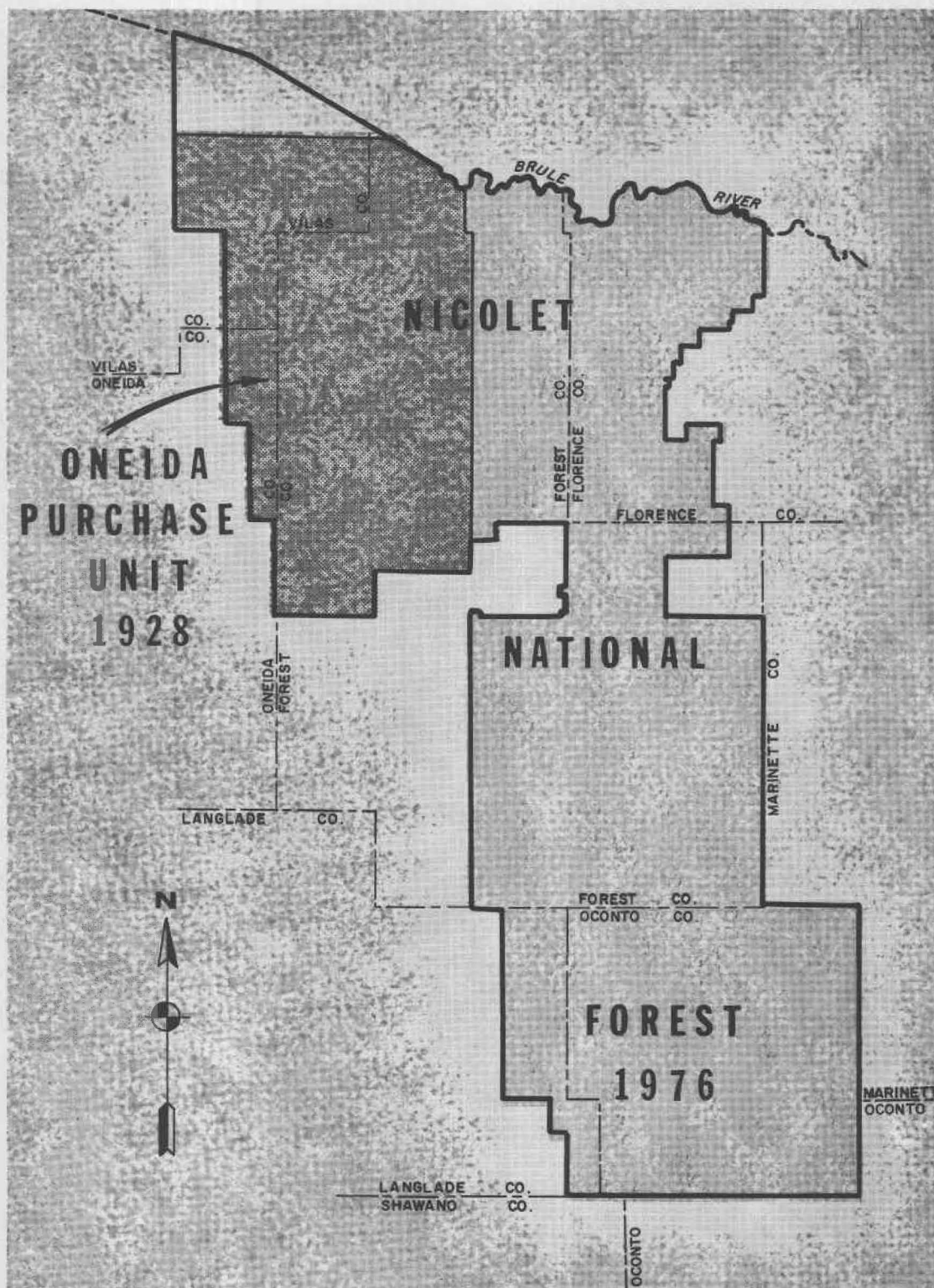
<u>Year</u>	<u>Volume</u>	<u>Value</u>
1930	N/A	N/A
1935	1,174 MBF	\$862.00
1940	10,353 MBF	\$ 39,729.21
1945	9,618 MBF	\$ 57,355.00
1950	28,481.72 MBF	\$188,276.40
1955	23,392.00 MBF	\$123,979.73
1960	38,187.33 MBF	\$327,145.00
1965	48,767.19 MBF	\$381,938.00
1970	52,490.52 MBF	\$540,718.69
1975	51,545.12 MBF	\$764,366.37

*AMOUNT OF 25% FUND RETURNED TO COUNTIES*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>
1931	\$ 1.56 (First year return)
1962	\$ 58,511.31
1965	\$ 78,493.55
1970	\$ 91,866.62
1975	\$111,880.02

Distribution to counties within Nicolet National Forest in FY 1975 was as follows:

Florence	\$ 14,168.66
Forest	\$ 58,356.85
Langlade	\$ 5,520.17
Oconto	\$ 23,797.39
Oneida	\$ 1,901.06
Vilas	\$ 8,135.09
Total	\$111,880.27





## SOMETHING ABOUT THE WRITER

Most pamphlets or books have a biography of the writer in the front part of the writing. I purposely put this in the back because if it were put in the front, and the reader saw this first, he probably would not want to read the rest when he knew it was put together by a scrub forester. What I mean by a scrub forester, like myself, is that I do not have a college degree in Forestry, but have professional status as a Forester, and am a member of the Society of American Foresters. I received this professional status the hard way - by reading, studying, learning from other people, and then finally taking and passing an examination. This is not recommended, and, in fact, cannot be accepted for professional status today.

I learned early in my employment with the U.S. Forest Service that there was more than trees to Forestry, and that foresters had to deal with people. I think I learned something from every person I ever worked for or with, as well as those who worked for me, and I'm still learning every day.

My parents came from Elliott and Carter Counties, Kentucky, and settled on a farm near Bryant, Wisconsin, in Langlade County. I was born there on August 1, 1908. My three sisters and one brother were older than me, and two brothers were younger. My father would take the farm horses to the logging camps in the winter. Later, he became a logger so I grew up in the woods and learned how to use the logging equipment and tools, use of compass, as well as estimating standing timber, and the scaling and measurement of wood volumes.

I married Alvilda A. Johnson of Hiles, Wisconsin, in Forest County. We were blessed with two sons, Marvin K. and J. Dale.

My three brothers, Carl, Arvel, and Oscar were later loggers, or worked in the transportation or manufacturing of wood products.

I was employed by the U.S. Forest Service for over 37 years, and worked on the National Forests in the Lake States most of the time. I retired November 1, 1969.

Elliott Road on the Nicolet National Forest was named after us. My brother Carl purchased a timber sale in Sections 10, 15, 16, T40N, R13E, in 1937 from Walter Nicewander, District Ranger at Eagle River. He had so much trouble locating roads because of all the swamp in the area that he asked



me to help him locate them. By using aerial photos, we laid out his main logging road. We found good access to the springs of Johnson Creek (now named Alvin Creek) and good brook trout fishing. Also, the area was good deer habitat, and my brothers and I hunted there a lot with good success. The road was later improved and extended through Section 21 to the south and out to Forest Road #2174. The Elliott Road is now Forest Road #2175, and only about two and one-half miles in length.

The U.S. Forest Service treated me well, and I am pleased with my success and career as a forester.

KENNEL M. ELLIOTT