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Students Manage
a Forest in the Cornbelt

WILLIAM H. CRAVEN and OLIVER F. SAPOUSEK

THE Holst State Forest, a school forest for forestry students of Iowa State College, located 12 miles northwest of Boone, Iowa, consists of 340 acres of hardwood forest and timber land in all its natural and picturesque beauty.

Nearly 80 per cent of the forest consists of a vigorous stand of red and white oak types. A host of aspen and ash together with a mixture of maple-linden and scattered individuals of hackberry, ironwood and walnut comprise the remainder of the forest cover.

The southeastern section of the tract is situated in the upland area and has recently been planted with 10,000 conifers and hardwoods to supplement a previous planting. The hillsides of the western and northern area are heavily wooded with the forest types mentioned above and represent a most valuable and important resource of the area.

The deep rolling hills, which are characteristic of Iowa, seem enhanced even further as one views the natural topography from one of the many readily accessible viewpoints. In the northwestern sector of the forest a small picnic area near a stream has been cleared and can be reached either by trail or by a road which bisects the tract.

History

With an eye to the further development and maintenance as a public recreational area, the Holst State Forest was originally ceded to the State Conservation Commission in 1939 by the late Mr. B. P. Holst, Sr., a prominent Boone businessman. Under the supervision of the Commission, the Civilian Conservation Corps conducted planting on the available non-forested areas and further increased the accessibility and protection by constructing roads and fences.

In cooperation with Civilian Conservation Corps in 1940, the Iowa State College Forestry Department accepted the responsibility of management as a demonstrational and experimental area, as well as a recreational area. As the student's need for practical experience in the forestry profession is always prevalent, the job of administration was turned over to the Forestry Club, who, through the department, made a preliminary survey, drew up a type map and a topographic map of the area, and followed the plans and requests of Mr. Holst.

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During World War II in the time of need, the open and tillable land was rented for crop production. As the war ended, and the forestry school was filled with returning veterans, the Forestry Club, in the early spring of 1947 organized a student body called, "The Holst State Forest Advisory Committee." With the organization of this committee, activities started before the war were again instigated and a Constitution of Administration was drafted.

Policy

The policy of the committee, in general, is the systematic development and maintenance of a sustained yield forest unit producing the maximum output of the most valuable products on a reasonably businesslike basis without lowering or destroying the potential recreational possibilities.

Although Iowa is recognized as being primarily agricultural, it is located in the Central Hardwood Region and has abundant farm woodlots and timber areas throughout the state. Sound management and administration of the Holst State Forest should serve as a demonstration with the results obtained being capable of emulation by owners of similar forest areas in Iowa.

The preservation of the tract as a natural recreational area and its beneficial influences upon the public are of primary importance. This can be accomplished by protection from fire and vandalism, preservation of wildlife and soil conservation.

In the process of administration and management Iowa State College forestry students will have the opportunity of gaining valuable and practical experience in the field with such activities as protection, utilization, production and reforestation.

As need arises, specific policies governing the conduct of the work will be determined by the committee.

Organization

The Holst Forest, although a State of Iowa forest, can be properly classified as a school forest for the Forestry School of Iowa State College. As previously mentioned it is under the administration of the Forestry Club. A committee of eight students, two freshmen, two sophomores, two juniors and two seniors serve as the Holst State Forest Advisory Committee, and their purpose is to serve as an advisory body and to supervise and direct all work projects in connection with the administration of the forest. A faculty advisor is available for advice on any of our problems.

Committee members are elected late in the fall of each year from the freshman class. They apply by letter to the standing committee for membership and are then interviewed. The com-
mittee then selects two from the applicants by vote by ballot, and they serve as members of the advisory body during their four years in college. In electing freshman, standing committee members take into consideration the student's interest in the Holst Forest as evidenced by their work at the area the fall quarter, sincerity, high school extra curricular activities, high school grades, experience and appearance. In drawing up this provision in the constitution, we realize the inadequacy from the standpoint of giving experience to as many students as possible in the administration and supervision of the school forest. But, at the same time, we are most interested in keeping the Holst Forest Committee an efficient body and keeping the Holst Forest an ever growing project. We believe it takes a committee member fully a year to appreciate our problems and the objectives we desire. By the time a committee member has served through his first three years, he is in an excellent position to act as chairman of the committee.

The various detailed responsibilities of committee members, we have divided into three groups: offices, duties and work project responsibilities. The officers of the organization are as follows:

1. The chairman of the body is the senior with the most credit hours.
2. The vice-chairman is the other member from the senior class.
3. The treasurer is the member from the junior class with the most credit hours.
4. The secretary is the member from the sophomore class with the most credit hours.

Duties: The senior members handle coordination with faculty and provide for the necessary transportation for all activities. The junior members handle publicity. This includes notification to the students of all work projects and miscellaneous publicity, newspaper articles, etc. The sophomores maintain and issue tools for all work projects. Freshmen make provision for food and water whenever required for working parties.

Although elementary, these duties are essential and necessary. Further provision is made for these committee members to organize their own sub-committees to assist them in handling their responsibilities. As an example, students experienced in care of tools, sharpening of axes and saws, etc., have an opportunity to benefit the school forest with their training. Likewise, students interested in problems of publicity may obtain experience by working on the publicity sub-committee.

Nineteen Forty-eight
A The Host State Forest Advisory Committee with Offices.
B Duties of Committee Members.
C Work Project Responsibilities.
D Sub-committees Headed by Members of the Forestry Club.

Ames Forester Staff Photo


Standing: Richard L. Posekany, William T. Plass, Paul F. Hoffman, Jr.,
Albert H. Taube, Howard S. Lovestead, Oliver F. Sapousek.

Not in picture: Charles C. Barnes.
**Work Project Responsibilities:** Probably second in importance only to the article in the constitution of this organization for the selection of members, is the provision for the division of work project responsibilities. Divided into four general groups, the following class members take as their responsibility, in order of their importance, management and research, seniors; utilization and road and trail improvement, juniors; protection and records, sophomores; recreation and buildings, freshmen.

Here, again, provision is made for a breakdown into committees and sub-committees, and committee members are authorized to appoint members of the Forestry Club to take charge of a sub-committee of a job under their work project responsibility. (See organization chart). For example, the junior member handling products will be chairman of a products committee and these members individually will be in charge of (1) woods operations—getting material out of the woods; (2) fire place wood—cutting wood into salable lengths and delivering to the consumer; (3) fencepost production—cutting and treating fenceposts and sale to the consumer.

With the war freshly over and with the use of the area acquired only shortly before that in 1940, the organization is still in knee pants. There are many steps before the compilation of a management plan. As this goes to press we are in the process of making an inventory of the area consisting of a 15 per cent cruise along with type mapping and growth studies. Later, aerial photographs will be used to complete and compile our results.

Planting, as a part of management, will take an important place in the spring activities of the forest. Last spring an area of 10 acres was planted with white pine, red pine, Virginia pine, blue spruce, Douglas fir, green ash and red oak. One hundred forestry students participated in the day's work which was a successful undertaking. In this job, the value of the division of the duties proved itself. Transportation was a problem, since some students had classes and all were not able to go out at the same time. Tools and food had to be secured for the 100 men. Publicity was very necessary. However, working individually on these problems, the advisory committee members coordinated to carry the operation to completion.

The purposes of this particular planting operation will be (1) reforestation, (2) experimentation on three soil groups, (3) demonstration of windbreaks and coniferous plantations in Iowa and (4) the future realization of products.

Some work has already been completed on road improvement and the construction and repair of the boundary fence has been
started, along with studies of an applicable fire prevention plan consisting of fire lanes and cooperation with nearby farmers. We also have four cords of fireplace wood out of the woods but not ready, as yet, for sale. The development of recreational areas will be taken into consideration by our freshmen this winter.

Since the area is state land, all business and financial transactions must be handled through the Iowa Conservation Commission and all profits returned to the Commission. At first, this might appear as a disadvantage, but, at the same time, appropriations for state forests in Iowa have been made available for the purchase of necessary tools, equipment and supplies to maintain and improve the area. This gives the Holst Committee and students an especially advantageous position and substantial financial backing that otherwise would be difficult to obtain.

The state has also made available to us space in the State Nursery in Ames as an operating headquarters for distribution of products and the maintenance and storage of equipment.

With the time of transportation to and from the area, with working time limited to week-ends, and with many of the students in Saturday classes, we have a definite problem of production and working time. However, forestry students at Iowa State College are making use of the new opportunity of practicing multiple-use forestry on a small forest in their own back yard.