Instructor of the Year

George W. Thomson Ph.D.

Iowa State University

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Material harvested can be sawed for building purposes in the area, firewood and or rustic fences. More valuable trees like black walnut, could be sold for veneer and lumber, thus generating money for park development.

c. Impact of Large Reservoirs: Much of Iowa's forest land, potentially valuable for outdoor recreation, is found in the river valleys. Large reservoirs greatly reduce this valuable resource as forests are replaced by water. Outdoor recreation opportunities dependent on a forest environment are exchanged for water recreation opportunities. These trade-offs need to be more critically evaluated in states like Iowa where forested areas are in quite limited supply. Reforestation of areas to regain and restore the forest environment for outdoor recreation opportunities is a costly and time consuming process.

Americans today are more independent economically, better educated, and have more leisure time than any previous generation. Most people are searching for their version of the "good life". For many this desire focuses on a greater demand for improved physical surroundings, a healthier environment, and a greater sense of community involvement.

In Iowa properly located and developed recreation areas, open space, and natural areas can contribute immeasurably to the goal of a better life for all citizens, urban or rural. Iowa's municipal leaders are now recognizing the value of green belts and open spaces to counter their "asphalt jungle" image. Throughout the state areas are being acquired and developed for enjoyment by all citizens. Continued emphasis on efforts to develop parks for urban dwellers is expected through state, county and municipal programs.

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At the General Faculty Meeting on February 24, 1972, Dr. George Thomson received a $500 award and plaque sponsored by the Standard Oil Foundation naming him the top teacher in the College of Agriculture for 1971-72.

Dr. Thomson graduated in Forestry from Iowa State University in 1943. After military service in World War II he returned to Iowa State University to earn his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees. While a graduate student and instructor he was recognized as an unusually good teacher and was encouraged to remain on the faculty. At the time he received his Ph.D. in 1956 he was promoted to associate professor, and in 1960 was promoted to the rank of professor.

There has been no professor in the College of Agriculture who has carried on heavier teaching load than George Thomson, but he has enjoyed working with his many students. His good sense of humor and good natured philosophy make his courses exciting as well as challenging and educational. His set of values has had a strong and favorable influence on Forestry students over the last twenty-five years. Dr. Thomson was honored recently by being selected as one of five outstanding faculty advisers in the College of Agriculture. In 1960 he was named the Agriculture Professor of the year.

He has served on many committees and, in particular, has distinguished himself in his work as Chairman of the Honors Program Committee for the College of Agriculture and as President of the local chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta, the Honor Society of Agriculture.