1-1-1972

Holst State Forest

Ames Forestry Club

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The Holst State Forest is a 330 acre forest deeded to the Iowa Conservation Commission in 1939 by Mr. B. P. Holst, Sr., a prominent Boone businessman. In 1940 the Forestry Department at Iowa State accepted the responsibility of managing the forest as a demonstration forest for research and recreation. In 1947 the management was turned over to the Forestry Club where students could implement creative management ideas and gain practical forest management experience. Since then management and student activity has been sporadic and during the 1960's the forest has generally been neglected.

Students are again recognizing the potential value of this area and during the past few years a number of them have taken a strong leadership role in getting work projects initiated and bringing the area under more intensive management. Students most instrumental in this have been—Pat Pisarik, Bradley Upfield, Mike Bondi, Tim Glover, and Duane Klemp.

During the past year two red pine plantations were thinned from 180 and 160 BA-acre to 120 and 100 BA-acre. The trees removed in the thinning operation were sold to the Episcopal Church Camp where they were used to build a log cabin. Much of the tops and branches were collected and sold for greenery during the Club's Christmas tree sale.

Some recreational projects were also undertaken. A self directed nature trail was designed through the conifer plantings to assist forest visitors with identification and characteristics of these plantings. A toboggan trail was designed and will be used for winter outings. Some of the forest boundaries were relocated and an inventory of all plant communities, both timber and herbaceous materials is planned for the coming year.
Perhaps the most unusual project was the building of a large fireplace on the supply cabin to replace a continually vandalized sliding door. Gary Dykstra, instructor, and Ken Smith, graduate student, were primarily responsible for the fireplace construction. Graduate students, Tom Hennessey and Paul Wray, also helped with the project. The Conservation Commission also rebuilt the road to the cabin making it suitable for all-weather travel. These two projects will provide better access and will greatly improve the area’s potential for student work and recreational outings.

Building the fireplace in the snow?
Hmmm... Wonder what they’ll do when they’re done?

A Bear: .... In Iowa?!