

FOREST AND SHELTERBELT PLANTING IN THE UNITED STATES  
DURING 1953

Acres planted, 1953 and previously

Forest and shelterbelt planting during the fiscal year 1953 (July 1, 1952, through June 30, 1953), as reported by State Foresters and other agencies, amounted to 715,548 acres. This figure is remarkable for two reasons—first because it is a new record, and second, because it represents the highest increase for one year. It is almost 193,000 acres—37 percent—greater than the acreage planted in 1952, previously the record year.

When the components of this new record are considered separately, many reasons can be found for either "pointing with pride" or "viewing with alarm\*" The record area planted and the spectacular rate of increase, especially in eight States, are impressive facts, but the counterbalancing fact is that more than half of all the States show no increases or are even reducing their private- and State-land planting programs. Many States have programs pitifully small in relation to the areas needing windbreaks or reforestation. The current annual rate of planting, after allowance for planting failures, harvesting of planted Christmas trees, etc., is still less than 1 percent of the total area to be covered.

1953 accomplishments by ownership classes are as follows:

The Federal Government planted 77, 612 acres of land in its custody, an increase of 23,800 acres— 44 percent—over 1952. About half of this increase came from planting by the Atomic Energy Commission in South Carolina—a newcomer to Federal agencies—and the remainder from reforestation on Department of Defense reservations, National Forests, Bureau of Land Management lands, etc.

The States and other non-Federal public agencies planted 63,791 acres in 1953, almost the same as in 1952.

Private landowners planted 574,145 acres, an increase in private land planting of about 168,000 acres—41 percent—above 1952.

Eight States reported remarkable increases in rates of private land planting. These were Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin. They planted 152,000 more acres of private land than were planted the year before.

Fourteen other States recorded definite, but much smaller, rates of increase. These States increased their private land plantings 22,000 acres.

Twenty-two States did not vary their plantings by as much as 200 acres.

Six States decreased their plantings about 6,000 acres.

About four-fifths of the nation's reforestation job is on privately owned land. To increase tree planting on this land is the principal objective of the various governmental agencies, civic organizations, and countless private citizens. As a result of their efforts some States have increased their planting programs several fold over those of pre 1942 days. For example, in 1940 and 1941 only Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee reported private land planting in excess of 15,000 acres a year. The largest of these was in Georgia where 30,600 acres had been planted in 1940. By contrast, in 1953 twelve States reported planting 15,000 acres or more. Louisiana led with 77,000 acres and the other eleven were Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, New York, Michigan, Arkansas, South Carolina, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Ohio. The landowners of these twelve States planted 447,000 acres in 1953. Of these twelve leaders, the top four are worthy of special mention since each planted more than 57,000 acres. Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi set these new records.

Reforestation of public lands is, of course, entirely dependent upon the wishes of the public, as expressed through the appropriations made by their Congress, State Legislatures, county boards, city councils and so on. The figures show a great decrease in the interest of these bodies for this type of public work\* In the prewar years 1938-41, 1,034,000 acres of publicly owned land were planted, but during the recent 4 years 1950-53 only 453,000 acres were planted. This is a decrease of 56 percent. Some recently collected data indicate that about 12 million acres of public land need planting. Thus the present rate of progress is less than 1 percent annually, even without allowance for failures or harvestings.

A notable "first" in reforestation history was reached in Michigan in 1953 where 40,000 acres were planted on all types of holdings, making it the first State to have more than one million acres of plantations. Eleven percent of the nationwide plantings reported are in Michigan\* They consist of 548,000 acres of Federal plantations, 314,000 acres of State and other public plantings, and 153,000 acres of private land planting. No other State has even half as extensive Federal plantations.

The State ranking second in total plantations is New York with 886,000 acres, 10 percent of the nation's total. At its present rate it will have planted a million acres in 4 years. New York has more than half a million acres of "other public" plantations—almost a third of the national total in this class. It also has 375,000 acres of private-land plantations. Only Georgia has more private-land plantings.

#### Nurseries—numbers, operators, and outputs

A tabulation of the forest tree nursery facilities of the nation in 1953 follows:

Agency or Owner	Active nurseries	Actual or estimated output of trees
U. S. Forest Service	12	8 1, 2 11 M
Soil Conservation Service	12	22,070 M
Tennessee Valley Authority	2	26,282 M
State Foresters or similar	89	435, 736 M
Cities and counties	2	260 M
Soil Conservation Districts	4	4, 385 M
Paper industries	10	50, 061 M
Lumber industries	5	1 0, 467 M
Private commercial	35	50, 000 M

See Table 5 in this report for additional details.

As this report is being written, the U. S. Soil Conservation Service is discontinuing the administration of its 25 nurseries, 12 of which produced tree-planting stock in 1953. The administration of all 25 nurseries is being transferred to a State, or other public agency. The SCS will continue financial cooperation in some but not all. In the event that no State or public agency assumes future administration of any particular nursery its planting stock and equipment will be transferred to one of the other nurseries and the land leased or otherwise disposed of.

Expansion of output by the State nurseries continues\* In 1953, 89 active State nurseries produced almost 436,000 M plants. One additional nursery is currently inactive, three are being built, and a number are being enlarged. An output of 475,000 M trees in 1954 seems reasonable to expect, plus additional stock from the SCS nurseries taken over by the States.

An astonishing expansion of output occurred in 1953 at the nurseries operated by forest companies to produce stock for planting on their holdings and associated lands. Six new nurseries came into production in 1953, and the total output increased from 9,600 M to 60,528 M. The establishment of two additional nurseries is expected in 1954.

#### Cooperative distribution of planting stock by the States (the C-M 4 program)

Most of the planting stock distributed by the States is handled under the Federal-State cooperative program set up by Section 4 of the Clarke-McNary Law of 1924\* Under this program the landowner gets trees at nominal cost, or free in a few States under certain conditions. They are produced and shipped by employees of the State in which they are to be planted. The landowner deals entirely with the State agency, and often is unaware of the Federal Government's part in the program. The Federal Government furnishes some of the money to encourage State participation and makes inspections and audits.

Under this program neither the Federal nor the State Governments do any planting of the trees, nor do they offer any financial aid for doing so: the program is limited to furnishing trees at nominal prices.

The source and price of the trees, the conditions under which they are available, and related matters are controlled by each State to fit the locality. The only restriction imposed by the Federal Government is that the trees be used for forest and shelterbelt planting, and not for ornamental purposes\* Some States impose their own restriction, such as not allowing this stock to be used for Christmas tree plantations intended for clear-cut harvestings, or not providing this stock for planting on land so valuable for other uses that its indefinite use as forest land seems improbable.

At this time 43 States, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico are cooperating under the program. The cooperative agreements with 35 of these date back to 1925-27, the other 10 having come into the program since then—Rhode Island being the most recent (July 1951). Four States operate no nurseries but purchase their stock from commercial or Federal nurseries. The quantities distributed in each State and the prices charged the tree planters are given in table 5.

#### Reforestation by direct seeding

The following tables include the acreage planted by direct seeding. Details are given in footnotes to the tables. Oregon, especially active in this work, can show considerable success in places where such factors as advance pre-

paration, seeding rates, species-site relationships, and climate were effectually correlated. Research and large-scale field trials by many agencies and private companies continue, Successful methods of direct seeding are earnestly sought since vast areas exist, chiefly in the western mountains, on which hand planting is so costly that restoration is currently impractical\*



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