

Branch of Forestry

10-23
(May 1929)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Oregon ~~cases~~ NATIONAL ~~PARK~~ *Mon.* *Date April 11, 1940*

FILE NO. 602 - OC

FIELD REPORT OF COMMITTEE

PROPOSED PORT ORFORD CEDAR NATIONAL MONUMENT

APRIL - 1940

IMPORTANT

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Branch of Forestry

ARNO B. CAMMERER,
Director.



Measuring the largest Port Orford Cedar on the investigational trip. This tree, near the South Fork of Coquille River, is in the Squaw Basin Area (#12). Its diameter is 83 inches at the point being measured.

Oregon Caves N.M.
April 11, 1940

Memorandum for the Regional Director, Region IV:

Pursuant to instructions of the Director and the Regional Director, your Committee has inspected several of the areas of Fort Orford Cedar which received the highest consideration in the preliminary report of such areas by Associate Forester Jack B. Dodd. The following areas were visited:

- Area #12 Squaw Basin and vicinity;
- Area #3 Euchre Creek;
- Portions of the Coos Bay Lumber Company tract (Area #14) visible from the logging railroad and the highway along the Middle Fork of the Coquille River;
- Area #8 Big Creek;
- Area #13 China Flat; and portions of the Sixes River Drainage.

Also an unsuccessful attempt was made to visit Area #1 Hunter Creek. In addition the Committee inspected the several Fort Orford Cedar areas adjacent to the Oregon Caves National Monument, acting on the suggestion of Chief Forester Walter Horning of the Oregon and California Re-vested Lands Administration of the General Land Office.

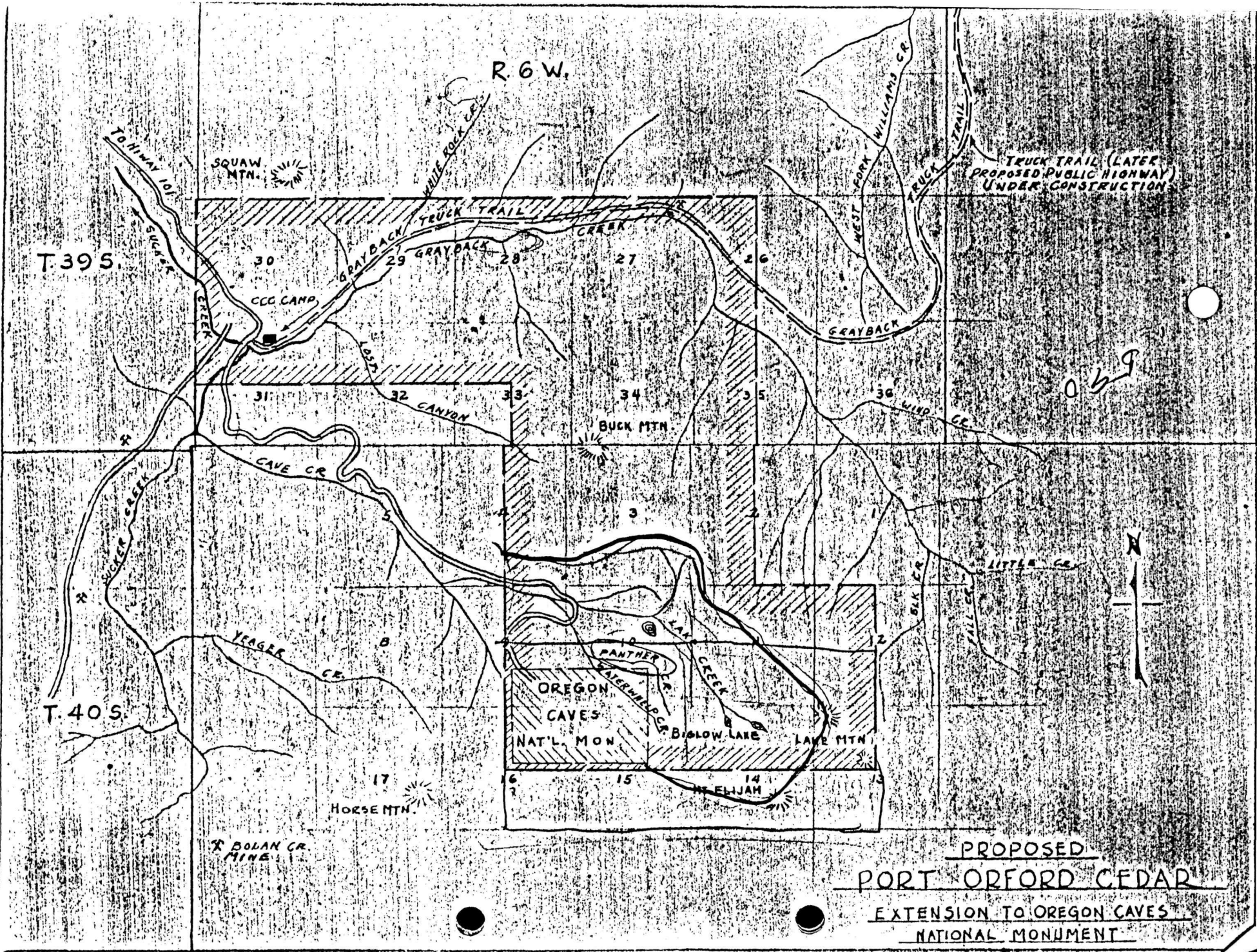
On Lands of the Forest Service the following officials of that Service participated in the study: F. V. Norton, Assistant Regional Forester in Charge of Lands and Recreation, Region VI; Don Matthews, Associate Silviculturist, Pacific Northwest Forest Experiment Station; Edward P. Cliff, Supervisor, Siskiyou National Forest; and District Ranger Harold R. Dowman, Siskiyou National Forest.

On Lands of the O & C Administration the Committee was assisted by Assistant Forester N. O. Nicholson and District Rangers Slattery and Kruger.

During the inspection of the Lands of the Coos Bay Lumber Company the Committee was accompanied by J. W. Forester, Manager for Oregon; Rube Day, Timber Superintendent; and Victor Torrey, Logging Superintendent.

In the Oregon Caves area the Committee was assisted also by John Ulrich, Project Superintendent, Oregon Caves CCC Camp; and Dick Rowley, Guide, Oregon Caves National Monument.

Chief of Forestry, J. D. Coffman, accompanied the Committee in investigations of the first four areas listed above; then was obliged to depart to keep previous engagements.



The selection of a natural area of Port Orford Cedar that is suitable for preservation as an example is by no means a simple or easy task. The forests in which this species was the dominant tree are no longer in existence, and today even the areas that contain a stand of 20 per cent or more are few and small. Furthermore, range of the species from sea level to altitudes above 4000 feet includes a corresponding range in the associated species of trees and undergrowth and also a wide variation in topographic and scenic features, accessibility, and suitability for possible recreational development. Considering all of these variables, together with availability of the cedar areas and the condition of the adjoining lands, it is obvious that the selection of one particular area as distinctly the best for the purpose, becomes an exceedingly difficult undertaking.

In our opinion, however, the possibilities for a National Monument from the areas thus far visited narrows down to two tracts; namely:

- (1) An extension to Oregon Caves National Monument, and
- (2) the Squaw Basin Area and Vicinity [12].

Our judgment is based upon consideration of the Port Orford Cedar stand, scenic value, availability, accessibility, recreational possibilities, ease of administration and protection.

1. Extension to Oregon Caves National Monument

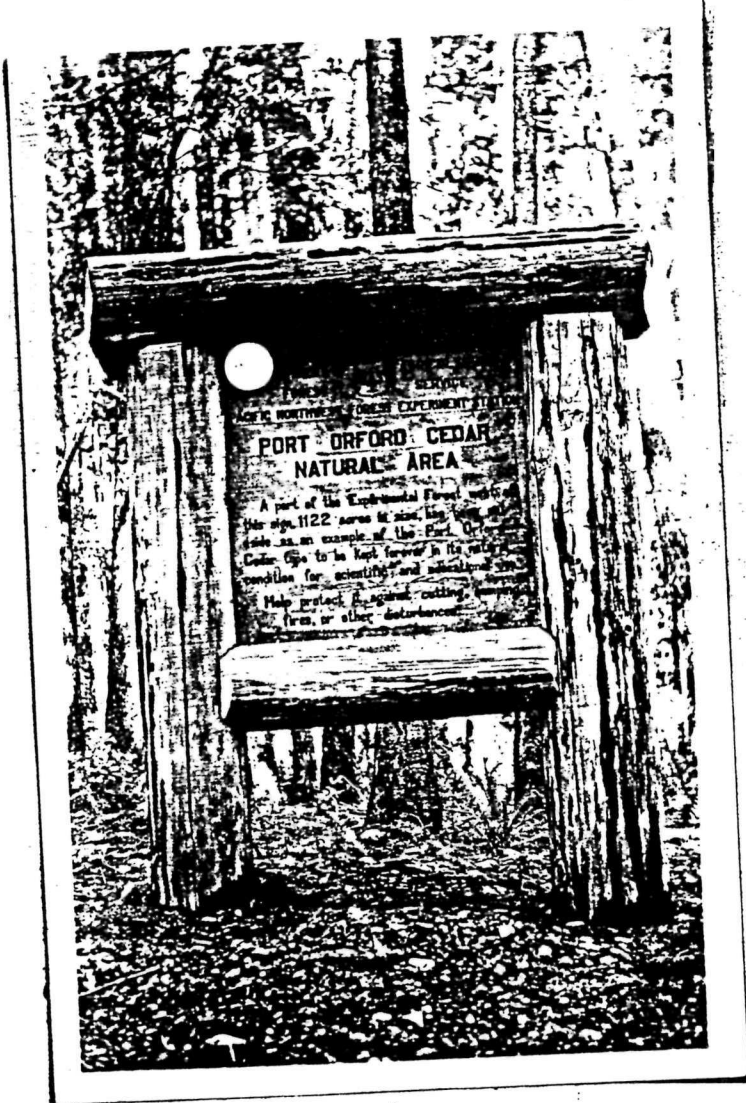
If it is possible to acquire certain necessary sections of land, we believe the most practical solution is an extension of the boundaries of the Oregon Caves National Monument which would include roughly the following:

In Township 39 South, Range 6 West, W. M.

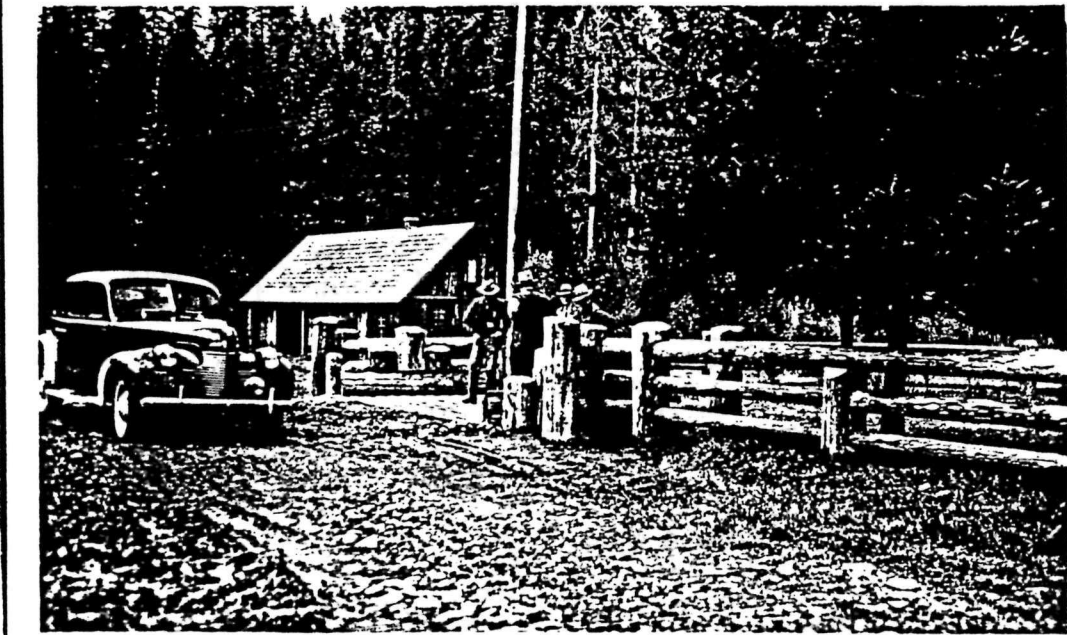
West $\frac{1}{2}$ Section 26; Sections 27, 28, 29, and 30; the North $\frac{1}{2}$ Section 31; the North $\frac{1}{2}$ Section 32; the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ and East $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 33; Section 34; and the West $\frac{1}{2}$ Section 35.

In Township 40 South, Range 6 West, W. M.

West $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 2; Section 3; East $\frac{1}{2}$ Section 4; all of the East $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 9 not now in the National Monument; all of Section 10 not now in the Monument; Section 11; the West $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 12; the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 13; the North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 14; all of the North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 15 not now in the Monument; and all of the Northeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 16 not now in the Monument.



Sign where road enters
Forest Service "Port
Orford Cedar Experimental
Forest". (The Exp. Forest
is some 8000 acres in area).



Gateway cedar fence, and one of the
buildings at headquarters area,
Experimental Forest.

R. 12 W.

R. 11 W.

T. 32 S.

T. 33 S.

SOUTH FORK COQUILLE RIVER

TO COQUILLE

EXISTING TR. RD. TO BOEN VALLEY

FOREST SERVICE
PORT ORFORD CEDAR
NATIONAL AREA

FOREST SERVICE
PORT ORFORD CEDAR
EXPERIMENTAL FOREST

PROPOSED
PORT ORFORD CEDAR

SQUAW CREEK
BASIN AREA

MUD LAKE

FISH CABIN FOREST CAMP

▲ DAPHNE GROVE FOREST CAMP

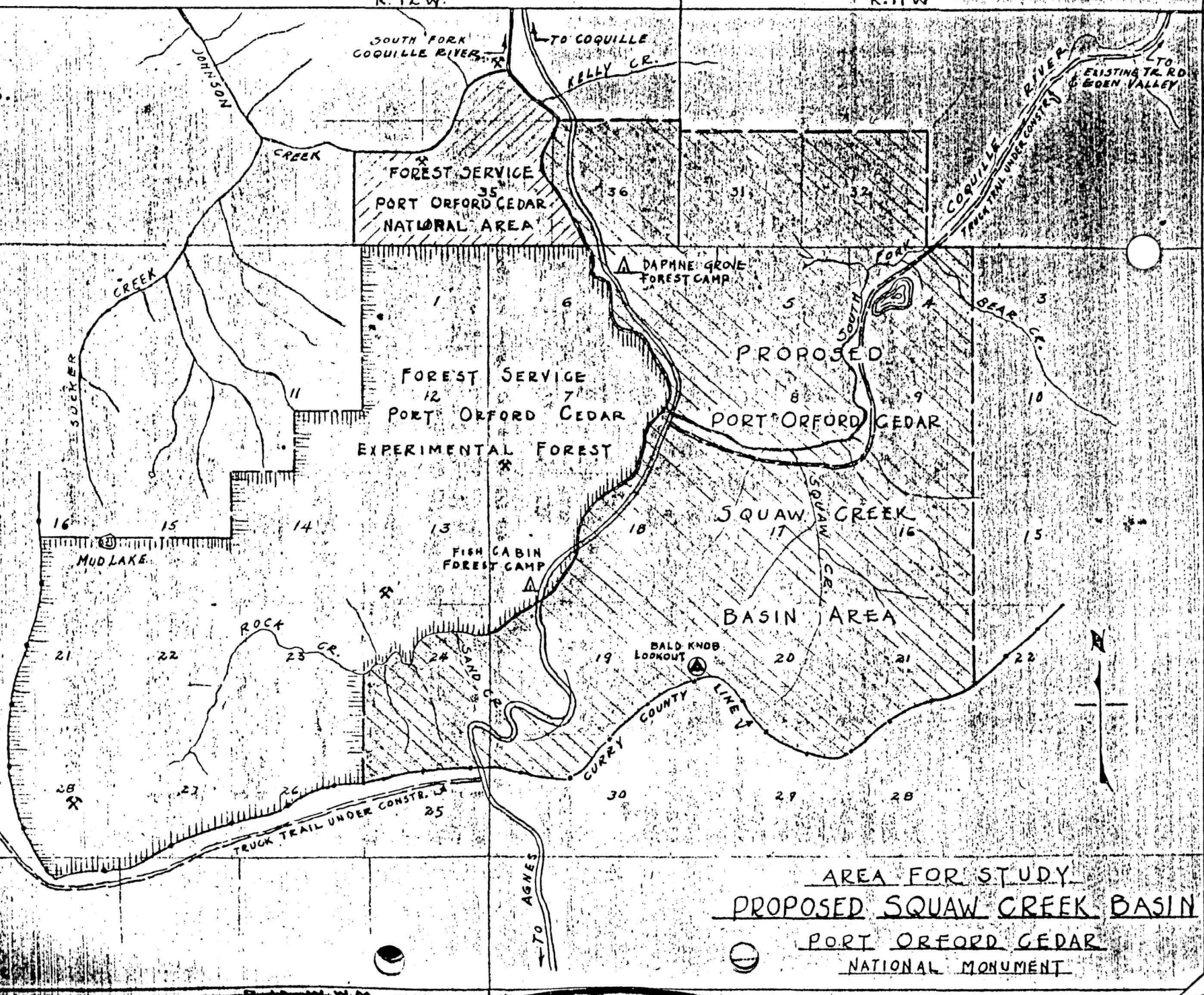
▲ BALD KNOB LOOKOUT

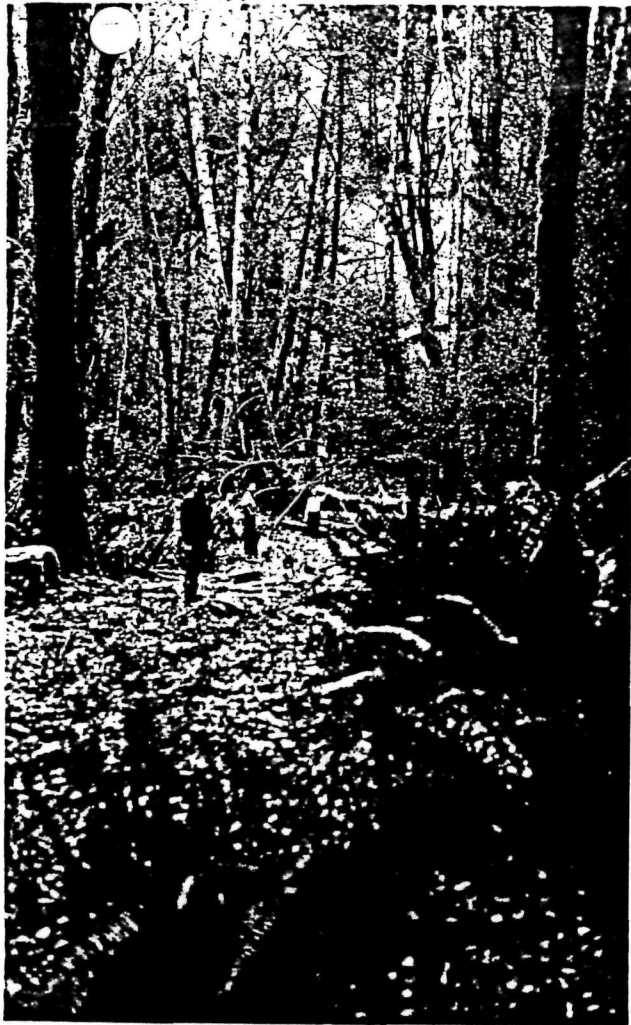
IRON MTN. LOOKOUT

TRUCK TRAIL UNDER CONSTR.

TO AGNES

AREA FOR STUDY
PROPOSED SQUAW CREEK BASIN
○ PORT ORFORD CEDAR
NATIONAL MONUMENT





Old logging road
by which cedar logs
were taken out of
lands near Big Creek
(#8) Area.



Bridge across South Fork of Coquille River
Forest Service Road, within Squaw Basin
(#12) Area. Foot of trail to Squaw Creek etc.

In Township 32 South, Range 11 West:
Sections 31 and 32.

In Township 33 South, Range 11 West:
Sections 4, 5, 8, 9, 16, 17, and portions of 20,
21, 28, 29 and 30 north of the Coos-Curry County Line;
portions of Sections 6, 7, 18, 19, lying east of the
Port Orford Cedar Experimental Forest.

In Township 34 South, Range 12 East:
Portion of Sec. 24 lying South and East of Ex-
perimental Forest, and portion of Section 25 lying north
of the Coos-Curry County Line.

From accompanying maps it will be noted this area, together with the Forest Service Port Orford Cedar Experimental Forest, will form quite an extensive tract wherein Port Orford cedar will be protected, with the exception of experimental forestry logging work by the Forest Service in its area. A portion of the Forest Service Experimental Forest, consisting of 1,122 acres, has been set aside as a Natural Area for complete protection and preservation in its primitive condition.

The scenic qualities of the area outlined above (Squaw Basin Area #12) are better than in any other area that we have seen. Recreational possibilities are excellent, and the area is accessible over gravelled County and Forest Service roads which are travelable in all seasons, except in occasional winter snows. A truck trail now under construction (see map) up the South Fork of the Coquille River from the present road up that stream will connect with an existing truck trail from the east which ends at the head of this drainage 42 miles from the town of Glendale on Highway #97. This road will give a connection with Highways #97 and #101.

There are suitable locations for the administrative headquarters which would be necessary for the management of this area.

Wildlife

The Oregon Caves Addition lies entirely within the established game refuge, and the wild life inhabiting the additional area probably does not differ from that now found in the National Monument. Fishing is said to be excellent in several streams in this addition.

The Squaw Basin Area would be entirely surrounded by National Forest land on which hunting is permitted in season. The area proposed is too small to serve as an independent game refuge, but would act to some extent as a sanctuary for wild life. The animals in this area are typical coast range mammals. Fishing is considered good in the area during the early part of the fishing season.

Engineering

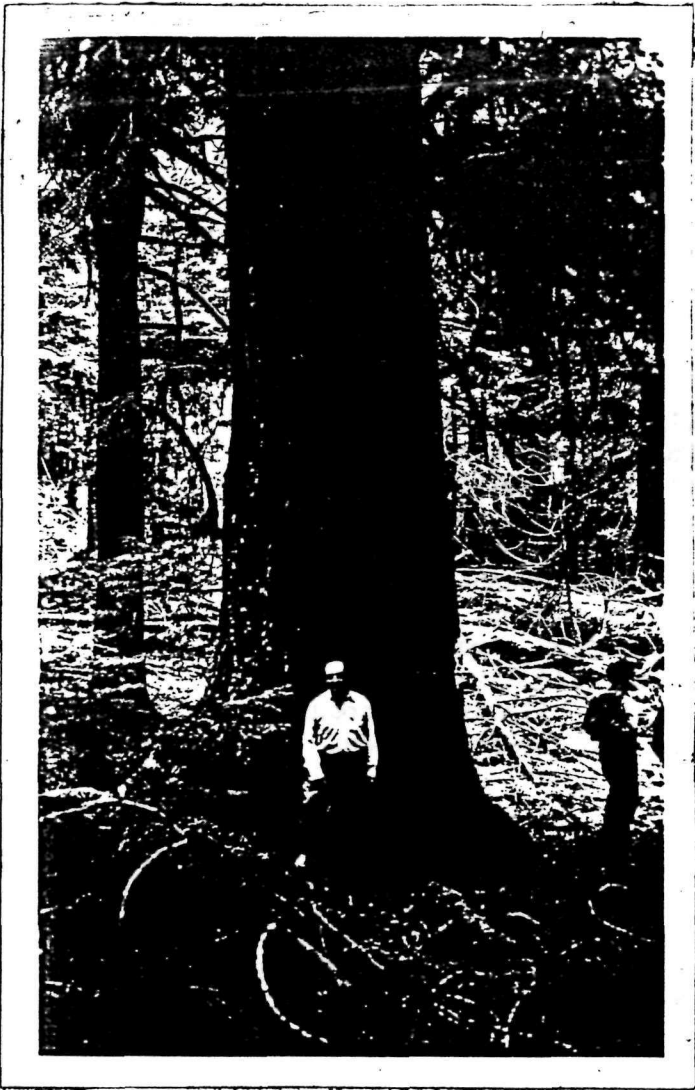
No engineering problems are apparent that cannot be solved with reasonable expenditures. Water supply should be adequate as several streams are included in both areas.

History

We know of nothing of historical significance in either area.

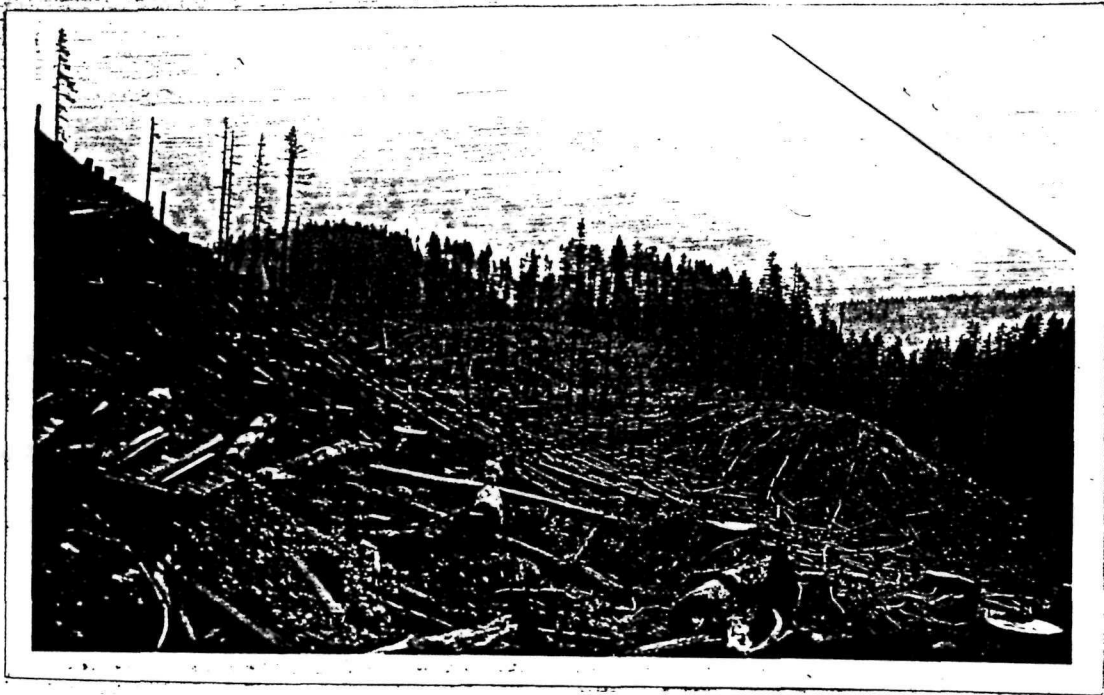
Geology and Mining

The region about Oregon Caves is typical of the whole range of the Siskiyou Mountains. It is composed of metamorphic rocks, both igneous and sedimentary in origin, which have been intruded by granite similar to that of the Sierra Nevada. Earth movements in the mountain-making epochs caused widespread crushing, shearing, and faulting of the rocks, and the cracks have been filled with innumerable small quartz veins, some of which contain gold. The weathering and crumbling of the rocks and veins has supplied the gold to the sands and gravels of the streams, and these have been the objects of placer mining and prospecting over wide areas.



Two views of the best cedar type forest in the Forest Service "Natural Area". There is a small percentage of Port Orford Cedar even in this area. N.P.S. Forester Coffman stands in front of the largest tree seen in the "Natural Area". (Tree approximately 78" diameter.)





Two views of Coos Bay Lumber Co. properties. Logging is rapidly proceeding. Note that the logs remaining on the ground are entirely waste. The profitable logs have been removed. This is old style logging practice which is still the rule in virgin Oregon forests. Logging railway provides transportation to mill; trucks are often used to bring logs to rail. These pictures show "high-line" logging.

Through the years placer operations have been undertaken from time to time on nearly every creek and river in the region. Signs of the old workings may be seen in the irregularly piled gravels in many places, as on the lower reaches of Cave Creek and along Sucker Creek, to which it is tributary. Some of the larger placer deposits are still worked, but so far as known none has been active for many years in the area under consideration.

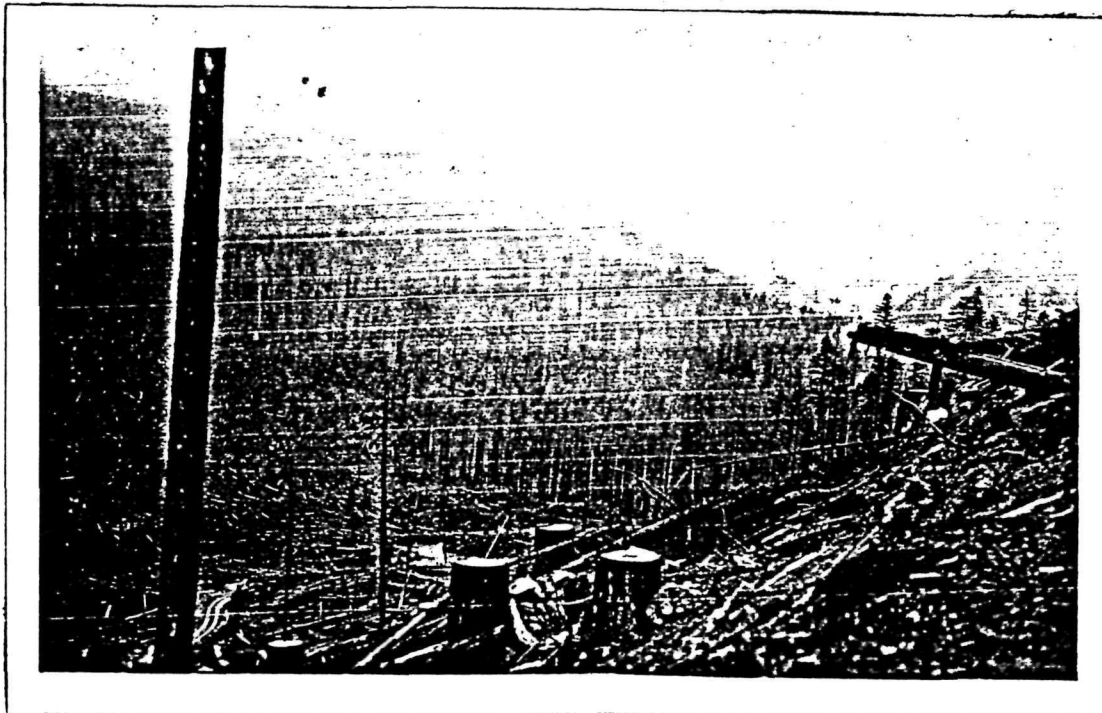
Prospectors have searched throughout the region also for workable vein deposits, but few have been found that are either large enough or rich enough to support even small-scale mining. Evidence of such prospecting in recent years was seen at three places on the slopes north of Grayback Creek; but no effort had been made to mine the small, irregular veins, and so far as known none has been mined in or near the areas of Fort Orford Cedar here recommended.

In the general area about Squaw Basin the lower course of Rock Creek and the South Fork of Coquille River, below the mouth of Rock Creek, mark the boundary between the Fort Orford Cedar Experimental Forest and the cedar areas lying eastward that have been inspected by the Committee and suggested as a possible Fort Orford Cedar National Monument. This line also marks a geological boundary. The Experimental Forest to the west lies on a ridge of metamorphic rocks that are threaded with a network of little veins. In geology and mineralization this area is comparable to that about Oregon Caves, described above. The weathering and erosion of the rocks and veins has likewise supplied gold to the creeks that drain these slopes and to the South Fork of Coquille River into which they flow. Placer mining has been undertaken here and there along these streams, and some gravel bars are still worked from time to time.

East of the Experimental Forest, the cedar forests of Squaw Basin and adjacent areas, which have been recommended as an alternative to the Oregon Caves area, are underlain by unaltered sedimentary formations of sandstone and shale, which are not mineralized and which cover to an unknown depth the older metamorphic rocks and make their mineral deposits inaccessible. So far as known, therefore, no question of mining and prospecting can arise in this area, except in the sands and gravels along the streams at the western boundary.



Two views of Coos Bay Lumber Company lands proposed for sale to Park Service. While there is Port Orford Cedar along the lower portion of the valleys, none grows in these hillside areas which are rapidly being logged. Note truck roads which deliver logs to the railway. Some of these truck roads have no connection to outside highways.



Forestry

The forest stand of the Squaw Basin Area and that found in the proposed extension of the Oregon Caves National Monument differ somewhat in composition. In the first named area the Port Orford Cedar is found lying in stringers along the creek bottoms, and in the second area it is found in similar sites but also scattered on the side hills. In both areas Douglas Fir is the main associated tree species, but in the Oregon Caves area more of a tree mixture is found. Here one can see Sugar Pine, Western Red Cedar, Ponderosa Pine, true firs, Madrone, Tan Bark Oak, and Chinquapin growing with the Port Orford Cedar. Some of the same species are also found in the Squaw Basin Area, but usually near the ridge tops. In both areas are found Salal, Huckleberry, Rhododendron, and Saddle Oak, under the tree canopy. Occasional Myrtle groves are found in the Squaw Basin Area.

Other Areas:

Owing to impassable roads and long distances of trail travel, it was found impracticable to visit certain areas of cedar that may prove to be desirable. Therefore it is recommended that before a final report be prepared, the Committee make additional studies when the rainy season is over. At the present writing it is considered doubtful whether other prospective areas can be found which have the advantages of the two areas described above, but we believe that no opportunity should be left without investigation and careful check before submitting a final report for the Director's use. In particular, it is suggested that a careful investigation be made of the more remote portions of the Coos Bay Lumber Company holdings. The portions that could be seen during the present investigation proved to be of no particular interest. The impassable condition of the road made it impossible to visit the area on Hunter Creek (1).



Chief of Forestry
Coffman stands before
a large "Oregon Myrtle"
tree. There is some
"Myrtle (*Umbellularia
californica*) in nearly
all forest containing
Port Orford Cedar.

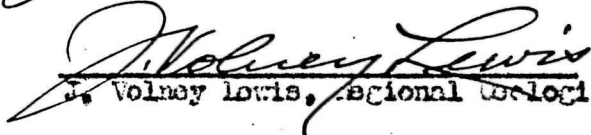


The paper is being held behind the iron pin
which marks the N.E. corner of Oregon Caves
N.H. The large tree is Port Orford, just
outside boundary.

The Committee recommends that the areas indicated be visited not earlier than mid-July, in order to insure accessibility and a reasonably safe condition of the roads.

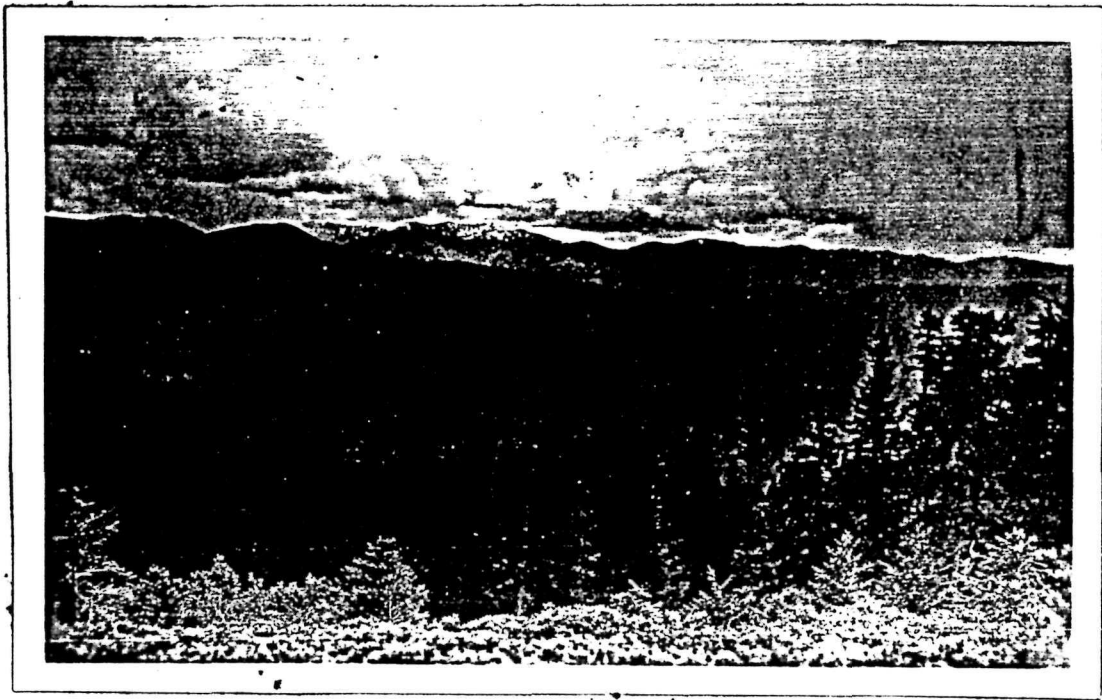
When a conclusion is reached as to the most desirable area upon which the final report is to be prepared, the Committee recommends that representatives of the Forest Service or of the O & C Administration, (or both, as may be appropriate) be invited to participate in the final study and recommendation of boundaries.


Jack B. Dodd, Associate Forester.


J. Volney Lewis, Regional Geologist


Homer L. Crowley, Engineer


Ernest A. Davidson, Chairman



View southward across Rogue River Valley from ridge which forms proposed south boundary of Squaw Basin (#12) Area. There is said to be no Port Orford Cedar in the area pictured. A truck-trail type road leads from Squaw Basin Area down into the Rogue valley, terminating at the village of Agness.