

Distributed by Causes.	
Lightning.....	4
Railroads.....	35
Lumbering.....	2
Brush burning.....	56
Campers.....	14
Incendiary.....	5
Unknown.....	52
Miscellaneous.....	6
Total number of fires.....	174

The total area burned over, including both timbered and open land, was 46,511 acres, while the damage to timber and improvements amounted to \$28,132. This data is significant, since the season was a very wet one. In spite of this fact, however, many fires were started and considerable valuable property destroyed. In order that we may be prepared for the real dry periods, which are bound to come in the near future, probably within five years, it is hoped that a well organized scheme of forest fire protection may be developed, and that individuals, corporations and other landowners organize forest fire associations and make it possible to co-operate to the fullest extent with the State throughout the wooded regions.

COÖPERATION WITH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN FIRE PROTECTION

In 1911 Congress approved an act (Weeks Law) authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to coöperate with states in the protection from fire of forested areas at the headwaters of navigable streams, and an appropriation was made available for such protection. Under the coöperative agreement, States were obligated to spend an amount equal to the allotment provided by the government. Wisconsin was one of the first states to coöperate and has received an annual allotment of \$4,500.00. Under the agreement entered into in 1916, eight federal patrolmen were appointed by the Conservation Commission for a period of six months and have been given definite districts to patrol and are under the direct supervision of the Head Ranger. During periods of no fire danger these patrolmen are employed in permanent improvement work, such as building trails, fire lanes, telephone lines, roads, etc. A close coöperation exists between the Federal Patrolmen and the State force of eight forest rangers.

PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT WORK

In the development of the forestry work some 37 buildings have been erected to shelter the ranger force at an approximate cost of \$28,600. Two forest nurseries have been established which have an output of 1,000,000 trees annually. Other improvement work includes the building of about 250 miles of roads, 140 miles of fire lanes, and 80 miles of telephone lines.

VALUE OF IMPROVEMENTS AND BUILDINGS ON THE STATE FOREST RESERVES.

37 Buildings.....	\$28,690.00
4 Steel Lookout Towers.....	547.00
86 Miles Telephone Lines.....	3,151.00
<i>Trout Lake Nursery.</i> (Land improvements, water system with power engine, fencing, nursery frames, etc.).....	4,700.00
<i>Tomahawk Lake Nursery.</i> (Land improvements, water system with power engine, fencing, nursery frames, etc.).....	2,600.00
Nursery Stock (Trout Lake).....	9,385.00
Nursery Stock (Tomahawk Lake).....	1,983.00
Implements, tools, wagons, boats, speeders, furnishings for headquarters building, men's cabins, camp equipment for field work....	4,100.00
Total.....	\$55,156.00

During the fiscal year ending June 1, 1916, the forest rangers have carried on the general lines of improvement work of keeping open the fire lanes, repair of old roads, trails and telephone lines; the protection of the fish and game within their respective districts, thereby coöperating with the conservation wardens, which not only prevents duplication of work, but also makes for efficiency in both branches of the service.

The organization of the forest fire protective force is given in the appendix to the report and sets forth in detail the duties of the rangers in fire protection.

STATE PARKS.

The first State Park in Wisconsin was established by the legislature of 1878. All state land owned by the state in twenty-three townships in Iron and Vilas counties, some 50,000 acres, was set aside with the express provision that "no authority should be given to anyone to cut down or destroy any timber on such lands." For nineteen years this land was held intact. In 1897 the legislature placed the land on the market, and about 32,000 acres were sold. It is of interest to note that most of this same land, which was sold for approximately \$8.00 per acre, was later repurchased by the state for a forest reserve at about one-third of the original price, but with the timber cut. In 1895 a law was passed authorizing the Governor to arrange to acquire 250 acres in what is now known as the Interstate Park, and he was authorized to appoint three Commissioners to examine the land and determine the values. In 1899 the legislature appropriated \$6500.00 for the purchase of the lands, and the remainder from the purchase to be available for the general purpose and care of the park.

The first actual purchase of land for park purposes did not take place until 1901. The state has spent \$291,571.23 for the purchase of lands for state parks, as may be seen from the following tabulated statement: