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TRANSACTIONS WESTERN SECTION THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY 22:20-21

Weyerhaeuser Company owns and manages 5.8 million acres of timberlands in the United States. These timberlands are located in Washington, Oregon, California, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, and North Carolina and represent a wide diversity of wildlife habitats and silvicultural opportunities. Wildlife studies involving white-tailed deer, eastern turkey, red-cockaded woodpeckers, mule deer, elk, anadromous fish, bald eagles, and golden eagles have been successfully implemented into management plans and operations. Livestock grazing has been managed with varying degrees of silvicultural success in eastern Oregon, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.

Following is a brief review of a portion of the research and operational activities associated with livestock grazing and wildlife as managed under a variety of silvicultural systems.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT - EASTERN OREGON

Livestock are managed through a grazing lease system that regulates numbers, length of season, livestock placement and distribution. As the result of an extensive study a livestock management program was developed on Weyerhaeuser timberlands that coordinates with grazing practices of the BLM and U.S. Forest Service. The management emphasis is centered on: (1) early turnout directly onto pine plantations, (2) heavy use of plantation transitory forage, (3) deferred use of major riparian areas and meadows, and (4) riding and water development to maintain livestock distribution and herd control.

Using this program foresters benefit from pine plantation grazing in terms of fire protection and reduced plant competition. Livestock owners benefit from additional stock numbers and higher individual calf weight gains, and wildlife benefits from fawning area deferment, summer forage enhancement, and riparian area protection.

BALD EAGLES - EASTERN OREGON

Cooperative studies with Oregon State University have been ongoing for the past several years on the nesting habits and site selection, feeding patterns, responses to pesticides, and home range use by bald eagles. Additionally, individual nest areas are preserved and enhanced by

selectively thinning the local timber stands through partial cutting techniques and harvest timing. Nest success is monitored every year for chick production. A multitude of data has been accumulated and analyzed by Weyerhaeuser game biologists for additional habitat management purposes. Cooperative management activities with Oregon Department of Fish and Game involve road closures in areas of high nest concentrations, as well as area closures near the Bear Valley National Eagle Roost.

WHITE-TAILED DEER - OKLAHOMA AND ARKANSAS

In Oklahoma and Arkansas, cooperative studies with Oklahoma State University and the University of Arkansas involving white-tailed deer and cattle interactions have been underway for several years. Additionally, Weyerhaeuser is working with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission in establishing a population census for deer. Impacts in relation to livestock occurrence are also being studied.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT - OKLAHOMA AND ARKANSAS

Livestock historically have used Weyerhaeuser timberland in these two states for seasonal and year-long grazing. Approximately 10 years ago an allotment license system was developed to manage the livestock numbers and distribution. Loblolly pine tree seedling survival, as well as wildlife species such as white-tailed deer, eastern turkey, and bob white quail have benefited from this approach. Cooperative wildlife management areas have been established and interactions of wildlife and livestock with current silvicultural practices are being monitored.

WILD TURKEYS - MISSISSIPPI, ALABAMA AND ARKANSAS

Cooperative research with the University of Arkansas over the past four years has resulted in a wealth of knowledge about eastern turkeys concerning habitat use and selection, home range area, and forest management impacts. New studies concerning forest mid-rotation management activities (thinning and burning) and turkey population performance have been started in Mississippi with Mississippi

State University.

WILD TURKEYS - EASTERN OREGON

Cooperative work with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife pursuant to the release and establishment of Merriam's turkeys near Silver Lake, Oregon and the release of Rio Grande turkeys west of Klamath Falls took place in 1981. The Rio Grande population continues to expand and a sport hunting season was possible in 1986. The Merriam population has not expanded rapidly, but monitoring has continued and expansion of home range has occurred. Current silvicultural systems are enhancing the habitat for these birds.

ROOSEVELT ELK - SOUTHWESTERN WASHINGTON

The study of elk populations, reproduction and habitat use near Mount St. Helens began after the eruption. Reforestation efforts were seriously hampered by elk damage and cooperative studies of elk herds were initiated with the Washington Department of Game, University of Washington, Washington Forestry Association, and Washington Department of Natural Resources.

The elk population has expanded to near pre-eruption levels with little cover, no old growth forest, and under the most drastic habitat change conceivable. Calving rates are high - 60 calves per 100 cows. Knowledge of habitat use has been gained and reforestation systems have been developed to cope with the elk. Plantations of Douglas-fir are thriving.

ANADROMOUS FISH - WESTERN WASHINGTON

Weyerhaeuser Company manages several current studies in Washington and Oregon to

monitor the performance of coho salmon fingerlings in fresh water. Population performance, overwinter survival, and numbers returning to the ocean are being monitored in eleven specific streams.

Additionally, a cooperative project with the Nisqually Indian Tribe and the Washington Department of Game is underway in turning a non-productive stream into productive coho habitat. Fish ladders were constructed around a waterfall, and fish were planted at a rate of 200,000 per year in upstream beaver ponds.

CONCLUSIONS

The activities briefly mentioned in the text does not cover the entire gamut of wildlife studies or management activities that occur across the country on Weyerhaeuser Company lands. It does represent the in-depth commitment of Weyerhaeuser to manage the wildlife, livestock, and fisheries resources in relation to silvicultural activities in a cooperative manner.

Every acre cannot be managed for multiple resource activities. However, tree farms in general can be managed for both silvicultural profit and other natural resource benefits. Additionally, the management of livestock can be achieved in a manner that can be beneficial to certain species of wildlife and silvicultural activities.

Cooperation with state and federal agencies in managing livestock, road use, and cooperative wildlife studies is ongoing and will produce positive results as management techniques continue to be developed and implemented.