

Forward

John Buck, Regional Silviculturist, 1957-1973, wrote extensive drafts of timber management history in Region 5 after he retired in 1973, using the history records in the Region 5 Timber Management Staff Silviculture Library. He was self-motivated to do this, working long hours conscientiously reviewing records and photographs to write his manuscript. He stopped working on the project sometime in 1974. There was a brief hand-written note with his file of drafts that the project was too big and he would not complete it. However, a comparison of his draft manuscript to his outline of intended subjects, showed that the major parts of his history were essentially completed.

From his manuscript and organizational notes, it was clear that Buck intended his history to be comprehensive, including covering broad aspects of early California and U. S. history, and all State and Federal policy history pertaining to forestry practiced by the USDA Forest Service in California during the 20th Century. However, the narrower primary focus, evident through almost all his manuscript, was a Regional staff perspective: that is, policies, procedures, and operations of the District/Region 5 staff managing the timber resources in the National Forests in California. We chose to use Buck's writings that had this focus, and did not use the other materials, since other histories have covered those subjects.

Two examples of subjects we omitted were acreages in the Forest Reserves in California in 1908, and an extensive description of life in California before 1908. The acreages and development of the Forest Reserves are covered well in other books, such as "Fire in the Forest" by our colleague Bob Cermak and "The Ever-Changing View: a History of the National Forests in California" by A. Godfrey¹. General descriptions of pre-1908 life in California are covered in textbooks and other media.

The organization of Buck's history is his. We edited a few titles for clarity and to maintain the District/Region 5 staff focus.

Imbedded in the prose are many photographs, all selected by Buck from the Region 5 silviculture history records. The photograph collection totaled well over one hundred black-and-white, large-format photographs and color slides. In only a few instances did Buck indicate in his draft manuscripts where specific photographs were to be used, and there were no instructions to use all the photographic material. That would have been an overwhelming task. Consequently, we selected a manageable number of photographs to illustrate the points described in Buck's text, ending up using almost all of the wonderful historic black-and-white photographs from the early 1900's, and roughly one-tenth of the color slides (which depicted places and activities in the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's). We had a bias for selecting photographs showing people, especially people who were

¹ Cermak, Robert W., 2005, *Fire in the Forest, A History of Forest Fire Control on the National Forests in California, 1898 – 1956*. USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, R5-FR-003. 347p. Godfrey, A., 2005, *The Ever-Changing View: a History of the National Forests of California*. USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, R5-FR-004.

identified. Almost all the photographic captions were Buck's. Others were edited for clarity. Some of the captions for the black-and-white photographs are in Buck's handwriting.

We worked from draft manuscripts of major programmatic areas, such as timber management appraisals, reforestation, and pest management. Buck wrote the drafts first in cursive, then they were typed by Regional Office clerks (1973/4), and reviewed and corrected by Buck. Many of the typed manuscripts were undated, likely early drafts, and a few had brief sections with the same material. We worked from what seemed to be Buck's latest manuscripts, but, in a few instances, included what could have been earlier material, when we thought that including the "earlier" material would improve Buck's narratives. Also, we reduced the repetitive information.

The spelling of names and dates are Buck's, except where we discovered errors based on other sources.

Occasionally Buck inserted opinions into his history narrative, which we retained without change; all of the opinions are Buck's.

For more detailed descriptions of reforestation practices, Buck's special area of interest about the time he retired, we recommend "Reforestation Practices for Conifers in California" 1971 by Gil Schubert and Ron Adams², to which Buck contributed.

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April, 2020

² Schubert, Gilbert H. and Ronald S. Adams, 1971, *Reforestation Practices for Conifers in California*. State of California, The Resources Agency, Department of Conservation, Division of Forestry, Sacramento, 357 p.