

THE PROPOSED CHESNIMNUS FOREST RESERVE OREGON

EXAMINED BY F.A. CLARK

SUMMARY OF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Bureau of Forestry
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THE PROPOSED CHESNIMNUS FOREST RESERVE, OREGON

The proposed Chesnimnus Forest Reserve of 183,140 acres in extreme northeastern Oregon includes the forested portion of a chain of comparatively low hills which separates the valley of the Willowa River from the Snake River region. The original withdrawal contained 324,118 acres, but much was found to be unsuitable, while 14,720 which were not withdrawn are included in the recommended area given above.

The forest, chiefly of bull pine, with red fir, tamarack, white fir, and lodgepole pine at higher elevations, is continuous over the greater part of the area, the occasional parks and barrens comprising but nine per cent of the whole. The timbered portion, about 167,580 acres, bears an average stand of about 3,500 feet, B.M., to the acre, making an aggregate of 586,530 feet on the proposed reserve.

The character and extent of all adverse holdings are shown by the following table:

	<u>Acres</u>
Homestead entries	1,800
Timber and stone entries, in effect	840
Timber and stone entries, suspended	1,960
Patented	1,760
School sections	1,320
Unapproved State sections	40
Total	7,720
Per cent of proposed reserve	4.11

Probably a very small part of these lands will be offered for relinquishment, for the homesteads are held by actual settlers, and the majority of the timber and stone claims are apt to be cancelled.

Grazing is the most important interest within the tract, and cattle and sheep controversies threaten much complexity and injury to the range, unless it is placed under control. It is believed, however, that regulations to provide for both interests will not be difficult.

The withdrawal of these lands raised a storm of protest from the citizens of Wallowa County, whose business was being prospered by the influx of timber locators and the promise of an export lumbering activity, and who had reason also to object to the withdrawal of some agricultural land. This opposition subsided largely when the object of the reserve was better known, and now, probably 85 per cent of those who will be actually affected are in favor of the project.

The chief argument for the reserve is the necessity for protecting from fire and otherwise certain export a timber supply essential for the development of a remote and poorly wooded agricultural region. Regulations of grazing and protection of water flow are also most desirable. The streams rising in the tract are small, but the region is dependent upon irrigation, and all the available supply is certain of use.

For these reasons, and since the activity of timber locators in the region leaves no doubt that the area will otherwise be denuded in the early future, it is recommended that the proposed Chesnimnus Forest Reserve be established, the boundary to be as shown on the accompanying map.