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LAND USE REPORT OF THE ROBERTSON CREEK VALLEY,
COWICHAN LAKE LAND DISTRICT.

SOIL SURVEY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

by

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FOREST ECONOMICS DIVISION

1941

Project S 12
Office files: 0120300
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Maps accompanying this
report:
Soil and topography (scale
40 chains to 1 inch) filed
under Project S 3 Map 9.

LAND USE REPORT OF THE ROBERTSON CREEK VALLEY,

COWICHAN LAKE LAND DISTRICT.

Area Examined

This report covers an area in the Robertson Creek Valley and the upper part of Lens Creek Valley. The Robertson is a tributary to Cowichan Lake while Lens Creek flows south to join the San Juan River. The area examined is made up of Blocks 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 130, 131, 264, 265, 279, 309, 310 and 311 and Lot 67 and S 33 Ren., S 39 Ren. and S 40 Ren. all lying within the Cowichan Lake land district.

Method and Purpose of Examination

The object of the survey was to classify the soils and define their best use. This was attained by a detailed reconnaissance survey in which all abandoned logging railway grades were traversed and additional strips run in areas not adequately covered by grades. The main soil types were identified and mapped; variations within a type were noted but not traced in the field. This coverage was of sufficient intensity to provide information for an appraisal of land uses.

Soil and Topography

At the lower end of Robertson Creek Valley there is an alluvial plain of about half a mile in width and three miles long. The topography is flat and the elevation above creek level sufficiently high to be free from the danger of floods. The soil is a deep, fine textured loam and sandy loam over a well drained sandy loam subsoil. The profile is probably adequately supplied with moisture through sub-irrigation by seepage from the adjoining hillsides. Gravelly and stony areas occur as fan deposits from tributary creeks and in abandoned channels of the Robertson Creek. At present where the shrub cover is not too dense there is a good growth of ^{native} mature and domestic grasses. This is being utilized to a limited extent for grazing. The gravelly soils are non arable, but used in conjunction with better soils they could provide some spring and fall pasture. This soil type has not been assigned to any soil series.

The adjoining hillsides are rolling and quickly merge with the steep valley walls. The soil is a stony sandy loam over an impervious subsoil and is provisionally called the Admiralty series. In draws and depressions finely textured loams occur. They are non arable because of their limited extent and irregular occurrence. The fine textured soils would have been mapped as Maywood series if they had occurred more extensively. All of the hillside soil types are classed as non agricultural.

The alluvial soils, the Admiralty and the Maywood types just described occur in Blocks 14, 15, 19, 265, Lot 67, S 33 Ren. S 39 Ren. and S 40 Ren.

The upper portion of the Robertson Creek is a valley about sixty chains wide. The soil consists of a series of gently undulating gravelly and stony terraces extending the full width of the valley. The profile consists of stratified deposits of sand, gravel and stone. The terraces on the east side of the valley are slightly finer textured, containing more sand and less stone than those on the west. Even the best sites, however, are dry, excessively drained and of no agricultural values. These soils belong to the Cordova series.

The terraces terminate in the north with a small moraine crossing the valley. The morainal soil is an Admiralty stony sandy loam in which fine textured deposits of Maywood loam occur in draws and depressions. The topography is too steeply rolling for agricultural use. This portion of the valley mainly occurs in Block 16.

The divide between the Robertson and Lens Creek is formed by a high, rough and rolling moraine. The soil belongs to the Admiralty series and is a stony sandy loam over an impermeable subsoil. Large boulders and outcroppings of bedrock are common. Along the northern fringe fine textured loams occur in draws and depressions. The entire area possesses no agricultural possibilities. These morainal soils occur in Blocks 17, 18, 130, 131 and 264.

The upper part of Lens Creek is an alluvial deposit of about half a mile in width. The soil is a deep loamy sand and sandy loam, with gravelly and stony soils forming fans about tributary creeks. The area is probably sub-irrigated by hillside seepage. A large swamp occurs in the centre of the area. This soil is a little coarser textured and more poorly drained than the Robertson Creek alluvials. Some of the land might be classed as agricultural except that the value is depreciated by a high elevation (1000 feet above sea level) isolated location remote from schools, roads etc. and an absence of any adjoining first class land. For practical reasons, therefore, the area is classed as unfit for agricultural use. This soil type occurs in the bottom lands of Blocks 130 and 131.

The adjacent Blocks 309, 310 and 311 are non-agricultural steep hillsides.

Accessibility

A dirt road extends from Lake Cowichan village across the mouth of the Robertson Valley to Honeymoon Bay. The distance from the village is about five miles. A logging road extends up the valley for about two miles.

Recommendations

The agricultural soils occur in the north half of the Robertson Creek valley. Very little agricultural development is to be found in the Cowichan Lake land district, thus a permanent logging industry should encourage an interest in farming possibilities. It is with this in mind

that it is suggested that the fine textured alluvial soils extending from the Robertson Creek to Honeymoon Bay are of sufficient extent to form a small agricultural community. It is recommended that S 40 Ren. S 39 Ren. S 33 Ren. Block 14, and Lot 67 be reserved for agricultural use. The remaining area within the valley described is non-agricultural and can best be utilized for the production of forests.

<u>Summary of Acreage</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Alluvial loam and sandy loam	1,000
" loamy sand	1,000
Admiralty stony sandy loam	10,025
Maywood loam	75
Cordova stony loamy sand	970
Peat and meadow	<u>55</u>
 TOTAL	 13,125
 Recommended for	 <u>Agricultural Use</u>
	1,360 acres
	<u>Forest</u>
	11,765 Acres

Departmental files: 0120300
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Approved:

Date:

Jan 13/42

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October 14, 1941.

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