RECONNAISSANCE

of

SOUTH FORK MCGREGOR RIVER.

-- 1925 --

E.T. Harvie

Reconnaissance File 234 Sec. II
Correspondence File 051650

MAPS:
1 Tracing
30 chs. to 1 inch.
R. Files.
TIMBER RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

South Fork McGregor River-1925.

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An estimate of vacant Crown timber in the valley of the South Fork of the McGregor River, and on the timbered area known as the Torpy River Divide, situated between the Torpy River and the McGregor River, is included in this report.

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NOTE.

The valley of the South Fork covered by this reconnaissance is that part situated between Mile Post 40 (the termination of last season's traverse) and a point 58 miles up-stream from this post.
TIMBER RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

South Fork McGregor River-1925.

The objective of the survey party working on the South Fork of the McGregor River was to complete the traverse from the point at which it was abandoned last winter, thereby establishing a tie to the surveyed timber licences situated below the forks of the Torpy River.

Commencing at the N.W. corner of T.L. 7653 the traverse follows the Torpy River to the forks, thence up the East fork for a distance of five miles, at which point it leaves the river and is carried overland to the McGregor River. In all, fifty-nine miles of traverse were run to complete the "tie" to the 40 Mile Post where the traverse was discontinued last year.

From a point where the north boundary of Lot 4075 crosses the traverse iron angle posts have been set at one mile intervals along the east bank of the stream. Because of the winding nature of the river, only half mile posts have been marked instead of quarter mile posts as was done last year. On long straight reaches of the river quarter mile stations have been marked. All iron
mile posts have been marked with a "T" before the number denoting the mile, thus:- "T.14." This is to distinguish the Torpy River traverse from the traverse of the previous year. From (mile 4) on the south side of the divide to (mile 11) on the north, the traverse is well blazed and iron posts are set at one mile intervals as on the river.

Topography and Drainage.

The south fork of the McGregor River, downstream from the Torpy River divide, is an evenly flowing stream having an average width of about 300 feet, and a fairly well defined river channel. For the first twenty miles the river is very crooked, flowing from one side of the valley to the other, but from there on down to the canyon it flows in fairly straight stretches.

Up-stream from the Torpy divide the river bed is not clearly defined but broken up by islands and inland sloughs. Travelling up-stream from the canyon to the Torpy River divide the valley has an average width of about one and three quarter miles; is bounded to the south by a long even range of mountains (approximately 3,000 feet) forming the divide between the south fork and the Torpy; and to the north by a high broken mountain range (approximately 5,000 feet) dividing the south
fork from the Herrick River. A large area of the river flats are taken up by muskegs and non-merchantable Jack Pine swamps.

The valley is not broken up by any large tributary streams except between Miles 47 and 53, when two fairly large streams come in from the north and one, rising near the headwaters of the Torpy, flows in from the south.

Above the Torpy River divide the valley narrows down to about one mile in width and has a general bearing of about N. 45° E. for a distance of fourteen miles, where it turns due east and a divide from the Herrick River comes in from the north.

Climate.

Precipitation is extremely heavy in this locality. Especially in the valley of the south fork the snowfall is very heavy. The summer is short—June to the middle of September—and a heavy rainfall is experienced during the spring and fall. The freeze-up usually occurs during the early part of December and snowstorms are frequent until the middle of February, when the snow starts to settle and become crusted. The break-up can be expected any time from the beginning to the middle of May.
During the two months in which we were in the field this winter (January 18th to March 22nd) only fourteen clear days were experienced, the remainder being either mild, or snowing heavily.

Forest Description and Forest Types.

The timber may be divided into the following types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spruce</th>
<th>} River Flats.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balsam</td>
<td>} Cottonwood)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spruce</th>
<th>} Low ridges and mountain slope.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balsam</td>
<td>} Cedar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-merchantable } Higher elevations on sidehills.
Balsam and Hemlock}

The Spruce is the dominant species occurring to best advantage on the river flats and on the low timbered ridges flanking the foothills. It is of medium height has an average D.B.H. of about 14 inches, but is inclined to be heavy in limbs.

The Balsam is found chiefly on the ridges and lower slopes of the mountains. It is very inferior to the Spruce, being short and very defective in heart-rot. At least 50% of the Balsam stand could be culled for this defect.
Cottonwood occurs only on the valley floor, and is not found in any large quantities. Patches of Cedar are found in isolated groups on the mountain slopes, but as they are practically negligible in quantity and defective in heart-rot, this species is non-merchantable.

At merchantable timber-line (usually about 1,500 feet) the forest type changes to scrub Balsam and Hemlock. In the valley the Spruce and Balsam occur in a ratio of about 60% Spruce and 20% Balsam.

Reproduction appears to be about evenly distributed between Spruce and Balsam except above merchantable timber line where it changes to Hemlock and Balsam. Underbrush in the form of Red Willow Alder and Devil's Club is dense throughout the valley.

Area of Vacant Crown Timber:

Merchantable V.C.T. between the canyon (Mile 40) and the Torpy River divide - 38,656 acres.

Merchantable V.C.T. between the Torpy River divide and a point 15 miles up-stream - 6,500 acres.

(V.C.T. on Torpy River divide - 2,560 acres)

T.Licences on Torpy River divide - 6,400 acres.

Due to error in Harris's map this area should be omitted from the estimates.
Total Merchantable V.C.T. - 47,696 acres.
Total timber licences - 6,400 acres.

Location of Main Timbered Tracts.

Torpy River Divide: - Bounded by Torpy River to the south, McGregor River to the north and mountain ranges to the east and west.

Main Valley of the South Fork: - Bounded by the Torpy River divide (Mile 11) to the east, the first canyon (Mile 40) to the west and the mountains watershed to the north and south.

Upper Valley of the South Fork: - Bounded by the Torpy River divide to the south, a point fifteen miles up-stream to the north and mountains watershed to the east and west.
Estimate of Timber in Thousand Board Feet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Spruce</th>
<th>Balsam</th>
<th>Total Volume in Thousand Board Feet.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Per Acre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Valley, South Fork</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Flats</td>
<td>25216</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>337894</td>
<td>42867</td>
<td>380,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbered Slopes</td>
<td>13320</td>
<td>13135</td>
<td>120579</td>
<td>54379</td>
<td>174,958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper Valley, South Fork</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Flats</td>
<td>3840</td>
<td>12000</td>
<td>40320</td>
<td>5760</td>
<td>46,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbered Slopes</td>
<td>2560</td>
<td>11000</td>
<td>19200</td>
<td>8960</td>
<td>28,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torpy Riv. Divide</td>
<td>2560</td>
<td>17500</td>
<td>38400</td>
<td>6400</td>
<td>44,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. C. T.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber Licences</td>
<td>6400</td>
<td>17500</td>
<td>96000</td>
<td>16000</td>
<td>112,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Corrected Totals</strong></td>
<td>53896</td>
<td>51,336</td>
<td>613,393</td>
<td>127,566</td>
<td>786,759</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Acreage: 53,896
Total Volume in M. bd. ft.: 786,759

The Timber Licences include the area referred to as the Torpy River Divide. Harris's original map showed this much further from the Oregon River than they really are.
Factors Influencing Logging of Areas.

The Torpy River Divide.

The divide, comprising some 9,000 acres of unbroken bench land, where approached from the Torpy River has an even ascent of about 250 feet to its summit. The surface is smooth, and but for a few small swamps, is well timbered throughout its entire length. On the McGregor side the divide drops off abruptly to the river. The Torpy River, which is large enough to carry logs, is usually free of ice by the middle of May.

The South Fork, McGregor River.

The main difficulty encountered in the logging of this area occurs just after the break-up (about May 15th) when the whole valley bottom floods to a depth of six to eight feet above the river banks.

The low swampland country adjoining the river would not be difficult to put roads through. Difficulty would be experienced in decking logs high enough to remain during flood season.

The canyon above the junction of the South Fork with the Herrick would also be an obstruction to river driving. The canyon is narrow with high precipitous walls (250 feet) which would make it impossible to have crews working in the canyon to prevent or break up jams.
The topography adjoining the canyon is such that fluming would be very difficult.

Cruising of Area.

Because of the swampy nature of the country adjoining the south fork of the McGregor River, this timber could be cruised to best advantage during the winter. The whole valley could be cruised from the main traverse except the area lying N.E. of the canyon between the McGregor and "10 Mile Creek." A traverse would have to be run around the north bank of the canyon (Mile 32-40) to cruise this area.

The south bank of the McGregor above the Torpy River divide would have to be traversed to estimate the timber in the upper valley. The best timber in this part of the valley is situated on the south bank.

The Torpy River divide could be cruised from the main traverse, strips being run at right angles across the divide. A main camp situated at Mile 7 (Gleasons Cabin) would be a central location for this work.

Supplies could be purchased at Dome Creek or Prince George and taken up the Torpy during low water season as far as Mile 7. A cache situated at Mile 7 would only leave a distance of three and a half miles to the McGregor River. Having all available supplies and equipment over the divide before the actual party entered the field would save considerable time and expense.
Mr. Hanes and Mr. Goodson, homesteaders at the forks of the Torpy, are good canoe men and familiar with the divide over to the McGregor.

Accommodation for a field party can be found at Urling Pit (3 miles east of the mouth of the Torpy) and at the forks of the Torpy. Any other cabins situated at different points along the river or on the divide are small and of little use to a party of men. Their locations are shown on map accompanying report.

NOTE: The upper valley of the South Fork (shown on map) was not covered so intensively as that part of the valley down which the traverse was carried.

E.T. Harvie,
Cruiser.
February 27th, 1928.

Mr. R. G. McKee
Forest Branch Office
Victoria, B. C.

Dear Jerry:

In reply to your letter of the 20th. instant, re McGregor River Reconnaissance.

The main difficulty appears to be the difference in plotted acreage on my map and stated acreage in my report regarding the 15 miles of river north of the Torpy River divide.

You will notice at the end of my report that this part of the river was not covered so intensively as that part down which the traverse was run. As a matter of fact, I made the trip from the Torpy divide upstream 15 miles and back in two days, as time did not permit taking any longer.

However, I can probably help you out of the difficulty. The merchantable timbered portion of the upper valley of the South Fork as covered roughly by me on this trip, constitutes a strip some 15 miles by 1 mile in width, with about one third of this area deducted for non-merchantable swamp lands. This would give 6400 acres as stated in my report. I mentioned to the department while I was in Victoria, that it would be much more satisfactory to wait and plot the timbered areas from my field notes on to Mr. Fraser's traverse map, than to make up the complete map from daily notes computed without any instruments for such work.

However, my instructions were to complete the work at once, so it was impossible to make any use of the surveyors map. In compiling data on this area, I would recommend the figures in my report rather than the plotted area on the map.

These figures are as accurate as it was possible for one man to compile during the length of time we were in the field, and can be safely used as a rough estimate of this valley. I hope this will help to straighten things out, but if there is anything else I can do just let me know.

Yours truly,

[Signature]
EXTENSIVE TIMBER RECONNAISSANCE

SOUTH FORK OF M'GREGOR RIVER

BY E.T. HARVIE

Scale 1 inch = 1 mile

March 1925

Revised to coincide with official Traverse of South Fork of M'Gregor River. Direction of the River East of Torpy Divide not definitely located.

C. M'Carron, April 1927.
Scale 1 inch = 1 mile

Revised to coincide
Fork of McGregor's
River East of Tommy
Legend

Merchantable Timber Area Shown Coloured Green

-- Line

Elevations Are Roughly Approximate Only And Are
Referred to the Valley Bottom

Elevation of the Valley Bottom is about 2300' A.S.L.

Mile Posts on Traverse Shown M 10 etc.