

Kosmos Firm For Logging Formed 1936

The possibility of locating a logging operation in the Kosmos vicinity was conceived by Jack Southerland in the years of 1934, 1935 and early 1936 when he was superintendent of various CCC camps in the Cowlitz and Cispus Drainages during those years.

The idea jelled sometime in early 1936 when he, with the manufacturing and financial backing of R. S. Fox of the Seattle Export and Tacoma Export Lumber companies, formed the Kosmos Logging Company.

The first crew was formed around June 1, 1936, at which time a road was started south from Kosmos Corners. Some of the members of this early crew were Orville Lewis who surveyed and ran lines, Owen Amondson, Mickey O'Grady, Slim Cheney, Karl Hofmann, Leo Bristol, Vic Hackett and others.

At about the same time as the road work was started the landing south of Morton was being built on a railway siding to handle logs developed from the new area. On June 19, 1936, a temporary bridge was completed over Rainey Creek, which is in the vicinity of the present camp.

The first side was started at the present 107 area south of the camp-site on July 14, 1936.

Loading was done with a 9x10 steam pot with Bobby McNea as head loader and Charlie Moriarty on the cat. Also in the picture at that time was Faye Hendricks, road construction contractor. Many local residents may recall the incident of Jack's "pea gravel" on the road between Kosmos and Morton, consisting of rocks from 12 inches to 3 feet in diameter.

Early logging was conducted on a two-shift day with trucks rolling from dawn to dusk. Construction of the railroad started in August of 1937 and was completed out to the 108 station by December, at which time logs were hauled over the new road, trucking being discontinued.

The following spring the Cowlitz River bridge was built and Landers



AN EXAMPLE OF SOME OF THE BIG LOGS brought out of the Kosmos area can be gained from the above photograph. The picture was taken in Centralia, and special permission had to be gained before the log could be hauled over the highways. Standing alongside the big piece of timber is R. W. Smith. (Chronicle Staff Photo)

in Seattle with their log requirements, and is cutting United States Plywood Corporation's own timber. (timber owned by Milwaukee Land company and timber acquired from the United States forest service's competitive sales.

The management was handled by Jack Southerland until 1945 when he was replaced by Dan Soderling who resigned in November of 1952. Mr. Jesse Hurd, formerly with Harbor Plywood corporation at National, is the present manager. O. A. Lee is assistant manager; Jim Thayer, logging superintendent; Owen Amondson, equipment superintendent, and James Donovan, cutting superintendent. L. J. Walby is president.

Also located at Kosmos is a veneer plant and a salvage sawmill. Harry Mahoney is veneer plant superintendent. The present output of the company is approximately 90-million board feet of logs per year, employing approximately 400 men in the manufacturing and logging operations at Kosmos.

Measured by special apparatus, speed of a driver when it touches a golf ball is 70 to 125 miles an hour.

1 The following spring the Cowlitz
12 River bridge was built and Landers
13 Creek timber tapped that winter by
14 railroad. Along about this time
15 there were 120 men employed.

16 The first camp and shop were
17 built in 1938 at the present site.
18 With the shop came "Big Pete"
19 Nelson.

20 With the coming of the railroad,
21 development was ultimately extend-
22 ed to a point about half way be-
23 tween Kosmos and Randle on the
24 north side of the Cowlitz, and to
25 the Upper Iron Creek Basin on the
26 south side of the Cowlitz and Cis-
27 pus Rivers. Maximum production
28 achieved in any one day by the com-
29 pany was 128 loads.

30 The most loads were loaded by
31 Jess Thayer, who came to the com-
32 pany in 1939, when he loaded 51
33 in one 8-hour day. The maximum
34 volume produced by the company in
35 any year was 126 million board feet.

36 The cutting crew was originally
37 supervised by Charlie Little of
38 Kosmos and later by Jim Donovan
39 who came with the company in 1937
40 and who supervises the cutting to-
41 day.

42 During the company's history
43 when it was entirely devoted to raft
44 logging, the company operated a
45 maximum of nine locomotives over
46 approximately 90 miles of railroad
47 grade. At the present time the com-
48 pany has retired all of its loco-
49 motives, except four, which are us-
50 ed on a mainline haul with trucks
51 feeding into it.

52 The present owner is United
53 States Plywood corporation whose
54 home office is in New York. It ac-
55 quired a partial interest in the
56 company in 1941, and full owner-
57 ship in 1952 when they acquired
58 Scott Paper company's interest,
59 having previously acquired R. S.
60 Fox's interest in 1946. The present
61 logging division supplies United
62 States Plywood corporation's lum-
63 ber division and plywood division