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Pacific Forest Research Centre • Canadian Forestry Service • Victoria

October 25, 1973.

MORTALITY OF WESTERN WHITE PINE IN THE VICINITY
OF BLUE RIVER, KAMLOOPS FOREST DISTRICT

Clifford B. Cottrell

The mountain pine beetle is known to have taken an annual toll of mature western white pine in the North Thompson Valley from Avola to Lempriere for at least 20 years. Usually these attacks occurred in small scattered pockets of timber. However, between 1970 and 1973 several thousand semi-mature pine were attacked in an area one mile east of Blue River and along the south side of Mud Lake. By October 1973 relatively few healthy trees remained. Although the 1973 beetle population appears to be smaller than in 1971 or 1972, there are sufficient beetles to kill most of the unattacked trees within the infested area.

There are several groups of beetle-attacked pine, varying from 25 to 300 trees, south of Blue River on the east side of the North Thompson Valley. Otherwise the major cause of white pine mortality outside of the immediate Blue River area is white pine blister rust. Presently these attacks are confined to individual, or small, groups of trees. Between Avola and Lempriere an estimated 3,000 trees show the typical upper-crown foliage discoloration caused by blister rust.

Several damaged pine stands in the Blue River area were examined on October 17, 1973, in company with Messrs. B. Jennejohn and V. Barge of the British Columbia Forest Service.