NBC

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WRITER

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(11:30-12:30 PM) TIME

(MAY 31, 1940) DATE

(FRIDAY) DAY

PRODUCTION

ANNOUNCER

ENGINEER

REMARKS

ANNOUNCER: "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers".

MUSIC: RANGER SONG

ANNOUNCER: When we think of forests most of us think only in terms of trees. But there are a lot of other useful and valuable resources in the forest of almost equal and in some instances even greater importance than the trees themselves. One of these resources is forage. Forest forage provides feed for millions of cattle, sheep, horses and goats every year. In our western National Forests tens of millions of acres of forest range lands are available for livestock grazing. And western stockmen are critically dependent on the luscious feed of these high mountainous national forest ranges for the production of their quality steers and lambs. Thousands of sheep-herders and cowboys are employed in the handling of livestock on the national forest range. And the ranges administered by Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers make a substantial contribution to our national meat, wool and leather supply. In addition, they support many kinds of wildlife. Seventy-five percent of the big game animals of the west find a home in our National Forests Well, now let's see what Forest Ranger Jim Robbins and Jerry Quick are doing. As we look in at the Pine Cone Ranger Station today we find Jim and Jerry discussing an unusual new project.

JERRY: (FADING IN LAUGHING) You know Jim, every time I think about doing this job it strikes me funnier every time. Of all the crazy ideas I ever heard of this one takes the cake.

JIM: What do you mean, Jerry? It seems to me like a pretty smart idea.

JERRY: Well just the idea of us going out and putting tags in the elk's ears, Jim. (LAUGHS) I got a handpainted picture of you chasin' one of them elk calves around through the brush and puttin' a tag in his ear.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) We're not going to do much chasing if I can help it, Jerry. We're going to get some of these calves tagged in the first few days after they're born before they've learned how to run.

JERRY: (LAUGHING) Next thing they'll want us to do will be to go around putting bells on grizzly bears.

JIM: No, Jerry, I think this elk tagging project is a good sound idea. And it'll settle this business of elk migration up there in the Martin Creek Divide Country once and for all.

JERRY: Yeah ... it will if it works. But how do you know it will work? We've never tagged any elk before. And even if we do tag 'em we've got no way of knowing what the results will be.

JIM: That's not the way to look at the job at all, Jerry. We never know how anything is going to prove out until we try it. That game problem up there on Martin Creek has been a Jonah for years and this might be one way to help solve it. The Biological Survey opened up a whole new field of information when they started banding migratory birds and it was just the information they needed. Here we've got the same kind of a migration problem only it's with elk instead of birds. And it looks to me like this ear-tagging idea may be just the thing we've been looking for ... We've got to be open-minded about these new ideas and give them a try, Jerry. Otherwise we'll always be at a standstill.

JERRY: Aw, I know it, Jim. But some of these ideas they hatch out down there in the regional office seem to me just plain squirrelly.

JIM: Well, we'll give this ear-tagging idea a real tryout, and ...

(EXCITED WOMEN'S VOICES OFF MIKE)

JERRY: Here come Mrs. Robbins and Mary back from their Ladies' Guild meeting. From the way they're chewin' the fat and steppin' along they must have got hold of a piece of gossip that was a good one.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) It don't take much to start 'em off at one of these meetings.

BESS AND MARY BREAKING IN SIMULTANEOUSLY

BESS: Jim, I was never so disgusted with anything in my life.

MARY: Oh, Jerry, you and Mr. Robbins should have been there. It was awful.

BESS: He actually stood up there and asked us to sign a resolution. Why, I was never so ... so ...

JIM: (CHUCKLES) You don't mean to say you were speechless, do you Bess?

BESS: This is no laughing matter, Jim Robbins.

JERRY: Well, for Pete's sake, what's it all about? You two come puffing and snorting in here all hot under the collar and don't tell us a thing. What happened?

MARY: Oh, Jerry, it was that silly Sylvester Payne. I can't imagine why they asked him to speak to the Ladies' Guild in the first place.

BESS: Neither can I Mary.

JIM: Sylvester Payne. That's the naturalist from Willow Glen, Jerry.

JERRY: Yeah. I ran into him up the North Fork the other day collecting wild flowers or something.

BESS: He certainly wasn't collecting any wild flowers today, Jerry. He was taking the hide off the Forest Service.... Oooooh! I was never so mortified ...

JIM: You mean Sylvester Payne made a talk against the Forest Service? I wish I <u>had</u> been there.

JERRY: Me too. Just to look at him you wouldn't think he could make any kind of talk at all ... he's so meek and mild.

MARY: Well, he's not, Jerry. I'm telling you he's going to make a lot of trouble.

BESS: Why, he wanted us to sign a resolution condemning the Forest Service for what it's doing. If I hadn't stood up and ...

JIM: What kind of a resolution was this? What's behind all this trouble anyway?

MARY: It's something about putting tags in the ears of elk, Mr. Robbins. Sylvester Payne says the Forest Service is killing the elk.

JERRY: AH HA!

BESS: Well, what he said, Jim, was that the Forest Service was catching little elk calves and putting tags in their ears before they could walk. And that then the mother animals wouldn't have any more to do with them and the calves would starve or be killed by the coyotes.

JIM: H-m-m. It looks like Sylvester's got some advance information. What did the club members think about it?

JERRY: Ha! You can imagine how a bunch of women would take to something like that, Jim. I'll bet they were worked up ... plenty!

MARY: They were worked up, Jerry. And if Mrs. Robbins hadn't been there they'd have signed the resolution he wanted them to sign to stop the work, too.

BESS: Somebody had to say something, Mary. You know I couldn't just sit there and say nothing after the way he went after the forest Service.

JERRY: What'd you tell them, Mrs. Robbins?

BESS: Well Jerry, I just stood up and said that what Mr. Payne said might be true. I didn't know. But I did know that the Forest Service wasn't trying to kill the elk ... they were trying to save them. And I said that the Forest Service wouldn't start a project of any kind without having some idea of how it was going to turn out. And then I ended by asking Mr. Payne if he had ever caught a calf elk and seen the mother elk leave it.

MARY: When Mrs. Robbins asked him that you should have seen him. His face got as red as a beet and he couldn't say a thing. He just sort of sneaked off the platform and that broke up the meeting.

JERRY: Gee, Mrs. Robbins, I wish I could have heard you.

BESS: Well, now that I've got my foot into this thing I want to know more about it. If the elk calves are being killed I'll go back and get Sylvester Payne's resolution adopted myself. What's this elk tagging program about, Jim? You haven't ever said anything to me about it.

JERRY: It's a new job to us, Mrs. Robbins. It's been tried in some of the Forests farther north but this is the first time we've had anything to do with it.

MARY: I'd like to know what it's all about and what it's supposed to do too, Mr. Robbins.

JIM: Well, what we're trying to do, Mary, is to save the range the elk are feeding on ... Here, look at this map. You see right here is a high range of mountains that we call the Martin Creek Divide. Here on this side of the Divide is a big area marked in red ... that's the range of the South Fork elk herd and it takes in the area all around the head of the South Fork River. And over across the mountains on this other side of the Divide you see there's another big area marked in red to show the range of the Martin Creek elk herd, all around the head of Martin Creek. Now on both sides of the Divide it's all wild back-country ... no roads and a long way from any town. Not many hunters ever get back in there. And there's no grazing of any domestic livestock like sheep and cattle either. It's strictly a land for the game.

BESS: Why don't the red lines meet on top of the Divide, Jim? I should think the elk could cross back and forth across the mountains there just as easy as not.

JIM: That's what I'm coming to, Bess. You see since there's not much hunting up there in that back country and the animals aren't molested they've increased in numbers so fast they've just sort of outgrown their feed grounds. All that area marked in red there on the map on both sides of the Divide has become overgrazed. It's got to the place where the elk are even eating the twigs and the bark off the trees. And the result is that the forage plants ... the grass and bushes and so forth are eaten so close they're killed. And while you're getting more and more elk back in there you're getting less and less feed for them.

MARY: And that means there'll soon be nothing for the animals to eat and they'll starve to death. Is that it?

JERRY: That's right, Mary. You ought to see that country. Jim and I have been over that range after a hard winter and there's elk carcasses all over the place. A lot of the elk that don't actually starve get into a weakened condition and get diseased and die that way.

BESS: But I still don't see why you want to put tags in the ears of the little calves.

JIM: Well the idea of that, Bess, is simply this. We want to find out whether there's actually two herds of elk up there in that country or whether, like you say, the animals travel back and forth across the Divide and actually are just one big herd. We're hoping we can find out by the ear tagging method. We'll put the tags in the ears of the new born calves during the calving period and keep a record of where the calves were tagged. Then a year or so later when some hunter finds an elk that's been tagged we'll get him to return the tag to us and tell us the location. That way we can find out the migration routes and distances these Martin Creek and South Fork elk travel.

BESS: But how do you know that these little calves you tag will live and grow up, Jim? How do you know the mothers won't leave their calves if they're tagged, like Mr. Payne says?

JIM: Well Bess, the only thing we've got to go on is the experience of game management men on some of the other Forests. They found the mother elk stay right there and stay close to the calves all during the operation. I've still got to find that out for myself.

BESS: Then you don't really know whether Sylvester Payhe was right or not?

JIM: Nope. From personal experience I can't say that I know anything about it one way or the other.

JERRY: We'll know more about that, Mrs. Robbins, after we've tagged a few.

MARY: Well, what I'd like to know is why you want to find out about the migrations of the elk at all. What difference does it make if there are two herds of elk or only one herd?

JERRY: It's a problem of management, Mary. If there's two herds on two separate areas then we've got two separate problems to deal with. But if it's all one big herd that's something else again.

BESS: Well what I'd like to know is whether I was right or wrong in standing up and talking back to Sylvester Payne the way I did. I want to know about the calves and their mothers, whether or not the mothers will abandon their calves after they've been tagged.

JERRY: Yeah, Jim, that's what I want to know, too. What are we going to do about this bird Payne? If he keeps on going around talkin' to ladies' clubs like he did here he's liable to cause us a lot of trouble.

JIM: Where did you say Payne was staying here in town?

BESS: I think he's staying down at Mrs. Beeman's boarding house.

JIM: H-m-m. I think I'll give Mr. Payne a call.

SOUND: OF TELEPHONE RINGING

SOUND: OF RECEIVER OFF HOOK

JIM: (TO TELEPHONE) Mrs. Beeman's boarding house, please, central.

BESS: Now Jim, don't you make any trouble with him. I think he's a perfectly well-meaning little man. He just ...

JIM: (TO TELEPHONE) Hello Mrs. Beeman. This is Jim Robbins. Say Mrs. Beeman, is a Mr. Sylvester Payne staying there with you now? ... He is? Well fine. Will you call him to the phone? ... All right, thanks.

JERRY: What're you going to say to him, Jim?

JIM: (TO TELEPHONE) Hello, Mr. Payne? This is Jim Robbins, the Forest Service Ranger here in Winding Creek. Mrs. Robbins heard your talk at the Guild this afternoon and she tells me you've got a few doubts about our elk tagging program ... Ah-h-h ... Uh-huh ... Well my assistant ranger Jerry Quick and I happen to be going back up in the elk country in the next couple days and I thought maybe you might like to come along. It'll be about a four day trip all told, but I think we can help you get fixed up with a saddle horse all right and we'd mighty well like to have you go with us ... Yeah. Up in the Martin Creek Divide country ... That's right. We're planning on leaving day after tomorrow. That's right ... Sunday afternoon. You can Well, that's first rate ... What's that? Oh no....no sir ... it won't be any trouble at all. We'll count you in as one of the party then ... That's right ... about one o'clock Sunday afternoon over here at the ranger station ... You bet. Good-bye. (SOUND OF RECEIVER ON HOOK -- (CHUCKLES) Sounded like he was tickled pink.

JERRY: Yeah, but goodnight, Jim, what the sam hill did you have to go and do that for? We don't know this guy Payne from the eight-ball and here you've invited him to go along with us to look in on a new project, we aren't even sure of ourselves. Besides that I bet he's nothing but a greenhorn sissy and he'll mess up the whole trip.

JIM: Well, the Forest Service is one outfit that hasn't got any secrets about its work, Jerry. Stranger or no stranger, if Payne is interested in ear-tagging elk I want him to know all there is to know about it. (CHUCKLES) And after talkin' to him on the phone I think you've got him sized up all wrong. I've got a hunch he's quite a red-blooded individual and that he'll be a real help to the party.

MUSIC: FINALE

ANNOUNCER: Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers will be with us again next Friday on the National Farm and Home Hour. This program is a presentation of the National Broadcasting Company with the cooperation of the United States Forest Service.

ep-9:30
5/28/40