

Federal Government as a partial reimbursement of the costs of building the main protective works. Construction work began early in 1953 but will take three years to complete the dykes, drains and diversion of streams.

Lillooet Valley Reclamation Project.—This project was undertaken upon agreement between the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia and the Pemberton Valley Reclamation District and is located in the Lillooet River Valley above and below the town of Pemberton. Its objective is to protect lands now under cultivation from flooding and to reclaim additional lands by dyking and drainage. The land so far reclaimed amounts to 14,000 acres, which allowed farmers in the district to increase their holdings and permits the settlement of hundreds of additional inhabitants.

Land Utilization

In addition to cultivation and water conservation activities rehabilitation of drought areas involves the conversion of large tracts of land (proved unsuitable for crop production) to livestock production through cultivation of a permanent grass cover, and the relocation of farmers residing thereon. To this end PFRA's Land Utilization Program has constructed 62 operating pasture units, resulting in the reclamation of 1,696,900 acres of submarginal land. During the fiscal year ended Mar. 31, 1955, summer grazing was provided for 106,278 head of livestock owned by 5,959 patrons living on lands adjacent to these pastures.

An extensive pasture improvement program is in effect on all pastures and is begun as soon as new areas are enclosed. This policy has more than doubled the 1938 average carrying capacity on pasture land. The improvement policies most extensively practised in all pastures are: (1) regrassing—since 1938 approximately 190,548 acres of land in community pastures have been regrassed; (2) development of stock watering sites—to Mar. 31, 1955, over 1,000 stock watering dams, dugouts and wells have been constructed in community pastures; and (3) pasture management and controlled grazing.

MARITIME MARSHLANDS REHABILITATION ACT

The marshlands of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are among the more productive soils in Canada when protected and properly cultivated. They are composed of deposits laid down by tidal waters and are for the most part adjacent to the Bay of Fundy.

The initial areas were reclaimed as early as 1630 and since that time about 80,000 acres have been protected by dykes and aboiteaux. These structures prevented flooding by tide water and permitted cultivation after drainage had been carried out.

Through a variety of circumstances—loss of cattle markets, loss of hay markets and the increase in labour costs—maintenance of the protective structures was not adequately carried out and deterioration resulted. Because the marshlands, when protected, have an important role in the agricultural economy of the provinces concerned, the Government of Canada and the Provincial Governments of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick passed legislation permitting a program of reclamation and rehabilitation of these lands. The federal Act, the Maritime Marshlands Rehabilitation Act, was passed in 1948 and complementary provincial marshland reclamation Acts were passed by the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Governments in 1949. These Acts permitted agreements to be signed whereby the Government of Canada would construct or reconstruct the protective works, normally called dykes, aboiteaux and breakwaters, and would assume the responsibility of maintaining these works until they were turned over to the Provinces. The Federal Government is responsible also for any engineering work in connection with the complete program. The Provinces are responsible for the organization of the marsh areas, the fresh-water drainage and acquisition of any land required and for the initiation and follow-up of a suitable land-use program. Owing to the small area of marshland in Prince Edward Island no provincial legislation was considered necessary in that Province.