





FROM: PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT  
The Dow Chemical Company  
Midland, Michigan

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION  
Contact: Paul N. Sutton  
Phone: 517-636-5640  
Midland, Michigan

1786A65-15 -- To prevent a crisis in birdland, 540 acres of the Huron National Forest in the Au Sable River valley on the lower Michigan peninsula was burned in May, 1964, by the U.S. Forest Service in "Operation Pop Cone." The pulpwood was harvested first, and only seed trees and tree toppings remained to feed the flames.

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9-24-65



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1786A64-10 -- The burn also served as a training project for foresters to test new equipment and check organization procedures in fire control. Here a new "gelled water" fire control agent is sprayed from a half-track along fire lanes to prevent flaming debris from spreading into adjoining forests. This new agent, Gelgard M fire control polymer, causes water to cling to surfaces, slowing combustion. It was developed by The Dow Chemical Company.

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By May, 1965, nature had already started to cover her scars in the burned area with a lush new growth where the forest had stood a year ago. Beneath the blackened trunks of jackpine seed trees, the ground cover had come up within months after "Operation Pop Cone." To the right, the pulpwood of a mature forest is now being harvested in preparation for a controlled burn in 1966.

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Intense heat during the fire had popped the cones on the seed trees and millions of seeds had dropped to the ground. This spring, U.S. Forest Service officials found many young jackpine seedlings had started to grow in the burned area. Here, a popped jackpine cone and seedling are shown for size. The jackpine is a pioneer species that thrives in the sandy soil of the Au Sable River valley.

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1785A64-14 -- Cause of it all is this jack pine cone which is unusually tight and stays closed for years while on the tree. Enough heat must be generated to open the cones in sufficient number for millions of seeds to drop to the ground and produce young trees. Here, the small seed is removed from a cone which has popped open within minutes after the forest fire passed by.

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5-28-64



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