

T H E W O R K S P R O G R A M

--Works Progress Administration--

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Williams Reports WPA Now has 28,000 Destitute Farmers on its Rolls in Western Drought Areas.

Employment of destitute farmers in the drought area of the Central West on Works Progress Administration projects is mounting 2,000 to 3,000 a day, the total now exceeding 28,000, Deputy Administrator Aubrey Williams was advised today by Howard O. Hunter, Assistant Administrator in charge of drought operations.

Three weeks of withering dry heat have caused definite crop failure in many areas, regardless of future weather developments, reports from State Works Progress Administrators to Mr. Hunter indicated. Lower temperatures and light rainfall in some sections had reduced human suffering, Mr. Hunter explained, but have brought no general relief.

More than 23,000 farmers have been forced to turn to Federal works projects in the Dakotas alone, State Administrators said, but were welcoming the opportunity to improve the water supply and provide a defense against future droughts.

In Montana, where forest fires have brought appeals for immediate increase of the forces of the State Forest Service Department, a number of Works Progress Administration employes may be transferred to Emergency Relief rolls for this purpose, Mr. Hunter said. A similar arrangement

was made in Wyoming, where five extensive forest fires recently were extinguished. The Works Progress Administration itself, Mr. Hunter explained, does not have the authority to employ men for this type of work.

Assignment of drought victims to Works Progress Administration rolls, up to today, was reported as follows:

South Dakota	12,500
North Dakota	11,048
Montana	2,513
Minnesota	905
Wyoming	750

Preparations to aid women drought sufferers also were advancing rapidly in these States, as their special problems developed. In the majority of cases farm women have remained at home, busy with household duties, when the farmer was compelled to abandon his fields and look to Federal agencies for work and a security income. In many families left destitute by the drought, however, the only employable member was a woman.

Expansion of the regular activities of the women's division of the Works Progress Administration in these States is expected to provide for the needs of women farmers.

Mrs. Hazel Falley, director of the women's division in North Dakota, has doubled requisitions for clothing materials to meet the work needs created by the emergency drought program and the calls expected next winter for wearing apparel to be made in Works Progress Administration sewing rooms. A new state-wide ceramics project, making dishes from North Dakota clay for WPA day nursery schools, has just been approved.

Other women drought victims will be employed in repairing books for public libraries.

Preparations to add nearly 1,500 women drought sufferers were being made in North Dakota as officials listened to a growing number of appeals. A woman farmer in Grant County, N. D., has refrained from a request for aid longer than any of her neighbors. She had carried on the farm work ever since her husband became an invalid several years ago as a result of injuries. Appearing at the county seat town, Carson, with the dust of barren fields still on her shoes, she said simply---"I'm licked now."

This county, with others in Southwestern North Dakota has suffered the most extreme effects of the drought. Thomas H. Moodie, State Works Progress Administrator, estimated that of the 1,280 farm families in Grant County, 75 per cent will soon be on Works Progress Administration or Resettlement Administration rolls.

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