

[PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 209, June 07, 1973]

AUTHORIZING THE CREATION, ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNAL TREE FARM PILOT PROJECTS IN THE PROVINCES OF IFUGAO AND BENGUET PROVIDING FOR THE MECHANICS OF IMPLEMENTATION THEREOF, AND APPROPRIATING THE NECESSARY FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE.

WHEREAS, some of our important watersheds have been wantonly denuded through the destruction of the forest cover as a result of improper cutting, squatting, cultivation and uncontrolled burning resulting in the drying up of streams and creeks, erosion of soil and siltation of dams affecting hydro-electric power, irrigation system and ultimately degenerating our forest to the extent that raw material requirement of industries dependent upon wood are now insufficient;

WHEREAS, there is a keen need for the rehabilitation of these watersheds by bringing back the forest cover through reforestation of denuded areas and protecting those partly destroyed from squatting and burning;

WHEREAS, the rehabilitation of these watersheds and forest lands is slow, difficult and expensive without the cooperation of our people both in the private and in the government sectors;

WHEREAS, this burden can be made easier and lighter by involving the barrio people as well as municipal and provincial officials in cooperation with the National Government, religious and civic organizations, and those who, in one way or another, can contribute to this common goal;

WHEREAS, there is a great need for raw materials to supply the wood carving and mining industries in the provinces of Ifugao and Benguet as well as long fibered species for the paper pulp industry;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to adopt the tree farming concept on a nation-wide basis with Ambuklao-Binga Watershed and Ifugao as the pilot areas; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to give incentives to barrio residents, timber licensees and other interested parties to augment reforestation efforts of the Government;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution as Commander-in-Chief of all the Armed Forces of the Philippines and pursuant to Proclamation No. 1081, dated September 21, 1972, and General Order No. 1, dated September 22, 1972, do hereby order and decree as part of the law of the land:

- (1) The creation of two (2) pilot projects for tree farms in the provinces of Ifugao and Benguet, the purpose of which is to grow trees in the public forest within each province, using the barrio residents, the barrio captains as their leaders, municipal officials as supervisors, the provincial officials as coordinators in the management and operation of the tree farms. The Bureau of Forest Development shall extend the necessary technical assistance for the growing, maintenance and development of the plantation while the Forest Products Research and Industries Development Commission shall extend its expertise and NSDB (National

Science Development Board) fund in the research for tree species suitable for such purposes;

(2) In the case of the Ifugao Project, the Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources upon the recommendation of the Director of Forest Development shall create the Ifugao Forest District covering the watershed areas which he determined as the suitable jurisdiction of the said District;

(3) Beginning Fiscal Year 1973-1974 the Commissioner of the Budget is authorized to release to the Bureau of Forest Development the amount of two hundred thousand pesos for administrative operations of the Ifugao Forest District, following the approved staffing pattern, which shall form part of the regular appropriations for the said Bureau every year;

(4) The inclusion in the regular appropriation of the Bureau of Forest Development for the coming Fiscal Year 1973-1974 of an additional amount of five hundred and fifty thousand pesos for sub-allotment in the maintenance of the above-mentioned tree farm projects during the fiscal year as follows:

(a) The amount of two hundred and fifteen thousand pesos for the province of Ifugao; and

(b) The amount of three hundred and thirty-five thousand pesos to the Upper Agno River Basin Forest District;

(5) The inclusion of one million pesos in the budget of the Bureau of Forest Development for succeeding fiscal years with an authority to sub-allot from its income such amount as may be necessary every fiscal year to continue and maintain these two projects or their expansion to other areas if found successful;

(6) The Budget Commission shall release the necessary funds needed by these two projects based on the development plans and/or programs submitted by the Director of Forest Development every budget year;

(7) To insure the proper protection of the established plantation and/or existing forests from squatters, fire or unlawful acts, the Provincial Commanders, Philippine Constabulary, shall coordinate all agencies concerned in the protection of forest in these pilot projects as well as other provinces, and take the leadership in apprehending violators;

(8) The further destruction or squatting of the watersheds of the Ambuklao and Binga Hydro-electric dams by vegetable gardeners on the pretext that they are authorized under Executive Order No. 87, Series of 1967, is hereby prohibited.

To prevent such eventuality, the Mountain Province Development Authority is hereby abolished and its functions and funds are transferred to the four (4) Mountain Provinces and the Bureau of Forest Development which shall undertake reforestation and other forest development within their respective jurisdiction: *Provided*, That the Bureau of Forest Development shall have control of the expenses of the funds based on the development program of work submitted by the governors of the four provinces for the purpose and duly approved by the Secretary of Agriculture and