

Lesson Four



Wisconsin Forest History



CONCEPTS

1. Nineteenth century logging greatly influenced Wisconsin's forested land.
2. The logging industry has played a major role in shaping Wisconsin's cultural geography, industry, transportation systems, economy, and location of communities.
3. Many consequences and benefits have resulted from the logging of Wisconsin's forests.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. Describe the role humans have played in altering Wisconsin's forests.
2. Explain the effects that logging and land-use have had on Wisconsin's forests.
3. Create a timeline of Wisconsin's forestry history.
4. Describe, in their own words, several consequences and benefits resulting from the exploitation of forests in Wisconsin.

TEACHING SITE

Classroom with overhead projector and wall space or chalkboard for hanging the Forest History Timeline

MATERIALS

Day 1 – Wisconsin Forest History passage, history pictures as overhead transparencies, and copy of **Questions and Answers for the Reading Sheet**.

Day 2 – Forest History Timeline (must create), colored construction paper, markers/pens/colored pencils, glue, scissors, old magazines (optional), and masking tape

LESSON TIME

Two 50-minute class periods

NUTSHELL

In this lesson, students will read a history passage and use the information they have acquired to create a timeline of Wisconsin's forestry history.

TEACHER PREPARATION

Read the History passage, copy story for students, make transparencies of the story pictures, gather timeline materials for day two and prepare the history timeline.

ACTIVITIES: DAY ONE

Tell students they will be learning about the history of Wisconsin forestry through a fictional story that incorporates factual history of Wisconsin. It is told through the eyes of a young girl who has learned about Wisconsin history from her grandfather. Tell students they may want to take notes in their log books as you read the story because they will have an assignment to complete after the story. You can either read the story to the students, or have them take turns reading it to the class. Either way, make sure you provide them with a copy of the story to follow.

Pictures have been included that correspond with different parts of the story. As you read through the story, you will notice numbers preceded by a "P" in parentheses. The pictures included at the end of this lesson have corresponding numbers. Show the appropriate pictures on an overhead projector as you read through the story.

As you read through the story, you will find numbers preceded by a "Q" after certain paragraphs. These numbers correspond to the questions found on the **Questions and Answers for the Reading sheet**. Ask the questions as you read through the story, giving students a few minutes to discuss and reflect on the information they have just heard.

At the end of the story is a quote by Aldo Leopold. Aldo Leopold was a renowned conservationist from Wisconsin. He believed strongly in finding a harmonious balance between humans and the components of the earth. In his book, *A Sand County Almanac*, Leopold describes life through the seasons on his Wisconsin farm and attempts to impart three basic concepts to the reader:

- That 'land is a community' is the basic concept of ecology
- That 'land is to be loved and respected' is an extension of ethics
- That land yields a cultural (aesthetic) harvest

Once students have read through the story and discussed the questions, explain to them who Aldo Leopold was and have them read the quote. Discuss its meaning in relationship to the story with your students. Questions to guide this discussion can be found on the **Questions and Answers for the Reading sheet**.

Finally, let students know that they will be coming back to the story the next day, to complete a timeline based on the information which that they were introduced to today.

ACTIVITIES: DAY TWO

Prior to class create the **Wisconsin Forest History Timeline** with the events and dates supplied in the activity. Use a long piece of butcher paper and a thick black marker to designate the events and dates on the butcher paper. Students will be creating a visual representation of events that took place within the story and pasting them onto this timeline. Leave enough space between the events to fit the students representations of the history story onto or around the timeline.

At the beginning of class take a moment to review with students the main parts of the history story. Show the class the Wisconsin Forest History Timeline that you have created and go through the dates and events on the timeline.

Explain to the students that the events in the story and the events on the timeline relate to one another. Tell students that as a final project for the history lesson, they will use the **Wisconsin Forest History Timeline** and the story to create a visual timeline that highlights the events from Wisconsin's forest history. The most important events can be taken directly from the story and timeline. It may be beneficial to discuss the story and timeline with the class and come to a consensus on the events that should be included.



Have students get in pairs or groups. Either let them choose a section or assign a section of the history story to each pair or group. It is fine to have more than one group work on the same section of a story, but make sure the entire story is covered.

Once students have a story section, tell them that they need to make a visual representation of their section. The goal of this assignment is to help the other students further understand the reading. The visual can be a drawing, a collage or some other type of visual, but it must focus on their section and be understandable to the rest of the class. Give students about 25 minutes to use colored paper, markers, glue, tape, old magazines and/or other art supplies that you have available for the students to use.

Once the students have completed their visual, have each group present their picture and explain how it relates to their section of the story and how it relates to the actual events listed at that point of time on the timeline. As each group finishes their presentation, have them place their visual on the timeline, so that each visual is in the correct chronological order and correlates with the timeline. When all visuals are up on the timeline, students will have a visual timeline they can refer to for the rest of the unit.

Student Log Book

Tell students that they have the opportunity to change a small portion of Wisconsin's logging history. Ask them to explain at least one thing about Wisconsin's logging history that they would change. They should justify their explanation by using information presented throughout the story that concerns the benefits and consequences of our logging history.

Resources

Botkin, Daniel B. 1990. *Discordant Harmonies*. Oxford University Press, New York.

Cronon, William. 1983. *Changes in the Land*. Hill and Wang. New York.

Leopold, Aldo. 1949. *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There*. Oxford University Press. New York.

Mead, Howard and Dean, Jill and Smith, Susan. 1971. *Portrait of the Past: A photographic journey through Wisconsin*. Wisconsin Tales and Trails Inc. Madison, Wisconsin.

Ostergren, Robert C. and Thomas R. Vale. 1997. *Wisconsin Land and Life*. The University of Wisconsin Press. Madison, Wisconsin.

Peattie, Donald Culross. 1948. *A Natural History of Trees of Eastern and Central North America*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.

Rosholt, Malcolm. 1980. *The Wisconsin Logging Book*. Palmer Publications Inc. Amherst, Wisconsin.

Rosholt, Malcolm. 1982. *Lumberman on the Chippewa*. Palmer Publications Inc. Amherst, Wisconsin.

Rosholt, Malcolm. 1986. *Photos from Wisconsin's Past*. Palmer Publications Inc. Amherst, Wisconsin.

Wessels, Tom. 1997. *Reading the Forested Landscape: A Natural History of New England*. The Countryman Press. Woodstock, Vermont.

Photography

The historic photos used throughout this lesson are part of a large collection of historic photos available at the State Historical Society in Madison, Wisconsin.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR THE READING

- Q1. Why were settlers coming to Wisconsin? *(In the beginning, to start a new life with land, wealth and adventure, later for work and to start over after the Civil War, still later for land and work)* What did they do when they arrived here? *(many worked in some aspect of the timber industry, then much later, when the trees were all harvested, they began farming)*
- Q2. Describe how you think Native American land use impacted Wisconsin's forest structure and composition. *(Used fire to burn small clearings, to attract game and new plants, creating a patchwork of different, younger plants and trees interspersed with the older forest. These patches had different composition and structure than the forests around them. The fire also created the vast prairies and oak savannas that were once a large portion of Southern WI)*
- Q3. What do you think the white pines, with their special characteristics were used for? *(Masts, building materials for houses, etc.)*
- Q4. Why didn't the settlers want England to have first choice of the white pines? *(They couldn't get as much of a profit, were going to war with them shortly – Americans would have to fight against ships with the white pine masts that had been harvested in America)*
- Q5. How did the transportation system in Wisconsin change? *(From rivers to railroads)* What effect did this have on the timber industry and the northern forests? *(They could access the northern forests that were too difficult to get to by other methods)*
- Q6. How could these fires have started? *(Besides farmers - lightning, careless match, etc.)*
- Q7. Where did the rocks come from that the farmers had such problems with? *(Glaciers left them behind – review lesson three)*
- Q8. How can you distinguish most replanted forests from natural forests? *(In replanted forests, the trees are planted in straight lines and usually all of the same type – plantations)*
- Q9. What did you learn from this story about how our ancestors treated the land? With the advantage of the knowledge you now have, would you have done anything differently?

QUESTIONS FOR THE LEOPOLD QUOTE

“When some remote ancestor of ours invented the shovel, he became a giver; he could plant a tree. And when the axe was invented, he became a taker; he could chop it down. Whoever owns land has thus assumed, whether he knows it or not, the divine functions of creating and destroying plants.”

Aldo Leopold, 1949 - *A Sand County Almanac*

Ask students what they think Leopold means by this statement. Analyze the quote with the following questions: A giver to whom? What is he giving? A taker of what and from whom? What has man assumed? Ask the class to correlate this quote to what they know about Wisconsin's forest history and ask the same questions again. Ask the students if, from what they have learned, they think humans have had an impact on the forests of Wisconsin. Brainstorm these impacts with the entire class.



WISCONSIN FOREST HISTORY



One of the strongest memories of my childhood is the summer my younger brother and I spent with our grandfather in the Northwoods of Wisconsin. I was about 11 years old that summer, and my brother was 4. We lived down in Milwaukee at the time, and Grandpa's house - really old, wooden, two stories, set back in the woods - always scared me a little bit. One thing about the house I really remember is all the long hallways filled with doors leading to different rooms. I remember thinking that some of those rooms probably hadn't been used in years.

Grandpa would always doze off in the afternoons in his big leather chair, and as soon as I noticed this, I would make my brother sneak upstairs with me. I always felt safer when he was with me, even though he was only 4 years old. I remember staring down the long hallway at the top of the stairs and wondering what was behind some of the closed doors of the rooms. More furniture? Who once slept there? Why were the doors shut?

We could never gather the courage to open one of the doors. Inevitably, we would end up back in the living room whispering, "Grandpa wake up." Finally one day towards the end of the summer, I nervously sputtered a request to my Grandfather.

"Grandpa, I was wondering if you would tell me what is in some of the rooms upstairs?"

He stared at his morning paper for a long time, taking his glasses off and then putting them on again. I wondered if he hadn't heard me.

"Grandpa, I was..."

"Yes," he said slowly. "I think I would like to show you some of the things in the rooms upstairs."

I sat on the living room couch, half frozen and half ready to make a mad dash up the stairs. I helped Grandpa out of his chair and ascended the stairwell slowly with him. The upstairs was dark except for a little light coming through the window at the end of the hallway. Grandpa led me to one of the first doors and slowly opened it. We entered a room that was darker than the hallway. I immediately sneezed as I breathed in the musty smell.

"Just a minute, kiddo, I have a lamp over here."

I heard Grandpa fumbling around for the lamp and then a dim light appeared, showing me a room crammed full of boxes, pictures, and furniture. It seemed that every square inch of space was taken up. Elaborately framed pictures were leaning on many of the boxes. I carefully followed Grandpa to a dusty desk that was beside the bed. He sat in the chair by the desk and I found a stable seat atop one of the boxes next to him.

I vividly remember the time we spent in the room that day. Grandpa spent hours telling me stories about my family - about my ancestors. I didn't understand everything he told me, but I was interested in what he was sharing because he was very emotional about it all. Sometimes he would laugh out loud when he showed me old photographs; other times he was very serious about the connections our family has to the land and trees of Wisconsin.

One of the first stories Grandpa told me was how my distant relatives came to be some of the first settlers of Wisconsin. My great- great- great- grandparents, Sven and Lena Anderson, came to Wisconsin from Sweden in 1832. They were hoping to find a new way of life that included land, wealth and, of course, adventure. There were a lot of other immigrants coming into southeast Wisconsin as part of that first wave of people, which lasted from 1830 to 1850. Sven and Lena found some success here, and apparently sent letters to their brothers and sisters back in Sweden. These letters spoke of the good farming and the endless white pines and the money that could be made by logging and clearing the land up North. Their nephew, Erik Olsen, found his way to Wisconsin from the east coast in 1856. He had heard about the lumber mills and logging companies that paid good wages for hard workers from his aunt and uncle. He was part of the second major wave of people who came to Wisconsin between 1850 and 1860.

Erik left Wisconsin in 1861 to fight in the Civil War. He managed to survive through four years of fighting, and brought his brother Nels back to Wisconsin with him in 1866. Many others were travelling to Wisconsin, looking for work in the logging industry, which was really booming by this time. This third wave of people lasted from 1865 at the end of the Civil War to about 1880.

One last major group of settlers came into Wisconsin between 1880 and 1920. Grandpa showed me a picture of his mother and my great-grandmother, Ingrid Peterson. She had come to Wisconsin with her parents from Sweden in 1890. The trees had all been logged out by this time, and the government was pushing for more people to come and farm this cleared land. Many of the loggers had moved out west, looking for more trees, but my relatives decided to stay and try to farm the land they had previously logged. Grandpa told me that my great-grandfather Carl Anderson met Ingrid at a dance one night, and they eventually got married and had children, including my Grandpa. (Q1)

Grandpa told me lots of stories throughout the last few weeks of the summer. I just couldn't get enough information about my relatives. Another story was about how when Sven and Lena moved into Wisconsin. (P1) Their first impression of the trees was that they were inexhaustible and that once logging started, it would never end. My relatives realized how valuable the trees were and how they could profit from them. (P2) Grandpa told me, "There were so many trees in Wisconsin. Imagine a land with no roads or homes. Just trees, after trees, after trees. Some trees were wider than you are tall. It was said that a squirrel could travel across the state without ever coming down from those trees."

Sven and Lena realized they were sitting on a gold mine of opportunity. Almost all of the money made by them and the other early settlers came from logging. There were many jobs related to the lumber industry: cutting the trees down, hauling them out of the forest, and sawing them into lumber which could be sold.

These settlers, however, disrupted the lives of the Native Americans who had been living in Wisconsin for thousands of years. These tribes believed in using the land, not owning it. They did not believe that humans could own the land. This view was very much at odds with how settlers viewed the land. The settlers were removing the trees from their own land as fast as they could to make money. Once all the trees were gone, they would sell or abandon their land and move on to repeat the process in a new place. They didn't seem to think about the effect their rapid removal of trees would have.

I asked Grandpa how Native Americans used the land differently than the settlers. He asked me how much I thought a tree was worth. I thought it was a strange question, but I told him, maybe

100 dollars. He told me that Native Americans didn't view a tree's worth in dollars and cents. They valued trees for the resources they provided, like shelter, food, and habitat for game animals. He gave me an example of how the Native Americans used fire to clear only small parts of the forest. These clearings attracted game animals that were looking for food. Young plants would also become established in this newly cleared area. The Native Americans used these plants and animals for food and clothing. (Q2)

(P3) One of the framed pictures in that old musty room was a black and white photo of Erik Olssen. When grandpa and I looked at it under the dim light, it wasn't Erik that amazed me, but the tree he was standing under. "That tree is huge," I remember telling Grandpa. "Yes it is. That's a white pine – they reached 150 feet in height, half the length of a football field. They were all over Wisconsin when your relatives first came here," Grandpa said.

(P4) Grandpa continued to tell me that the white pines' popularity started in the New England states, in the mid-1700's, before the Revolutionary War. The white pine is very special because the wood is very light and soft compared to other wood. The best part, though, was that the trees were so tall and straight. (Q3)

Because of this, the wood was in demand all over the world, especially to the Queen of England and her subjects. They were interested in reserving the very largest and mightiest trees for the Royal Navy of England. Since the white pines were straight, light, and sturdy, they were perfect for ship masts. Loggers in New England didn't want to have to save the best trees for some distant Queen, thousands of miles away.

Because of this and similar disagreements, England began announcing trade regulations and rules that affected all kinds of products important to the colonies, such as tea and lumber. No one was pleased with England's demands. This unhappiness led to our country wanting independence from England. As it became obvious that a war was going to break out soon, the loggers realized that Americans could end up fighting English ships fitted with white pine masts that they had logged.

In 1774 Congress stopped the export of everything to England, including the white pine. The American Revolution began one year later. Other nations, like Spain and Portugal, kept up the demand for American white pines. They wanted them for shipbuilding and construction and were willing to pay top dollar. "As your relatives came to Wisconsin, the logging companies they worked for were making quite a profit selling these huge trees at a top price on the market," Grandpa said. (Q4)

In 1836, after Sven and Lena had been here for four years, the Wisconsin Territory was created. Twelve years later, in 1848, Wisconsin was established as a state. (P5) When Erik arrived in 1856, lumber mills had popped up all over Wisconsin and the state's rivers made up the major transportation system. Once the logs were cut, men would float them down river to the sawmill. The logging industry created many mill towns along Wisconsin's rivers. Towns such as Appleton, Green Bay, and Stevens Point were known for transforming logs into lumber for our growing nation.

At first, the pineries farther north were not popular lumbering areas because of the steep and winding waterways. These waterways made it difficult to transport logs down the river. (P6) That all changed when railroads arrived in the mid-1800s and there was access to the north country for transporting timber. Many of these railroad lines are still transporting logs for lumber and paper

companies today. The railroads were usually built on the flat stretches of land. (P7) This terrain also happened to be perfect for highways. Many highways were built over old railroad lines. Sometimes you can see old railroad tracks running along side the highway. (Q5)

Another effect the lumber mills had on Wisconsin can be seen in the buildings and homes that surround the state. The white pine proved to be the most generally useful wood in Wisconsin's and America's history. Thousands of homes all across Wisconsin had been built with white pine by 1905. In fact, I learned that Grandpa's house had been built from white pine trees that his father, Carl Anderson, had logged.

(P8) At turn of the century, over ninety percent of Wisconsin's forest trees had been logged. They were either utilized for development, exported to other states or countries, lost at the bottom of lakes and rivers, or left on the forest floor to fuel enormous wildfires. The mass logging of the forests produced many ecological changes in Wisconsin's forests. The mass removal of trees allowed much of our soil to be lost into rivers and streams and washed away. Not only the soil, but logs and tremendous amounts of sawdust and wood chips clogged our waterways. Just looking at the pictures of the old forests with Grandpa, I could tell that the forests then were totally different than our forests today.

(P9) By the time Grandpa was born, in 1898, his parents had been trying to farm the land that had been logged off for about 4 years. This was the only work left. There just weren't any trees left to be harvested. "Farmers used fire to do a lot of their work," Grandpa told me. They used it to burn cut land so that it would be ready for planting. Fire was used to clear away the leftover tree stumps and slash. Deposits of valuable soil nutrients were left by the fires. The farmers hoped their crops would be successful, after being planted in this rich soil.

All the dead wood, or slash as the lumbermen called it, was left on the ground by the loggers and became a big problem. (P10) This dry slash fueled the most severe fires in Wisconsin's history. Fires started by the farmers could get out of control very easily with all of that fuel ready to burn. One such fire, the Peshtigo Fire in 1871, has been called one of our country's greatest catastrophes. It killed 1400 people and burned 1,250,000 acres of land - an area larger than one million football fields! (Q6)

As the occurrences of fires increased throughout Wisconsin's forests, the environmental conditions throughout many areas began to change. Grandpa told me that some trees need fire to reproduce, while others are destroyed by fire. The seeds of the white and red pine trees could not survive the heat of the fires. They could not reproduce. On the other hand, most jack pine cones would *release* seeds if exposed to fire. These seeds spread across the burned land and grew in abundance. Grandpa said that today the jack pine is found in areas where it wasn't found before the logging companies came through Wisconsin.

(P11) Making the transition to farming in these burned and cut-over areas wasn't easy for my great-grandfather, or for the other farmers in Wisconsin. Over time, the soil began to lose nutrients and harvests became smaller and smaller. The colder weather up north meant a shorter growing season. The farmers had a lot of large rocks to work around when plowing their soil, some that were too large to move. (P12) By the 1920s most farmers had abandoned their land and started to look for work elsewhere. In their abandoned fields aspen and white birch trees started to grow where the oaks, maples, and other trees originally thrived. (Q7)

With the original forests cleared and farms abandoned, many people wondered what to do with all this land. (P13) A man by the name of Edward M. Griffith became the Wisconsin Forestry Commissioner in the early 1900s. He was one of the first to realize the benefits of replanting trees. Mr. Griffith had a hard time convincing people how replanting the trees would be helpful to the state. Grandpa said it was a hard sell. As far as he was concerned, his ancestors had worked very hard to cut the trees down. After all that hard work, what was to be gained by replanting?

Griffith found plenty of opposition to his tree-planting scheme and was kicked out of office shortly after his work began. Eventually though, his idea caught on, and replanting became very popular. (P14) By the late 1920s, tree farms, including the one Grandpa planted on my family's land, began to spring up in the state and seedlings planted on these farms were reforesting the clear-cut land of Wisconsin. New laws protected the trees from being cut down too soon.

Prosperity didn't last for long after the stock market crashed in 1929. Wisconsin farmers were in the midst of the Great Depression for the next six years. During this time, many of the farmers couldn't pay the taxes on their tree farms. Grandpa said that he and my Grandma had to sell some of their land off, but were able to keep the farmhouse. He said that many of the farmers around him had to let all their property go to the government. Many of the county and national forests in Wisconsin started from this land that was taken by the government.

One way that people were able to find work in these hard times was through the Civilian Conservation Corps, otherwise known as the CCC. The CCC was put in charge of replanting a lot of the national and county forests. Friends of Grandpa's worked for the CCC replanting land up north with trees after they had lost their farms in the Depression. Grandpa told me that due to workers like his friends, the Northwoods was replanted with the trees that make it so beautiful today. In fact, by the 1960's over two-thirds of Northern Wisconsin was forested again, largely due to these replanting efforts and the natural regeneration now encouraged by the northern counties. (Q8)

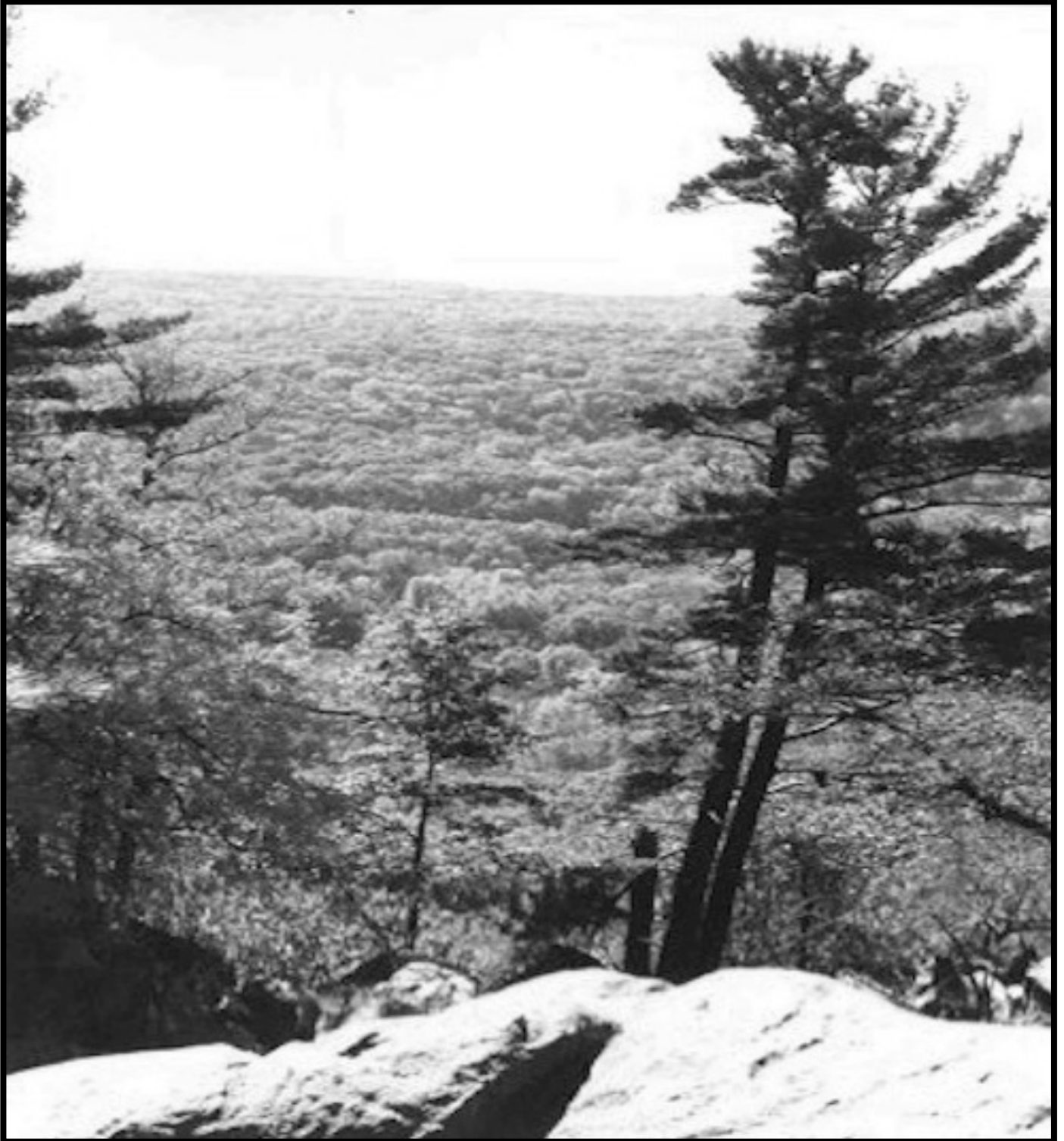
Before that summer, I hadn't really understood the connections that my family had to the North woods. I eventually became a high school science teacher, partly because of the interest in the forest that my Grandpa sparked in me. Now I try to help my students understand the connections *they* have to the Northwoods, whether their family has lived in Wisconsin for 2 years or 150 years. I tell my classes the stories that my grandfather told me, and we often wonder what it was like back then. I try to help them understand the value of looking back at what our ancestors have done and learning from their mistakes and from their successes. I hope that you will take a moment to think about what your connections with the Northwoods of Wisconsin may be. Think about what you have learned that will help your generation live in balance with the forests. (Q9)



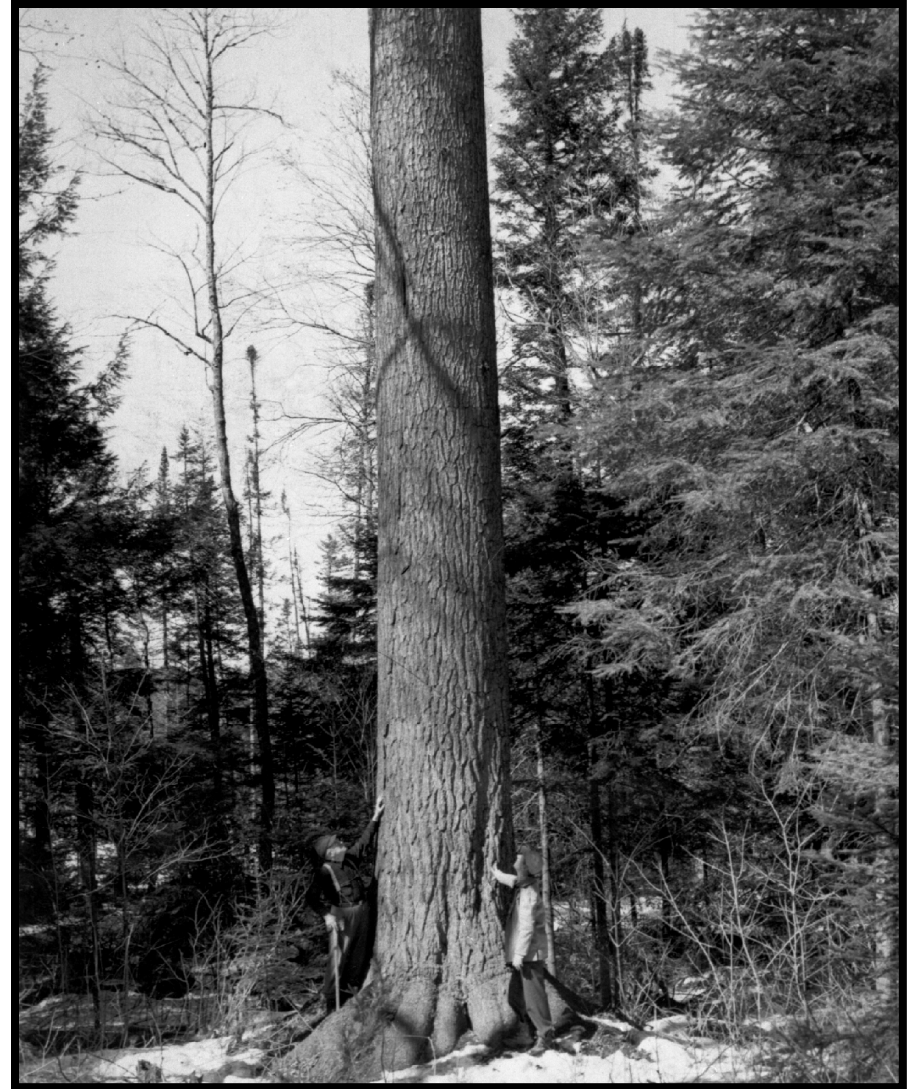
EVENTS FOR THE WISCONSIN HISTORY TIMELINE

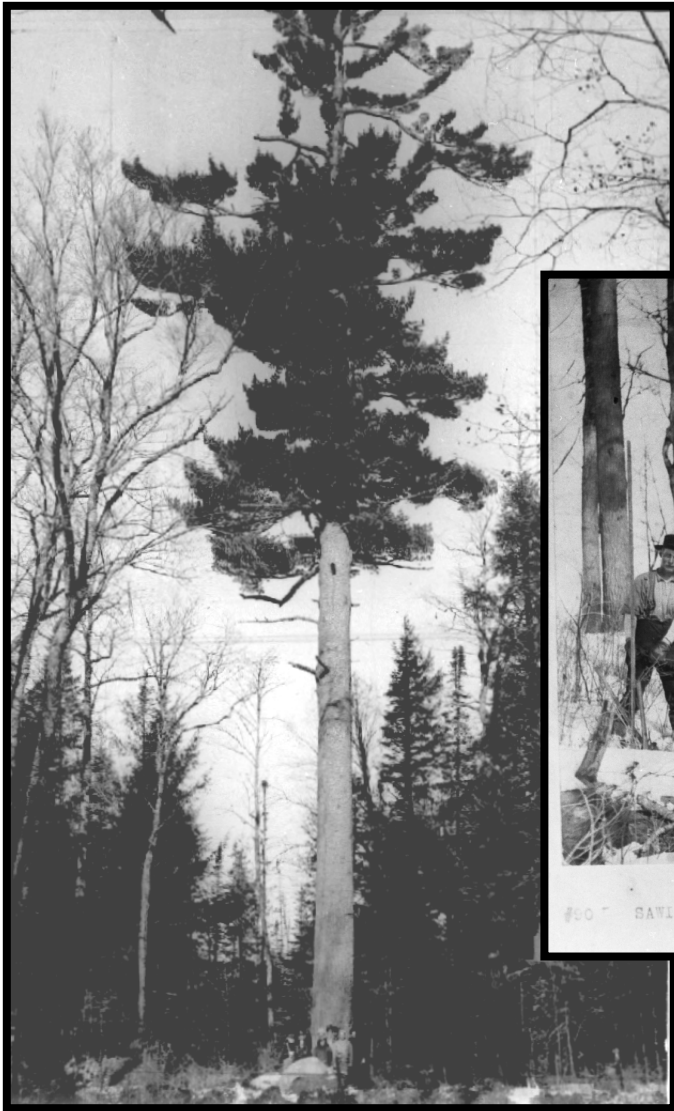
- 1809** First saw mill in Wisconsin at De Pere on Fox River.
- 1832** Black Hawk War ends. First surge of European settlement.
- 1836** Creation of Wisconsin Territory. Timber harvest began as native people lost their land.
- 1848** Wisconsin statehood. First Wisconsin paper mill built in Milwaukee.
- 1850** First railroad in Wisconsin built from Milwaukee to Waukeesha.
- 1861-65** Civil War
- 1871** Peshtigo Fire
- 1880** Logging becomes number 1 industry in Wisconsin (continues for 30 years).
- 1899** Wisconsin becomes highest timber producer in the nation. Produced 9.7% of all lumber.
- 1903** State Forestry Commission established and within two years acquired $\frac{1}{4}$ million acres of tax delinquent land.
- 1904** Edward Griffith appointed State Forester.
- 1906** State Reforestation Fund created.
- 1911** First Wisconsin tree nursery established at Trout Lake.
- 1913** Representatives of five northern Wisconsin counties formed an opposition to state forestry work.
- 1914 -18** WW I
- 1915** Wisconsin Supreme Court decides no further state funds to be spent on forestry.
- 1924** Referendum passed allowing state to spend money on forestry.
- 1925** Federal government purchases land for two national forests in Wisconsin, to be later named Chequamegon and Nicolet.
- 1928** First school forests in the nation are dedicated at Crandon and Leona. First county forest established in Langlade County.
- 1929-35** Great Depression
- 1933** Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) created to fight forest fires and plant trees.
- 1941-45** WWII
- 1953-present** Wisconsin becomes number one paper making state.
- 1960-present** Fire used as a forest management tool.
- 1960** Over 2/3 of northern Wisconsin was reforested.

P1



P2

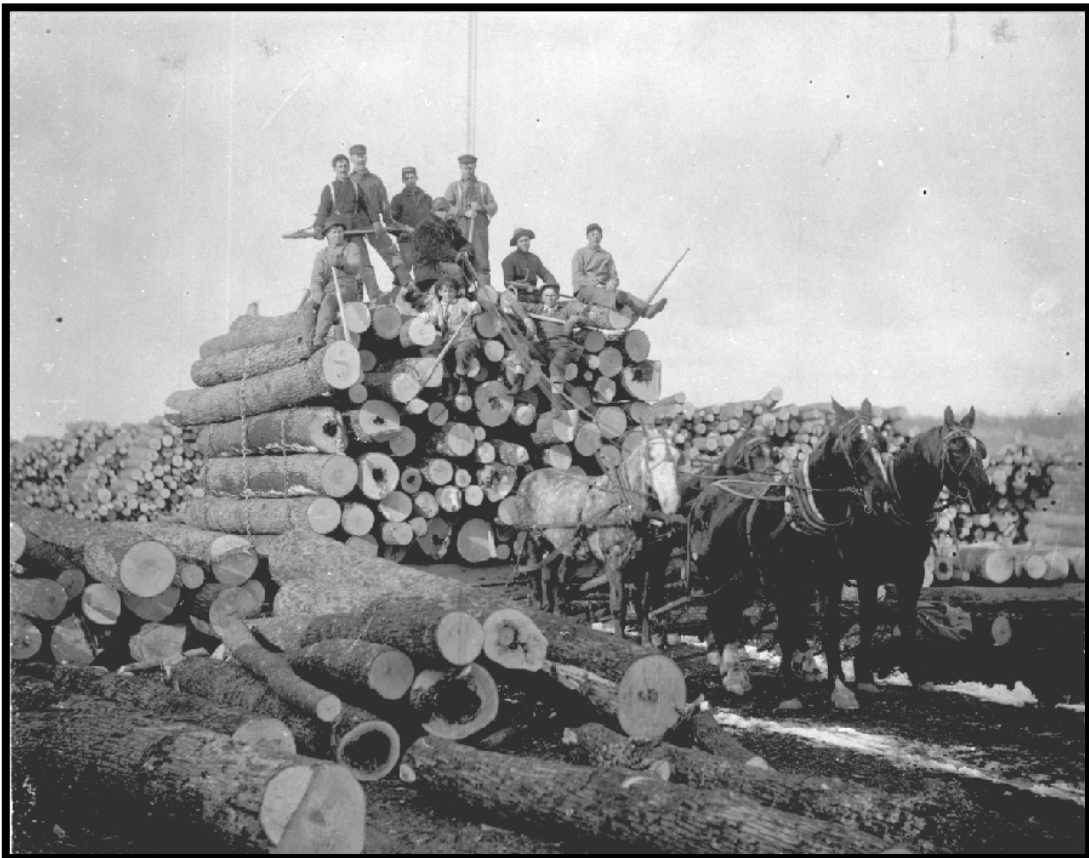




#00 - SAWING DOWN TIMBER. HOPES & BAYNE'S CAMP. LOST LAKE, WIS. 1900



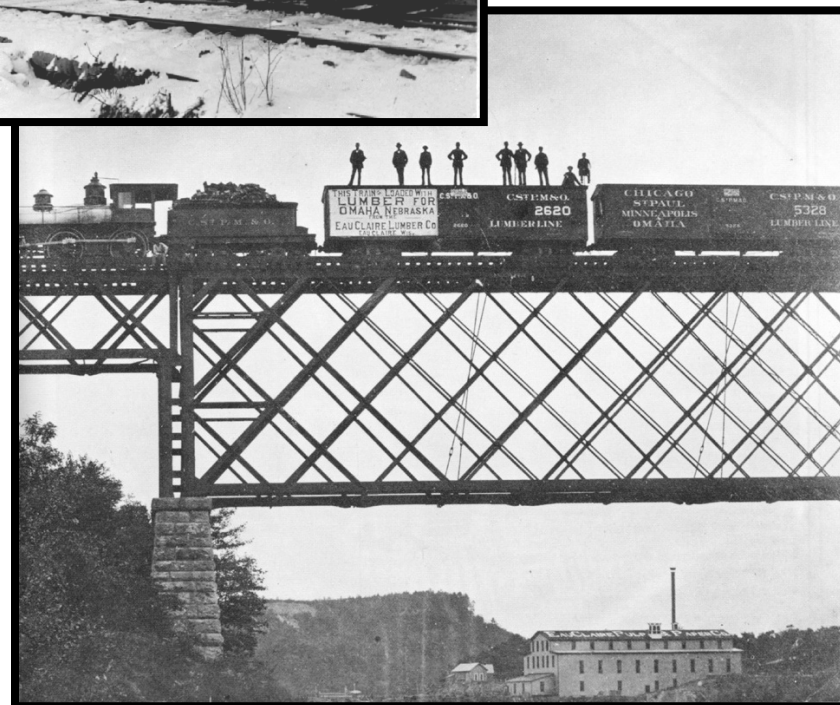
P4



P5

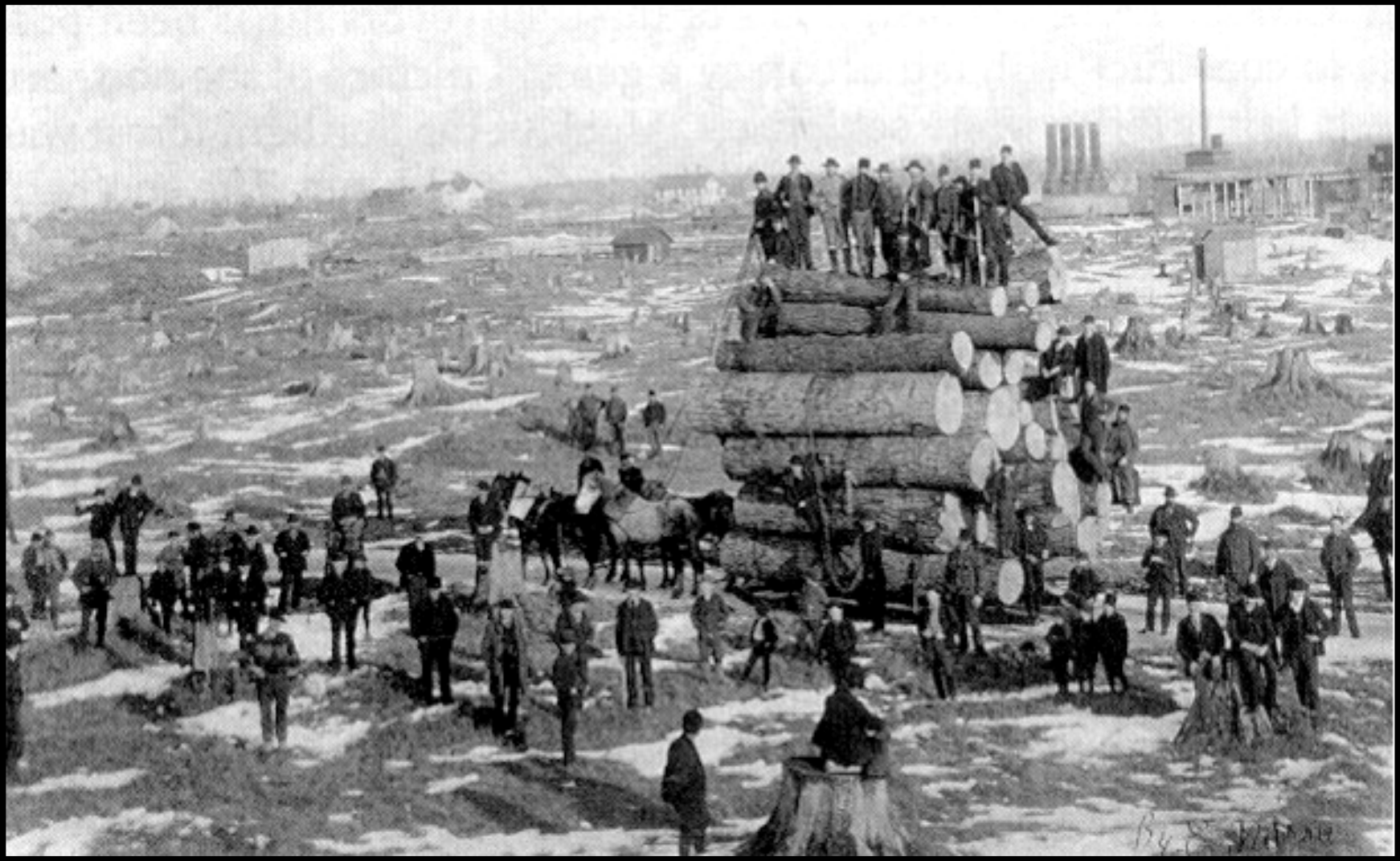


P6



P7





P9



P10



P11



P12



24319 A



P14



Cut these cards apart and hang them in order to create a timeline. They can be spaced to fit the artwork created by the students during **day two of lesson four** of Wisconsin Forestree.

Wisconsin Forest History Timeline

1809

First saw mill in Wisconsin at De Pere on the Fox River.

1832

Black Hawk war ends.
First surge of European settlement.

1836

Creation of Wisconsin Territory. Timber harvest began as native people lost their land.

1848

Wisconsin statehood.
First Wisconsin paper mill built in Milwaukee.

1850

First railroad in
Wisconsin built from
Milwaukee to
Waukesha.

1861-65

Civil War.

1871

Peshtigo fire.

1880

Logging becomes
number 1 industry in
Wisconsin. This
continues for 30 years.

1899

Wisconsin becomes highest timber producer in the nation--produced 9.7% of all lumber.

1903

State Forestry Commission established and within two years acquired 1/4 million acres of tax delinquent land.

1904

Edward Griffith appointed first Wisconsin Forestry Commissioner (State Forester).

1906

State Reforestation Fund created.

1911

First Wisconsin tree nursery established at Trout Lake.

1913

Representatives of five northern Wisconsin counties formed an opposition to state forestry work.

1914-18

World War I.

1915

Wisconsin Supreme Court decides no further state funds to be spent on forestry.

1924

Referendum passed allowing the state to spend money on forestry.

1925

Federal government purchases land for two national forests in Wisconsin, to be later named Chequamegon and Nicolet.

1928

First school forests in the nation are dedicated at Crandon and Leona. First county forest established in Langlade County.

1929-35

Great Depression.

1933

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) created to fight forest fires and plant trees.

1941-45

World War II.

1953-present

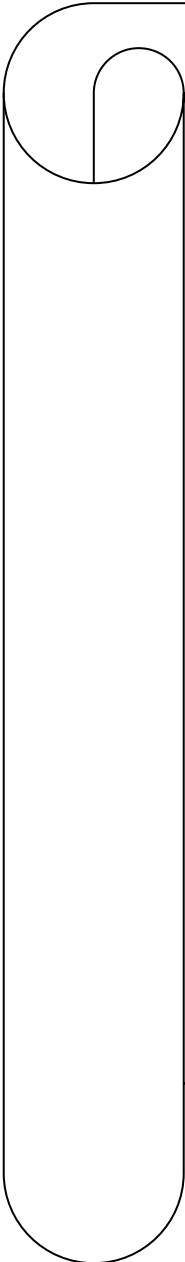
Wisconsin is number one paper making state.

1960-present

Fire used as a forest management tool.

1960

Over 2/3 of northern
Wisconsin had been
reforested.



First saw mill in
Wisconsin at De
Pere on Fox River.

1809



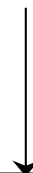
1810

1820

1830

Black Hawk
war ends.
First surge
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1832



Creation of Wisconsin Territory.
Timber harvest began as native people lost their land.

1836

1840

Wisconsin statehood.
First WI paper mill built in Milwaukee.

1848

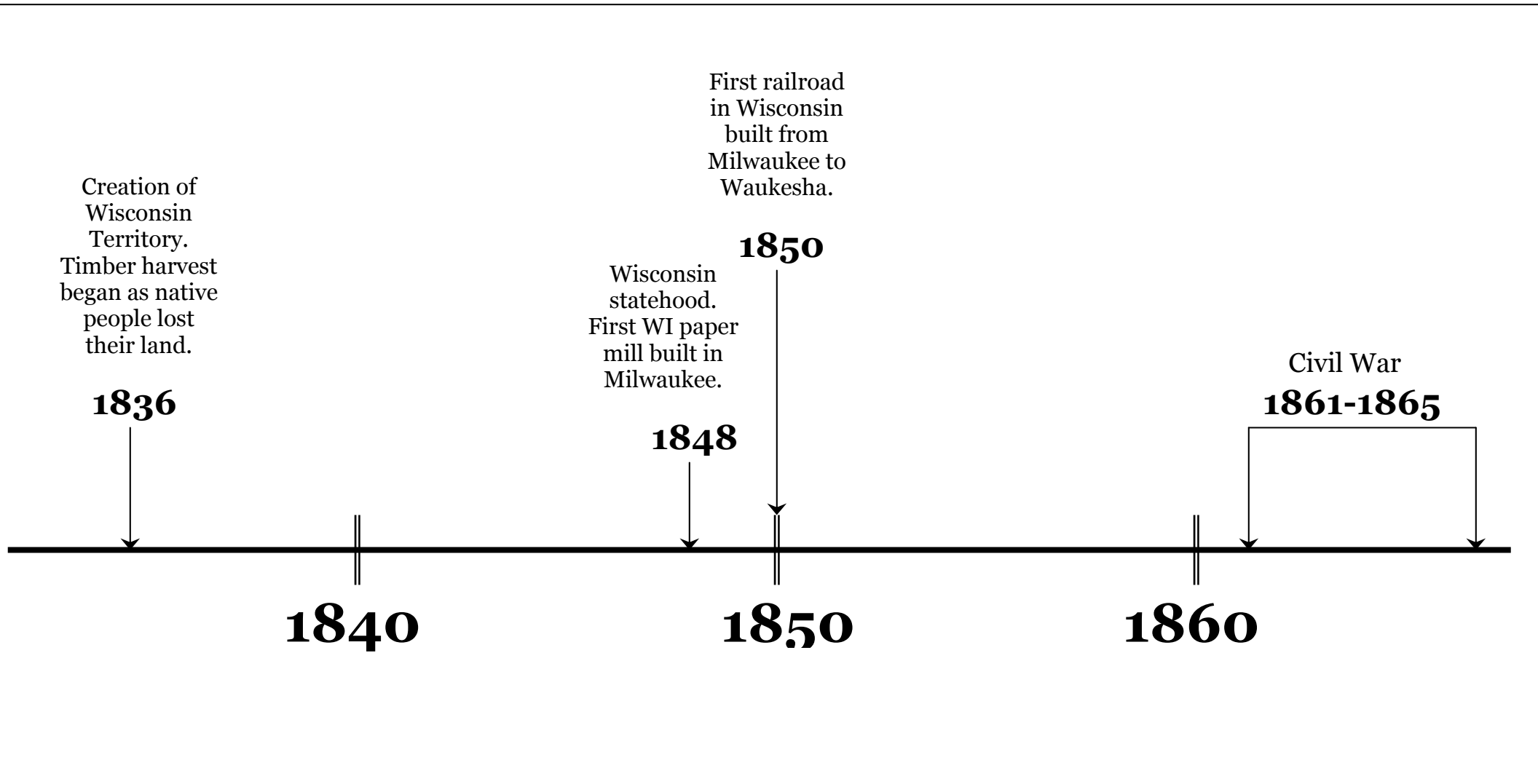
First railroad in Wisconsin built from Milwaukee to Waukesha.

1850

1850

1860

Civil War
1861-1865



Wisconsin Forest History Timeline

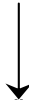
Peshtigo fire

1871



Logging becomes
number one industry in
Wisconsin. Continues
for thirty years.

1880



Wisconsin
becomes highest
timber producer in
the nation.
Produced 9.7% of
all lumber.

1899



1870

1880

1890

1900



State Forestry Commission established and within two years acquired 1/4 million acres of tax delinquent land.

1903

Edward Griffith appointed State Forester.

1904

State reforestation fund created.

1906

First Wisconsin tree nursery established at Trout Lake.

1911

Representatives of five northern Wisconsin counties formed an opposition to state forestry work.

1913

Wisconsin Supreme Court decides no further state funds be spent on forestry.

1915

World War I
1914-1918

Federal government purchases land for two national forests in Wisconsin, to be later named Chequamegon and Nicolet.

1925

Referendum passed allowing state to spend money on forestry.

1924

First school forests in the nation are dedicated to Crandon and Leona. First county forest established in Langlade County.

1928

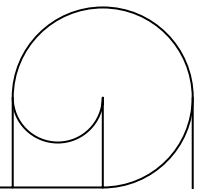
Great Depression

1929-1935

1910

1920

1930



Fire used as a forest management tool.

1960-present

Over 2/3 of northern Wisconsin was reforested.

1960

Wisconsin becomes number 1 paper making state.

1953-present

World War II
1941-1945

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) created to fight forest fires and plant trees.

1933

1940

1950

1960

