# Timber!

The History of Forestry in Wisconsin

In the late 1700's, virgin forests covered about 30 million acres (86%) of Wisconsin. As settlers arrived, they cleared the land for agriculture. Beginning in the 1840's, logging crews harvested pine to build cities and settlers' homes on the American frontier. These crews were so efficient that white pine was nearly wiped out in Wisconsin by 1910. In the late 1800's, after many pines had been cut, logging crews began to harvest hemlock for the tannic acid located in the bark. Once the pines and hemlocks had been cut, the hardwoods—maple, beech, aspen, birch, and ash—were harvested to clear more land for farming. In addition to the cutting, wildfires took their toll, burning half a million acres per year. By 1915, only 380,000 acres (1%) of timberland remained in the entire state. At this time in history, people viewed the forest as an inexhaustible resource.

By the 1920's, the magnitude of the devastation was beginning to show. The cutover/burned over lands could not support forest products industries—nor were they good farmlands. A small group of people recognized the value of trees and forested lands for economic development, wildlife, water quality, and recreation. In the late 1920's, Wisconsin foresters, with support and cooperation from the public, the Legislature, lumber and logging associations, and conservation groups, began to reestablish Wisconsin's forests.

Today, Wisconsin's forests total over 16 million acres (46% of the state), and foresters are managing our forests in ways that will ensure continued productivity, habitat, and recreation opportunities. It took their commitment to establish the comprehensive forestry legislation and management practices that remain the foundation of our programs today.

Getting Ready

1. Make copies of the student page "How Well Do You Know Your State History?" on page 21 for each group of 2 - 4 students.

2. Make a copy of pages 22 - 26 and cut apart for use by student research groups.

3. Gather reference books on Wisconsin history listed under **Finding Out More!**
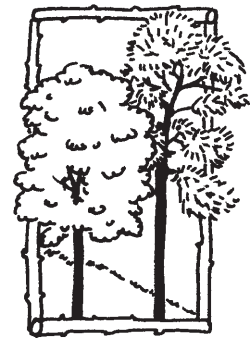
Method

Students create a "scrapbook" that interprets the history of Wisconsin's forests.

Key Concepts

Wisconsin's forests have provided for the needs of people for thousands of years.

The recovery of Wisconsin forests from overharvesting at the turn of the century is a success story.

Today's forests are the result of thousands of decisions made by forest property owners and users, each seeking different benefits from the land.

Objectives

- investigate a time period of Wisconsin history

- create a scrapbook page or other product that tells the story of a particular time period

- compare and contrast the way people have viewed the forest throughout Wisconsin history

- research local history
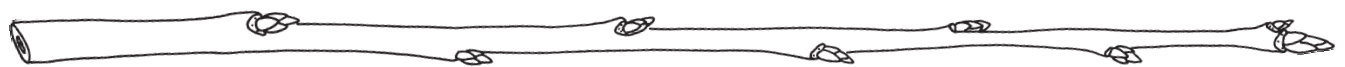
Subjects & WI Academic Standards

Science:
A.4, B.4, C.4, E.4, H.4
B.8, C.8, F.8

Social Studies:
A.4, B.4, E.4
A.8, B.8, E.8

Math:
A.4, A.8

English/Language Arts:
A.4, B.4, C.4, E.4, F.4
A.8, B.8, C.8, E.8, F.8

Environmental Education:
A.4, B.4, C.4
A.8, B.8, C.8

Materials

- copies of "How Well Do You Know Your State History?"
- 1 copy of time periods and questions found on pages 22 - 26
- reference books
- Internet access

Preparation Time

15 minutes

Activity Time

Part A: 15 minutes

Part B: 1 50-minute class period plus homework

Part C: 1 50-minute class period plus homework

Setting

classroom

Doing the Activity

Part A
Set the Stage for Learning

1. Help your students briefly review Wisconsin history. Give each group of 2 - 4 students a copy of page 21.

2. Ask students to cut apart the events and put them in chronological order. If they think they know the year of an event, encourage them to record it.

3. As a class, go over the events, allowing students to work together to establish the correct order of the timeline. See the key on page 26. As an alternative, you may want to use this activity to assess students' current knowledge of Wisconsin history.

Part B
Research Our History

1. Explain that the class is going to take a close look at the history of forestry in Wisconsin. Each group of 2 - 4 students will be assigned an historical time period. The groups will research their time periods and share their results with the rest of the class. Think about how the results might be shared. Don't decide yet! But do consider some of these options:

   ❧ **Scrapbook.** The groups could put together scrapbook pages that interpret their time periods. Invite a parent or retailer with experience in assembling memory books to give the students ideas about how they might put together their pages.

   ❧ **Book.** Each group could write and illustrate a page(s) for a book that the class could publish and place in the school library. See the book *Paddle to the Sea* by Holling Clancy Holling for ideas on how this book might look.

   ❧ **Mural.** Each group could contribute a panel to a linear mural that would show the history of our forests. You could display the mural in the classroom or a school hallway.

   ❧ **Web page.**

   ❧ **PowerPoint or HyperStudio presentation.**

2. Assign each group a period of time to investigate. See pages 22 - 26 for the different times. You can combine or split these time periods to meet the size and special needs of your class.

3. Discuss with students how they will research the time periods and events they have been given. Encourage them to use reference books, the Internet, history books, and

local historical resources. They should add other events they uncover to their lists. They should also add local events to their lists.

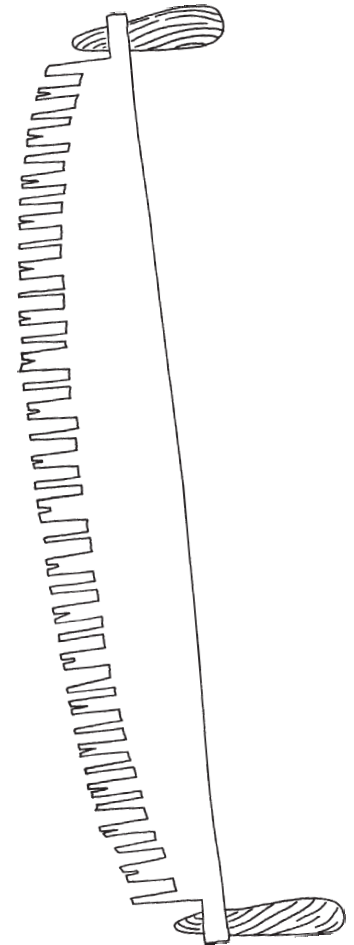## Part C
Put the Pieces Together

1. After they have pulled together interesting photos, quotes, newspaper articles, or other information from their time periods, meet together as a class to share preliminary findings. Ask each group:

   ❧ What was it like during your time period?

   ❧ What did our area of Wisconsin look like during your time period?

   ❧ What else was happening in Wisconsin?

   ❧ How did people feel about the forests?

2. Looking at the whole history of forestry in Wisconsin, ask these questions:

   ❧ Were the people who cut all the trees "bad" people or did they really believe that the trees were limitless?

   ❧ What were the consequences of not thinking ahead?

   ❧ When did we start to plan for the future use of forests and other natural resources?

   ❧ What were some early steps toward conserving our forest resources?

   ❧ Who were some of the early leaders promoting the conservation of Wisconsin's forests?

3. Ask each student to write a paragraph or two summarizing what was happening during his/her time period.

4. Decide how to organize and present the information. Look back at the options listed under Part B step 1. Are there other possibilities? Select the method and work cooperatively to produce the pieces of the final project.

5. Think of a way to share the final project with other students in your school, parents, or the members of your community.

crosscut saw

Assessing Student Understanding

Assess student participation in classroom discussions. Observe their research skills and the types of questions they pursue. Evaluate their individual written summaries and the final group products based on criteria that you have established with the students.
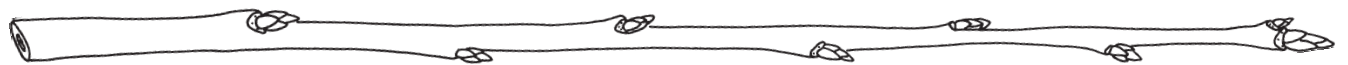
Extending Student Learning

Read Tree Rings

In the first activity, "Every Tree for Itself," your students learned to interpret the cross-sections of trees. Go on a field trip to an area that was recently logged, or bring large cross-sections into the classroom. Look at the cross-sections. Assuming the tree was recently cut, figure out what year it began to grow. Use pushpins and yarn to date the rings, and label important historical events that the tree has witnessed. Can you find a cross-section of a 100-year-old tree? Do you think you could find a 200-year-old tree in Wisconsin? Challenge your group to find areas where such a tree might be located.

Focus on Local Changes

The *Project Learning Tree* activity "Did You Notice?" encourages students to study changes in their local community over short and long periods and to identify patterns of change. Grades 3 - 8.

The *Wisconsin's Millennium Tree* activity "School Grounds Timeline" looks at the school grounds or school forest to develop a timeline or diorama. Grade 4.

Discover a Famous or Historic Tree

You may have interesting trees in your park or community! Contact your local historical society or county forester. Check out the book *Wisconsin's Famous and Historic Trees* by Bruce Allison and Elizabeth Durbin. It lists historic trees, hanging trees, homeplace trees, Native American trees, and surveyors' trees. It also tells you where you can find trees made famous by legend, art, and individuals.

Do a Little tReesearch!

Try this idea from the *NatureScope: Trees Are Terrific* activity "Celebrate Trees." Have teams of four or five kids research some ways trees have influenced our lives through time. Here are some examples of topics they can learn about: the first railroads, druids, iron smelting during the Iron Age, Johnny Appleseed, Paul Bunyan, and shipbuilding. Once they've finished doing the research, have the teams draw pictures, make collages, or create some other type of displays representing their topics. Then have them present what they've learned to the rest of the group.
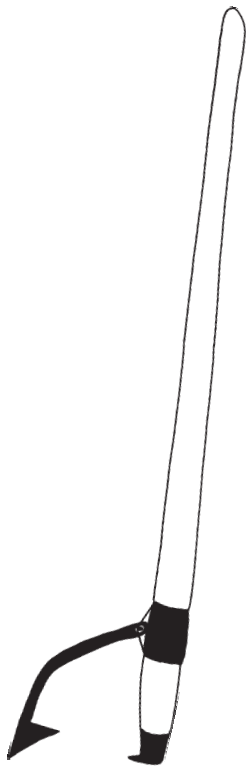
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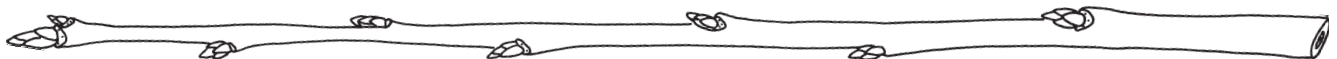
Read All About It!

Share one or more of these "hisTREE" books with your class:

- 🍁 *The Big Tree* by Bruce Hiscock
- 🍁 *Giants in the Land* by Diana Appelbaum
- 🍁 *Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder
- 🍁 *Marven of the Great North Woods* by Kathryn Lasky
- 🍁 *A Sand County Almanac*—"Good Oak" by Aldo Leopold
- 🍁 *A Tree in the Trail* by Holling Clancy Holling
- 🍁 *A Tree's Tale* by Lark Carrier

Finding Out More!

Searching for Historical Information

America's Forests: A History of Resiliency and Recovery.
This is a well-researched video production on the history of American forests and the people who used them as they moved westward. Rare film footage and turn-of-the-century photographs graphically depict the forest, watershed, and wildlife conditions which led to our first national conservation movement. Contact the Forest Service Video Library, c/o Audience Planners, 5341 Derry Ave., Suite Q, Agoura Hills, CA 91301, (800) 683-8366. www.r5.fs.fed.us/video/fs.htm#history

Brevet's Wisconsin Historical Markers and Sites by Jane Hunt.

Conservation Hall of Fame. For more information, contact Schmeeckle Reserve, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, WI 54481, (715) 346-4992.

Forestry History Association of Wisconsin, Inc.
403 McIndoe Street, Wausau, WI 54401

Forest History Society
www.lib.duke.edu/forest

Library of Congress
http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/collections/finder.html

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Visit their website to find out about some wonderful collections. They offer numerous books, kits, old photos, newsclippings, and period documents.
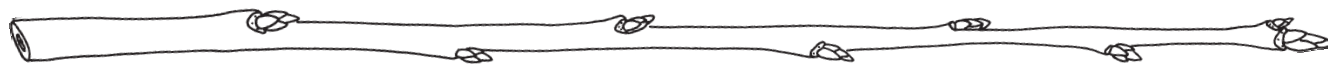www.shsw.wisc.edu/oss

- 🍁 ***Badger History.*** This series of booklets is written for kids. Titles of special interest include: ***Wisconsin Indians, French in Wisconsin***, ***Wisconsin Pioneers***, ***The Fur Trade***, ***Wisconsin Explorers***, and ***Wisconsin Lumbering***.
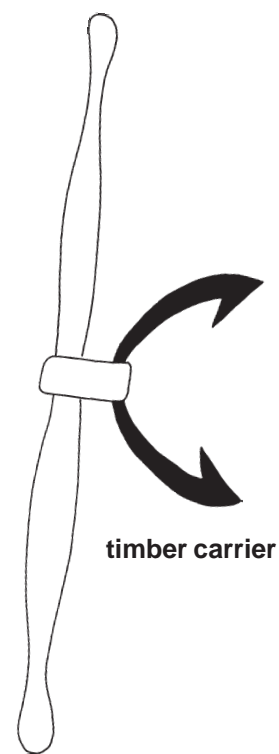
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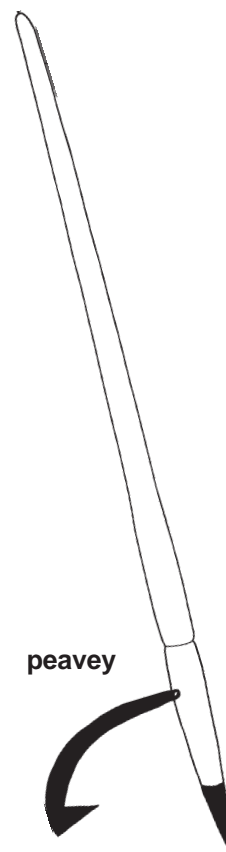
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🍁 **The History of Wisconsin** edited by William Fletcher Thompson. This six-volume set contains photos, newsclippings, and excellent maps showing the growth of Wisconsin.

🍁 **Learning from the Land: Wisconsin Land Use** and **The Great Peshtigo Fire: an Eyewitness Account**.

Wisconsin Natural Resources. The February 1994 issue of this magazine included the insert "It Started with Fire: The Origins of Forestry in Wisconsin."

Wisconsin Pathways to Prosperity by Shiela Reaves. This book is filled with photographs, drawings, and maps.

Learning About Wisconsin Forests

National Forests (Chequamegon - Nicolet)
United States Forest Service (715) 362-1300
www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf

State Forests
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (608) 267-7494
www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/stateforests

County Forests
Wisconsin's County Forests Association (715) 453-9125
www.wisconsincountyforests.com
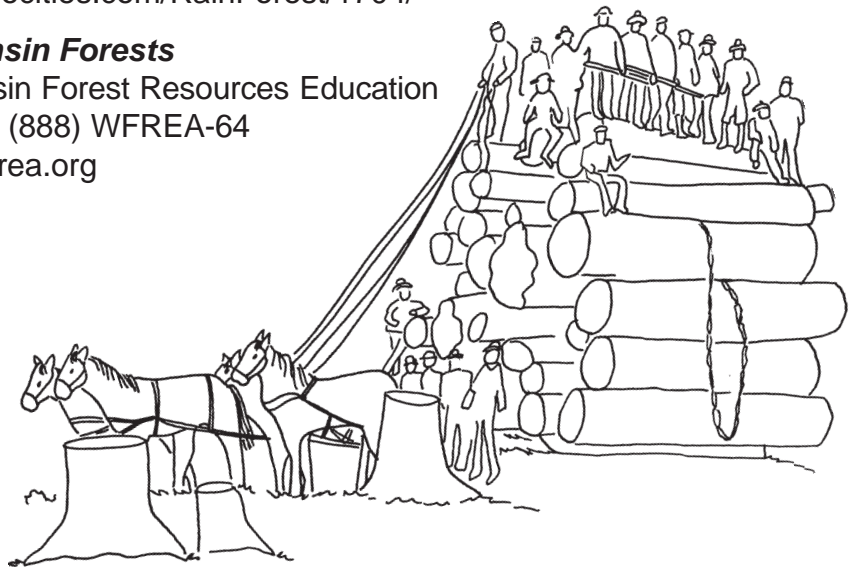
Industrial Forests
Wisconsin Paper Council (920) 722-1500
www.wipapercouncil.org

Private Forests
Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association (715) 346-4798
www.geocities.com/RainForest/1704/

Wisconsin Forests
Wisconsin Forest Resources Education Alliance (888) WFREA-64
www.wfrea.org

How Well Do You Know Your State History?

Smokey Bear in his first parade	Peshtigo Fire
Wisconsin's first state forest – Brule River State Forest	First sawmill built near DePere on the Fox River
First forest fire law	Crosscut saw invented
Earth Summit held in Rio	Civil War ends and settlers come to Wisconsin
Jean Nicolet explores Green Bay	First official state observance of Arbor Day
Wisconsin becomes a territory!	Last buffalo killed in Wisconsin
Mechanical tree-planting machines invented	First school forest in the nation – Crandon and Laona School District
Wisconsin becomes a state!	First state forest rangers
Wisconsin's first towns recognized as Tree City USA communities	First Wisconsin groundwood pulp mill
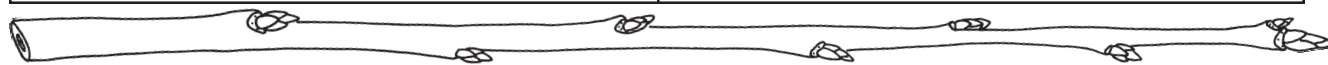
Presettlement & Fur Trade

Presettlement
Trees, Prairies, and Wildlife!
Of the 35,000,000 acres which would later become Wisconsin, approximately 30,000,000 are forested. Native Americans regularly set fire to parts of the land.

1634
Jean Nicolet Looks for Passage to China
The first governor of New France sends Jean Nicolet to visit the untraveled Northwest and discover a passage to China. Instead, he lands somewhere on the shores of the Bay of Green Waters.

1673
Joliet and Marquette Cross the Portage
On their way to discovering the Michissipi, Joliet and Marquette travel on the Fox and Meskousing Rivers. The mysterious land has been crossed by the first European explorers!

1763 - 1783
British Defeat French at Quebec
Now the British own the Ouisconsing wilderness, but little changes. However, there is a sense of uneasiness among the Indians. The French have only wanted furs; the British have shown interest in the land.

1783
Treaty of Paris Signed
With the signing of the Treaty of Paris, the Northwest Territory officially becomes American.

1800
European Population in Ouisconsin = 200

Questions you might try to answer:
Why did Native Americans start fires?
How did Native Americans use the forest?
How did the fur traders use the forest?
When did the first European build a cabin in Wisconsin? Where?
What was the life of a fur trader like? Can you find a picture of one?
Who were some of the other explorers of this time?
Can you find written descriptions or paintings of what Wisconsin looked like before settlement?
How did the area where you live look in the late 1700's?

Early European Settlement

1809
First Sawmill Built Near DePere on the Fox River

1814
American Flag Flies Over Fort Shelby
The war of 1812 reestablishes American ownership of the lands of Ouisconsin. It also opens the land for settlement. For the first time, an American flag flies over this land at Fort Shelby in Prairie du Chien.

1817
First Forest Fire Law
There is a new law against starting a fire on someone else's land or allowing a fire to spread to someone else's land.

1822
Badgers Invade Area
The United States Government leases land in southwestern Wisconsin for mining. This opens the rich lead mines to speculators and prospectors eager to try their luck. Many bring their families, set up homesteads, clear the land, and take up farming on the leased land.

1832
Buffalo Days Over for Wisconsin
The last buffalo east of the Mississippi River is killed in Trempealeau County.

1832
Black Hawk Surrenders
The end of the Black Hawk War in 1832 opens the lands south and east of the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers to settlement. In 1834, land offices open at Mineral Point and Green Bay. Settlement changes the face of Wisconsin. People pour in, living off the land and its resources. Farming becomes the major occupation. Land is cleared and prairie sod turned into wheat fields.

Questions you might try to answer:
The population of Europeans was about 200 in 1800. How many Europeans were there in 1830?
Why was the first sawmill built on the Fox River?
What did the American flag look like in 1814?
What other large animals were disappearing from the state during this time?
Why were lead miners called Badgers?
Can you find a map of Wisconsin in the early 1800's?
How did the area where you live look by the early 1800's?

Wisconsin Becomes a State

1836
Wisconsin is a Territory!
A census finds that about 12,000 people live in the area which will become Wisconsin. These settlers depend almost entirely upon the land to provide them with food, clothing, and shelter.

1837
Metal Plows Break Ground
The metal plow has replaced the wooden plow! Trees are removed from the land and used in construction of homes and barns. However, most of the trees are burned to get rid of them.

1848
Wisconsin Statehood
Wisconsin is a state with 200,000 proud people living within its borders. A growing number of these people live in small towns and urban areas. Farmers, market hunters, lumbermen, and miners supply food and raw materials to the growing urban populations. At this time the frontier lies along the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers.

1860
The Frontier is Advancing!
The frontier line corresponds roughly to an arc drawn from Green Bay to Hudson by way of Stevens Point.

1860's
Settlers Coming!
With the Civil War over, settlers rush to Wisconsin to homestead parcels of land.

1860
Buzzzz!
Forty sawmills are operating in Sheboygan, Manitowoc, and Kewaunee counties. Most of the lumber they produce is going by boat to the fast-growing cities of Milwaukee and Chicago.

Questions you might try to answer:
What did a metal plow look like? Why was it better?
Look at a state map. What waterways were being used to get lumber from Wisconsin's sawmills to Milwaukee and Chicago?
Find a map of Wisconsin territory in 1836.
On a map, show how the frontier changed from 1848 to 1860. How did this change affect the forests?
What was the population of Wisconsin in 1860?
How did our state flag look in 1848? Has it changed?
How did the area where you live look by the 1860's? Had your town been founded?

Growing Too Fast?

1867
Legislature Worried
The legislature asks for a study of forest destruction in the state. They report that the forests of southern Wisconsin "no longer yield a supply adequate for the wants of the present inhabitants; and the forest of the northern regions, heretofore considered inexhaustible . . . will soon be so reduced that the people must look elsewhere for their supplies." No steps were taken to fix the problem.

1870
Two Can Work Faster Together
The invention of the crosscut saw has greatly increased Wisconsin's production of lumber. Over one billion board feet of lumber are harvested this year alone!

1870
First Railroad to the North
The lumber industry has entered the northwoods on the Wisconsin Central! Logging is now a year-round activity. Loggers can harvest pines that had been located too far from streams. They also have been removing hardwoods by rail. Hardwoods had been ignored before this time because they would not float.

1870
Stumplands or Bust?
Settlers are moving into the cutover forests in northern Wisconsin. They are trying to farm the land, but the danger of fires, the hard work of removing stumps, the short growing season, and the poor soil are making life hard. The frontier line can now be drawn roughly as an arc extending from Green Bay through Stevens Point and Eau Claire to Hudson on the St. Croix River.

1872
First Wisconsin Groundwood Pulp Mill
The new paper mill in the Fox River Valley is using hemlock discarded by nearby lumber mills.

Questions you might try to answer:
Why do you think no one paid attention to the warning given in 1867?
How does a crosscut saw work?
Find a map showing the location of railroads in 1870.
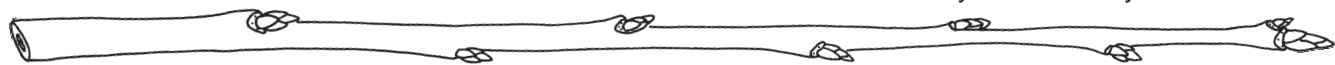What was the population of Wisconsin in 1870?
Can you find a picture of the cutover?
How did settlers remove tree stumps from their land?
Using a state map, draw the frontier line in 1870.
What did papermakers use to make paper before they tried wood in 1870?
How did the area where you live look by 1870?

Up in Smoke!

1871

Peshtigo Fire
The Peshtigo fire has claimed 1200 - 1500 human lives. In addition, 1,280,000 acres of timber have been lost. No attempts have been made to tally the loss of livestock or wild game.

1871

First "Closed Season" on Burning
It is now illegal to burn woods, prairies, and cranberry bogs between August 1 and November 30. Unfortunately, no one is enforcing this new law.

1887

Marshfield Burns to the Ground in Forest Fire

1892

First Arbor Day Observed in Wisconsin

1892

Peak Year for Timber Industry
Four billion feet of lumber are cut in Wisconsin forests! The lumbering business is rapidly providing openings and the eventual clearing of the wilderness.

1894

Fire Sweeps Through Phillips

1895

State Board of Immigration Encourages Agricultural Settlement of Cutover

1895

Fire Protection
The Legislature says that town supervisors and road superintendents will also be fire wardens. They have the power to hire firefighters and prohibit burning when it is too dry.

Questions you might try to answer:

On a state map, blacken the areas destroyed by forest fires. How many acres were destroyed by fire?

What equipment did firefighters have?

Why were there so many fires? If the trees had been cut and removed, what was left to burn? What does a forest look like after a fire?

Why did settlers go to northern Wisconsin? Did they know it was a land of stumps and fires?

Why do you think people wanted to clear the wilderness?

Where was the first Arbor Day observance?

What was the population of Wisconsin in 1895?

How did the area where you live look in 1895? Had your town been founded?

Oops! Did We Make a Mistake?

1897

State Forestry Warden
The state has begun a serious effort to conserve and restore our forests. A state forestry warden is now responsible for finding fires and putting them out.

1897

Commission Recommends Big Changes
The Legislature appoints a commission to investigate the "rapid disappearance of timber." The commission recommends big changes, but nothing comes of it.

1899

Wisconsin Produces 9.7% of All Lumber in U.S.— Four Billion Board Feet!

1903

State Forestry Department Established
The first major forestry law passes. It creates a Forestry Commission, hires a superintendent of forests, and establishes a forest reserve.

1907

First State Forest—Brule River—Established

1910

U.S. Forest Products Lab Opens in Madison

1911

First State Nursery and State Forest Rangers
Trout Lake is the state's first tree nursery. It begins with 192,000 seedlings purchased from Michigan.

1914

First National Fire Prevention Day

1915

First Aerial Fire Detection
Jack Vilas flies over northern Wisconsin in a Curtis Flying Boat searching for forest fires. This is the first time that an airplane is used for finding forest fires.

Questions you might try to answer:

What was it like to be a forest ranger in the early 1900's?

What did firefighting equipment look like back then?

What is the Forest Products Laboratory? What did it do? Is it still there?

On a state map, mark the first state forest, first state nursery, and other places of important forest-related events.

What was the population of Wisconsin in 1915?

What do you think Wisconsinites thought about their forests in the early 1900's?

How did the area where you live look by 1915?

Rethinking the Forests

1920's
Farming Goes Bust in Cutover
Many landowners can't make a living and have stopped paying their property taxes.

1924 - 1929
Money for Forestry Program
First, a state referendum allows the legislature to use money to buy, preserve, and develop forests. Then, a Forestry Mill Tax on real estate establishes a steady source of funding for forestry in Wisconsin.

1927
Fire Protection Expanded
Responsibility for all fire protection, detection, and control is placed in the State Conservation Commission.

1927
Forest Crop Law
The Forest Crop Law is encouraging tree farming by delaying taxes on privately-owned land until the timber is harvested.

1927 - 1929
First County Forests
Counties can now create forests from tax delinquent land. Langlade County and Marinette County are the first to take advantage of the new law.

1928
Wisconsin's First National Forest
The federal government begins buying land for the Nicolet and Chequamegon National Forests.

1928
Fire Lookout Towers in Northern Forests = 54

1928
First School Forest in Nation Started in Crandon and Laona School District

1930 - 1935
Two Million Acres of Forests Burn in Five Years

Questions you might try to answer:
What happened during this time to encourage growing trees?
On a map, locate the first school forest, the first county forests, and Wisconsin's national forests. Why are these forests so important?
How many school forests are in Wisconsin today?
Can you find pictures of homesteads in the cutover?
What was the population of Wisconsin in 1930?
How did the area where you live look in 1930?

On the Right Track

1933
CCC Makes a Difference
With the Civilian Conservation Corps, Wisconsin finally has enough people to control fires.

1935
Fire Hazard Along Roads Reduced
Ash containers are now required in cars. New laws prohibit throwing burning tobacco or matches from autos.

1936
First Statewide Forest Inventory
Forests are being cataloged and recorded as part of a cooperative effort between state, federal, county, and industrial forestry organizations.

1938
Radios Improve Fire Control
Communication from towers to ground crews improves with the purchase and use of ultra-high frequency radios.

1939
Timber Production Down to 336 Million Board Feet

1944
Tree Planting Process Improved
Foresters use mechanical tree-planting machines for large-scale reforestation in state, county, and industrial forests.

1950
Smokey on Parade
Smokey Bear makes his first public appearance at the Fireman's Convention Parade in Hurley, Wisconsin.

1950
First Forest Entomologists Employed by the Wisconsin Conservation Department

Questions you might try to answer:
Who worked for the CCC? What did they do for Wisconsin's forests?
Why were radios such an important improvement in fire control? Remember: Before this time, the only means of communication was by phone. Note: This was before cell phones!
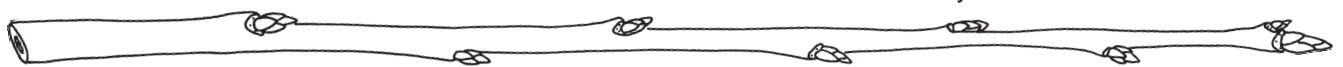What has Smokey Bear's job been? Find out the true story of Smokey.
How were trees planted before the invention of the mechanical tree planter?
Why was a forest inventory an important step?
What was the population of Wisconsin in 1950?
How did the area where you live look in 1950?

Think Globally—Act Locally

1976
Wisconsin's First "Tree City USA" Communities
Five cities receive recognition from the National Arbor Day Foundation—Eau Claire, Racine, Sheboygan, Stevens Point, and West Allis.

1985
Managed Forest Law Enacted
Under this improved forest tax law, landowners must write a management plan for their forest lands. The plan has to be approved, and landowners must follow the plan to receive tax advantages.

1992
Forest Service Changes Its Management Plan
The National Forest Service adopts a new philosophy. It is called ecosystem management.

1992
Earth Summit in Rio
More than 120 of the world's governments agree on the goal of sustainable development. In 1993, the United States says it will sustainably manage U.S. forests by the year 2000.

1993
Forest Stewardship Council Forms
This organization oversees certification of "green" wood products. These products cost more, but some consumers are willing to pay more for a product that comes from a sustainably managed forest.

1994
Forestry Best Management Practices (BMP)
Forest resource experts develop guidelines and a monitoring program to be sure that forestry practices don't harm Wisconsin's water resources. The BMP manual tells loggers, landowners, and foresters how to plan timber harvests, build roads, and replant harvested areas in ways that protect water quality.

1995
State Forests Set the Pace
New legislation defines sustainable forestry and revises how state forests will be managed.

Questions you might try to answer:
Was the United States one of the nations to agree to sustainable development at the Earth Summit?
What does a "green" label look like?
What is the definition of sustainable forestry?
Who owns the forests near you?
Is your town or city a Tree City USA?
What is the current population of Wisconsin?
It's a new millennium! How do people view the forests?

Answers to
How Well Do You Know Your State History?

1634
Jean Nicolet explores Green Bay

1809
First sawmill built near DePere on the Fox River

1817
First forest fire law

1832
Last buffalo killed in Wisconsin

1836
Wisconsin becomes a territory!

1848
Wisconsin becomes a state!

1860s
Civil War ends and settlers come to Wisconsin

1870
Crosscut saw invented

1871
Peshtigo Fire

1872
First Wisconsin groundwood pulp mill

1892
First official state observance of Arbor Day

1907
Wisconsin's first state forest - Brule River

1911
First state forest rangers

1928
The first school forest in the nation - Crandon and Laona School District

1944
Mechanical tree-planting machines invented

1950
Smokey Bear in his first parade

1976
Wisconsin's first towns recognized as Tree City USA communities

1992
Earth Summit held in Rio