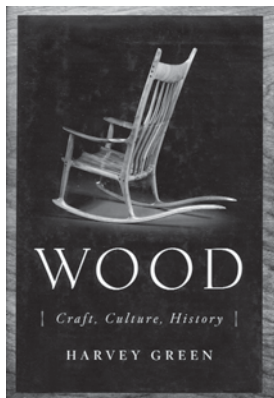


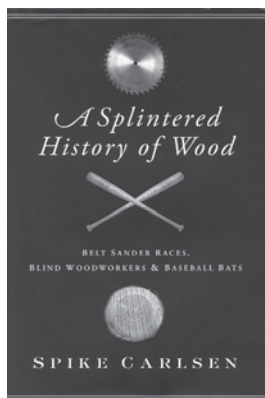
BOOKS OF INTEREST

By Eben Lehman



For thousands of years, wood has been a commonly used material, familiar to the everyday lives of humans throughout the world. Wood is such a ubiquitous material, in fact, that its importance tends to be overlooked. Two recent books examine the long history of wood's use and its immense value to almost every aspect of human civilization. In *Wood: Craft, Culture, and History* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), Harvey Green begins by examining the physical and visual qualities of wood, revealing the important characteristics and differing appearances found in wood from various tree species. The many uses of wood through history are then examined, from large structures, such as buildings and ships, to smaller items, such as crates, barrels, pipes, toothpicks, pencils, and more. The artistic, religious, and decorative aspects are also taken into account, with information on topics such as wood sculpture and musical instruments. Through these examinations of historical wood use, the book reveals greater themes related to the cultural power of wood. Wood as a substance facilitates a collective consciousness of the past, and many newly developed materials continue to imitate wood. These cultural aspects of wood help to provide the substance with an enduring importance, even in a current era dominated by man-made materials. Spike Carlsen's *A Splintered History of Wood: Belt Sander Races, Blind Woodworkers & Baseball Bats*

(New York: Collins, 2008) also celebrates the importance of wood to human civilization. Carlsen goes beyond recounting important uses of wood throughout history and instead presents extraordinary stories, unusual historical events, anecdotes, and profiles of eccentric figures, all revealing different ways in which wood has shaped our lives. Chapters cover topics such as wood in the world of music, wood-built means of transportation, and wood use in warfare. Another chapter on the history of wood in sports looks at the development of wooden baseball bats, golf clubs, pool cues, and tennis racquets over time. The many interesting narratives touch on such divergent topics as the work of modern chainsaw artists, the pioneering wood forensics work of the Lindbergh



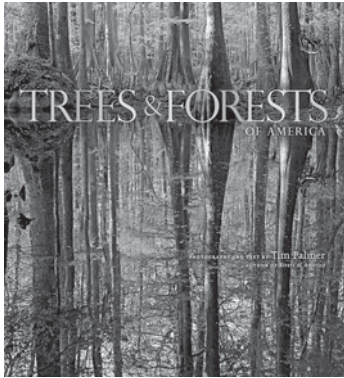
baby kidnapping investigation, and the enduring passion for wooden rollercoasters. Thoroughly engrossing, the book's many topics all serve to present wood as a remarkable substance that will maintain its importance and remain relevant to humans long into the future.

Forest management practices have been a source of debate in the United States over much of the past century. With *Forests Forever: Their Ecology, Restoration, and Protection* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), John J. Berger provides an introductory guide to forestry management practices, forest issues, and American forest and conservation history. In this very



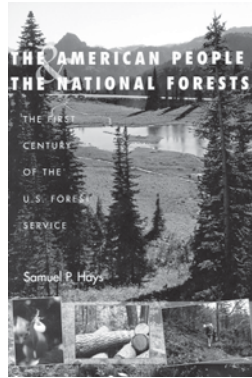
practical book, Berger looks at the ecology of how forests function, as well as the accepted principles of forest management. Overviews of logging techniques, sustainable forestry practices, restoration forestry, and tree planting are among the topics featured. Chapters on the history of American conservation efforts and a history of the U.S. Forest Service are also found in this work. Berger also evaluates government forest policy in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries and presents his own ideas on ecologically sustainable forest management. The book's value is in its clear and comprehensive overview of important topics in forestry. Containing a wealth of information on forest ecology, economics, management, history, laws, and policies, the book nonetheless remains focused and engaging to the reader throughout. As a practical work of forest management and history, this work holds great value for students, forestry professionals, and the public alike.

A more visual take on America's forests can be found in *Trees & Forests of America* (Chicago: Center for American Places at Columbia College in association with Forests Forever Foundation, 2008), by Tim Palmer. This large, impressive volume features more than 200 striking full-color photographs of trees and forest scenes from different regions of the United States. Palmer's photographs capture the spectacular natural beauty found throughout



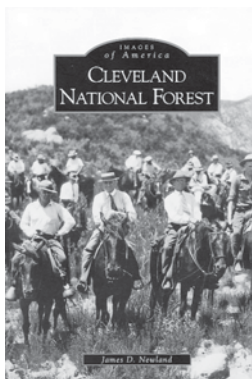
the varying landscapes of America's forests, including coconut palms in Hawaii, California redwoods, Douglas-firs in Oregon, spruces in Colorado, Fraser firs of the Smoky Mountains, longleaf pines in the Southeast, and everything in between. Accompanying the photographs is information on the ecology of trees—their growth and life-cycles, their interactions with the forest environment, and their importance to wildlife and other natural resources. Also discussed are the various threats to America's forests past and present and the need for preserving forest resources into the future. The main body of the book, though, is the photographs, which present a powerful visual argument for appreciating our natural surroundings and not taking our forests for granted. These large color photos and the book's attractive layout make this ideal for a coffee table or display book. Overall, Palmer's work effectively showcases America's many tree species, the physical beauty of woodlands, as well as the crucial importance of forests to human life.

The history of American federal forest policy is the focus of *The American People and the National Forests: The First Century of the U.S. Forest Service* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), in which Samuel P. Hays provides a historical overview of U.S. Forest Service actions and administration. Hays seeks to complement existing scholarship on U.S. Forest Service history by relying on sources primarily written since 1970 and focusing on the evolving relationships between American society and the agency. The agency's response to societal influences and pressures is given special attention. Hays organizes the book by breaking the agency's history into three eras: "The Silvicultural Imperative, 1891–1920," "Evolution of an Agency Clientele, 1920–1975," and "Confronting the



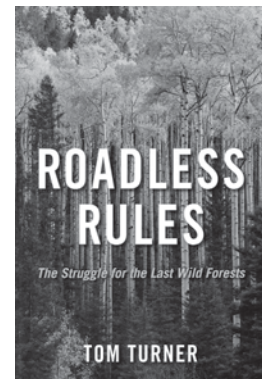
Ecological Forest, 1976–2005." Topics examined include Forest Service relationships with the timber industry, challenges of the recreational use of forestlands, wildlife management issues, and the agency's long reluctance to recognize the natural beauty of forests as an official objective. Special attention is also placed on Forest Service history since the 1970s, with Hays drawing on his previous work, *Wars in the Woods: The Rise of Ecological Forestry in America*, in looking at recent environmental challenges as well as the development of new ecological and hydrological objectives in forest management. Throughout the book, Hays argues that previous scholarship has focused primarily on legislative history, rather than examining the reasoning behind administrative choices made by the Forest Service, and the importance of the agency's relationship with society in making those decisions.

A visual history of U.S. Forest Service actions with a localized focus can be found in James D. Newland's *Cleveland National Forest* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008). Newland, a former historian for the Cleveland National Forest, presents a history of the forest featuring well over 200 historic photographs. The Cleveland National Forest, established by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908 and located



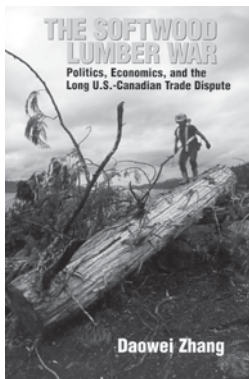
in Southern California, has dealt directly with many of the overall policy decisions confronting the U.S. Forest Service over the past century. The Cleveland has been an important location for agency issues and activities such as fire control and suppression, Civilian Conservation Corps projects, recreational land use, road construction, environmental planning, and more. These topics are presented through historical photographs and detailed captions covering the people, places, and policies of the Cleveland's first hundred years. This national forest's long history and important range of work and activities make the book an excellent record of Forest Service history as a whole.

An examination of one specific aspect of U.S. Forest Service policy is the subject of Tom Turner's *Roadless Rules: The Struggle for the Last Wild Forests* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2009). This work takes a detailed look at the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, put in place in 2000 near the end of Bill Clinton's presidential administration on the recommendation of Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck. Turner, a journalist and editor-at-large for Earthjustice, recounts the run-up to the rule, the organizational campaign behind its creation, and the many challenges to the rule during the George W. Bush administration. The book frames the Roadless Rule as a crucial victory for conservationists and the culmination of an extensive national grassroots environmental campaign. Turner effectively examines the efforts of the disparate parties whose collective support was instrumental in the rule's creation: environmental organizations, hunters, scientists, outdoor recreation groups, and many others. He further examines how the rule survived numerous efforts by the Bush administration to subvert it. Though Turner uses court

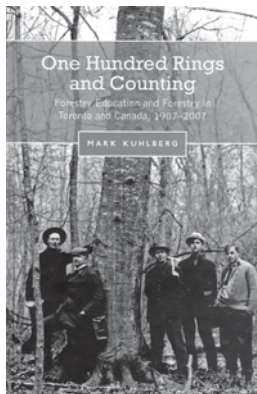


record transcripts and interviews with most major figures involved in the rule's creation, implementation, and debate, he did not interview Forest Service officials who were involved after 2001, including Dombeck's successor Dale Bosworth. Regardless of your take on this divisive policy issue, Turner's book provides a readable overview of the rule's history and an excellent introduction to a topic worthy of scholarly attention.

A long international conflict over forest policy is the subject of *The Softwood Lumber War: Politics, Economics, and the Long U.S.-Canadian Trade Dispute* (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 2007) by Daowei Zhang. In this book, Zhang takes a detailed look at the softwood lumber disputes between the United States and Canada from the early 1980s through 2006. The core of this international conflict lies in the questions of whether Canadian lumber is significantly subsidized by national and provincial governments, and how much harm this inflicts on the U.S. lumber industry. The resulting dispute has waxed and waned over the last three decades through various agreements, export taxes, duties, and litigation. Zhang examines the factors that have contributed to the longevity of this international conflict, looking at how politics, economics, different legal systems, and various institutions have all played a role. The book also explores possible long-term solutions to this conflict, as well as important consideration for future issues in all areas of international trade. For those interested in forest policy, politics, or economics, this work uses the analysis of a specific issue to produce a broader understating of globalization, trade, and natural resource management issues in the twenty-first century.

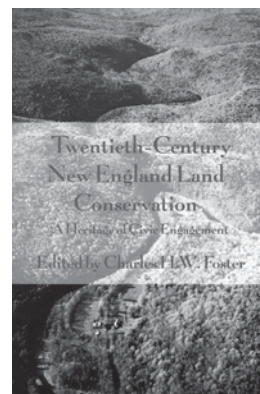


Conflict is at the heart of another book about Canada's forests. Mark Kuhlberg's *One Hundred Rings and Counting: Forestry Education and Forestry in Toronto and Canada, 1907-2007* (University of Toronto Press, 2009) offers readers more than the standard institutional history and celebratory tome. The history of the University



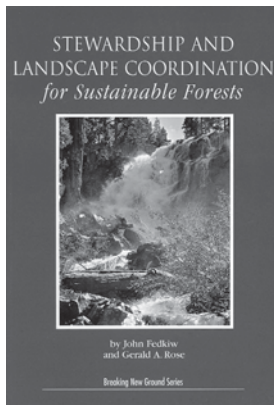
of Toronto's Faculty of Forestry is one of tumult and conflict. Established in 1907, Canada's first forestry school offered an undergraduate program at a time when there were only a dozen foresters in the country. The faculty eventually developed strong graduate and research programs, but the heart of the school was its undergraduate program, which began producing national leaders in forest and environmental fields from the outset. Then in 1993, because of budgetary concerns and personal conflicts, the university eliminated the undergraduate program, much to the astonishment of all. Kulberg explains with engaging prose how this extreme measure came to pass and what is left to celebrate. He documents the struggles of the school and its graduates not only with other parts of the university for recognition and respect, but also their uphill fight to gain support for forestry from the public and Canada's political leaders. It is an exemplary study of professional forestry education and of educational politics in general.

A new work of regional focus providing an excellent history of land conservation efforts is *Twentieth-Century New England Land Conservation: A Heritage of Civic Engagement* (Harvard University Press, 2009), edited by Charles H. W. Foster. This book features an overview of land conservation in the region as a whole, along with individual chapters on Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts,



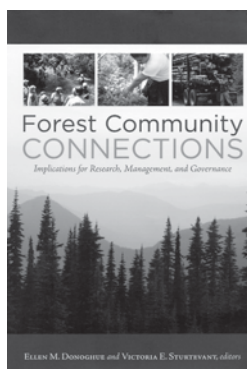
Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The deep roots of conservation efforts in New England are revealed through historical accounts beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing throughout the twentieth. A host of issues surrounding land conservation are explored, including agricultural development, road construction, the efforts of local organizations, state legislation, wildlife policy, and recreational land use. Discussion of the various individuals and organizations behind the efforts in each state reveals how innovative conservation measures have been made by those in both the public and the private sectors. Those interested in regional conservation issues anywhere in the world will find value in the history of natural resource management, wise use policies, and sustainability. As a whole, the book provides a detailed and readable history on the development and evolution of New England conservation practices, showing the region's importance within greater American history, as well as the many resulting positive environmental, social, cultural, and economic impacts.

The creation and implementation of new theories on sustainable forestry are the focus of a study by John Fedkiw and Gerald Rose, *Stewardship and Landscape Coordination for Sustainable Forests* (Milford, PA: Pinchot Institute for Conservation, 2008). This study uses the work of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC) to present the application of a theoretical "pathway" model for forest sustainability first laid out in the Forest History Society publication *Pathway to Sustainability: Defining the Bounds on Forest Management*. The model looks toward sustainability as a holistic societal goal and incorporates societal choice, science, economics, forest management, landscape planning, and periodic assessments. The



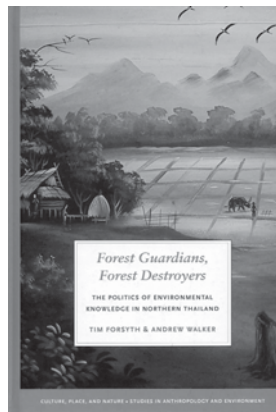
MFRC, established in 1995 as an advisory body on sustainable forest policy and practices in the state, embraced the conceptual framework of this pathway model and serves in this study as an example of practical application. Using interviews with staff and observations of MFRC activities, the authors demonstrate how the model can be applied to the land and how forest management, landscape planning, and collaborative stewardship can be unified into a collective management process for sustainability. With constantly changing public perceptions of forest resource management and shifting expectations for results, the authors emphasize local populations' important role in decisions regarding the forest landscape. This study helps make sense of conflicting societal views on natural resources management while showing how forest sustainability can work as a constantly evolving process.

The bonds between forests and their local communities are fully explored in *Forest Community Connections: Implications for Research, Management, and Governance* (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 2008), edited by Ellen M. Donoghue and Victoria E. Sturtevant. This collection of essays looks at forest



communities, primarily in the western United States, and how they are responding to changing forest policies, economics, and scientific issues. With an approach grounded in social science, the book explores the many connections between forest ecosystems, forest policy, social issues, and local communities. When examined from the perspective of local communities, complex forest issues—such as the adoption and integration of federal wildfire policy goals by local populations and the impact of land disinvestment by the timber industry on communities—reveal how state and federal policies can shape communities and institutional forces can affect community access to local forests. Collectively, the essays argue for strengthening the bonds between forests and communities to achieve mutually beneficial sustainable management strategies.

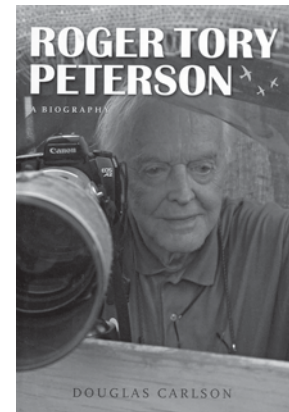
An international view of environmental issues and politics can be found in *Forest Guardians, Forest Destroyers: The Politics of Environmental Knowledge in Northern*



Thailand (University of Washington Press, 2008), by Tim Forsyth and Andrew Walker. The authors examine the politics of environmental knowledge, analyzing how environmental problems are perceived and defined. With a geographic focus on the highlands of northern Thailand, this book challenges prevailing notions of increasing environmental degradation in developing countries. Environmental issues examined include forest destruction, soil erosion, water resource management, and the use of agricultural chemicals. A social framework is applied by the authors, revealing how certain rural ethnic populations in Thailand are portrayed as ecological vil-

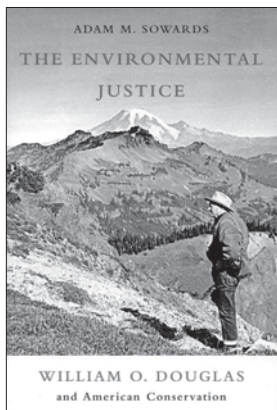
lains and disproportionately blamed for causing environmental damage. The authors demonstrate how environmental changes are experienced in different ways by different social groups and argue that these social and political factors must be taken into account to develop a complete environmental understanding. The book effectively uses local case studies to explore large-scale international issues surrounding developing countries and global environmental discourse.

Those with an interest in birds may enjoy *Roger Tory Peterson: A Biography* (University of Texas Press, 2007), by Douglas Carlsen. This book provides an overview of the life and work of Roger Peterson (1908–1996). His famous *Field Guide to the Birds*, first published in 1934, described nearly 500 bird species and revolutionized American interest in birds by making a vast amount of knowledge easily accessible. With more than four million copies sold, Carlsen considers it “one of the most important and influential books about the natural world written in the twentieth cen-



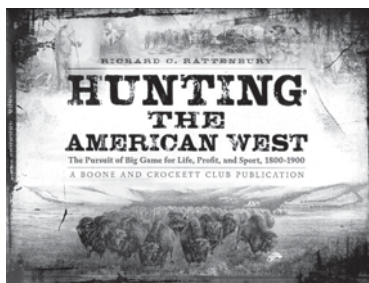
ture,” because it helped change the way the general public viewed the natural world. This biography explores Peterson’s entire life as well as his career work as teacher, artist, author, and environmentalist. The immense amount of work behind the original *Field Guide* is revealed, along with its immediate success following publication. Although Peterson’s influence on bird study is unmistakable, it is his influences on the broader conservation movement throughout the twentieth century that is of interest here. Carlsen explores how his field guides built a general appreciation for the natural world and provided a direct foundation for the modern environmental movement.

Another recent biography of note is *The Environmental Justice: William O. Douglas and American Conservation* (Oregon State University Press, 2009), by Adam M. Sowards. America's longest-serving Supreme Court justice (1939–1975), William O. Douglas played an integral role in shaping the mid-twentieth-century American conservation movement. An avid outdoorsman, Douglas brought his passion for nature to the legal realm, where he worked to institute legal safeguards protecting wilderness areas throughout the country. Using his position of authority, Douglas gave the conservation movement a powerful voice. His influential writings, such as the 1964 article "America's Vanishing Wilderness" and his dissent in the 1972 case *Sierra Club v. Morton*, are examined in detail here. Through his work, Douglas sought to draw the American public into the decision-making process over conservation and natural resource management issues. His writings argued for preserving the nation's natural heritage because this heritage belonged solely to the American pub-



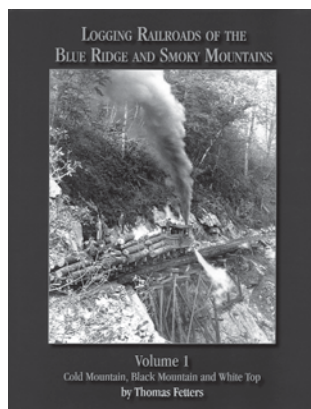
lic. Douglas brought the cultural values of wilderness into the political arena and applied his highly individualistic stamp to legal matters from both sides of the judicial bench. This environmental biography focuses primarily on his public work and legal career, providing an excellent account of a unique figure in the history of modern American environmentalism.

The history of early big-game hunting in the American West is celebrated in the beautifully illustrated *Hunting the American West: The Pursuit of Big Game for Life, Profit, and Sport, 1800–1900* (Missoula, MT: Boone & Crockett Club, 2008), by Richard C. Rattenbury. This work explores



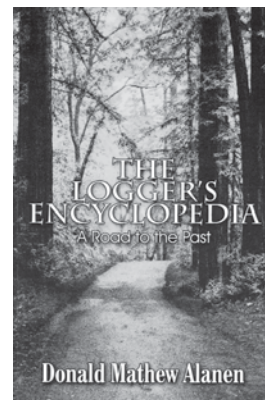
the world of big-game hunting on the American frontier of the nineteenth century. The book's strength is its presentation, featuring nearly 400 pages filled with historical photographs and illustrations and new full-color images of vintage weapons and other artifacts. The book follows the course of development from subsistence hunting to market hunting to sport hunting, examining the evolution and impact of the different practices. Also featured are profiles of the game animals of the American West, as well as information on hunter-naturalists' efforts to conserve the region's wildlife and habitats. More than a historical overview, though, this book immerses readers in the big-game hunts from this era and will appeal to those with interests in hunting and the early American West.

Railroad enthusiasts will be impressed by a new book from railroad historian Thomas Fetters, *Logging Railroads of the Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains: Volume 1, Cold Mountain, Black Mountain and White Top* (Hillsboro, OR: TimberTimes, 2007). This large volume, featuring well over 300 historic photos, more than 50 maps, and 30 locomotive roster listings, provides a detailed history of early-twentieth-century logging railroad operations in southwestern Virginia, northwestern North Carolina, and northeastern Tennessee. Fetters breathes life back into the



long-gone logging railroads of the era and describes the challenges of building the lines through dangerous mountainous terrain. The book includes anecdotes about the use of logging railway lines to generate tourism. One early tourist attraction was a train to the top of Mount Mitchell, North Carolina, which brought some 10,000 visitors to the summit in the year 1916 alone. These stories, along with the abundant accompanying photographs, create a thorough account of early logging operations in the Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains.

Another recent work of logging history is Donald Mathew Alanen's *The Logger's Encyclopedia: A Road to the Past* (Baltimore: PublishAmerica, 2008), which offers a quick reference guide to a wide range of topics relating to logging history. Entries cover the expected and the odd historical figures (did you know Clint Eastwood once worked as a logger for Weyerhaeuser?), companies, and places, as well as logging equipment, practices, and terminology from the nineteenth and twen-



tieth centuries. The focus is on the Pacific Northwest, providing a who's who of influential figures and companies in the region over the past 150 years. Topical overviews of logging equipment and machinery look at the many developments and advances made in the industry over this time period. Although users seeking detailed historical information would be better served elsewhere, this work serves as a handy reference for anyone with an interest in logging and lumbering history. Perhaps its real purpose is best expressed by Alanen himself, who says he hopes that other "authors will be compelled to write the numerous books that lie within these pages." □