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By James Mackovjak

By the late 19th century, the forests of Southeast Alaska were being eyed for economic development and commercial interests had begun harvesting the high-quality Sitka spruce and other species in Alaska’s panhandle. The arrival of high-intensity logging in the 20th century and the establishment of wood pulp mills beginning in 1954, and lasting more than four decades, exposed the environmental and economic limitations of an integrated wood products industry in Alaska.

In Tongass Timber: A History of Logging & Timber Utilization in Southeast Alaska, independent scholar and longtime Alaska resident James Mackovjak traces the history of the many attempts to develop the region’s forests, revealing the forces that influence the present choices about forest management in Southeast Alaska.

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By Char Miller

Ground Work offers intriguing insights into American conservation history. Miller demonstrates his remarkable ability as a historian to cast new light on familiar events and figures, such as Bernhard Fernow and Gifford Pinchot, and create a deeper and richer understanding of their significance, both in their times and in our own. Ground Work is a series of vignettes rather than a chronologically continuous tale. It spans topics from the Progressive Era roots of the American conservation movement, on which Miller has proven his virtuosity in earlier works such as Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism, to new insights into the impact of documentary films on the environmental perceptions of 21st-century urban America. Advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in environmental and forest history will find these essays stimulating, general nonfiction readers very enlightening.

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Lands Worth Saving
James G. Lewis, ed.

In 1911, Congress passed the Weeks Act, one of the most transformative conservation laws in U.S. history. Designed to establish national forests in the East, the Weeks Act has helped restore more than 24 million acres around the country. The law also provided a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Forest Service, the states, and private landowners to fight forest fires. This framework is also used today for combating climate change, protecting endangered species, and managing urban forests.

Today, with America’s forests now under threat from invasive plants, insects, and diseases and from human impact, the Weeks Act and the lands it has saved face an uncertain future. In this collection, drawn from Forest History Today and newly updated, leading historians, conservationists, and legal experts explore the history, impact, and future of natural resource management under the law. By examining what the Weeks Act has done for America, they can help us better understand what’s at stake for the nation’s public and private forests in the century to come.

James G. Lewis is the author of The Forest Service and the Greatest Good: A Centennial History and has served as editor of Forest History Today since 2007.

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DVD includes America’s First Forest (55 min.) and First in Forestry (30 min.)

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Cradle of Forestry in America: The Biltmore Forest School, 1898–1913 by Carl Alwin Schenck, $14.95

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