

The Forest History Society Awards program enables the Society to recognize research and writing in forest and conservation history and to stimulate further research into our understanding of the relationships of people and forests. The following is a list of awards for 2022.

### THEODORE C. BLEGEN AWARD

The Theodore C. Blegen Award recognizes the best article in the field of forest and conservation history not published in *Environmental History*. This year's winner is **Ana Córdova**, a research professor at El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Department of Urban and Environmental Studies in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, for her article "El Colorado Sawmill: A View into 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Timber Extraction from the Chihuahua Sierra Madre." It was published in the *Journal of the Southwest* (Autumn 2021): 385–425. Her work introduces readers to El Colorado Sawmill, one of the largest sawmills in the state of Chihuahua between 1952 and 1970. It operated with up to three shifts daily, processing lumber extracted from its surroundings and providing employment for hundreds of workers. Impressive as it was, the mill lasted less than two decades, meeting the same fate of mills in other logging and mining towns in the extractive boom-and-bust economy of the northern sierra of Chihuahua during the twentieth century.

### JOHN M. COLLIER AWARD FOR FOREST HISTORY JOURNALISM

John M. Collier was a New Orleans journalist skilled in many areas of communication, including advertising and sales promotion and public, government, and media relations. He was a working scholar and a prolific writer of articles and special features for forest industry press publications. Established to honor his memory, the John M. Collier Award encourages excellence in journalism that treats forest and conservation history.

The winner, **Agostino Petroni**, is a freelance journalist and author living

in Apulia, Italy. He is a 2020 MA-Politics graduate from the Columbia Journalism School and a 2021 Pulitzer Center Climate Science Reporting Fellow. His article, "Death by Many Cuts," was published in the Autumn 2021 issue of *Earth Island Journal*. Petroni tells the story of how ancient olive trees in the Puglia region of Italy are being killed by a deadly bacteria, *xylella fastidiosa*, which obstructs nutrients and water from flowing through their vascular tissues.

### LEOPOLD-HIDY AWARD

The Leopold-Hidy Award honors the best article published in the journal *Environmental History* during the preceding year. Named for forester and ecologist Aldo Leopold and business historian Ralph Hidy, the award is presented jointly by the American Society for Environmental History and the Forest History Society. The 2022 recipient is **Kendra Smith-Howard**, an associate professor of history at the State University of New York-Albany, for her article, "Absorbing Waste, Displacing Labor: Family, Environment, and the Disposable Diaper in the 1970s," (April 2021): 207–30.

According to the judges, Smith-Howard's article skillfully joins arguments about labor and consumption to offer an innovative interpretation of an ostensibly familiar subject: disposable diapers. Tracing the rise in popularity of single-use diapers, the article connects stories about family structure, political economy, and commodity chains that are typically disaggregated to draw together the knowledge-creating work processes of diapering that had offered women a way of knowing nature prior to the 1970s with the environmental footprint of disposable

diapers that followed. By calling attention to how the work of disposal replaced the work of maintaining diapers, Smith-Howard underscores how the changing dynamics of family life shaped the material world in the late twentieth century.

### CHARLES A. WEYERHAEUSER BOOK AWARD

The Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Award is given to a book demonstrating superior scholarship in forest and conservation history. This award goes to an author who has exhibited fresh insight into a topic and whose narrative analysis is clear, inventive, and thought-provoking.

There was a tie for first place between *The American Chestnut: An Environmental History* by **Donald Edward Davis** (The University of Georgia Press) and *Timber and Forestry in Qing China: Sustaining the Market* by **Meng Zhang** (University of Washington Press).

Davis's *The American Chestnut* tells the story of the titular tree species from Native American prehistory through the Civil War and the Great Depression. Davis documents the tree's impact on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American life, including the decorative and culinary arts. While he pays much attention to the importation of chestnut blight and the tree's decline as a dominant species, the author also evaluates efforts to restore the American chestnut to its former place in the eastern deciduous forest, including modern attempts to genetically modify the species.

In the Qing period (1644–1912), China's population tripled, and the flurry of new development generated unprecedented demand for timber.

Standard environmental histories have often depicted this as an era of reckless deforestation, akin to the resource misuse that devastated European forests at the same time. This comprehensive new study shows that the reality was more complex: as old-growth forests were cut down, new economic arrangements emerged to develop renewable timber resources. Historian Meng Zhang traces the trade routes that connected population centers of the Lower Yangzi Delta to timber supplies on China's southwestern frontier. She documents innovative property rights systems and economic incentives that convinced landowners to invest years in growing trees. This carefully constructed study makes a major contribution to Chinese economic and environmental history and to world-historical discourses on resource management, early modern commercialization, and sustainable development.

#### **F. K. WEYERHAEUSER FOREST HISTORY FELLOWSHIP**

The F. K. Weyerhaeuser Forest History Fellowship is awarded annually to a student at the FHS university affiliate, Duke University, whose research is historical in nature and related to forestry, land use, or the environment. This year's recipient was **Alyssa Russell**, a PhD student in the Department of History, for her project, "Economic Development at What Cost? The Fantus Company, Corporate Subsidies, and Working-Class Communities, 1919–1999." Her examination of the Fantus Company reveals how the nation's most prominent site selector altered the U.S. economy and explores the impact of these deals on communities throughout the country. Fantus's primary private clients were businesses from the industrial sector that were seeking to either

relocate or expand their operations. Throughout the twentieth century, many private companies moved from predominantly urban areas to more rural and peripheral suburban lands at the behest of Fantus. This industrial migration blighted once-used urban areas while further industrializing more natural environments. The company, as a consultant, provided its clients with various positive and negative points about their potential new communities, often providing in great detail environmental reasons to move to or not to move to a new area. Fantus often recommended areas with lax environmental laws, abundant natural resources, and clean water. Fantus was also contracted by the U.S. federal, state, and local governments to provide feedback on how environmental factors may affect existing and future industry in a certain location.

#### **WALTER S. ROSENBERRY FELLOWSHIP IN FOREST AND CONSERVATION HISTORY**

The Walter S. Rosenberry Fellowship provides a stipend to support the doctoral research of a graduate student attending a university in North America whose research contributes to forest and conservation history. The winning student for 2022 is **Sophie FitzMaurice** from the University of California, Berkeley. Her dissertation project, "Wood and the Making of Modern Communications: Telegraph Infrastructure in the U.S. Empire, c. 1846–1910," examines how wood provided the material foundations for the modern forms of communication usually associated with wire and electricity. The story of modern communication is best understood not as a story of electricity but as a story of wood. These forms of communication ultimately hinged on the ability of states or corporations

to capture colossal amounts of wood and command cheap human and animal labor to move it. Telegraph construction transformed landscapes and disrupted animal habitats, even as insects, birds, and mammals disrupted telegraphic communication by interfering with poles.

#### **FHS FELLOW AWARD**

The Forest History Society bestows the honorary title of Fellow of the Forest History Society upon persons who have provided many years of outstanding leadership and service to the Society or many years of outstanding sustained contributions to the research, writing, or teaching of forest, conservation, or environmental history.

With this award, we recognize **Hayes D. Brown II** for his leadership on the FHS Board of Directors. During his time on the board from 2010 to 2017, he served as vice-chair, chair, and immediate past-chair. Throughout his eight years, he was a member of the Finance Committee. Hayes was active on the Nominating Committee, the Program and Strategic Planning Committee, the Facilities Working Group, and the Campaign Cabinet for the New Facilities Campaign. Above and beyond these official capacities, he has provided counsel that assisted the Society in some challenging situations, including the status of the U.S. Forest Service Headquarters History Reference Collection and the *Environmental History* journal.

In addition to his FHS duties, since July 2000 Brown has served as host and moderator of the interview program "Capital Ideas–Live!" for the Alabama Forest Owners Association, which provides significant educational opportunities for landowners in topics across the field of forestry and land ownership. He often includes historical contexts for the current events–focused topics.