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## Canada's forestry industry essential to a healthy economy

Summer in Canada is the season for forest fires. In an average year, some \$35 million is lost in wasted timber and fire-control costs. The loss to the environment, including wildlife, is inestimable.

Up to the end of June this year the Canadian Forestry Service estimated that 2,984 forest fires destroyed some 182,000 acres. Fires in July, however, have led Ontario provincial authorities to believe that 200,000 acres have been burnt so far this summer in that province alone.

The value of the forest  
The forests of Canada, covering nearly half the country's total area, are by far the most prominent feature of its landscape. About half of this forest land contains merchantable wood — 8 per cent of the world's total timber resource. As Canada's leading export commodity, forest products are worth more than \$3 billion annually, and so play an important role in the lives of all Canadians.

But the value of the cash crop of the forests is by no means all; there is really no way of calculating their true worth, since a large and important part of the value is intangible.

The forests provide the ecological "buffer zone" essential for clean air and water — they protect watersheds from erosion, stabilize the flow of streams and minimize flooding — they provide the scenic background for recreation, and shelter a wide variety of wildlife.

A healthy forest industry is essential to Canada's economy. Wood is renewable, demands little energy to process, and is biodegradable. But the need to balance the economic use of the forest with its preservation as a place for enjoyment and relaxation is emphasized by the federal Environment Department.

Mechanization and clearcutting  
Canada's woods industries are under extreme pressure to cut costs by increasing productivity. They strive to do this by mechanization, and by wide-



Trucks carrying huge logs out of cutting area in British Columbia.