



CANADA - UNITED STATES

## Acid Rain

# Acid Rain Damage



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Government agencies and scientists in Canada and the United States have documented the magnitude and severity of acid rain pollution damage in both countries. Acid rain pollution directly or indirectly affects large areas of North America and touches many aspects of our daily lives.

In vulnerable lakes and streams acid rain gradually depletes the ability of drainage basins to neutralize the acid being deposited. The acidity of the water bodies subsequently increases, causing

disruption in the food chain and ultimately losses in the number and types of fish. In eastern Canada about 300,000 lakes are vulnerable (that is, they have limited ability to neutralize acid deposition and they are located in areas where acid deposition exceeds environmentally tolerable levels); 150,000 lakes are in the process of being damaged; and about 14,000 have already been acidified, which means that their acidity level has reached the point where virtually all the normal indigenous fish

*Example of extreme forest dieback.*

species are gone.<sup>1</sup>

In the eastern United States, about 11,000 lakes are vulnerable, 3,800 are being damaged and about 1,100 have been acidified. Streams, which make up a large portion of the aquatic resources in the eastern United States, are also being affected. More than 25,000 streams are being damaged and about 3,300 have been acidified.<sup>2</sup>

While the precise mechanism by which it works has yet to be irrefutably