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THE FORESTS AND FOREST INDUSTRIES OF CANADA

(Prepared by the Canadian Forestry Service, Ottawa.)

The greatest of the eight forest regions into which Canada is divided is the Boreal Forest. Stretching in a broad belt westward from the Atlantic Coast to the Rockies and the Alaska boundary, it includes about three-quarters of the country's productive forest land. Its trees are primarily coniferous, with spruce, balsam fir and pine being the most important. However, some deciduous species are also found, the most widespread being birch and poplar.

To the north, the forest merges into open woodland and finally into tundra. In general, trees here are relatively small and much of the area is more suited to pulpwood production than lumber.

South of the Boreal Forest in Eastern Canada, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence and Acadian Regions make up about one-eighth of the country's productive forest area. The forests are very mixed, containing large numbers of both coniferous and broadleaved species. The main conifers are white and red pine, hemlock, spruce, cedar and fir, while the most important deciduous species are yellow birch, maple, oak and basswood.

Much of the original forest of these two regions has been cleared for agriculture, and small parcels of privately-owned forest occur in the agricultural zones. The forests of the area, most of which have been logged for more than 100 years and some for more than 200, form the basis of a large forest industry.

The Coast Forest Region of British Columbia is very different in character. The climate is mild and very humid, with an annual rainfall of about 100 inches a year. Forests here are coniferous, the main species being cedar, hemlock, spruce, Douglas-fir and amabilis fir. Trees of the region attain very great size -- up to 200 feet in height and six feet and more in diameter.

Though the Coast Region contains less than two per cent of the forest area of Canada, it supplies nearly one-quarter of all the wood cut. Lumber is the most important use for the wood, and most of Canada's softwood plywood is made in this region. It also supports a large pulp-and-paper industry.

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The forests of the mountainous region of the British Columbia interior and western Alberta are also coniferous, and very mixed in species and character. Their composition changes with local climate, which varies from dry to very humid. Production in this area has expanded very rapidly in recent years. Although the wood was used almost exclusively for lumber until a few years ago, there are now several pulp mills in the region.

Canada's only area of true deciduous forest is a relatively small one in the southernmost part of Ontario, a predominantly agricultural zone.

Wood Production

Canada's total area of productive forest is 554 million acres, roughly 10 per cent of the world total and second only to that of the U.S.S.R. Four-fifths of this forest is coniferous, the remainder deciduous.

The pattern of use for the harvest of this forest varies widely across the country. In Eastern Canada, about two-thirds of the wood is used for the production of pulp and paper, while lumber is the dominant product on the West Coast.

More than 4,000 million cubic feet of wood was cut from Canada's forests in 1970 -- about 90 per cent of it coniferous. A recent estimate placed the annual allowable cut from lands now accessible, and using present practices, at 8,480 million cubic feet, so that roughly half the allowable cut is being currently taken.

Economists predict, by the year 2,000, an annual harvest of 7,620 million cubic feet -- still within the present allowable cut. In addition, much of the timber in Canada's northern forests -- about 25 per cent of all the country's forested land -- has not yet been inventoried, so that no allowable cut has been calculated for this area.

Forest Industries

In 1970, Canadian forest industries employed almost 300,000 workers earning some \$1,940 million. Of these, about 52,000 worked in logging operations, 88,000 in wood industries and the remainder in paper and allied industries.

The largest lumber-mills are located on the West Coast, some employing as many as 600 or 700 people, while a typical large mill in Eastern Canada employs between 75 and 100. There has been a steady reduction in the number of sawmills in Canada in recent years, with many small mills going out of production.

Plywood manufacture, mostly for the Canadian market, gives employment to more than 12,000 Canadians, with a payroll of \$80 million. Though most of this production (valued at \$262 million in 1970) uses wood from the West Coast coniferous forests, there is also an important plywood industry in Eastern Canada, based on the use of birch and poplar.

The pulp-and-paper industry has expanded rapidly during the past decade, particularly in bleached craft pulp manufacture. Newsprint, the chief product of the pulp-and-paper industry, is mainly exported -- predominantly to the U.S.A., but also to many other countries. Canada produces about 40 per cent of the world's newsprint. Other grades of paper and paperboard, mostly for the home market, account for another large part of the growing production of wood pulp -- more than 18 million tons annually.

Production figures for the forest industries in 1970 were: lumber, 11,271 million board feet; wood pulp, 18.3 million tons; paper products, 12.4 million tons. As well as the important newsprint market, exports account for about 7,500 million board feet (66 per cent) of Canada's lumber production annually, most of it going to the United States. In an economy highly dependent on exports, Canada's forest industries play a major role, providing about one-fifth of the value of all sales to other countries.

Forest Ownership and Jurisdiction

Statutory Authority

Under the British North America Act, passed more than 100 years ago, each of Canada's provinces is assigned the exclusive right to legislate with respect to the management and sale of public lands belonging to it and the timber on those lands. Each province has similar authority in relation to municipal institutions, property and civil rights in the province, and all matters of a purely local and private nature. Thus, the administration and management of municipally-owned forests and those in private ownership, as well as provincially-owned forests, are within the jurisdiction of provincial legislatures.

To the north of the provinces are two vast areas -- the Northwest Territories and the Yukon -- whose population is very sparse. Although these territories comprise more than a third of Canada's total land area, they include only eight per cent of its productive forest. Forestry matters in both territories are governed both by statutes of the Canadian Parliament and by ordinances of the territorial councils. These are administered by the Government of Canada through the Northern Natural Resources and Environment Branch of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

Ownership of Forest Lands

For many years, the policy of both the federal and provincial governments has been to retain in public ownership lands not required for

agricultural purposes. In some of the older settled parts of the country, however, the proportion of privately-owned land is high, especially in the Maritime Provinces -- New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island -- where nearly two-thirds of the productive forest area is in private ownership.

In Canada as a whole, about 90 per cent of productive forest land is publicly owned. Apart from the two northern territories, nearly all of this is vested in the provinces and administered by provincial government departments. There are, however, in some provinces a considerable number of small forests owned by other public authorities such as counties and municipalities.

In addition to the forests of the Yukon and Northwest Territories, the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs is also responsible for the administration of the forest in 29 national parks and many Indian reserves within provincial boundaries. Scattered across the country are numerous small parcels of forested federal land, including those on Canadian Armed Forces bases and federal forest-experiment stations. The administration of these tracts, whose combined area amounts only to about 1½ per cent of the provinces' total productive forest, is the responsibility of the appropriate federal agencies.

Although Canada's forests are chiefly under provincial jurisdiction, there are a number of circumstances in which federal law affects the forest industries; hence the use and management of the resources on which those industries are based. These include the regulation of trade and commerce, taxation, and interprovincial and international transportation.

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