THEY CALLED IT
"KING PINE"

Dense forests of large white pines provided a critical economic resource for settlers in the late 1800s and early 1900s. With its light, clear, straight-grained, easily milled wood, it was the most valuable tree species in the moist forests of the Inland Northwest. They called it "King Pine."

**IT WAS THE MOST VALUABLE TREE SPECIES IN THE MOIST FORESTS OF THE INLAND NORTHWEST.**

White pine dominated the timber industry in the Inland Northwest between 1900 and 1965. Founders of some of the nation's largest and most successful timber companies, including Frederic Weyerhaeuser, were attracted to the region and built their Inland Northwestern empires on a foundation of white pine. Weyerhaeuser and his associates incorporated seven companies in Idaho, including the three that eventually merged to form Potlatch Forests, Inc. (Rutledge Timber Company, Potlatch Lumber Company, and the Clearwater Timber Company) and the two that eventually merged to become Boise Cascade (Barber Lumber Company and the Payette Lumber and Manufacturing Company).

By 1903, large timber companies owned most of the private timberland in northern Idaho, and by 1910, there were 72 mills operating in Kootenai, Benewah, and Shoshone counties alone. Mills in the Coeur d'Alene region produced more than 17.5 billion board feet of lumber between 1900 and 1965, much of it white pine. Between 1925 and 1954, the average annual cut of white pine was 430 million board feet in northern Idaho, western Montana, and north-eastern Washington. Whereas in 1889 the Inland Northwest had been producing less than 1 percent of U.S. white pine lumber, by 1929, it was producing 43 percent.

White pine wood was used for everything from construction lumber to boxes to match sticks. High quality white pine is still a highly valuable resource, rivaling old-growth ponderosa pine and western redcedar in log prices. Its wood is used for interior and exterior siding and is a choice material for milled products such as window sashes, doors, and blinds. In recent years white pine has also been in high demand for solid-wood home furnishings such as dressers, beds, and tables.