

Conservation of Our Forests

Conservation of forests is of vital importance. Protecting and conserving forests for the future is something we've been doing for many generations, whether that be proactively preventing forest fires, harvesting lumber, planting saplings, or taking care of wildlife. Forests help clean the air and provide us with fresh air to breathe. They also provide shelter for wildlife and wood products for building and providing a source of heat for human beings. These are just a few reasons why caring for and preserving our forests is of such great importance.

Forest fires are one of the greatest threats to our beloved forests and the wildlife that reside in them. For that reason, it is of the utmost importance to prevent wildfires. There are many ways you can help to prevent a fire from occurring. One is to check the fire hazard status before building a campfire and do so in a designated area such as a fireproof ring. Make sure if you start a campfire you know how to properly put it out by dumping water on the fire until there are no red hot embers or smoke, then dump dirt on top till it is no longer visible. Don't smoke cigarettes and throw lit butts on the ground or out car windows or use fireworks when it is dry

outside, especially in heavily wooded or grassy areas that can catch on fire easily. As Smokey the Bear said, “ Only you can prevent wildfires”.

Harvesting lumber is something we as humans have been doing since the dawn of time for warmth and shelter. To be able to continue to use these resources, we need to regulate them so that they are not exhausted. Deforestation is a significant problem we can prevent by planting saplings in place of every tree we take. Cutting down the dead or sick trees and leaving the healthy ones, can help to maintain healthy forests. Harvesting diseased trees helps to stop the spread of the disease. Harvesting dead trees helps to prevent wildfires from spreading very easily, as dead wood makes the best kindling, making it burn much quicker than the rest of the trees. These trees can then be cut up for firewood or made into mulch and bark for landscaping. Selective harvesting and replanting of trees as needed helps to prevent overpopulation and thin out forests to maintain a healthy forest and provide humans with lumber to build with. These are just a few of the many ways we can help to regulate and use our forests wisely.

Forests create unique ecosystems for a variety of wildlife. There must be a balance between how much forest is available and wildlife populations. Not enough trees will cause a loss of habitat for animals, just as too many trees can cause overcrowding of various populations. Too much or too few of one species of animal can be a problem, just as an overcrowded or overly harvested forest can be. With this knowledge, we need to care for the inhabitants of the forests just as much as the trees. There are many ways we can manage and care for wildlife and forests. One of the biggest ways is conservation. Conservation is managing the population that lives in an area such as deer, grouse, squirrels, elk, etc, as well as the various species of trees and

plants. By doing this it allows for there to be a steady flow of food and resources. Conservation ensures survival and reduces the spread of disease which can lead to the extinction of species if left unmanaged.

Forests are one of our greatest resources. They provide much-needed resources such as clean air, food, shelter, building supplies, and habitat for wildlife. We must do all we can to implement proper conservation efforts, in order to preserve and properly maintain our forests for future generations.