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The Lumberman's Frontier: Three Centuries of Land Use, Society, and Change in America's Forests

By Thomas R. Cox



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The Lumberman's Frontier: Three Centuries of Land Use, Society, and Change in America's Forests By Thomas R. Cox

With *The Lumberman's Frontier*, Thomas Cox has reconstructed a groundbreaking history that stands apart from all previous studies of American forests. Forests were ubiquitous in early America, but it was only in selected areas that trees, rather than farming, attracted settlement. These areas constitute the lumberman's frontier, which appeared first in northern New England in the seventeenth century, followed by upstate New York, the Allegheny Plateau, the upper Great Lakes states, the Gulf South, and the Far West. The forest frontiers generated capital and building materials important in the nation's development, but they also left a legacy of environmental problems, class and urban-rural divisions, and economic frictions. The 1930s marked the end of the lumberman's frontier, but these consequences continue to shape attitudes and policies toward forests, most notably the questions "Whose forests are they?" and "How and by whom should forests be used?" Drawing upon recent work in social and economic history, as well as a wealth of historical data on forest industries and individuals, *The Lumberman's Frontier* neither glorifies economic development nor falls into the maw of gloom-and-doom. It puts individual actors at center stage, allowing the points of view of the workers and lumbermen to emerge. *The Lumberman's Frontier* will appeal to students and scholars of forestry, public policy, and environmental history, as well as to general readers interested in the history and settlement of the United States.



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Editorial Review

About the Author

Thomas R. Cox is Professor Emeritus of History at San Diego State University. He earned a PhD from University of Oregon and is a fellow and former president of the Forest History Society. He has published numerous articles on forest and environmental history and is the author of *The Park Builders: The State Parks Movement in the Pacific Northwest*; *Mills and Markets: A History of the Pacific Coast Lumber Industry to 1900*; and coauthor of *This Well-Wooded Land: Americans and their Forests from Colonial Times to the Present*.

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