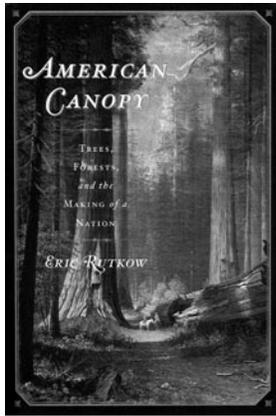


## BOOKS AND FILMS OF INTEREST

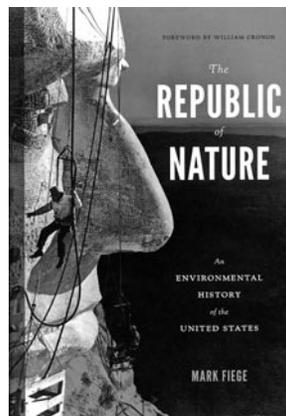
by Eben Lehman and James G. Lewis



“No other country was populated because of its trees quite like the United States,” writes Eric Rutkow in *American Canopy: Trees, Forests, and the Making of a Nation* (Scribner, 2012). The first-time author tackles an ambitious topic: the history of the United States told through trees. This fascinating narrative shows how American attitudes toward trees have transformed over time, as well as just how much trees have shaped what it means to be American. The book traces the formation and growth of the country, along with the evolution of national values, from colonial times through the twenty-first century. Rutkow reveals how American ideas of consumption were formed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as a seemingly limitless supply of trees was used as wood source for shelter, heat, and transportation fuel. As forests were wiped out, later generations became advocates for conservation and proper forest management while also promoting the ecological, scenic, and spiritual importance of forests. It is an epic tale, and Rutkow packs loads of information into around 350 pages of text. With so much ground to cover, the book could easily be encumbered by an overabundance of facts. Instead, the reader is treated to a surprisingly engaging tale as Rutkow successfully navigates through a series of short narratives that include insights on key historical figures such as Johnny Appleseed, Gifford Pinchot, Frederick Weyerhaeuser, and the mythical

Paul Bunyan. The book also offers fascinating anecdotes on topics such as the ubiquitousness of hard cider during colonial times, the politics of importing Japanese cherry trees to Washington, D.C., the founding of California’s orange industry, the spread of the chestnut blight, and the role of southern wood pulp in democratizing the written word. Rutkow mentions “how easy it is to forget that much of American history has been defined by trees,” but after reading this book it would be impossible to lose sight of this fact. Rutkow shows how wood was used not only to build the nation from the ground up but also to help shape what it means to be American.

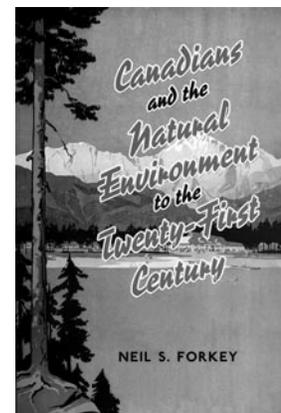
Another exciting new work similarly broad in scope is Mark Fiege’s *The Republic of Nature: An Environmental History of the United States* (University of Washington



Press, 2012), from the Weyerhaeuser Environmental Books series. Rather than presenting American history as one long singular narrative, Fiege chooses to illuminate several important episodes. These historical events are then reexamined through an environmental lens. Fiege applies his unique environmental perspective to key historical events and eras, many of which fall far outside the scope of traditional environmental history analysis. Subjects examined include the Salem witch trials, cotton agriculture and the slavery economy, the life and work of Abraham

Lincoln, construction of the transcontinental railroads, the creation of the atomic bomb, the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, and the oil crisis of the 1970s. Presented as individual chapters, these and other topics suggest an environmental component to nearly every step in the development of the United States, showing how the natural world has continually influenced American life. For example, when Fiege examines the *Brown v. Board* case that ended school segregation in 1954, he looks at how the urban environmental geography of Topeka, Kansas, created unsafe conditions for African American children walking to school. This presents a new angle on the events leading up to the monumental decision. This work is full of fresh takes on previously explored topics in American history. As a whole, the book underscores the importance of the natural environment to the entire narrative of American history and demonstrates how the natural world has played a significant role in the creation of the modern nation.

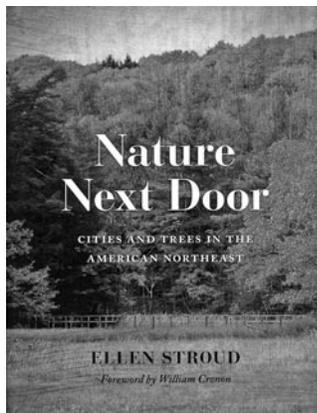
The natural world has also played an integral role in the national history of Canada, as revealed in Neil S. Forkey’s *Canadians and the Natural Environment to the Twenty-First Century* (University of Toronto Press, 2012). Forkey explores the indelible rela-



tionship between Canadians and the environment, stating in the introduction, “There is a strong case to be made for the

idea that humans and nature are mutually entwined in one related narrative of Canada's past. The objective of this book is to make that case." What follows is an excellent overview of four hundred years of Canadian environmental history. Forkey traces Europeans' initial encounters with Canada's landscape, the increased use and exploitation of forests and wildlife, and the eventual adoption of conservation regulations designed to protect and sustain these natural resources. But Canada's relationship with the environment was not just a utilitarian one. In addition to examining the sustainable management of natural resources, the book also looks at Canadians' romantic celebration of nature and their efforts to preserve it. This includes the influence of landscape art, the rise of nature tourism, and the successful creation of national parks. Forkey also includes a chapter addressing First Peoples' connections with the landscape and their use of natural resources. With a significant amount of information packed into a relatively short text, the book is an exceptional survey of the historical relationship between Canadians and their natural environment. The conflict and compromise between the opposing influences of exploitation and protection of natural resources serve as a common theme throughout. Canada's use and protection of its natural surroundings are integral to the country's history as a whole. Readers are also reminded of the relevance of these historic connections with the natural world as we face new environmental dilemmas.

Shifting our focus back to the United States, we find a valuable new perspective on

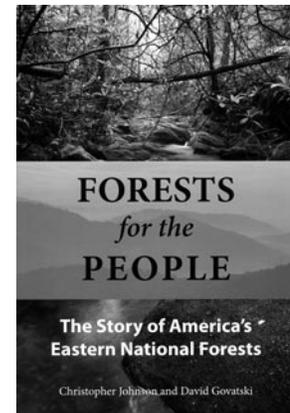


American landscape history in Ellen Stroud's *Nature Next Door: Cities and Trees in the American Northeast* (University of Washington Press, 2012). Stroud tells the remarkable story of how trees returned to

the landscapes of the northeastern United States during the early twentieth century, examining the many factors and agents that facilitated the region's dramatic transformation from open pastures to lush forests. The change resulted partly from farm abandonment, as farmers left their worn-out land and set out for other parts of the country, but this was only a small sliver of the story. Without the work of dedicated individuals like Joseph Rothrock, Mira Lloyd Dock, and Philip Ayers, along with crucial changes in tax law and other state and federal government policies, extensive reforestation would never have been possible. With chapters organized by state, Stroud's book shows the differences in culture and ecology between Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine, while also touching on commonalities across the region as a whole. This narrative is an important one, as it documents steep increases in forested acreage during a time when the region also experienced massive population growth and expansive urban development. While the change is remarkable, the book shows that it was not at all accidental. Stroud's focus on the direct connections between cities and woods is particularly valuable, as she explores how the region's urban areas and forested land have grown simultaneously. This is a little-explored topic and represents an exciting combination of perspectives. Stroud examines the region's environment through urban and rural lenses and reveals how, rather than diverging, these two perspectives converge around a common interest in the growth of forests. Through their work on causes such as protecting watersheds and promoting outdoor recreation, turn-of-the-century conservationists, politicians, scientists, and tourists laid the groundwork for the return of forests to the northeast. Stroud's work is well researched, written in an engaging style, and accompanied by numerous historical photos. With its fresh perspective on an important topic, the book is a welcome addition to American forest history scholarship.

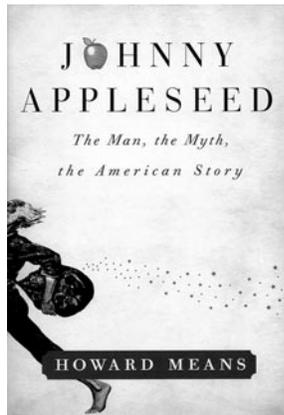
Another important new work in that scholarship field is *Forests for the People: The Story of America's Eastern National Forests* (Island Press, 2013) by Christopher Johnson and David Govatski. The book details how the disappearing forests of the Northeast, South, and Upper Midwest were saved during the early twentieth century. Following increased deforestation due to factors such

as logging and devastating fires, an American forest conservation movement began to build in the late nineteenth century. The authors detail this escalating forest crisis and focus on the many individuals who worked toward the creation of eastern national forests to help conserve this dwindling resource. These conservation efforts culminated in the passage of the Weeks Act in 1911, which opened the door for the creation of national forests in the East. The work of passing this monumental legislation receives a full chapter, as does the work of creating several individual forests over the decade that followed. This history, though, is only the first half the book. The second half of the book uses a case study approach to illustrate current issues affecting the eastern national forests, examining crucial issues in specific locations that also



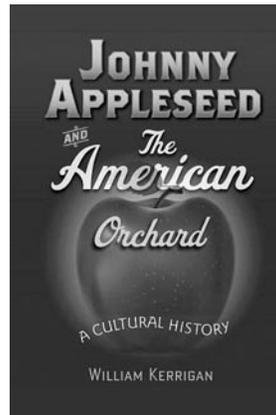
impact the eastern system as a whole. These topics include the use of prescribed burning in Florida, timber harvesting in Mississippi, wolf population recovery in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, oil and natural gas drilling in Pennsylvania, multiple-use disputes in the Boundary Canoe Area Wilderness in Minnesota, and the destruction dealt by the emerald ash borer in Michigan. The book's overall structure, split between historical narrative and case studies, makes it ideal for classroom use. In documenting the path taken to create and manage the national forests of the eastern United States—a very different path from that of their western counterparts—the book illuminates crucial issues facing America's national forests, East and West.

Not one, but two new biographies examine the legendary American figure of John Chapman, better known to history as Johnny Appleseed. A uniquely American figure and the subject of numerous myths and legends, Chapman nevertheless left



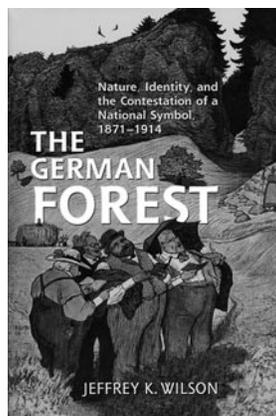
relatively minimal traces on the actual historical record during his life. Two new works attempt to get to the core of the man behind the legend. The first, *Johnny Appleseed: The Man, the Myth, the American Story* (Simon and Schuster, 2011), by Howard Means, follows Chapman as he crosses Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana and plants apple tree orchards during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As those familiar with the enduring stories of Chapman's life might expect, Means reveals him to be a man who lived a life of simplicity in the natural world; he oftentimes walked barefoot and slept outside in the woods. Mostly forgotten to history, though, is Chapman's involvement in the Church of New Jerusalem (or the New Church), which was based on writings of the Swedish spiritual mystic Emanuel Swedenborg. Chapman not only labored to spread apple trees across the countryside, he also evangelized tirelessly for this branch of Christianity, which fell far outside the religious mainstream. Means describes Chapman's personal holy trinity as "land, apples, and Swedenborg's God." These were the things that fueled him on his journeys across the American frontier.

The Chapman legend is further mined in *Johnny Appleseed and the American Orchard: A Cultural History* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), by William Kerrigan. Using impressive historical research, especially considering the lack of significant written records, Kerrigan traces Chapman's life from a childhood in Massachusetts to his journeys west through Pennsylvania and into the Midwest. In Kerrigan's telling, Chapman's life in some ways parallels the evolution of a young American nation during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries: both demonstrated an insatiable appetite for westward expansion and both exhibited more than a dash of



religious zeal. The narrative also reveals the importance of the apple—and the hard cider that came along with it—to Americans of this period. Like Means, Kerrigan dives into Chapman's many eccentricities, religious and otherwise. The Johnny Appleseed character ultimately entered the national consciousness through a posthumous 1871 article about Chapman in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* by W. D. Haley. But the Chapman behind the legend, as revealed in both of these books, is an even more fascinating figure.

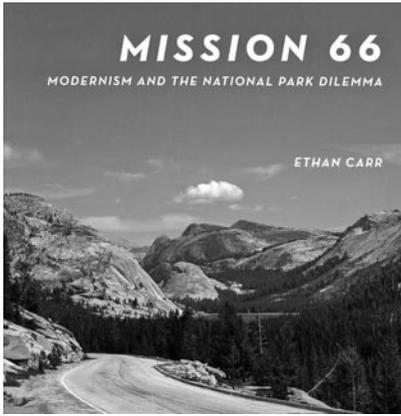
The woodland environment has a long and unique history as a source of national identity in Germany. The forest as a unifying symbol took on new significance under the German Empire, a historical period examined by Jeffrey K. Wilson in *The German Forest: Nature, Identity, and the Contestation of a National Symbol, 1871–1914* (University of Toronto Press, 2012). At the time of the German Empire's creation, Wilson writes, the forest served as "a logical and natural symbol of a generalized, unified, and truly national landscape in a country otherwise



divided by political, social, and cultural boundaries." This unifying symbol also quickly became a source of conflict, though, as a variety of groups with com-

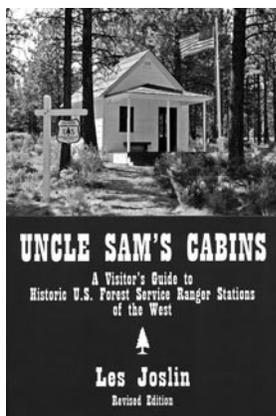
peting interests attempted to co-opt the forest as representative of their own narrow agendas. The symbolic woodland landscape became a highly contested space as various political parties and economic classes challenged the implications of the forest as a national symbol. Wealthy agrarians and industrialists sought to restrict access to valuable timberlands, for example, while social reformers and radical nationalists advocated for forests as national public property. In Berlin, local urban groups organized to challenge state government efforts to sell woodlands near the city rather than preserve them for recreational use. One of the book's two chapter-length case studies focuses on one of these disputed forests, the Grunewald. The other case study examines reforestation efforts in the Tuchel Heath on the eastern German frontier. The reforestation programs in Tuchel are somewhat controversial, as they represent a form of national control over an ethnically contested area between Germans and Poles. In this case, the German forest is an agent of modernity as well as an instrument for bringing an area under centralized control. Wilson's work is meticulously researched and provides a unique perspective on the role of forests in the formation of modern German national identity. The book is a welcome and important contribution to scholarship on German political and environmental history.

The years following World War II brought a dramatic increase in the number of Americans visiting national parks. A rapidly expanding road and highway system, inexpensive automobiles, and the promotion of nature tourism helped contribute to this massive spike in travel to parks. The unprecedented visitor numbers, while welcome, also put an intense strain on park facilities and services. Something clearly had to be done to keep pace. The answer was a decade-long planning, landscape, and architecture initiative begun in 1956 by the National Park Service. This program is examined in *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), by Ethan Carr. National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth timed his Mission 66 initiative to conclude in 1966, the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Park Service. Carr details the massive planning, design, and construction efforts launched under the Mission 66 banner. The program's physical output is examined in detail, such as the



building of park visitor centers, a new concept at the time, as well as the construction of new roads and other facilities. The book also delves into controversies surrounding the program, such as the opposition of wilderness advocates and environmental groups to the expansion of Yosemite's Tioga Road due to the anticipated environmental impacts. Overall, the book captures an important era of American landscape planning and architecture during a time of growing consciousness about the natural environment. The book's handsome, large-scale format helps show off numerous historical photos of the enduring Mission 66 facilities.

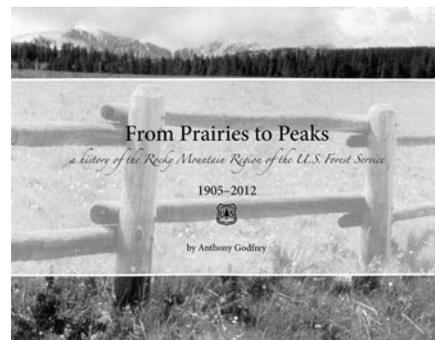
Those interested in architectural history and the U.S. Forest Service may appreciate *Uncle Sam's Cabins: A Visitor's Guide to Historic U.S. Forest Service Ranger Stations of the West* (Wilderness Associates, 2012), by Les Joslin, a former Forest Service firefighter and wilderness ranger. After giving a brief history of the work of forest rangers in the West, Joslin looks at some of the earliest physical structures built by



the agency in the West. Detailed entries for nearly 100 historic ranger stations built before World War II in twelve western states appear within chapters organized

by Forest Service region. Each entry contains current access information for each cabin and a history of the structure's construction and use, and is accompanied by maps and historic photographs. This revised and updated version adds new entries and additional information to the original 1995 edition. Joslin's intense interest in the subject matter, which he attributes to a 1962 stint as fireguard in a district ranger's office on the Toiyabe National Forest, comes through in every detailed entry. As gathered in Joslin's book, the views of individual ranger stations offer a unique snapshot of life in the Forest Service during the early years of the agency. The book also provides an excellent resource for those interested in architectural history and current issues of historic preservation.

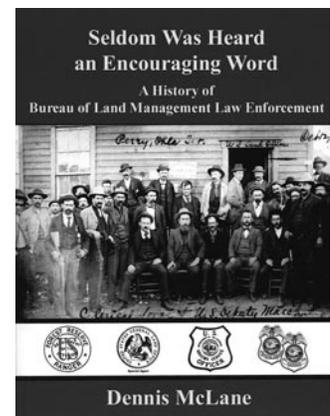
Anthony Godfrey has written another outstanding history of a Forest Service region. The author of *The Ever-Changing View: A History of the National Forests in California*, Godfrey has just published the equally impressive *From Prairies to Peaks: A History of the Rocky Mountain Region of the U.S. Forest Service, 1905–2012* (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 2012). Region 2 includes seventeen national forests and seven national grasslands stretching across parts of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming, making it one of the more unique regions to manage. The region has played a vital role in the development of long-range forest management plans and the shaping of the multiple-use policy. Despite the date range in the title, Godfrey begins with the exploitation of natural resources



in the West prior to the establishment of public lands in 1905 that came under the protection of the U.S. Forest Service. He then tackles the history of one of the most

ecologically diverse regions overseen by the agency, one that incorporates the Great Plains, vast grasslands, and the Rocky Mountains. Tracing conflicts over such issues as cattle grazing and water rights across more than a century, Godfrey provides a history that will be useful for stakeholders, visitors, students, historians, and Forest Service employees. The impressive size of the book is commensurate with the swath of history it covers: at 8.5 x 11 inches and 370 pages, it is densely packed with information and is well illustrated.

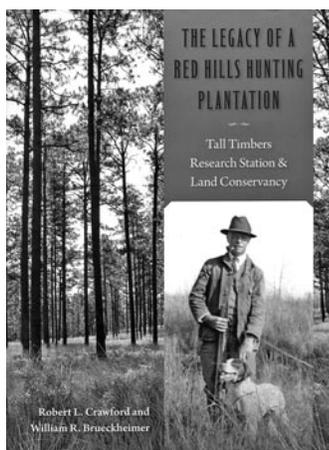
The history of a single aspect of another federal agency, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), is the subject of a recent book by Dennis McLane. One of the oldest BLM programs, law enforcement efforts are nevertheless often overlooked in the overall history of the agency. McLane looks to correct this with *Seldom Was Heard an Encouraging Word: A History of Bureau of Land Management Law Enforcement* (Shoppe Foreman Publishing, 2011). A multiple-use management agency created in 1946, the BLM's history of protecting the nation's natural and historic resources actually began more than a century before with a precursor to the BLM, the General Land Office, which hired its first special agents to protect federal timber resources in 1832—long before the existence of forest and park rangers. The BLM law enforcement program includes the agency's work in the areas of grazing, wild horses and burros, off-road vehicles, and drug enforcement. The book's appendices include a useful chronology of significant BLM law enforcement events, along with transcriptions of various historical documents. The



author himself also brings to the table years of experience working for BLM. McLane worked as a ranger in California before eventually becoming BLM's first chief

ranger at the national level. His office was later moved from Washington, D.C., to the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, where he became deputy chief of law enforcement. His own law enforcement work affords an expert personal take on the subject. McLane's book serves as a much-needed historical analysis of the enforcement arm of one of our most important federal agencies.

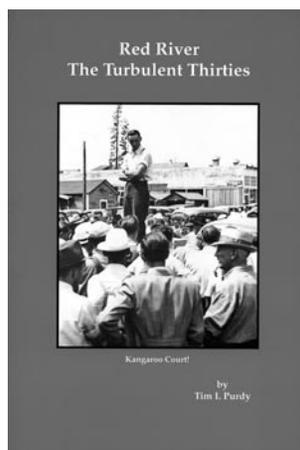
Perhaps no location is more important to the American South's forest history than Tall Timbers. Located in the Red Hills of northern Florida and southern Georgia, Tall Timbers has played a crucial role in the development of fire ecology and the study of the longleaf pine ecosystem and is given a detailed examination by Robert L. Crawford and William R. Brueckheimer in *The Legacy of a Red Hills Hunting Plantation: Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy* (University Press of Florida, 2012). Crawford and Brueckheimer trace the history of Tall Timbers from its beginnings as a hunting plantation through its transition to a world-class ecological research station. The story centers on Henry L. Beadel, who took ownership of the Tall Timbers Plantation in 1919. During the 1920s Beadel witnessed firsthand the campaigns by the Forest Service to eradicate all types of forest fire across the South.



These fire prevention efforts had a dramatic impact on the local ecosystem, turning formerly open longleaf woodlands into forests choked with brush. This severely limited the quail populations and Beadel's ability to hunt on his lands. As a result Beadel commissioned a wildlife management study, marking the beginning of a friendship with Herbert Stoddard that lasted the rest of their lives. Stoddard's groundbreaking work led Beadel to establish the Tall

Timbers Research Station in 1958. Numerous images accompany this fascinating history, including many previously unpublished photographs from the Tall Timbers archives. The book is broken up into four sections: the first looks at the plantation era of Tall Timbers, the second details the first fifty years of ecological research at Tall Timbers as the station received international attention for its work in areas such as wildlife management and fire ecology, and the third and fourth sections look at the modern conservation work of the Tall Timbers Land Conservancy and its enduring intellectual resources in the form of library and scientific collections. Given the importance of the work done at Tall Timbers over the past century, this attractively designed large-format book is worthy of its subject.

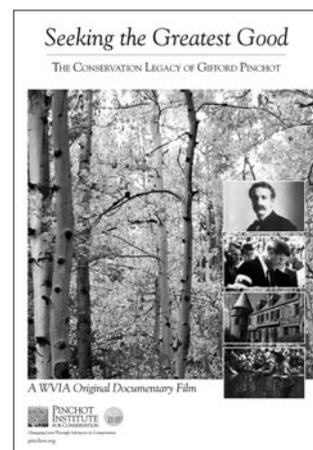
An era of conflict for large forest products companies in the American West resonates through Tim I. Purdy's new work, *Red River: The Turbulent Thirties* (Lahontan Images, 2012). This book represents the third volume in Purdy's ongoing series on the history of the Red River Lumber Company. Red River was founded in Minnesota during the late nineteenth century but moved to northern California following the turn of the century. The two previous books in Purdy's series document the com-



pany's founding and early growth and success. This volume focuses on a period of tumult for the company. The 1930s were a decade in which Red River weathered a severe financial crisis as well as significant labor problems. While the company's financial issues, rising debt, and management changes are discussed, the primary focus of the book is the labor turmoil Red River experienced during this period. The company town of Westwood, California,

became a hotbed of union activity, and battles over which group would represent the employees, the Congress of Industrial Organizations or the Industrial Employees Union, often turned violent. Meanwhile, Red River was demanding pay reductions for employees, and the resulting strikes, riots, and legal activity dominated the town's history throughout the decade. Because similar labor issues convulsed company towns throughout the country during this time, what Purdy offers is both a case study and a snapshot of Westwood. Like the previous two volumes, this one is well illustrated with historical images of the company's operations. Readers interested in additional materials can also consult a Red River Lumber Company photograph album and a company file containing official publications and advertising materials in the Alvin J. Huss Archives at the Forest History Society.

A new documentary film is being released to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Pinchot Institute for Conservation. *Seeking the Greatest Good* explores the life and legacy of Gifford Pinchot and the institute that bears his name. Written and directed by filmmaker Kristin Doran and produced for television by WVIA, the one-hour film does an admirable job of wedding what are essentially two films. The



first half hour comprises a biographical portrait of Pinchot, the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service and a leader of the conservation movement for nearly half a century. It serves as a fairly comprehensive introduction to a seminal figure in forest history. Then the film briefly explains how Pinchot's home, Grey Towers, came to be donated to the federal government, thus becoming a national center for environmental education and the study of envi-

ronmental and natural resource policy, and explores how the national historic site is now used for those purposes. Next, the film covers the establishment of the Pinchot Institute in 1963 and discusses its mission before looking at three institute projects that exemplify Gifford Pinchot's philosophy of "practical conservation" and social justice: the Common Waters Fund, which works to protect the Delaware River watershed; the Forest Health-Human Health Initiative in Oregon, which helps provide a means for private landowners to afford healthcare by maintaining a healthy forest; and a sustainable forest management project in Ecuador, which is led by Peter Pinchot, a grandson of Gifford Pinchot. To learn when the film is airing on public television stations around the country, to purchase a copy of the film, or to find accompanying educational materials for classroom use, visit the Pinchot Institute's website at [www.seekinggreatestgood.org](http://www.seekinggreatestgood.org). (JGL)

Pinchot fares less well in *A Fierce Green Fire: The Battle for a Living Planet*, a new film by Mark Kitchell that surveys the history of the last 50 years of the environmental movement and the rise of global environmentalism. Based on the book *A Fierce Green Fire*, by Philip Shabecoff, the film begins with the familiar, simplistic explanation about the split between early twen-

tieth-century conservationists on the one hand—represented by Gifford Pinchot—and preservationists on the other—personified by John Muir—and the battle over building a dam in Yosemite National Park's Hetch Hetchy Valley. This sets up a dy-



namic that pits grassroots activists against government and corporate interests, which becomes the major theme of the film. Given that the film's intended audience is the successors to those grassroots activists, this theme is not surprising but it is disappointing. At just over 100 minutes, the film offers only a cursory overview of a complex subject. A more nuanced and balanced interpretation of this topic is long overdue. That quibble aside, the Hetch Hetchy discussion sets up the fight led by David

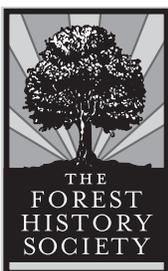
Brower and the Sierra Club over building dams in various national parks in the 1950s and 1960s. From there the film moves chronologically through four other topics, each one broader and more global. The second act examines the environmental movement in the 1970s by focusing on Love Canal before engaging in a broader discussion about environmental justice. The third act looks at how the embrace of alternative ecology, energy sources, and ways of living led to the establishment of Greenpeace and its controversial efforts to save sperm whales and harp seals. The next act uses the struggle led by Chico Mendes and Amazon rubber tappers to save the rain forest as a lens through which to view global resource issues. The final act discusses climate change and the feeble efforts by national governments to curb it through international treaties and accords. The film draws from news and documentary film footage, home movies, and archival still and moving images, as well as new interviews with commentators and activists. This is a useful, if heavy-handed, introduction to global environmental issues and recent environmental history for students because it can be used to prompt discussions about historical interpretation. The DVD, available from Bullfrog Films, comes with a teaching guide and a viewers' guide on the disc. (JGL) □

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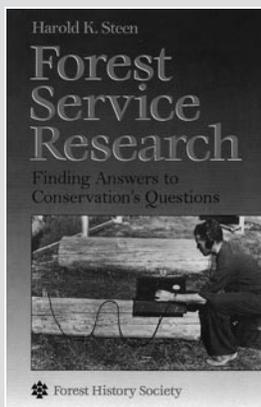
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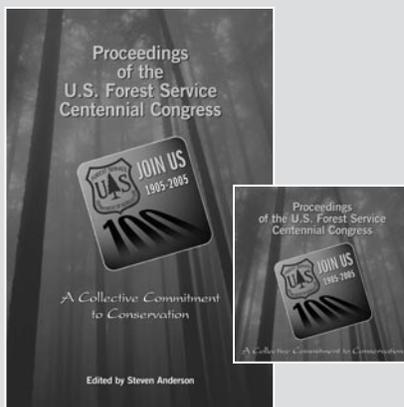
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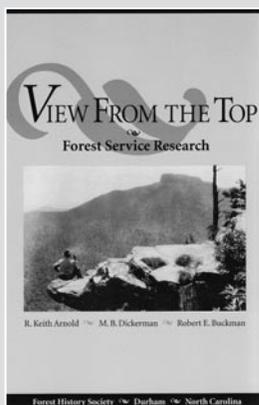
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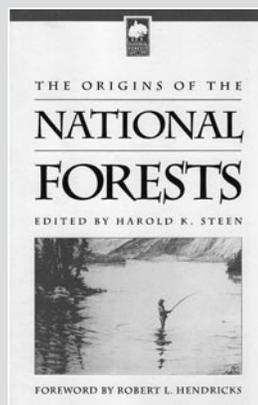
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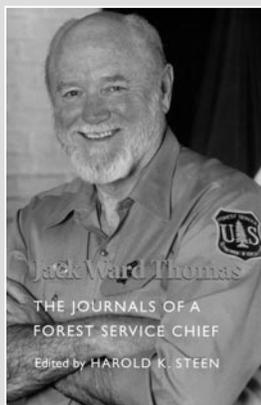
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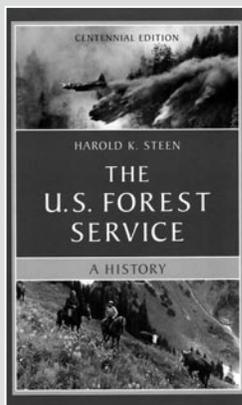
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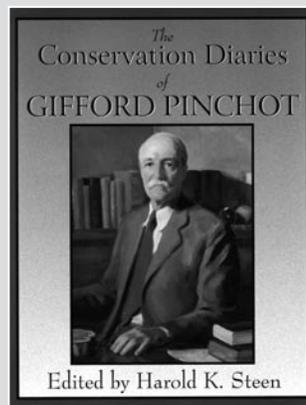
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