**THE TIMBER INDUSTRY IN CANADA**

Vast forests cover almost half the land in Canada. Canadians have made this natural resource important to the economy. Loggers cut the trees and then send them to mills. These mills use the timber to make a variety of products including lumber, plywood, and wood pulp for making many kinds of paper.

Forests serve an important role in the environment. Animals and plants depend on the forests to live. Forests also serve to provide oxygen to the atmosphere and to filter out pollutants in the air. Forests serve as homes for wildlife and areas for human recreation.

Citizens in Canada are concerned that logging will destroy the forests and the benefits that it brings. A major concern for many Canadians is ***clear-cutting***. Most timber companies cut all the trees in a given area, leaving large treeless gaps in the forest. Results of clear-cutting include reduced water quality, erosion, and loss of wildlife habitat. Heavy machinery can leave the forest floor compacted. This makes it hard for new growth to start. Some environmental groups want companies to leave small trees and seedlings. They also want to see smaller groups of trees removed instead of hundreds of acres of trees at a time.

The government and industry are working together to try to manage the use of the forests. Hundreds of millions of seeds and seedlings are planted each year. Billions of dollars are spent managing and protecting the forests. Over $100 million is spent each year by the logging industry to protect wildlife and their habitats.