

Reading 4: Using the Forest in Many Ways

Do you like to climb trees? When I was a small girl, that was my favorite thing to do. I still love the forests along Lake Huron. People hike, camp, and explore in the forest. Birds, deer, mice, squirrels, chipmunks, and foxes live there. The trees are tall and straight. Now my job is to manage the forest. I am a conservation officer.

The trees in the forest have been here a long time. There are stumps where big trees used to stand. In the early 1900s, trees were cut for lumber. Houses and wooden ships were built from that lumber. People still live in many of those houses in Alpena. Both houses and ships have economic benefits. One is to shelter people. The other is to transport products on the water. Trees are a natural resource that have a direct economic benefit. They also have another benefit. People enjoy the forest. Besides that, paper and cardboard come from trees. I enjoy and use trees every day.

The tallest trees in the forest are about 75 years old. Most are younger. Every ten years some of the older trees are cut for lumber. The small trees grow very close together. Some of them are also cut. They are not big enough for lumber, so they are used to make paper. Others are left to grow. In 50 years, they will also be cut.

People want to save and consume the forest at the same time. Is that possible? I want the forest to stay the same so I can hike and camp there. But I also use wood products. It is possible to both cut some trees and let others grow. We must use resources wisely. If we use resources in a smart way, then we should never run out.

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