

Planting Loblolly Pine in Cutover Longleaf Pine Forests by Civilian Conservation Corps Enrollees in the 1930's and 40's

(bolded words in text indicate key words and concepts)

Student Information:

During the years of the Great Depression, times were tough for many Americans. To help fight off these hard times, the thirty second President (Franklin D. Roosevelt) created jobs for millions of unemployed young men to do projects which helped protect the environment. These people formed what was called the Civilian Conservation Corps. In much of the South, land that was logged of all of its trees stretched as far as you could see. Young longleaf pine trees were difficult to find and hard to plant, so in place the Civilian Conservation Corps planted this barren land with loblolly or slash pine.

Teacher Information:

Accepting the Presidential nomination on July 1, 1932, New York Governor Franklin Roosevelt planned a fight against **soil erosion** and declining **timber** resources, utilizing the unemployed of large urban areas. He proposed to recruit thousands of unemployed young men (mostly white males between the ages of 18 and 25 years old), enroll them in a peacetime army, and send them into battle against destruction and erosion of our natural resources.

The **Civilian Conservation Corps** (aka CCC) camps were set up all over the United States. The men planted trees, built public parks, drained swamps to fight **malaria**, restocked rivers with fish, worked on flood control projects and a range of other work that helped to conserve the environment. Between 1933 and 1941 over 3,000,000 men served in the CCC. The pay was \$30 dollars a month with \$22 dollars of it being sent home to dependents. Throughout the Corps, more than 40,000 illiterates were taught to read and write.

CCC enrollees throughout the country were credited with renewing the nation's decimated forests by planting an estimated three billion trees from 1933 to 1942. In the South, CCC enrollees began to plant large areas of cutover land with pine seedlings. Unfortunately, the forestry community at the time saw longleaf pine as a slow-growing tree, difficult to regenerate. So, in place of **native** longleaf, **off-site** loblolly or slash pine were carefully planted in tidy rows, amid the skeletons of the ancient pine forests. This new crop of **loblolly** and **slash pine** plantations were less tolerant of fire than longleaf pine trees. In order to protect this new investment of trees, a crusade spearheaded by the **Southern Forestry Educational Project** was initiated to preach that fire was a destructive agent in the landscape and needed to be snuffed out. This message was later passed on to **Smokey Bear**.

Key Words and Concepts: CCC, Civilian Conservation Corps, loblolly pine, malaria, native, off-site, slash pine, Smokey Bear, soil erosion, Southern Forestry Educational Project, timber.