

## **Modern Logging and Milling Spelled Economic Recovery for the South But Spurred the End of the Longleaf Forest**

(bolded words in text indicate key words and concepts)

### **Student Information:**

Timber and forest products are the biggest industry in many southern states. When pulp and paper mills came to the South, they helped landowners and small towns make money. Longleaf pine was not a good tree for paper making and it began to disappear. Longleaf pine still makes very good **lumber** and utility **poles** and is a good tree for landowners to have on their land.

### **Teacher Information:**

Timber still remains one of the South's biggest crops. For example, timber is Alabama's largest crop, returning more money to landowners than cotton, peanuts, corn, soybeans, and wheat combined. **Forest industry** is also the state's largest industry. Although 71% of the state's acreage is forested, longleaf acreage has declined precipitously. Much of today's forest is grown like a crop, primarily for its **cellulose** used as **fiber** in the manufacture of pulp and paper. Trees are harvested when they reach **economic maturity** rather than **ecologic maturity**. For this reason, forest rotations are often not extended past 15 - 20 years. Additionally, loblolly and slash pines are the preferred trees because of their rapid early growth and adaptability to a wide range of sites. For the most part, these forest are grown as a **monoculture** and do not contain the **biodiversity** or unique plants and animals seen in the native longleaf pine forest. The pulp and paper industry came to the South in the 1940's and 1950's and gave landowners a strong market for low quality timber. That, along with the **boll weevil**, shifted that state's market from one dominated by agriculture (cotton) to one dominated by forest industry. Longleaf is not a tree well suited for the **pulp and paper industry**, so it was routinely cut and replaced with other pine species. Today, longleaf pine still supplies the highest quality forest products as lumber, utility poles, and **pine straw**.

**Key Words and Concepts:** biodiversity, boll weevil, cellulose, ecologic maturity, economic maturity, fiber, forest industry, lumber, monoculture, pine straw, poles, pulp and paper industry.