

NAWPA

North America's Healthy Forests

Pennsylvania is home to the finest growing stock of hardwoods in the world.



INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

American Hardwood Information Center
Pennsylvania Forest Products Association

Sustaining Penn's Woods: A Sound Use of the Land, a curriculum about Pennsylvania's forests and land use



The volume of hardwoods in American forests today is 90% larger than it was 50 years ago.



Hardwood forests cover 279 million acres: the equivalent of hardwood trees covering every square inch of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. This resource is neither scarce nor finite. Instead, it is plentiful and renewable.



Taking into account all hardwood trees in all American hardwood forests, there is nearly twice as much new wood growth as there is wood removed through harvesting. We are not running out of trees.



The volume of hardwood in American forests is 352 billion cubic feet and 10.2 billion cubic feet are being added each year through growth. By contrast, only 6 billion cubic feet are removed each year.



By the early 1900s, much of Pennsylvania's forests were cut and forest cover amounted to only about 30% of the state's land area. The forests have since recovered and developed into a bountiful, valuable resource.



Today, Pennsylvania has 16.7 million acres of hardwood forests which cover 59% of the state.





Pennsylvania is recognized as the nation's leader in the production of hardwood lumber, accounting for about 10% of the annual U.S. output.







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Pennsylvania's Healthy Forests





In Pennsylvania, there are two major forest-type groups:

-  **Oak and Hickory** - 47% of the forests, mainly in the central and southern areas.
-  **Northern Hardwoods** - 38% of the forests, mainly in the north and northwest, including birch, sugar maple and black cherry. Other forest-type groups are oak/pine (2%), elm/ash/red maple (4%) and white/red pine (5%). Commercially valuable species include black cherry, red and white oak and sugar maple, with lower-value hardwoods being red maple and hemlock.

Ecological processes that influence our forestland:

-  **Succession and Competition Among Species** - For example, the northern red oak expands its crown to out-compete shade-intolerant white ash trees, and the black walnut emits a chemical from its roots that prevents growth of nearby trees.
-  **Grazing** - Deer browse on the twigs and leaves of young trees, inhibiting growth and forest regeneration. This also has a dramatic impact on wildlife habitat and species biodiversity.
-  **Disease and Pests** - Chestnut blight, a fungus, destroys chestnut trees, except for small rootstock and saplings. White pine blister root, Dutch elm disease, hemlock woolly adelgid, cherry scallop shell moth, pear thrips, fall cankerworm, forest tent caterpillar and elm spanworm are all tree predators.
-  **Weather** - Wind, fire caused by lightning, drought and rain.

Human influences on the forest:

-  **Clearing** - For development or agriculture.
-  **Harvesting** - For lumber and wood products.
-  **Fire** - Humans cause most wildfires, with debris-burning and arson now the most common causes.
-  **Taxes** - The need to pay property taxes influences landowner decisions regarding management or the sale of their land. Private landowners in Pennsylvania receive an estimated \$380 million a year from timber sales.

Pennsylvania has 16.7 million acres of forestland covering 59% of the state. Although it ranks 33rd among the states in land area, Pennsylvania ranks 12th in total timberland.

It is estimated that Pennsylvania timber is growing faster than it is being harvested — in other words, the annual harvest is less than the sustainable yield.

