



Communities and Forests: Where People Meet the Land

Robert G. Lee

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Communities and Forests offers a timely view of the changing face of forests and forestry in North America today. In examining interactions between people and forests, the book shows that forests are as much a social institution as they are a biological resource.

Editors Robert Lee and Donald Field document the shift from scientific forestry to community forestry. They note that the traditional science-based, state-controlled model for managing forests ignores the voices of those affected by the use of forest resources. The editors suggest that science-based forestry is giving way to an alternative approach, one in which nature, economy, society, and culture are considered integral elements of the human-forest relationship. They see a future where forestry will continue to be informed by science but shaped by community values.

Contributors to this volume consider the connection between forests and communities from a variety of perspectives, including environmental history, natural resource sociology, and forest policy. The book begins with an investigation of the historical and sociological foundations of community-based forest management. Chapters in the second section highlight the diverse issues surrounding community forestry, specifically the conflicts between the management of public forestlands and the interests of various stakeholders in using forests as a public good. The final section examines urban forestry, focusing on both the importance of forestry in urban settings and the demographic shifts that have brought people with urban values and lifestyles to rural, forested settings.

With its unique focus on the integration of communities into decision-making about forests, this collection of insightful essays will prove useful to public and private land managers, as well as to researchers and students in the fields of forestry, resource management, rural sociology, regional planning, environmental studies, and parks and recreation.

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