

THE TREE PROGRAM FOR 4TH AND 5TH CLASSROOMS

The TREE program was originally developed by the MFRA (Michigan Forest Resource Alliance) to reach school children at the fourth and fifth grade level. At these grade levels, students are often introduced to topics such as Michigan history, photosynthesis, and the tropical rain forest. It is an excellent opportunity to embellish these themes with information about our own forests right here in Michigan.

MSU Extension has adapted the TREE program and it has been well received in hundreds of classrooms and by thousands of students. It consists of a series of posters and with a number of show n'tell materials. All the available information is rarely used during a presentation. Rather, students help drive the topics of a particular session. The program is highly



interactive. Questions flow back and forth between presenter and students. Much fun can be had with the material. The program is always evolving, often from cues provided by students and teachers.

Topics potentially covered include:

- ❖ Forest history from glaciation, to near complete forestation, to where we are today.
- ❖ Some Michigan forest facts.
- ❖ Tree identification features and key Michigan tree species with a stress on differing silvics.
- ❖ Forest associations and community distribution.
- ❖ Tree morphology, annual rings (2/season), growth, CO₂ and O₂ ratios, and photosynthesis.
- ❖ Natural vs. artificial regeneration.
- ❖ Forest products (e.g. 5,000+ products and Levi's hip tag paper made in Munising).
- ❖ Wildlife habitat requirements.
- ❖ Recreation, watersheds, and soil protection.
- ❖ Michigan harvest (cord pile 3,500 miles long).
- ❖ Michigan growth (8,000 miles long).
- ❖ Michigan standing volume (cord pile almost 300,000 miles long).
- ❖ Introduction to silvicultural systems.

Some Sample Forest Tidbits:

About half the state is forested.

Michigan has among the ten largest forests.

Acre = about a football field.

Every U.S. person uses 4-4.5 pounds of wood/day.

Logging boom timber value worth more than the gold from the California gold rush.

3 national forests, 6 state forests in Michigan.

Over 14 billion trees in Michigan.

Sugar maple is Michigan's most common tree.

More forest in the USA than 100 years ago.

13,000,000 trees planted each year in Michigan.

About 45% of Michigan forests are private non-industrially owned.

Current Materials List

TREE poster kit

Tree "cookies"

Photosynthesis "kit"

Daily supply of wood

Cone board

Forest Product samples

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