

What is a Boreal Forest?



The northernmost and coldest forest zone in the Northern Hemisphere is the boreal forest, forming a continuous belt 1000 km in north-south width across North America, Europe and Asia.

“The boreal forest is between the northern tundra and the southern grassland, having mixed hardwood trees.

Canada's boreal forest is part of a great northern circumpolar band of mostly coniferous trees extending across the subarctic latitudes of Russia, Scandinavia and North America. Globally, the boreal forest comprises almost 25% of the world's closed canopy forest as well as vast expanses of open transitional forest.

The boreal forest plays a significant role in the earth's environmental balance. Besides being a producer of oxygen, the boreal forest absorbs and stores carbon dioxide and so plays a critical role in mitigating global

warming. Canadians cannot forget they are custodian to one third of this essential global resource.

The boreal forest is characterized by the predominance of coniferous trees. Fossil records show that their first occurrence was during the Miocene Epoch, from 12 to 15 million years ago. From this time forward the boreal forest's adaptation to the immense forces of fire, glacial ice, insect infestation and disease have produced the forest for which we now have stewardship. These natural disturbances have been and continue to be necessary for the maintenance of the forest's ecological balance. Human activities, such as tree harvesting, mining, manufacturing, resource development and recreational use are causing stress and changes to this land. Their cumulative and long-term effects will cause far-reaching and potentially disastrous changes to the forest. “

Bibliography:

http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/learningresources/theme_modules/bo_realforest/index.html

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=a1ARTA0000888>

<http://www.hww.ca/hww2.asp?id=354>

http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/learningresources/theme_modules/bo_realforest/index.html

(a really good website to use as a link that the students can use as well)

Check out the world view image below.....

