

the lumber workers. The mill owners also discouraged labor organization. They formed trade associations such as the Southern Pine Association and the Southern Lumber Operators Association to promote their own interests and block the formation of unions, especially the [Brotherhood of Timber Workers \(/handbook/online/articles/ocbbb\)](/handbook/online/articles/ocbbb). In these goals they were uniformly successful until the era of the New Deal.

Many lumbermen such as Robert A. Long of Long-Bell, Charles Keith of the Central Coal and Coke Company, and W. A. Pickering pursued a cut-out-and-get-out policy, cutting all merchantable timber and moving on to a new region, fully expecting that the cut-over area would be converted into farms. Conservationists led by [W. Goodrich Jones \(/handbook/online/articles/fjo85\)](/handbook/online/articles/fjo85), a Temple banker, argued that much of the East Texas land was good for growing pine trees and not much else. They demanded that the lumber companies follow a program of selective cutting, sustained yield, and reforestation. To promote these aims, Jones organized the [Texas Forestry Association \(/handbook/online/articles/dat05\)](/handbook/online/articles/dat05) in 1914 and successfully lobbied to have the state legislature establish a state department of forestry the next year. This agency, later renamed the [Texas Forest Service \(/handbook/online/articles/met03\)](/handbook/online/articles/met03), promoted fire prevention and reforestation on public and private lands alike, with increasingly good results.

The Texas lumber industry grew rapidly and in 1907 reported an annual cut of more than 2.25 billion board feet of lumber (third largest in the United States), a figure that has remained a record for the state. During World War I Texas lumbermen cooperated with the United States Shipping Board's effort to build wooden ships for freight transport. The war ended, however, before most of the "pine-built" vessels were completed. In the 1920s lumbering declined, as many companies, large and small alike, exhausted their timber holdings and ceased operations. The Great Depression accelerated this trend, and production fell to 350 million board feet in 1932, the lowest since 1880. During the fifty-year "bonanza" period, lumbermen had logged about eighteen million acres of pine timber and produced some fifty-nine billion