



CATASTROPHIC CONSUMPTION:

THE REAL COST OF RETAIL CATALOGS AND JUNK MAIL

JUNK MAIL AND CATALOGS ARE DESTROYING NORTH AMERICA'S ENDANGERED FORESTS

Each year, catalog retailers mail out more than 20 billion catalogs.¹ That's 67 catalogs for every man, woman and child in the US. The junk mail industry mailed 392 solicitations per person in the US in 2005.² Yet almost none of this paper contains any recycled content. Which means that every year, over 8 million tons of trees go straight into catalogs *alone*—most of which are unread and discarded. Catalogs and junk mail are needlessly consuming North America's most valuable forest regions and filling our overburdened landfills.

A CHALLENGE FOR INDUSTRY CHANGE

Consumers are learning that catalogs and junk mail do much more than clog their mailboxes. They are concerned about the impacts of paper manufacturing and use on their forests and environment.

After a two-year campaign by ForestEthics, Victoria's Secret's parent company, Limited Brands, announced a landmark environmental policy. Other catalog companies, including Williams-Sonoma and Dell, have also taken a leadership role in the industry by working with ForestEthics to introduce environmentally friendly catalog initiatives.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS TO CONSUMERS

According to the 2002 Cone Corporate Citizenship Study, 89 percent of Americans say that in light of recent financial scandals, it is more important than ever for companies to be socially responsible. 76 percent of those surveyed said they would refuse to purchase a company's products or services if they learned of a company's negative practices.





CATALOGS AND JUNK MAIL: HEATING UP OUR PLANET

Catalogs and junk mail are a significant contributor to climate change. Junk mail now constitutes more than half the total volume of US mail—totaling 12.3 billion pounds of mail in 2005. That's equal to the weight of 1.6 million Humvees! The industry requires transport, printing and other energy-intensive resources—all for a response rate of less than three percent!³ According to US Department of Energy, the pulp and paper sector is the third largest carbon-emitting sector in the US, after the petroleum and chemical sectors.⁴

ENVIRONMENTALLY SMART CATALOGS ARE GOOD BUSINESS

In an era of increasing competition and growing public concern about corporate responsibility, companies can demonstrate their values and protect their brands by becoming Endangered Forest-friendly. By maximizing recycled content and assuring that their paper does not come from Endangered Forests, catalogers and advertisers can save forests, energy and water. Using recycled paper also decreases solid waste going to landfills, and prevents air and water pollution.

THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR INDUSTRY-WIDE CHANGE

Responsible business practices improve customer loyalty and reduce the risk of controversy. Corporate leaders like Limited Brands, Williams-Sonoma and

Fifty percent of consumers polled said they no longer buy a particular brand because the product, packaging or manufacturer is detrimental to the environment. – ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES POLL

ENDANGERED FORESTS IN OUR MAIL

Two Endangered Forest regions in North America are threatened by the catalog industry: the Boreal Forest of Canada, and the forests of the southeastern US. Over two-thirds of the world's paper supply comes from biologically diverse natural forests. In addition to destroying forests, current paper production practices have the following repercussions:

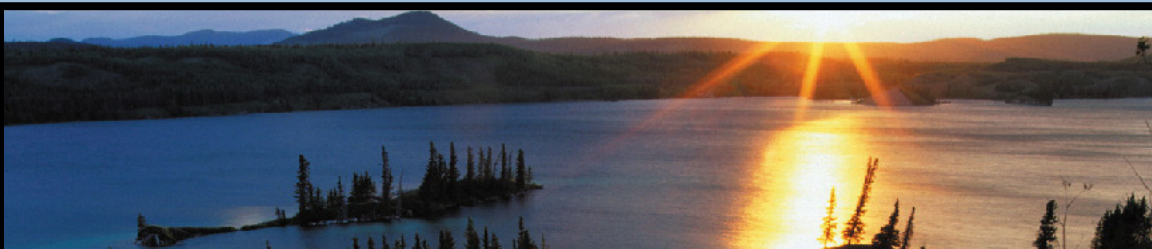
- **Energy use** - Paper production is the third most energy-intensive of all manufacturing industries, using 14.5 percent of all energy in the industrial sector.
- **Pollution** - The pulp and paper industry ranks third among industrial sectors in emissions of Toxics Release Inventory chemicals to air, and fifth in discharges of such chemicals to surface water.
- **Solid waste** - Paper and paperboard products make up the largest portion (31 percent) of discarded municipal solid waste.



Dell have made vital commitments such as maximizing recycled content, using paper certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, and eliminating paper from Endangered Forests. It's time for other catalogers and advertisers to do the same.

SOME COMPANIES ARE LEADING THE WAY

High quality papers are already available and being used by the most innovative corporations. Seeds of Change, a mail-order seed retailer, and Aveda Corporation, the international beauty product retailer, are two examples. They both use 100 percent recycled paper with at least 60 percent postconsumer recycled content. Other catalogs can do the same.



OUR CHALLENGE TO CATALOG RETAILERS – BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

- **Stop purchasing paper that comes from Endangered Forests.** These forests are critical to maintaining biological diversity and wilderness globally. They merit protection from industry logging and development.
- **Maximize the post-consumer recycled paper in catalogs and junk mail.** The wide availability, competitive prices, and high quality of recycled paper have created a great opportunity for catalog and junk mail retailers to improve their paper procurement policies. As demand increases for Endangered Forest-friendly papers, more of it will become available.
- **Join environmental organizations in transforming the paper industry.** More than 100 leading environmental organizations have endorsed the Common Vision, a blueprint to transform harmful paper industry practices. Find out more at www.forestethics.org/commonvision.
- **Implement strategies to reduce paper use overall.** By reducing the size of catalogs, switching to lower weight papers, maximizing online ordering, and offering consumers a choice on the number of mailings received, catalog retailers can reduce the amount of paper used.

FORESTETHICS, A CATALYST FOR SOLUTIONS

ForestEthics works to protect Endangered Forests by changing the way paper and wood are made and used in North America, and by supporting forest communities to develop ecologically sustainable economies. To find out more, visit forestethics.org.

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹ According to the Direct Mail Association.
- ² According to US Postal Service statistics compiled by Janet Abramovitz.
- ³ Abramovitz.
- ⁴ Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy.
http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/mecs/iab/forest_products/page2.html.
Accessed March 6, 2007.

PHOTOS:

- Front Cover: Truck - Ian McAllister/Raincoast; Leaves - Protected Areas Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
Page 2 - Earthroots
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Back Cover - Leaves - Protected Areas Association of Newfoundland and Labrador; Caribou - Dean Biggins/US Fish and Wildlife Service

FORESTETHICS

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