

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

MAY/JUNE 2006

VOLUME 62



Logging is in
Jerry DeMenge's Blood
2006 Session - Productive

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May/June 2006
Duluth, Minnesota

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ON THE COVER

Jerry DeMenge shares his thoughts on more than 30 years in the logging and trucking business.

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Group Health Insurance: The Rest of the Story

Greetings!

Summer is soon here. After a spring of rest and repairs, many loggers are anxious to get back to work. It seems last winter's full wood yards have had a slowing

President's Column



impact on summer start-up. One doesn't have to look far to see that we are indeed in a global marketplace. The cost of energy, wood fiber and labor all impact our businesses much more now than ever before. It seems much more important to be flexible in today's market. The mills that consume our wood face these same problems, plus competition from within their own companies for capital investment dollars.

None of this is news to you, so why do I bring it up? I bring it up because to me it emphasizes the importance of membership in the MTPA. To be flexible, you have to be informed. To be informed, what better way than to have good working relations with legislators, mills and resource management agencies?

The speakers, the committees, the panel discussions, the social events bring representatives from all segments of the industry together. These are but a few of the many reasons I will continue to belong to and support the MTPA.

Since this will be my last column as president, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the great staff and membership of MTPA for their help and advice over the years. Continue to support the MTPA!!

Thanks,

Dan A. Emickson

Many of the TPA members have in place for their employees a Group Health Insurance Program. In most cases, particularly for small groups of under 50 employees, coverage is provided from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota or Medica Health Plans. Both of these carriers do a nice job of providing I.D. cards and coverage certificates for employees. They both offer customer services lines as well as having web sites with numerous tools. Employers get billed each month for the premium and have a supply of various forms for new employees, changes, and terminating employees. Employers will generally have an agent who also answers questions, solves problems, and helps with the paperwork and plan design. All of this should sound familiar to many of you. However, what most employers are not aware of is the additional compliance requirements that go along with being a sponsor of an employee benefit plan.

At Otis-Magie Insurance Agency, Inc, the endorsed TPA agent for members, we provide the above services and will also help you get started on understanding the compliance requirements of ERISA (Employment Retirement Income Security Act) and HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). Most employers who have group health plans are unaware of the various requirements and do not realize that their group health insurance carrier does not supply all of the numerous employee notification requirements needed to be compliant. Non-compliance can result in fines of up to \$110 per day per violation for each employee. Average fines can run over \$1000 per day.

Some required forms to be given to employees include, but are not limited to, the following list. Otis-Magie can produce these for you to deliver to your employees.

SPD – Summary Plan Description.

This booklet outlines to employee participants information about their plan and how it operates.

SMM – Summary of Material Modification. Changes to your plan need to be delivered in a meeting or in writing. State law requires this be done before any change.

COBRA General Notice – This notice goes to employees when their group health plans starts.

Special Enrollment Notice – This notice to employees explains enrollment rights if an employee initially waives coverage.

Otis-Magie will also provide you with a *COBRA Compliance Procedures Outline* for your use and reference.

Other services for TPA members purchasing group health insurance from Otis-Magie include a *Premium Only Section 125 pretax Plan Document and Enrollment Materials*. This service is included at zero cost to members and provides tax savings to employees and employers. A full cafeteria pretax plan with spending accounts is available at a very low cost to members.

Otis-Magie Insurance encourages all TPA members with group health insurance or those members interested in starting a group plan to contact us regarding these services.

Dan Zobel at Otis-Magie can be contacted at 1-800-241-2425 or dzobel@otismagie.com

A number of long time DNR employees have or will soon retire. Chuck Spoden, who served stints in Littlefork, as regional forester in Grand Rapids and most recently was the department's northeast regional manager, has retired. Larry Hegstad who is currently regional forester in Bemidji after a long career in the field and St. Paul

Executive Vice President's Column



offices will retire this summer. Doug Ford, the longtime timber program administrator in St. Paul and the sympathetic voice on the end of the phone when you've had contract problems will finish his service in June.

Each of these men has been a leader within the DNR and forestry community. They helped bring the division's programs into the 21st century while staying intimately connected with the forest. They were also all frequent participants at TPA events including our Annual Meetings and the North Star Expo.

On behalf of TPA, I want to wish each of them the best in retirement and offer our thanks for their many contributions.



It is often said that the first rule for physicians is to do no harm. For the many who would also apply this rule to the state Legislature, 2006 was a banner year. Nothing bad happened to the forest products industry. There were a few testy moments over an ill-advised amendment that would have made it illegal to drive 4x4 vehicles (pick ups, skidders) on public lands and a few more over some electrical power issues.

We also had some successes as you will see elsewhere in this issue of the *Timber Bulletin*. Most notable were the addition of the language allowing the DNR to issue no cost extensions in the case of unsuitable weather and obtaining state capital investment (bonding) funds for reforestation

and for replacing some bridges on state forest roads.



2006 is one of those big election years. The races on the ballot will include U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, governor, attorney general, secretary of state and the entire state Senate and House of Representatives.

The fate of many issues will be decided this year for the balance of the decade.



Do you ever wonder about the impact of some of the things that we do?

I wrote in a previous column that the state was undertaking a review of the Wetlands Conservation Act. This process is about at the half way point. Over the past two months the focus of the meetings has been on the exemptions that are included in this law.

One entire meeting was on the silvicultural and forest roads exemptions. At this meeting data from the monitoring program that is run by the DNR and the MN Forest Resources Council as part of the Sustainable Forest Resources Act was presented. It detailed information about the application of the Voluntary Site Level Forest Management Guidelines that we use in the woods every day.

Information was also presented about the training provided through the Minnesota Logger Education Program and how that has addressed wetlands issues through the years.

These are all programs and activities that we have played a key role in supporting, developing and implementing.

At the end of the day the consensus of the wetlands stakeholders group was that we had plenty of data to show that silviculture and forest roads were not a significant issue for the Wetlands Conservation Act. Even the environmental representatives voiced this opinion.

It was very heartening to see that all of the hard work that has been done and the costs that have borne in this area are being recognized quite broadly.

This is a clear validation that when the right things are done they will be recognized. It was a testament to your work and to the programs and activities that we have helped establish.



In other personnel news, Chippewa National Forest Supervisor Norm Wagoner has accepted a transfer to the Ouachita National Forest in Arkansas. This move brings Norm closer to home and family. His transfer will be effective in July. On the Superior National Forest, Pam Brown, who is currently a District ranger on the Black Hills National Forest, has been named deputy forest supervisor.



We should all be proud that another hectic winter logging season passed without serious injuries in the woods. The results in our TPA/LUA workers compensation program continue to be exemplary and the envy of others around the country.

This too shows that establishing a program and supporting it through all of the inevitable ups and downs is the best path to long-term success. There are always companies that take a run at different parts of our program. A lower rate here or there and a special deal now and again. But, our 25 year relationship with LUA is a program that we can all be proud of.

Anyone that is licensed can sell insurance. We offer a comprehensive program with LUA. The basis of this program is safety and loss control. I thank each of you who are part of this program for your commitment to safety. There is no more important issue.

Logging is in Jerry DeMenge's Blood

by Ray Higgins

It started with his dad, who logged for as long as Jerry can remember, leading crews of up to 25 men. That was more than 50 years ago. And Jerry would ride along to the woods every day until he started kindergarten.

"When I'd ride with, I don't remember what I'd do," DeMenge says. "I guess I was just there. By the time I was 10 years old I was driving truck or running the cat in the woods, helping skid with the dray skidders."

Now 56, DeMenge lives just outside of McGregor. And although he buys some stumpage, his primary profit center is trucking. Loggers hire him to move their wood from the job to the mill.

But his business goes beyond that. DeMenge is the one who finds the market for the wood and negotiates the price. That way, small loggers can concentrate on the harvest. And since DeMenge's focus is trucking, he passes any savings he negotiates on to the logger.

"If I negotiate for a couple of dollars a cord because of the volume, I pass that along to them because I just want the trucking. I make my living basically trucking.



Curt Raveill owns his own trucking business and, during the winter months, helps DeMenge haul up to 1000 cords of wood per week. Raveill and DeMenge have been doing business together for 25 years.



Jerry DeMenge owns and operates DeMenge Trucking & Forest Products. His company helps small loggers get their wood from the jobsite to the mill.

That's what I do. If they put it in a pile, I'll make it disappear.

"I've tried to be really fair and honest with them and they know that and they trust me."

That's why building relationships is crucial to DeMenge's success, both with loggers he hauls for and with the mills.

"I've had a real good rapport with the mills over the years," DeMenge says. "All of them. They've been good to me, considering the business I'm in."

It's a business model that DeMenge's father started years ago.

"Years ago," DeMenge says, "Northwest Paper came to my dad and asked him if he would round up all the peeled wood in the area that he could get because they really needed peeled popple. And they said rather than give somebody a contract for 25 cords, the more volume he had, the more bonus he'd get. So they said you get all the wood you can, and bring

it in. And my dad had a sawmill so he was buying logs from these guys, so he just started hauling their peeled wood for them."

These days, Jerry's brother, Brad, owns and operates the sawmill, making lumber for pallets. He also has a dry kiln for making flooring and paneling. Jerry finds wood for him, too.

"He keeps messing up my fishing," Brad jokes. "I get up in the morning and go out to get my fishing stuff, and there'll be another load of wood."

Jerry couldn't do it on his own. In the winter time, he has 10 trucks running throughout the region. Sometimes they go as far as Boise, Idaho. For that he gets help from old friend and trucking business operator Curt Raveill.

"He asked me 25 years ago to if I could haul a little wood with him," Raveill says. "I'm wondering when we're going to be done."

They haven't finished hauling
(continued on page 10)

(continued from page 12)

because the business has grown over that period of time.

“Twenty-five years ago, we’d haul maybe 800 cords over four months time,” Raveill says. “Now in the winter, we move 1,000 cords a week all the time.”

So there’s no shortage of wood, but these days there’s nowhere to take it. The yards at many of the mills are full, forcing loggers to scramble to find a market for their wood. This time of year is never as busy as winter, but at DeMenge’s, the two Kenworth tractor/trailers he owns himself sit idle, waiting for wood to be hauled. But Jerry’s been in business for 35 years. He’s seen markets like this before.

“What we’re going through today is something that most young loggers have never experienced in the last 15 years because we’ve had open markets and the wood has just been flowing,” DeMenge says. “When I was younger, this was not uncommon. We’d have two to three years that you could set the world on fire and all of sudden the bottom would just fall out. You couldn’t sell a stick of wood sometimes for 2-3 years. A lot of people would just get whole different careers or jobs for two to three years and then come back to logging. In 1974 I had a brand new truck and loader. It was three months old and we got cut off. No wood deliveries at all. I wound up in Minneapolis from 1974 to 1979 cutting Dutch Elm trees. It was virtually impossible to sell timber.



Two of the trucks DeMenge uses to haul wood. They’re Kenworth trucks with pup trailers and Serco loaders. DeMenge also owns a Hydroax 411 feller buncher, two John Deere skidders (a 548G and a 440), and a 1989 W900 Kenworth tractor so his sons can cut the stumpage he buys.

I would come home and haul all my dad’s wood in three months in the wintertime. That’s all the wood we could sell.”

Another thing that hasn’t changed is his entire family’s involvement in the logging industry. Although sons Chad and Clint have full-time jobs outside the timber industry, they still return to McGregor to log and drive truck on the weekends. They too went to work with their dad before they were in kindergarten.

“By the time they were seven and eight years old,” DeMenge says, they were greasing trucks. One of the big things when they were younger, all the trucks still had spring suspensions. They got pretty handy, and by the time they were 12 or 13 years old the two of them could change the trailer springs in about a half hour by themselves.”

Jerry’s wife Aileen is heavily involved as well.

“This business would never make it without Aileen,” DeMenge says. “She knows as much about it as I do. It would be a lost cause without her.”

This downtime does allow time for DeMenge’s other activities. He serves on the town board of Jevne Township, which is just west of McGregor. He’s also on the Smartwood board in Aitkin County, is active on TPA’s Transportation committee, and he and his wife Aileen have both been on the Log A Load for Kids board since the program started.

So DeMenge is confident business will improve, that conditions will get better. He just wishes stumpage prices could come down – or at least stabilize – to make it easier on the logger.

“There’s no shortage of wood.”



Brad DeMenge standing with spruce paneling manufactured at his sawmill near McGregor. Brad and Jerry DeMenge’s father started the mill, and Brad continues to operate it.



Jerry DeMenge learned the logging and trucking business from his father, Richard. This picture from 1946 shows one of Richard DeMenge’s fully loaded trucks and hangs on the wall of Jerry’s home.

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Loggers Get Guidance from State Patrol at Skilled Driver Workshops

Skilled Driver Workshops, sponsored by MLEP and TPA, again gave loggers and truckers the opportunity to hear from representatives of the Minnesota State Patrol, and learn about the most prominent enforcement issues facing the timber industry.

At the first workshop in Bemidji, Duane Amundson, a trainer in the Patrol's Commercial Vehicle Division, went over various scenarios that troopers are currently seeing on Northern Minnesota highways. He also led a discussion regarding load securement and conducted a walk-around of a TPA member's tractor/trailer demonstrating the proper use of tie downs.

The second workshop was held in Virginia, and featured State Patrol Lt. Ron Silcox. Along with discussing load securement and other enforcement issues and conducting the walk-around, Silcox told workshop attendees about another enforcement issue the Patrol is seeing.

When conducting civil enforcement checks at Minnesota mills for truck weight compliance, Silcox said patrol staff is finding that some mills are not properly noting the number of axles. When following up with truckers on scale slips that show weights higher than 80,000 pounds with only 5 axles, the trucker has been able to prove that six axles had been used. Silcox said he's had conversations with the mills about the issue, urging them to fill the slips out properly. But he also suggested to truckers at the workshop to take the time to check the slip before leaving the scale to make sure it's filled out correctly, including the proper number of axles.

"It would save loggers a lot of headaches if they check the slip before leaving the scale shack," Silcox said.

Also at the seminar, A trainer from CATCO discussed and demonstrated the technical function and diagnostics of total tractor/trailer air brake systems. The presentation also addressed

auto slack adjusters, clutch, power divider and PTO operations as well

as how truckers can maximize all the power from their batteries.



Minnesota State Patrol trainer Duane Amundson of the Commercial Vehicle Division talks to Skilled Driver workshop participants in Bemidji about enforcement issues, including load securement. More than 60 loggers and truckers attended the two workshops in Bemidji and Virginia.

Early Loggers in Minnesota

by J. C. Ryan

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Obituary

Clayton Peterson, 78, passed away on April 24, 2006. A native of Loman, Minn., where he lived his entire life, Clayton began logging in 1951. He was president of the Timber Producers Association from 1980 to 1982. He also served on the TPA board of directors and was chairman of the TPA Insurance Committee and the TPA Group Health Plan Board of Trustees.



Clayton was instrumental in the establishment of the TPA Group Health Plan and the TPA/LUA Workers Compensation Program. For many years he hosted insurance committee members and health plan trustees at his cabin on Rainy Lake's Red Gut Bay for meetings, fellowship and fishing.

During his years as a leader of TPA, Clayton was widely respected for his quick mind, facility with numbers and willingness to give his time and energy to improving conditions for logging contractors and their employees. He is a person that TPA called on many times for help on many issues. And, Clayton always selflessly answered those calls.

Clayton is survived by his wife, Bette, and five children including his son, Jon, who currently serves on the TPA board of directors. His advice, counsel and friendship will be missed by all.

2006 Session – Productive

The 2006 session of the Minnesota Legislature was completed on time with a number of accomplishments. Media coverage focused primarily on the debate over stadiums. The legislature focused primarily on other issues and did not turn to stadiums until very late in the game.

There were a number of issues of concern to TPA members and the forestry community that were dealt with during the session. A synopsis of these issues follows.

Bonding

The final numbers for capital projects include:

- \$4 million for state land reforestation
- \$1 million for state forest roads and bridges
- \$7 million for Forest Legacy
- \$500,000 for improvements at the Cloquet Forestry Center
- \$1,000,000 for state forest land acquisition
- \$9.31 for Clean Water Legacy. \$15 million from the General Fund was also appropriated. Of these funds
 - \$850,000 is for forest stewardship planning and implementation; research, evaluation and monitoring; and technical assistance to local units of government
 - \$500,000 is to acquire high priority, sensitive riparian lands

DNR Timber Sale Extensions

Legislation to provide additional authority to the DNR to grant extensions at no cost in the case of adverse weather and surface conditions was passed.

DNR Forestry Policy: This bill contains a number of provisions:

- Changes down payment to 15% of the bid price (15% of appraised required the day of sale with the balance per existing terms for securing sales)
- Requires timber sale purchasers to provide proof of workers' compensation insurance or exempt status, proof of compliance with general industry safety

standards and requires that someone who has completed MLEP, FISTA or similar programs approved by the commissioner be supervising active logging operations.

- Allows the DNR to establish a purchaser pre-registration system. It also codifies the requirement for pre-sale conferences and allows the DNR to include a set of liquidated damages for minor contract violations. Previously minor violations defaulted to timber trespass statutes which caused a variety of problems.

Truck Weights

MN DOT presented a comprehensive draft proposal at a hearing prior to the start of the legislative session. Due to a variety of factors MN DOT did not move forward with introducing this initiative. They have indicated that they will proceed with legislation in 2007.

10 Ton Roads

Language that would have made all roads 10-ton routes unless posted lower and would have increased county and township road limits from five to seven tons during periods when seasonal load restrictions are imposed was adopted by the House of Representatives. This language died in conference committee when no agreement was reached on the overall legislation.

Mercury

Legislation requiring the largest coal fired power plants to reduce their mercury emissions by 90% by 2014 was passed and signed into law. It includes provisions from the business community that include PUC review and approval/non-approval of technologies and costs.

Renewable Energy

Legislation to increase "renewable" requirements, which would have significantly increased energy costs, was passed by the Senate. No similar provision was passed by the House of Representatives.

Numerous efforts were made in the final days and hours of the session to impose the 20%

renewable energy mandate. Industry spent a substantial amount of time and effort on this issue. Ultimately the mandate was not passed.

Sales Tax Dedication

Efforts to dedicate either existing or increased state sales tax revenues to wildlife, parks, trails, zoos and cultural programs did not pass. Bills passed both the House and Senate and were sent to a conference committee. Ultimately the differences between the two bodies were not able to be worked out.

Off Road Vehicles

An amendment that would have banned all 4x4 vehicles, which would have included pick up trucks and skidders, along with other vehicles, from public lands was passed in the House. A less onerous provision to ban the development of new off road truck trails on state lands was passed in the Senate. The proponents indicated that they either wanted to eliminate "mud trucks" from public lands and/or close the Spider Lake Off Road Truck Trail. The House language was substantially broader than this. The Senate language would have precluded the development of new off road truck trails on state forest land. TPA worked with DNR and others to successfully defeat these provisions in conference committee.

Logging Equipment – Sales Tax

MN Department of Revenue policies on the application of the sales tax to logging equipment became law as part of the Omnibus Tax Bill. The actual language follows:

Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 297A.61, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 37. Logging equipment. (a) "Logging equipment" means new or used machinery, equipment, implements, accessories, and contrivances used directly and principally in the commercial cutting or removal or both of timber or other solid wood forest

(continued on page 18)

(continued from page 16)

products intended to be sold ultimately at retail, including, but not limited to:

- (1) machinery used for bucking, bunching, debarking, delimiting, felling, forwarding, loading, piling, skidding, topping, and yarding operations performed on timber; and
- (2) chain saws.
 - (b) Logging equipment does not include:
 - (1) repair or replacement parts;
 - (2) tools, shop equipment, communication equipment, and other logging supplies;
 - (3) motor vehicles taxed under chapter 297B;
 - (4) snowmobiles, snow blowers, or recreational all-terrain vehicles; or
 - (5) machinery, equipment, implements, accessories, and contrivances used in the creation of other commercial wood products for sale to others, including, but not limited to, milling, planing, carving, wood chipping, or paper manufacturing.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA)

A package of technical changes to the SFIA was enacted. These changes include clarifying procedures if lands enrolled in the program are sold and the subsequent owner wants to keep those lands enrolled; clarifying that the MFRC forest management guidelines that apply are those that were current when lands were enrolled and other technical changes.

LCMR Reform

Legislation was passed that changes the name of the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources to the Legislative Citizens Commissioner on Minnesota Resources. There will be 17 members of the commission: five senators, five representatives and seven citizens. Of the citizen members, five will be appointed by the governor and one each by the Senate and House of Representatives.

2007 Outlook

With the entire legislature and constitutional officers up for

election this year it is too early to make predictions about 2007. We do know that the following issues will be in play next year:

- DNR Budget
- Reauthorization of the Sustainable Forest Resources Act & the MN Forest Resources Council
- Transportation funding and policies including truck weights

- Energy policies including a renewable energy mandate
- Funding for the University of Minnesota and the collegiate unit that is replacing the College of Natural Resources
- Tax policies

If you have questions about the specifics of any of these issues, please contact the TPA office.

Timber Talk

Horton Joins DNR

Rick Horton has accepted a job as a Forest Wildlife coordinator for the Minnesota DNR. He's been assigned to Region 2 and will work out of the DNR office in Grand Rapids. Horton worked for the Ruffed Grouse Society for seven years.



Horton

In his new position, Horton will work with the Forest Service, counties, timber industry and conservation groups, as well as within the DNR, to ensure Minnesotans continue to have huntable game populations, healthy forests and recreational access to those forests.

Craig Engwall Named DNR Northeast Region Director

Craig Engwall has been named Northeast Region director for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Since 2004, Engwall has served as the DNR's special assistant to commissioner Gene Merriam. In that role, he coordinated major interdisciplinary projects for the DNR, including off-highway vehicle policy, land acquisition and trust fund land management issues. He served as the DNR's liaison to Minnesota's Indian tribes, and also represented the DNR in its relationships with federal, county and local governmental units. Engwall served as the Commissioner's staff representative to the Governor's Clean Water Cabinet. He also assisted in analyzing and drafting



Engwall

legislation and administrative rules.

From 1995 to 2003, Engwall was an assistant attorney general working on natural resource issues. Engwall worked on the Re-Invest in Minnesota (RIM), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and other successful land conservation initiatives.

Engwall and his wife have a cabin north of Grand Rapids, the city where his new position will be based in the DNR's regional office.

Engwall, 42, replaces Chuck Spoden, who retired this spring, and John Guenther, who came out of retirement to serve as a part-time, temporary acting regional director in the interim.

Kooch County Moves toward Certification

Koochiching County is proceeding toward certification of its forest lands by both Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards. The county board voted to continue participation in the programs in April. According to Koochiching County Land Commissioner Dennis Hummitzsch, the county will continue to be a part of the six-county certification co-op. "We look at this as improving our operation as well helping our loggers take advantage of future certified wood market opportunities," Hummitzsch said.

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Timber Purchasers from Across the Country Meet with USFS in Duluth

Timber industry leaders met in May with officials of the United States Forest Service in Duluth as part of the Federal Timber Purchasers Committee (FTPC) spring meeting.

The FTPC is comprised of people and companies who purchase federal timber.

Forest Service representatives included Corbin Newman, USFS director of forest management, Superior National Forest supervisor Jim Sanders, Chippewa National Forest supervisor Norm Wagoner, and representatives from each of the ten USFS regions.

The mission of the FTPC is to ensure that when federal timber sales are offered for sale, they are economically and operationally feasible, the terms of the contract are fair, and all timber sold is available for harvest.

The FTPC meets with USFS personnel twice each year to offer input in developing rules, regulations, policies, and



TPA Executive Vice President Wayne Brandt leads a panel discussion at May's Federal Timber Purchasers Committee Meeting in Duluth. Committee members met with representatives from the U.S. Forest Service at the three-day event. Also attending were TPA member John Gephart of North Shore Forest Products, Minnesota mill managers, and timber producers from all over the country.

procedures concerning the sale and operation of federal timber sales, and to provide a forum through which the USFS and the FTPC can

meet and discuss rules, regulations, policies, and procedures concerning the sale and operation of federal timber sales.

Logger Conferences Provide One-Stop Shopping

More than 375 loggers attended this year's two Logger Conferences in Biwabik and Bemidji.

The conferences combine the required MLEP training with LogSafe training. By offering the sessions on consecutive days at the same site, the conferences offer "one-stop shopping," reducing the need to travel to several cities on different dates in order to fulfill training requirements.

Among the training sessions offered by MLEP on Day One were "Portable Timber Bridge Program," "Forest Products Demand and Prices," information on the "Minnesota Master Logger Certification Program," "Moths – They Can Eat A Hole in Your Pants and Also Your Pocketbook," and "A Little R&R (Rutting and Revisions)."

On Day Two, among the topics covered by LogSafe were CPR/First Aid, welding hazards,

and workers' compensation issues.

According to MLEP Executive Director Dave Chura, 154 loggers

attended the two day conference in Biwabik, and 176 took part in the sessions in Bemidji.



Tim O'Hara, vice president of Forest Policy at Minnesota Forest Industries and a member of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Board, briefs the Loggers Conference in Biwabik on the latest in Forest Certification Standards. More than 300 loggers attended the two conferences in Biwabik and Bemidji.

Truck Weight Compliance Training

Retired State Patrol Lieutenant Greg Hayes again helped Minnesota loggers and truckers accurately calculate truck weights to help them comply with Minnesota law. Hayes led the “Truck Weight Compliance” seminar, held this year at Wendigo Lodge in Grand Rapids.

Hayes led the class participants through all the factors involved in calculating legal weights, including tire size, axle spacing, and various configurations. They also reviewed the laws governing gross weights, road-restriction weights, axle weights, and seasonally increased weights, and addressed the differences between the state and local systems, road damage issues, and reading weight charts.

Easy to understand classroom and “take home” materials were provided to help truckers identify potential concerns with their own trucks and assist them in optimizing their own



Greg Hayes, a former Minnesota State Patrol lieutenant, teaches loggers and truckers how to comply with state statutes regarding truck weights. Since retiring from the patrol, Hayes has been an instructor at Northland Community College in Thief River Falls.

configurations and options.

During the last 16 years of his career, Hayes supervised the commercial vehicle enforcement in

northwestern Minnesota. The workshop was funded by MNDOT and co-sponsored by MLEP and TPA.

Rieger Named Minnesota Logger of the Year

Mike Rieger, of Northome, has been named “Minnesota Logger of the Year” by the Minnesota Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Implementation Committee for his exemplary work in timber harvest and management in Minnesota’s northwoods.

By receiving this award Rieger Logging is recognized for its adherence to safety and insurance policies, and other business management criteria, in addition to its commitment to ethical, environmentally sensitive, and aesthetically appropriate harvesting practices.

SFI® Implementation Committee Chair and Weyerhaeuser Forester Kirk Titus applauded Rieger for his work at an awards ceremony on April 18. “Mike has shown leadership in this state, and is a very valuable asset to the forest products industry in Minnesota,” said Titus.

The Logger of the Year Award goes to a logger who harvests Minnesota’s forests with an eye toward the future conditions of that forest. The program honors harvest and management activities



Mike Rieger (R), receives the SFI “Minnesota Logger of the Year” award from SFI Implementation Committee Chair and Weyerhaeuser Forester Kirk Titus. The presentation was made in Bemidji at the MLEP/Logsafes Loggers Conference.

undertaken with sensitivity to the other amenities of our woodlands – their wildlife, waters, and soils. The award also aims to recognize

those who care for the safety for their workers, respect their clients, and are accountable for their actions.

LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

"Some Logs Scaled Many Times"

by J. C. Ryan

This story is reprinted from an earlier *Timber Bulletin*—one of the first of "Buzz" Ryan's ever-popular contributions to these pages. The *Bulletin* will continue to reprint selected stories from the memories he recorded for us.—*Editor*



Today many purchasers of timber products buy by weight or utilize even summer scaling instead of the old art of scaling, which seems to be passing into history along with sleigh hauling and horse skidding.

Years ago every camp of any size had its log scaler and some of the larger camps had two or three. Log scaling was the oddest work in the camps, and I can remember the log scaler dressed in an ankle-long, sheepskin lined coat with up turned collar, four-buckle belt overshoes and belt shoes, the heaviest wool pants and shirts and usually two or three pairs of mitts that he would change as his fingers became cold.

Log scaling has been done under many, many conditions—but probably the worst would be trying to scale decked logs on a skidway, 20 feet high, after midnight hit the logs and pitch ran out of the ends. A scaler would go from side to side of the skidway, checking the butts and tops and climbing over the piers, which stuck to his hands and scale stick. After that and the mosquitos and flies, both scaler and

his scale book were usually a mess.

Scaling was done mostly on the landing, usually at a river, or a lake or at a railroad siding where logs were loaded on cars. Sometimes logs were scaled as they were loaded on sleighs in the woods, and often on skidways in the woods if they were to be loaded on railroad cars. But as a rule, they were scaled on the landings as this was where the sleighs all unloaded in one place.

Logs were scaled as they were rolled from the sleighs onto the skidways where the scaler could examine the log for defects as it rolled along the skids. The scaler would have to walk from one end of the logs to the other in order to scale from the small end of the log.

Many companies required numbering of logs; and in this case, the scaler held a yard long stick with a crayon at the end to mark the logs. He usually held the scale stick under his arm when it was not in use.

Some companies used a scale book, as did the State of Minnesota. Others used a card system. These cards fitted into a

frame with a handle and that was easier to handle than the scale book. Each card was numbered and dated with the camp number or location, and each card had room for recording 100 logs.

The scaler's job was not complete even when crews finished up, because he had to work an hour or so each night figuring up his scale sheets.

In some of the larger camps, there were special shacks made for scaling; in others a special desk in the office was available for the scaler's use.

Some companies or jobbers set up a small shack on the lake, river or big landing for the scaler to warm himself while he waited for loads. But the log scaling job, at its best, was very cold work during the winter months. Summer scaling also had its drawbacks, because sand flies and mosquitoes were always a problem.

Some logs were scaled several times if they were to be sold to a different company or put in by a contractor. Often, a state and company scaler worked on the landing together if logs were cut from



state laws. And nearly all mills sealed logs as they came up the "back chain" — usually smaller end first.

Many logs were sealed at the sorting yards on the rivers. There, logs were sealed with a caliper instead of a scale rule. Logs also were sealed as they were hoisted out of the water and loaded on cars.

Most companies had "check sealers" who came around about once or two weeks to check the sealers. A check scale

usually consisted of a double scale of 200 logs. It took many years experience to be a good log sealer.

Julians and contractors always figured the company sealers favored the company that bought the logs, so in many contracts where logs were bought on scale, the sealing would be done by a surveyor general sealer.

The different scale rules — the Minnesota Standard Rule, Wisconsin Decimal C and Doyle Rule were used in Minne-

sota — also brought some criticism to the sealers.

I have known many good sealers over the years, but none that stand out in my memories were Henry (Helen M&I Railroad sealer from Bemidji); John and Ed Achenbach of Bemidji; Clyde Johnson of Big Falls; and Chris Holm, William MacGregor, Dan McCleod and Hank McGugin of Ulnquet. These all were log sealers of the first degree and masters of a last art.



Above: Thousands of cords of pulpwood await spring thaw along the Littlefork River.

Right: Light marks were as important to early loggers as brand marks to western cattlemen. These are some of the marks used by major companies during early days of logging in Minnesota.

Below: A scene from Minnesota's last big log drive in 1937 on the Littlefork River.

DINO TOEER Pitchfork	E. K. BACULUS B scalp A	W. P. WASHBURN C double Y reversed M
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