**Actions the Minnesota Timber Producers Association**

**(TPA) has taken on your behalf:**

Thanks to TPA’s lobbying efforts, both during Minnesota’s Legislative Session and through discussions with policy makers at the state, federal, and county levels, a number of issues important to TPA members were acted upon in the last 12 months.

Here is a rundown of actions pertaining to the forest products industry, and their outcomes this year:

**Relief for DNR Timber Permit Holders**

A provision was included in the Omnibus Environment and Natural Resources bill providing relief on certain DNR timber permits. Sales with at least 30% of the volume being spruce and/or balsam were eligible for either an interest-free and penalty-free two-year extension or a refund of the down payment. This provision was spearheaded by TPA in response to the 2020 Verso mill closure and resulting loss of spruce/balsam markets. TPA also supported and advocated for other “logger relief” proposals, including an expansion of the Minnesota safety grant program to include $1 million in funding for loggers. In addition, TPA worked with federal lobbying partners on federal relief for loggers and haulers and shared information on both programs with members.

**State Conformity with Federal Tax Law**

When the federal government makes changes to its tax laws, the state of Minnesota doesn’t automatically make changes at the same time. TPA lobbied on behalf of our members to make state tax laws conform with changes previously made by Congress. Chief among these changes is that PPP loan forgiveness is now tax-exempt on the state level as well as on your federal taxes. Other significant tax conformity provisions pertain to certain grants and other Small Business Administration loan subsidy payments.

**Advocacy with DNR and other agencies**

When members have questions regarding the administration of timber permits, how truck laws are enforced, or other issues with policy makers, TPA staff utilizes its contacts with various agencies, including DNR, county land departments, State Patrol, and others, to gather information, find solutions, and resolve conflicts.

**TPA 401(k) Program**

TPA now offers members the opportunity to join the association’s 401(k) program, allowing member companies to provide this additional benefit to their employees. Because these plans are be a part of the TPA 401(k) program, members’ administrative costs would be reduced, and their fiduciary responsibility would be minimized. Business owners can also realize additional tax and retirement benefits by participating. TPA partners with Wheeler Associates, a Duluth-based wealth management and employee benefits firm that has worked with its clients for more than 85 years.

**International Falls Truck Route Safety**

TPA has engaged with Koochiching County Highway Department staff about ways to improve safety at the intersection on MN Highway 53 and County Highway 332, the designated truck route to the PCA woodyard. Safety at the intersection has been a concern of haulers to the PCA mill for years and has been discussed at recent TPA meetings in International Falls. Options to improve safety at the intersection have including a potential overpass, additional signage, as well as a roundabout option.

**Political Action Committee Formed**

TPA has formed “TreePAC,” a political action committee (PAC) designed to show support to candidates for state office who support our industry. PACs are designed to influence elections, accepting donations from like-minded individuals, and then making contributions to candidates or political parties of their choosing. TreePAC isn’t just for TPA members. Any individual can donate, including friends, family members, employees, etc. However, contributions cannot be accepted from businesses or corporations.

<<Back Panel>>

**Ongoing TPA Benefits**

**Workers Comp Insurance Program**

TPA’s members-only self-insured program means low competitive rates, with quality account services from experienced timber industry agent Jay Eystad. Plus, participants can begin receiving dividends after 3 years of enrollment. Call the TPA Office for more information.

**Drug & Alcohol Testing Program**

TPA’s program for timber haulers helps you stay compliant with federal regulations and lowers your costs.

**Communicating to Keep You Informed**

TPA’s staff keeps you apprised of the latest on the timber industry, through emails, texts, and *The Timber Bulletin* magazine.

**Networking Opportunities**

TPA events like the North Star Expo, Annual Membership Meeting and Unsold Timber Tours give you the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with stakeholders, policy-makers, mill personnel, and other loggers.

The world is run by those who show up….

**TPA helps you show up!**

**<<Logo>>**

**Address**

**Etc.**

**<<Front Panel>>**

**<<Logo, ETc>>**

**What has TPA done for you lately?**

*November, 2021*