

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

# TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

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VOLUME 56

**North Star  
Expo 2000**

**Rutar  
Logging**



# TIMBER BULLETIN

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### ON THE COVER

Greg Cook Logging, winner of the 2000 Best Load Contest.

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**T**he word politics is one most of us would rather forget, but unfortunately it is one that becomes more important every year for the timber industry. This being an election year, it becomes doubly important. When the federal administration changes hands with the November elections, it will determine who makes forest policy. Will it be professional

foresters  
or

## President's Column



professional environmental protesters?

What happens on the federal level has a trickle down effect on the state, county, and, in the end, private lands. If the president or Congress were to declare all national forests off limits to logging, preservationist efforts would be refocused and intensified at the local levels.

Much of a president's power comes from his appointments to rule-making bureaucracies such as the EPA. We have already had a taste of what this can mean with the Forest Service roadless initiative and the proposed D.O.T.'s hours of service as examples.

So you see, there is a difference depending on who gets elected and it is time to remember who the friends of the timber industry are. Although we can't do as a famous Chicago politician once said, "vote early and vote often," it is important that we support our political friends and vote.

As you gear up for the winter season, take time to be safe.

*Robert Killian*

## Minnesota State Forests Celebrate 100 Years

**A**utumn comes to Minnesota in showy bursts of color from mid-September through October. Bluffs and hills abound where nature shows her palette. But where are these vistas located?

"Minnesota's 58 state forests offer plenty of opportunities to view colors," according to state forester Jerry Rose. "Our state forest system encompasses more than 4 million acres and extends from southeastern Minnesota north to the Canadian border."

Minnesota's state forest system, which is 100 years old this year, continues to be essential to sustaining and vitalizing the state's environment, economy and communities.

State forests:

- produce timber and other crops;
- provide open spaces for hunting and birding, skiing and snowmobiling, camping and canoeing;
- protect surface waters by preventing erosion;
- provide homes for countless animals and plants;
- contain 46 campgrounds, 44 day-use areas, 1,200 miles of trails, 142 water accesses, and 17 canoe and boating route campsites; and
- provide public access to more than 4 million acres of state forest land through 2,000 miles of forest roads.

The first state forest was established in 1900 when a thousand acres of cutover pine lands in Cass County were donated to the state by Gov. John S. Pillsbury to become the Pillsbury State Forest. One hundred years later, in 2000, the Minnesota Legislature created the 15,000-acre Waukanabo State Forest in north-central Minnesota.

To obtain a state forest anniversary poster, or a recreation guide that includes directions to state forest recreation areas and lists state forest trails, campgrounds and day-use areas, contact the Department of Natural Resources

Information Center at (651) 296-6157 from the Twin Cities metro area or toll free 1-888-MINNDNR from the remainder of Minnesota.

"Minnesotans should take pride in their rich and diverse forests," Rose said. "Indeed, almost one-third of Minnesota's total land area, 16.7 million acres, is covered with forests. Of this, the 4 million plus acres managed by the state is the largest such landholding in the lower 48 states."

People interested in fall color touring might try these places suggested by Rose:

- Finland State Forest off the Lake Superior North Shore; follow the Baptism River valley north and east of Finland
- Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest south of Red Wing with spectacular bluffs on the Mississippi River; follow Highway 61 from Red Wing to La Crescent
- Savanna State Forest, Hay Lake Campground, 20 miles east of Hill City; off the beaten path with remote roads in mixed hardwood forests.

For additional information about autumn colors, check out the DNR Web site at [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us) and click on "Current Conditions."

**W**hat's at stake in this year's presidential election? The entire National Forest system. After eight years of open hostility to logging and loggers by the Clinton administration and its political appointees, national forests are largely unmanaged today. If Al

**Executive Vice President's Column**



Gore is elected, the most likely outcome is an end to all commercial timber sales on federal lands.

Senator Bob Lessard has filed for re-election as an independent.

Lessard's independent, now there's a news flash. He does appear to have a tough race. One thing is clear about Senator Lessard, he's been there fighting for us on every forest management issue that has been in front of the legislature.

Now, if the preceding two bits of political commentary don't have your attention, read this story. Retired TPA Executive Vice President Russ Allen called me one day. It seems he'd been "surfing the net" and came across a website for the Lutheran Church. He noticed that they had a spot on environmental issues. Being a good Lutheran, Russ was interested in his church's views. After checking it out he called me, another good Lutheran, and the steam was coming out of the telephone.

I checked out the Lutheran Church's web site also. Now there were two mad Lutherans. What we found was that not only had the Lutheran Office of Government Affairs, the government affairs arm of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), endorsed the Clinton Administration's new roadless plan but they had also endorsed legislation to ban timber harvesting on national forests.

If you are a Lutheran whose church is affiliated with the ELCA, you may want to discuss this with your minister. Several of us are

also seeking a meeting with the Northeast MN Synod's bishop to discuss this issue.

My guess is that if one checked out the web sites for other denominations, similar positions would be found. I'm not going to check them out right now myself, fighting with one church at a time is plenty for me.

I guess this all may prove the old adage: "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." Either that or it proves that we're fearless in advocating for our TPA members.

\$60.80 a cord for winter access aspen. It happened at the DNR's September sale in Onamia. I'm quite sure that this is the all-time state record for aspen.

Even with that big price for aspen stumpage, TPA thanks the DNR Division of Forestry field staff for their efforts, which increased DNR timber sales by 80,000 cords last year. We also appreciate the support from DNR leadership for increasing management efforts. Hopefully the forest management program will increase to the total estimated sales volume in their plans of over 800,000 cords per year.

From their inception in 1914 until this year Hedstrom Lumber had not laid anyone off other than the times that fire destroyed parts of the mill. High stumpage prices, imports and depressed markets caused the company to temporarily shut down operations at their Two Harbors mill and lay off employees.

Think about it. The crash of '29, the Great Depression, the oil crisis of the '70s, double digit inflation and interest rates in the '80s all were weathered. But when the Forest Service's Gunflint District ranger wants to burn up blow down instead of salvaging it; and when the USFS program on the Chippewa National Forest sells less total timber than the year-to-year increase on state lands; and when all you get from agencies when you talk about sawtimber sales are excuses - what do you expect.

We can only hope that the situation will improve so that these

people can once again have jobs and support their families.

TPA extends its deepest sympathy to Assistant Vice President Bruce Barker and his family over the loss of his wife Janice. She was a vibrant part of many TPA functions and her sudden and unexpected passing saddens us all.

# North Star Expo 2000

The 47th Annual North Star Expo was held on Friday, August 11, and Saturday, August 12, 2000, at the Ironworld Discovery Center in Chisholm, Minn. More than 150 companies exhibited equipment and other products valued at more than \$30 million. The show was well attended, with the weather cooperating especially well on Friday.

A special thank you to the following sponsors for their support of the North Star Expo:  
Boise Cascade Corporation

Consolidated Papers  
Diamond Brands, Inc.  
Hedstrom Lumber Company  
Northshore Forest Products  
Potlatch Corporation  
Rajala Timber Company  
Trus Joist/Weyerhaeuser

## Workshops and Seminars

The Minnesota Logger Education Program sponsored the workshops this year. The topics were "Pre-Retirement Planning," by Jablonski/Madill, and "Give Me a Tax Break!" by the Minnesota

Department of Revenue. These were well attended and each program was worth 4 CEUs.

## Historic Logging Equipment

This year, for the first time, the Mechanization Committee asked for historic logging equipment to be displayed at the Expo. The response was gratifying, with several pieces of equipment being displayed. A special thanks to Jerry DeMenge of McGregor for coordinating these efforts. Thanks to the following individuals for



Knaeble Timber, second place winner.



Overall winners of the loader contest, left to right, Tony Kowitz, Tom Long and Gordy Dobbs.



Media loader contestants, left to right, Rep. Loren Solberg, John Swift, Pat Puchalla, Mark Koprivec, Heather Hill, Dave Chura and Mike Kilgore.



First place winner, indoor display, Radko Iron & Supply, Inc., Hibbing, Minn.



Second place winner, indoor display, Rice Blacksmith Saw & Machine, Rice, Minn.



Third place winner, indoor display, Lindsay Machinery, Inc., Manawa, Wis.



First place winner, outdoor display, St. Joseph Equipment, Hermantown, Minn.



Second place winner, outdoor display, Two Harbors Machine Shop, Inc., Two Harbors, Minn.

providing equipment:

Kenny Ziemba, Ziemba Trucking, Littlefork

Norman Johnson, Norman

Johnson Trucking, Baudette

Lowelle Pittack, Pittack Logging, Inc., Bovey

Wayne Paakkonen, Nashwauk

Robert Nelson, Birchdale

We would like to expand this portion of the show next year. Please keep an eye open for other historic pieces of logging and sawmilling equipment that could be available for display.

### Best Load Contest

There were eight entries in this year's Best Load Contest. They were all excellent examples of safe, well-maintained, polished trucks.

They were very hard to judge. The first place winner was Greg Cook, Greg Cook Logging, Bigfork, Minn., sponsored by Potlatch Corporation; second place winner was Kevin Kneable, Kneable Timber, Big Falls, Minn., sponsored by UPM-Blandin Paper Company; and third place winner was Gordy Dobbs, Dobbs Logging, Inc., Littlefork, Minn., sponsored by Boise Cascade.

The other contestants were: Rutar Logging / Bob Howe / Potlatch Corporation; Neil DeLack / DeLack Logging, Inc. / Boise Cascade Corporation; J & A Logging / Jeff Peterson / UPM-Blandin Paper Company; Craig Turnboom Logging / M & E Enterprises / Bell Lumber & Pole

Company; and Chris Venhuizen / Venhuizen Bros. / Potlatch Corporation.

### Guess the Weight

Back by popular demand was the guessing the weight of a loaded log truck. There were hundreds of entries. The winner of the \$50 prize was Gail Nosie of Chisholm, Minn.

### Loader Contest

The loader contest was held on both Friday and Saturday. This event always draws quite a few loader operators who want to try their skills against the clock and other operators.

The winners were:

#### Friday

First Place – Tom Long, Orr, Minn.



Third place winner, outdoor display, Wood-Mizer Products, Indianapolis, Ind.

Second Place – Gordy Dobbs,  
Littlfork, Minn.

Third Place – Mark Bowman

**Saturday**

First Place – Tony Kowitz

Second Place – Gordy Dobbs,  
Littlfork, Minn.

Third Place – Tom Long, Orr,  
Minn.

The overall winners (with the best average time for both days) were:

First Place – Tom Long

Second Place – Gordy Dobbs

Third Place – Tony Kowitz

**Celebrity Loader Contest**

The competition was close among this year's contestants. A good time was had by all. This year we had eight competitors. Marc Koprivec, mayor of Keewatin, successfully defended his title and won again this year. We would like to congratulate Marc on a fine job. TPA would like to thank everyone for taking the time from their busy schedules to attend the North Star Expo and compete in this contest.

First Place – Marc Koprivec,  
mayor of Keewatin, Minn.

Second Place – Dave Chura, Sen.  
Grams office

Third Place – Pat Puchalla – B105  
Radio, Duluth, Minn.

Other participants were:

Heather Hill – KBJR TV, Duluth,  
Minn.

Mike Kilgore, executive director,  
Minnesota Forest Resources  
Council

John Swift – IRRRB  
commissioner

Rep. Loren Solberg

**Social Hour, Dinner,  
Door Prize Drawings**

This year's social hour and dinner were held in Iron World. The weather was beautiful and the food excellent. The turnout for this year's event was good and the door prizes were worth waiting for. The grand prize, won by Jason Gilhousen of Grand Rapids, was a chainsaw donated by Tilton Equipment Company.

The mechanization committee members and all those involved in the North Star Expo would again like to express our thanks to the vendors that have supported the show. Without your support there would be no show. Thanks!!

A special thanks to those that provided the many door prizes.



Everyone enjoyed the banquet.



Some of the old-time logging equipment that was on display.



## Carlton County Joins SFI

**T**he Carlton County Board of Commissioners has voted to join the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. Carlton County becomes the fourth Minnesota county to take this step. Other counties who have become licensees of the SFI program include Itasca, Lake and St. Louis.

With the addition of Carlton County's 73,000 acres, there are now over 1.8 million acres in Minnesota licensed under the SFI program, making it far and away the most widely accepted forest standard and certification program in the state.

"We're very pleased that Carlton County, under the leadership of its land commissioner Milo Rasmussen, has taken this important step. SFI is rapidly becoming the pre-eminent means of demonstrating and assuring sound forest management," said Tim Beebe, chair of the SFI State Implementation Committee.

In 1999 the Minnesota SFI State Implementation Committee received

the first ever State Implementation Committee of the Year award.

## State Timber Sales Increase

**D**NR timber sales for fiscal year 2000 increased 80,000 cords from 1999. Total sales were 619,000 cords. While this increase is welcome news for Minnesota loggers and mills, timber sales lag behind the DNR's annual planned volume, which exceeds 800,000 cords per year.

"We're very pleased that the DNR has increased its sales. Commissioner Garber has supported this effort by the Division of Forestry and his support has been key to the increase in volume," said TPA President Ray Killmer. "The TPA Executive Committee has met with the commissioner a number of times and he has clearly listened and responded to our input."

Fiscal year 1999 sales of 535,000 cords were the lowest in a decade and down from the 750,000 cords sold in fiscal year 1996. The total planned volume of more than 800,000 cords is derived by adding the estimated volumes for each of the DNR's Area Plans statewide.

"It's easy to throw stones at the DNR, but the field staff has responded to the crisis in available timber for sale with a tremendous effort," said TPA Executive Vice President Wayne Brandt. "The DNR prepares and approves its management plans and we're pleased that they have moved to a higher level of accomplishment. Too often we have seen the DNR's field staff hamstrung in their daily work

to implement those plans."

"This needs to be a trend and not a one-time event. Loggers have put their shoulders to the wheel implementing the new guidelines, continuously improving logging practices and buying equipment. State forests need to be managed and timber sales increased," concluded Ray Killmer.

## Dave Thom Transfers to Black Hills

**D**ave Thom has accepted a position as Inter Disciplinary Team Coordinator on the Black Hills National Forest. His starting date for this new position will be in mid-October. Thom currently serves as the Laurentian District ranger on the Superior National Forest.

"We hate to see Dave go but wish him well in his new position," said TPA Executive Vice President Wayne Brandt. "Dave is a uniquely talented person who has worked very hard to make his ranger district work. We will miss his contributions."

In addition to his work for the U.S. Forest Service, Thom has been active in his community. He served and chaired on the school board for the Mesabi East district. He also was active in the Society of American Foresters and served on the GEIS Implementation Roundtable.



# Rutar Logging



Tony Rutar

**R**utar Logging of Buyck, Minn., was started in 1957 by long time TPA member Tony Rutar. "I did some logging in the early '50s and then worked in several other businesses. I finally decided I wanted to work for myself, so I started logging," Tony commented. The business has grown and changed over the years. It is primarily a family operation. There are five family members physically involved in the woods end of the business: Tony and three sons, Mark, Gary and Robert, and Mark's son Justin. He was registering at the University of Wisconsin-Superior the day I visited Rutar Logging. He plans on completing his degree in business and accounting. He will be missed on the job. They will have to find someone else to operate the skidder.

Presently, Rutar Logging employs two individuals. They are Dan Hoffman and Adam Rutchasky, both of whom are cousins of the Rutars. Dan runs the 200F Serco and Adam limbs most of the aspen and other hardwood species that go directly to the slasher.

Mark has been in the business for 25 years, his brother Gary for 22 years and brother Robert for 18 years. They are all capable of

operating most of the equipment. As with most businesses they each usually run a specific piece of equipment and change to something else as the job demands. Each of them are better at some specific jobs than others and they tend to take the lead when that talent is needed. Mark gets most of the public relations work, so naturally when I showed up he took the time to show me around and fill me in on their operation. He also works with the industry foresters and the timber sale administrators for the sales they harvest.

As I mentioned earlier, there are five family members physically working in the woods. There is a sixth family member, Jessie Rutar, Tony's wife, who does one of the most important jobs in the business. This position is called the bookkeeper or accountant. As most people in the business know, this position does a whole lot more than just keeping the books. They answer the phone, handle the mail, and remind everyone about upcoming meetings and other business appointments. They do all the work necessary, other than harvesting the wood, to keep the business running. I was reminded of this by most of the individuals I visited with on



Robert Rutar takes a break from the feller-buncher to discuss the job with Mark.



Gale Daniels evens up the load before tying it down. Gale drives one of Randy Daniel's trucks.



Adam Rutchasky finishes up limbing another drag of aspen.



**Dan Hoffman**

this job. "She questioned me not long ago about the monthly billing for my cell phone, which was quite high. I explained how it had allowed me to continue in the woods instead of running to town for parts and to take care of other business. That is her job and she is good at it," Mark mentioned.

When I asked Tony what equipment the company has he listed it as follows:

Three grapple skidders, a 525 Cat, two 67 Rangers, an EL 200B Car carrier with a 2000Limmit for delimiting, two slashers, a 200F

Serco, a 170A Serco, a 425T Timbco with a quad saw, and a 115D Case Crawler and a 140 Cat grader for road building and maintenance.

"That is a \$1.7 million investment in equipment to make \$30,000 a year. This is a tough business these days. In the '70s it was better. Stumpage prices and the cost of doing business isn't leaving much for profit," Tony commented. "I'm thinking about retiring. I have been doing this for almost 50 years and that's long enough."

We also have two trucks, one for the lowboy, to move equipment, and another to haul wood. The rest of the hauling is done under contract with Randy Daniels, who has three trucks, and Bob Howe, who has one truck.

The timber sale they were working on is a U. S. Forest Service sale that Potlatch Corporation had purchased. It was a few miles off the Elephant Lake road. "This is the first time we have spent all summer on the same sale. It is kind of nice not to have to move every few weeks. We usually log in the Echo Lake area, but with the U.S. Forest Service cutting back on timber sales we have to look elsewhere for wood," Tony said.



**Gary Rutar pauses while skidding aspen with the 67 Ranger.**



**Mark visits with Brad Arvila before loading Rutar Logging's truck and heading in with another load.**



**Gary heads for the landing with another drag of aspen.**



**Dan Hoffman adds 100" to the deck.**

## **Lt. Gov. Schunk presents awards at Aug. 24 State Capitol ceremony . . . Second Annual “Minnesota Forest Educators of the Year” Selected**



**T**wo Minnesota schoolteachers who employ innovative methods to teach about the state’s forests were announced Thursday as winners of the second annual Minnesota Forest Educators of the Year award. During a morning ceremony at the state capitol, Lt. Gov. Mae Schunk presented the Minnesota Forest Industries-sponsored awards to Karl Kaufmann of Pillager and Steve Maanum of Park Rapids.

Kaufmann is a forestry and biotechnology instructor at Pillager High School. Maanum is a fifth grade science and math teacher at Park Rapids Middle School. They were among 11 finalists – divided into grade K-6 and 7-12 categories – vying for the award. A panel of forestry and education professionals selected Kaufmann and Maanum, each of whom received \$1,000 cash awards.

Kaufmann was selected because of his dedication to developing a curriculum that emphasizes stewardship and multiple use, including utilizing the Pillager School Forest as an outdoor classroom.

“All Pillager High School students are using forestry, the school forest, wildlife management and greenhouse production applications as a hands-on environment for learning the classic principles in biology,” said

Kaufmann.

Maanum’s lessons that won the judges’ notice were several fall, winter and spring activities, including an emphasis on animal studies. One such example was the Bluebird Project, in which students and volunteers built and installed 161 bluebird houses throughout the Park Rapids community.

“Sometimes people think that once a tree is harvested, that that’s the end of its role in the

environment. But we used the wood to provide homes for one of nature’s inhabitants – the bluebird – which not only benefited the birds but also gave students hands-on exposure to several forms of environmental education,” said Maanum.

The other finalists for the Minnesota Forest Educators of the Year, listed alphabetically, were: Mitch Becker of Holy Trinity School in Pierz; Judy Johnson of North Shore Elementary in Duluth; Thomas Leuster of Willow River High School; James McCollough of Trailview Elementary in Mora; Doug Ploof of Little Falls Community School; Jane Reynolds of Sunset Hill Elementary in Plymouth; LeRoy Unlenkamp Jr. of Long Prairie-Grey Eagle High School in Long Prairie; Rusty Uscola of Nevis High School; and Larry Wade of Katherine Curren Elementary in Hopkins.

Applications for next year’s Minnesota Forest Educators of the Year program are available by writing to Minnesota Forest Industries, 903 Medical Arts Bldg., 324 W. Superior St., Duluth, Minn. 55802; by calling MFI at (218) 722-5013; or by logging onto [www.minnesotaforests.com](http://www.minnesotaforests.com).

## American Tree Farm System, Potlatch, and Trout Unlimited Sponsor Environmental Field Day Focusing on Private Forests

**S**hared Streams, a national cooperative conservation initiative, took root in Minnesota on Aug. 25, 2000, on the Wieck Family Forest, a tree farm near Mahtowa, in Carlton County. More than 100 private landowners attended a free educational field day to learn about forest management techniques and wildlife habitat improvement projects they can implement on their own properties.

Nearly 43 percent of Minnesota's 16.7 million acres of forestland is owned by ordinary citizens – not by governments or big industry. Because less timber is coming from our national forests, there's increasing pressure on Minnesota's private landowners to help meet this country's demand for forest products.

"But there's a lot more to managing a forest than cutting and planting trees," said Bob Simpson, national director of the American Tree Farm System, a national organization that provides assistance to private forest landowners. "Wildlife habitat, water quality, forest sustainability, and a landowner's goals all factor into forest management today."

That's why a partnership comprised of the American Tree Farm System, Trout Unlimited, Potlatch, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and Minnesota Power brought together a group of private forest owners with wildlife biologists, fisheries experts, and professional foresters. The pros gave pointers and advice on the many different goals and objectives associated with sustainable forestland management.

"Most of today's management discussions are focused on public land issues," said Mike Houser, Potlatch wildlife biologist. "But in Minnesota private landowners own nearly six million acres of forestland. Providing them with information about sustainable forestry and the many values associated with it is vital to

maintaining viable, dynamic forests for the long-term."

In this field-session workshop, private forest owners were provided with valuable and practical advice for improving water quality and wildlife habitat and providing recreational opportunities, as well as increasing forest productivity. Topics ranged from management of beaver and game species, to songbirds, wetlands integrity and water quality in forest streams.

The workshop is an outgrowth of a national partnership between Trout Unlimited and the American Tree Farm System, called *Shared Streams*, that works to improve stream habitat, and forest management on private lands across the United States. *Shared Streams* introduces forest owners to existing technical assistance programs, implements riparian habitat improvement projects, organizes educational events and field tours, and promotes the voluntary actions of participating forest owners. Potlatch, which owns nearly 340,000 acres of land throughout northern Minnesota, signed on as a *Shared Streams* partner on a project to manage brook trout habitat in the Dark River in northern Minnesota.

"Teaming with organizations like the American Tree Farm System, Potlatch and others has helped to increase awareness and implementation of conservation and watershed protection projects," said Wayne Hoshal, Waybinahbe Chapter of Trout Unlimited. "Wild trout in Minnesota's Dark River are already benefiting from a *Shared Streams* project that decreased sedimentation and improved trout spawning habitat."

*For nearly 60 years, the American Tree Farm System (www.treefarmssystem.org) has been providing assistance to and recognizing private landowners for their commitment to conservation and sustainable forest management. It is the oldest and largest forest owner program in the country with some*

*66,000 certified Tree Farms covering 85 million acres (25 million non-industrial) of forestland.*

*Trout Unlimited's (www.tu.org) mission is to conserve, protect and restore North America's trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds.*

*Potlatch (www.potlatchcorp.com) is a diversified forest products company with timberland throughout northern Minnesota and manufacturing facilities in Cloquet, Brainerd, Bemidji, Cook and Grand Rapids.*

## Lowe's Jumps on the Home Depot Bandwagon

**L**owe's Companies, the nation's No. 2 home improvement retailer, said recently that it will eliminate from its sprawling warehouse stores wood products from "endangered forests" over the next three years. The Wilkesboro, N.C.-based company said it will also give preference to wood that is independently certified as having come from forests managed in an "environmentally responsible" way.

Lowe's officials said growing customer demand for environmentally friendly wood products is prompting the changes, not pressure to keep up with arch-rival Home Depot Inc., which vowed last August to stop buying wood products from "environmentally sensitive areas" by the end of 2002. Environmental groups reacted by saying that the Lowe's move would almost certainly add to existing pressure on lumber suppliers to increase the supply of "certified" wood.

However, the word from inside the industry is that neither Home Depot nor Lowe's can obtain enough lumber certified under current "green" certification schemes, such as those licensed by the Forest Stewardship Council, to meet the terms of their pledges. This has reportedly caused Home Depot to explore alternatives, such as accepting wood products grown on lands covered by the forest industry-endorsed Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI).

# Green Future?

## Who's driving the movement towards certified lumber? And why?

by Jesse Brand, Brands Inc.,  
Columbus, Ind., past chair of  
NLBMDA, gave this speech at the  
Second Annual North America  
Softwood Conference

**G**ood afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to join you here and participate in the Second Annual American Softwood Conference. I appreciate your implicit recognition of the important role that the independent lumber and building material dealers of the United States play in getting wood products to our home builders, remodelers, industrial, institutional and consumers. I've been asked to bring the independent dealers' perspective on the movement towards third-party certification of forest products processes, which I found to be quite a challenge when I set about the specific task at hand. To a very large extent, because of the nature of our individual companies, we have been left out of the process. In spite of the fact that as a group we buy and sell more wood-based products than any other group, we are made up of thousands of individual companies all across the U.S.A. and don't present a very identifiable target for the activist organizations that are driving the process. Unlike our big-box competitors, we are primarily privately-held companies and rarely serve markets covering large geographic territories. As a result, large, publicly-traded companies in both the production and sale sectors of the industry have been much more attractive targets for the pressure being brought to bear by the vocal and very active minority pushing this agenda.

Let me first be very clear about two things:

First, there is no grassroots groundswell of concern over, or demand for, "green" lumber and wood products among the consumers, craftsmen (and women) and building professionals in the United States.

Second, independent dealers

are aware of many of the facets of the growing movement toward certification and/or verifiably environmentally responsible forestry and product management. We are sure this activity will affect our businesses even if it is not being driven by our customers.

Let me first talk a little about our customers. In the last 18 months I have had occasion to attend meetings with literally hundreds of lumber and building materials dealers from across the U.S.A. I have been asking dealers about the issues confronting them as they go about their business. They have many concerns, including the quality and quantity of the labor pool available; the problems of government intervention in their business; the volatility of the wood products market in terms of cost; concerns about reliable supply of wood products; and questions about the attempted encroachment of alternative building products such as steel, concrete and plastic. But the problem of how to provide their customers with certifiably "green" lumber has not come up once! I've asked wholesalers, distributors and co-op buying groups two questions: "Have your customers been asking you for certified lumber?" and "Has your company been working with producers to be able to provide certified lumber and wood products?" The answer to the first question has been a resounding silence. Not one has been asked for certified lumber. Answers to the second question range from, "We're developing a position on the issue," to "No, we're doing nothing at this time."

None of this is to say that this is not a real or important issue; our presence here discussing it makes it undeniably real. I believe, however, it is important to understand where the issues come from. And just because our customers are not clamoring for certified lumber does not mean there isn't a place for it in the market, nor does it mean that

independent dealers are not concerned about the process. This process has the potential to impact our businesses in a number of different, and some surely unexpected, ways. Many questions and concerns arise when the potential ramifications of this process are considered.

On a very practical level, dealers are concerned about how the pressure being exerted to promote third-party certification and related initiatives will affect the availability of wood-based building products. With the U.S. government-controlled forest resource functionally closed down, any action that can potentially further limit the availability of wood fiber is discouraging to independent lumber dealers. We've experienced the increases in prices and volatility that have resulted from shutting down our national forests. When we hear about programs that may result in reduced yield from our North American working forests, or worse yet, take more timberland completely out of production, we are skeptical, at least.

It is important that I talk a little about the issues of conservation, sustainability and responsible forestry at this point! As members of the forest products industry, we have a strong vested interest in the long-term health and sustainability of our forests. Ours are primarily family businesses with an eye firmly on the future. We want to insure the continuing health and sustainability of our forests for very personal, very strong reasons. We just don't start from the point of distrust – in fact it seems sometimes that hatred is not too strong a word for those who manage and work in our forests. Of course, we want to preserve an appropriate amount of forests in national parks and wilderness areas, but we wonder how many millions acres must be preserved? We admit that there have been poor practices carried out in the past, but we believe that the modern forest products industry in North

*(continued on page 22)*

(continued from page 20)

America is responsible, working for the long-term health and sustainability of our forest resource – if not for altruistic reasons – because it makes economic sense.

How will this process affect the quality of wood products we will receive? Wood products are used for a wide variety of purposes, structural and decorative.

Technology can help in some of these areas; we can use engineered lumber for many structural applications, though not all yet. And engineered substrates and veneers can help with decorative applications. But quality, in terms of structural and appearance characteristics, is a serious concern for independent lumber dealers, and further restrictions could exacerbate these concerns.

How will this process affect the price of lumber products? Despite assurances to the contrary, it seems reasonable that this process will result in higher costs. Higher costs must inevitably be passed on to home builders and consumers. And dealers are not the only segment concerned about this prospect. An announcement regarding wood-use policy by home builder Kaufman and Broad was followed by a statement by Jeff Metzger, Kaufman and Broad's COO, that the greatest challenge facing his company would be to "balance environmental sensitivity with our mission of providing affordably-priced homes."

How will this process affect the marketability of wood-based building products? We are already experiencing vigorous attacks by alternative building products making claims of eco-superiority. Even though these claims are often hollow at best, blatantly false at worst, the question of whether the added costs of certified lumber will be more than offset by any marketability benefit remains. Whether or not, or how much, consumers are willing to spend for "green" wood products has not been established.

I would return here to the difference in our perspective of the forest products industry versus the view of the general public, and the view of the radical, activist fringe elements pushing this

process. Dealers start from a basic perspective of trust, as well as dependence on the practices of the industry. The radical fringe hates the forest products industry with a religious zeal. I am dubious that even worldwide adoption of uniform methods of management, harvest and production will make allies of these groups. The general public does view the forest products industry, as they generally view big business, with suspicion and distrust. However, they generally view the building materials dealer as a member of the community, a small business that can be trusted. This should provide a great opportunity to work to improve our image with the public. I have been asked to serve as the contact point between NLBMDA and the Wood Is Good project. While the issue of certification may play a part, I encourage all of you to support and get involved with the project. We all need to be a part of this critical effort to win the trust of the public. Wood really is Good; we just need to work together to get that message out!

One of the more interesting questions to me, personally, about certification and related practices is whether they might have any effect on trade issues. Will there be any perception of a more level playing field as a result? This has not been a widely-discussed idea, but any development that might bring less contention to trade issues would be welcomed by independent dealers. If, however, there is a negative impact, a limitation on the importation of non-certified lumber, for an example, then this entire process could be very damaging to our businesses. And, unfortunately, no development is too outlandish to be concerned about!

Another area of current confusion is in regards to who certifies whom for what. Is the ISO14001 certification appropriate? Does this fully integrate with the Canadian Standards Association standard? Where does the AF&PA's SFI fit in? Will the Forest Stewardship Council become the dominant certifying organization? I have a lot to learn about the Forest Stewardship Council, but one

would have to have a great deal of faith in their ability to maintain objectivity when reading the minutes of their last board meeting that "The Operations Director reported on developments in setting up the expert and advisory panels. Funding has been received from WWF-US and from Greenpeace. Meetings and discussions will start shortly." National and regional certification standards and agents are emerging, and it appears, competing. We will surely watch with interest as this process develops.

It is also interesting to consider the possible irony that certification might just lead to wider public acceptance of responsible forestry, leading to more access to the timber base throughout North America. While I do not really expect this to happen, it is a dream I can't seem to let go of.

Even though demand for "green" lumber has not materialized among the customers of independent dealers, we realize this movement is real and it will affect our businesses. If big box retailers like Home Depot and Menard's stick to their stated intentions to buy and sell only "green" lumber, if Centex and Kaufman and Broad can balance environmental sensitivity with the need to provide affordable homes, there will certainly be producers ready to provide certified product to them.

It is difficult to know for sure, but it is unlikely many dealers will be able or willing to maintain separate, double inventories of certified and non-certified lumber. If certification serves primarily to recognize the responsible forestry practices that most producers currently employ, it may have little impact on the way we do business. On the other hand, there is little evidence that consumers are willing to make significant material or personal sacrifices for these "green" products, so for certification to integrate effectively into the market it will have to be economically sensible.

*Reprinted with permission from the Building Material Dealer magazine; this article first appeared in the September 2000 issue.*



## Minnesota Timber Producers Association *Meet the Directors*

**D**ick Walsh was born and raised in Park Rapids and still resides in the community. He started in the logging business in 1962 and is presently partner with his sons, Robin and Steve, in Dick Walsh Forest Products L L P. Dick has been involved in several different aspects of the industry. Besides logging he has owned and operated a sawmill and was an equipment dealer for a number of years. Presently he and his sons are operating two logging sites producing both chips and roundwood.

Dick and his wife, Sandra, have five children: Roger, Robin, Steve, Tony and Nancy. At present there are 10 grandchildren.

Presently TPA's past president, Dick Walsh has served on the executive committee and as chairman of the government relations committee. He also chaired the task force that established the Minnesota Logger Education Program. He was elected to the TPA Board of Directors in 1980 and to the



executive committee in 1991. Dick was president of TPA during 1997-1998. Dick and Sandra have been active in the issues that have faced the association and have made numerous trips to St. Paul to testify before the House and Senate Legislative Committees.

Dick has been active in his local community and has served as chairman of Arago Township Supervisors and as a Log-A-Load for Kids board member. Even with all the things he is involved with he still finds time for some of his personal interests such as hunting and golf.

inventory system.

"It was well worth the effort," said Heinzen. "Now any forest agency in the nation can obtain inventory data on an annual basis with only modest sacrifices in precision."

Inventory information helps to develop programs and policies that promote continued forest health and productivity. It helps in fighting fires, identifying where trees need to be planted or harvested, and assessing where trees are in danger due to disease or insect infestation.

## DNR Forestry Division Wins National Award

**T**he "Director's Award for Excellence in Forest Inventory Analysis" has been presented to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forestry Division's Resource Assessment Unit, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service.

"We were told this honor was given to us because of exemplary partnership and leadership in pilot testing and implementing the Annual Forest Inventory System," said Dave Heinzen, division resource assessment supervisor. "It was nice recognition for the many people who put in a lot of time to improve the way federal and state forest agencies inventory their resources."

Forest Inventory and Analysis was a program begun in the 1930s that collected information every 10

years. Improvements in technology and the need for more up-to-date information than the usual Forest Inventory and Analysis cycle could provide drove the development of a new way of measuring the resource known as the Annual Forest Inventory System.

"Annual inventory combines remote sensing, actual measurements of a relatively small number of tree stands, and computer models to provide an annual update of forest conditions," said Heinzen.

The DNR's Division of Forestry took a risk in applying state dollars and many staff hours to developing the new technology with us, said USDA Forest Service officials. It took seven years to measure the thousands of field plots, process the dozens of Landsat (satellite) scenes, and register the tens of thousands of Forest Inventory and Analysis field plots to satellite imagery that were needed to develop the annual

# American Tree Farm System Field Day

**N**early 43 percent of Minnesota's 16.7 million acres of forestland is owned by ordinary citizens. Because less timber is coming from state and federal forestland, there's more pressure on Minnesota's private forest landowners to help meet the increasing demand for forest products.

Today forest management goes beyond timber harvesting and includes wildlife habitat, water quality and forest sustainability. To provide information to private landowners, a partnership comprised of the American Tree Farm System, Trout Unlimited, Potlatch Corporation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Minnesota Power held an educational field day on Potlatch's Wieck Family Forest Tree Farm near Mahtowa on Aug. 5, 2000.

Bob Simpson, national director, American Tree Farm System, welcomed the 100 private landowners in attendance. He complimented those landowners who are managing their lands to provide forest products, wildlife habitat and clean water for the citizens of Minnesota and the rest of the country. The American Tree Farm System has developed the Forests for Watersheds and Wildlife Initiative connecting tree farmers with conservation organizations, agencies and industry to provide them with assistance for wildlife conservation and watershed protection projects. Two of these projects are Shared Streams, which is a partnership with Trout Unlimited focusing on improving riparian habitat and watershed health, and Forested Flyways, which is a partnership with Ducks Unlimited concentrating on waterfowl and wetland habitat. Additional information can be obtained from any of the partners involved in the projects.

Mike Houser, wildlife biologist, Potlatch Corporation, discussed the Shared Streams Project on the Dark River, a native brook trout river in Minnesota, which has been damaged by beaver population in the area. Rather than trapping out



**Rick Horton, forest wildlife biologist, Ruffed Grouse Society, discussed management strategies for early successional wildlife – ruffed grouse and woodcock.**



**Dan Toivonen, forester for Potlatch Corporation, informed this group on forest management and productivity.**



**Rain during the lunch break kept most people under the tents. The weather participated most of the day.**



**Bob Simpson, national director, American Tree Farm System, takes time out for lunch.**

the beaver and blowing dams year after year, this project will change the aspen type along the river over time by managing for species such as pine, spruce and other longer-lived hardwoods. This should reduce the availability of the aspen, the beaver's favorite food, and

cause them to move to other areas. At the same time other habitat projects will be carried out both in and along the river to improve the brook trout habitat.

Small groups were then directed to one of the following learning stations:

- Forest management and productivity,
- Financial and Technical Assistance for private landowners,
- Ecology and Management of Forest Wetlands and Waterfowl,
- Ecology and Management of Songbirds,
- Ecology and Management of Beaver,
- Management Strategies for Early-Successional Wildlife,
- Trout Habitat Improvement on the Dark River,
- Cold Water Stream Ecology and Management

Information on each of the above topics was provided along with where to go for additional help on each specific topic.

All the participants were provided the time to visit with the individual instructors during the lunch break. This interlude also provided an opportunity for everyone to sample the roast pig and other excellent side dishes that were provide.



## **Be Active! FRA Launches Pro-Active Forestry Website**

**T**ired of all the misinformation about harvesting and sustainable forestry? Concerned that your way of life is threatened by policies based on unfounded “facts”? To help loggers and foresters change the direction of public policy, the Forest Resources Association has launched a Pro-Active Forestry Education Resource Guide at its web site, [www.forestresources.org](http://www.forestresources.org).

“This on-line resource is your key to taking action to promote and defend science-based use of our forest resource and the communities that depend on it,” stated Robin Richerson of International Paper, chairman of the FRA Task Group that developed the site. “We know there are thousands of people who derive their livings from the forest who would be effective pro-forestry activists if they knew where to start. This web site provides the tools.”

The Price Companies, the innovative chipping contractor and engineering firm based in Monticello, Arkansas, generously underwrote the costs of developing the site. “We at Price Companies believe that everyone who works in the woods has a right and obligation to defend access. Supporting that effort is as important as anything else we do,” commented Dick Carmical, Price Companies’ representative on the FRA Board of Directors.

Other associations may link directly to the site at [www.forestresources.org/beactivehome.htm](http://www.forestresources.org/beactivehome.htm), to provide their members and other site visitors with its benefits.

Accessed through the “Be Active!” button on the FRA web site’s home page, the Pro-Active Forestry Education Resource Guide provides guidelines and tips on influencing state and federal legislative and regulatory processes, working with the media, taking advantage of public speaking opportunities, organizing forestry tours, and building effective coalitions. In addition, the

site provides a comprehensive catalogue of educational resources. On-line links to additional information and allied groups’ web sites enrich the site’s content.

“If we fail to make full use of new technologies in building alliances and pushing our message out, we will be allowing our adversaries to control the debate over forest use,” noted Richerson. “The Pro-Active Forestry Education Resource Guide empowers people on the ground to defend the pro use position.”

The Forest Resources Association Inc., formerly the American

Pulpwood Association Inc., is a nonprofit trade association concerned with the safe, efficient, and sustainable harvest of forest products and their transport from woods to mill. FRA represents wood consumers, independent logging contractors, and wood dealers, as well as businesses providing products and services to the forest resource-based industries.

## **Temporary Closing of the Two Harbors Division**

### ***High Log Prices and Lumber Over-production cited as cause***

**H**edstrom Lumber Co., Inc., one of the pioneering forest products companies in northeastern Minnesota, announced today the temporary shutdown of the company's Two Harbors Division. Established in 1914 in Grand Marais, Hedstrom Lumber Co. is a family-owned and -operated sawmill. The company purchased the Two Harbors facility – a complete lumber production facility including sawmill, dry kiln and planning mill operation – in September, 1996.

According to Howard Hedstrom, president of Hedstrom Lumber, the plant will be shut down for a minimum of one month. While uncertain about the precise length of the shutdown, Hedstrom officials indicated a desire to reopen the Two Harbors facility as soon as practical.

Current market conditions of high raw timber prices with a constrained log supply and low prices for the lumber product have combined to force Hedstrom into this historically unprecedented decision to shut down a portion of its operations.

Shutdown of Hedstrom's Two Harbors Division will affect approximately 40 people. The complete shutdown will be phased in over the next 3 to 4 weeks beginning with the sawmill and its 25 employees. If there is no significant improvement in the lumber market, on prices or supply, the remaining employees plus some office staff – an additional 15 employees – will be laid off. The company also anticipates some realignment of employees at its Grand Marais mill. "It is our intent to continue operating in Grand Marais and we will continue buying logs for that mill," Howard Hedstrom said.

"We are hoping this layoff will be short term, but the outlook is quite dismal for the near future," said Hedstrom. "Production of lumber in North America has exceeded demand for many months now and the economy is slowing down. Plus, we are heading into the time of the year where construction slows down as well. The only optimism I have is that most softwood mills are losing money, and there will be more curtailments throughout the industry. When supply is balanced with production, I expect to see pricing increase to profitable levels. There have been many mills taking downtime, so market turn around could be weeks away instead of months away."

Chris Hegg, vice president of finance for Hedstrom Lumber, confirmed that the company "is losing money at both of our mills."

"This move will strengthen the company and keep us solvent. This temporary shutdown is a survival strategy that is the only prudent thing for us to do. Once the lumber prices return us to profitability we will be able to reopen the Two Harbors mill," Hegg said.

In recent years, Hedstrom Lumber has made heavy capital investments in order to bring production cost into a competitive range. Since the purchase of the Two Harbors mill, the company has invested \$3 million in a new dry kiln and a complete sawmill

renovation. "We have achieved our goals as far as reducing costs, but the bottom keeps dropping out of the sales side of the equation," said Hedstrom.

"In addition to the equipment investment, we have gradually increased employment in the Two Harbors plant, while upgrading the job skills and pay rates," said Hegg. "Regrettably, the potential loss of skilled employees will have a longer impact than the temporary financial losses."

"Certainly markets have gone south before, but this time they have gone far beyond what anyone would have ever expected," said Jack Hedstrom, vice president of sales and marketing. "We are seeing prices that we haven't seen since the 1970s, which makes it very difficult to continue to run a business profitably."

The impact from the Hedstrom Lumber shutdown is expected to cause ripples beyond the economy of northeastern Minnesota. "This should be troubling wake up call for some of Minnesota's elected and forest management leadership. They are the ones who will have to answer the questions surrounding how a well-managed, family-run company like Hedstrom Lumber could be forced to lay off working people and shut down its operations during a period of unprecedented economic growth. The difficult answers to that will probably be found in restrictive public policies that ignore the needs of working families who depend on the forests for their livelihoods," said Wayne Brandt, executive vice president of Minnesota Forest Industries. "It's a very sad day when a company has to shut down operations, even temporarily. Lumber markets have always had their ups and downs, the difference today are the policies that artificially constrain the availability of timber on public lands. Red and white pine saw timber sales on state lands have dropped 75 percent in the past decade and saw timber sales on national forests in Minnesota have dropped 70 percent. The trees are out there but the will to manage the forest is lacking. My heart goes out to the affected employees, their families, the communities and to the Hedstrom family."

"The toughest part of this situation is the people side of our business. Our employees are very good at their jobs. We recognize and want to thank the Two Harbors employees who have made great efforts to make the operation successful. We are very concerned about the future for our employees and their families, and we regret that this shutdown had to occur. Our goal is to reopen this operation as soon as possible," Hedstrom said.

## **Cases of Mistaken Identity: Vandals Destroy Wrong Trees in Maine and Wisconsin**

In two possibly related incidents, vandals destroyed what they apparently thought were genetically-engineered trees on research plantations in Wisconsin and Maine.

In the Wisconsin incident, an underground group of environmental vandals is claiming responsibility for an attack that destroyed 500 research trees and left spray-painted graffiti on vehicles at a federal forestry

laboratory near Rhinelander. The Seattle-based North American Earth Liberation Front, describing it as an attack against “bioengineering,” killed rare nursery stock worth \$750,000 and vandalized eight vehicles at a Forest Service research station. Researchers at the lab said that bioengineering was not a part of their work, and was not used on any of the trees destroyed.

Police in Milo, Maine, are investigating an attack by vandals that destroyed about 3,000 trees on a four-acre stand of experimental poplar trees owned by the Mead Corp. The message “NO GE (genetically engineered) TREES” was spray painted on the side of a pickup truck parked at the site. Again, Mead researchers said the trees were hybrids, not genetically-engineered in any way. No group claimed responsibility.

## **Expensive Foofaraw Obscures Real Forest Issues**

*by Shawn Perich*

**T**he ongoing foofaraw over logging in the Little East Creek area north of Lake Vermilion is excellent example of what is wrong in the woods.

In a nutshell, the state and St. Louis County want to cross Superior National Forest land to reach their own lands, which they plan to log, in a remote, wild area north of Lake Vermilion and near the Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness Area. Getting to the wood requires building new “winter roads,” which are used only when the ground is frozen.

The logging and road-building is challenged by some environmentalists, who have focused their battle on the U.S. Forest Service, which must give the state and county permission to cross national forest lands. The challenge became a “cause du jour” when the environmentalists charged that road building and logging would harm habitat for the Canada lynx, which was recently listed as a federally threatened species. This dragged the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service into the fray. The plot thickened when the July 4, 1999, windstorm blew down trees in the area, and the state and county decided to do additional salvage logging in the area.

Since this battle over trees is being fought largely at the public’s expense, we should question the motives of all involved.

Let’s start with state and county. Do they really need to get at the wood, which is located a long way from anywhere, or are they trying to make a political point? The Forest Service, burdened with Congressional mandates that require extensive environmental assessments and public review prior to virtually any management decision, is gridlocked with paperwork – a point being made amply clear by the state and county.

It is reasonable for the enviros to question new road building – particularly since Minnesota seems unable to manage or control off-road vehicle use. But it is difficult to believe this battle is driven by any heartfelt concern for the Canada lynx. Instead, the animal’s status under the Endangered Species Act brings another federal bureaucracy, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and yet more paperwork, to Little East Creek.

The portion of the environmental community that leans toward animal rights and limited human use of



public lands is pushing hard to get large predators (next up is the wolverine) on the Endangered Species List. Despite any rhetoric to the contrary, their motives have less to do with restoring wildlife than gaining control over public lands. Large predators need room to roam. Once they are on the Endangered Species List, they become weapons to wield against consumptive human activities like logging.

Sadly, the real issues at Little East Creek – such as whether the Forest Service has been rendered ineffective by a paperwork burden and whether we should continue developing roads in our remaining remote areas – are barely discussed. Instead we have a battle of buzzwords like “salvage logging” and “lynx habitat,” which plays better in the media and the courtroom.

Avoided, too, is the bottom line: the cost to the public in human and financial resources devoted by the county, state, and federal government. Every penny taxpayers spend at Little East Creek is just a symptom of a nationwide disease, because similar battles are occurring on national forests across the nation.

So how do we fix this mess? Maybe, we never will. A knee-jerk political response may occur when the balance of power shifts in Washington, but that will change only the playing field, not the game. Maybe at some point the public will get tired of funding the shenanigans of politicians, lawyers, and special interest groups at the expense of forest management and demand more accountability.

But don't hold your breath.

*Reprinted with permission from the **Outdoor News**,  
Points North, Aug. 4, 2000.*

LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

## Days of Real Horsepower

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, when a new skidder, tractor or other power unit is purchased to serve the logging industry, we ask, “What horsepower is it?”—meaning the S.A.E. rating of developed horsepower units.

In the old logging days, “horsepower” meant just what I said: How many head of horses needed to do the job.

In early days of logging in Maine, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, oxen were used extensively. This was when timber was cut near the rivers and lakes, and skidding was done over only about a quarter of a mile to the shore. The ox was good for skidding, but when sleigh hauls over ice roads came into the picture, the ox was out. Oxen were tough, needed little housing and care, and worked every day on hay with little grain. But oxen were slow, and it took eight head of oxen to handle a load that four good horses could haul.

In Minnesota, oxen were used mostly along the Rum, St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers, around Lake Mille Lacs and the southern edge of the pine forests. They were used but very little in northeastern Minnesota, where there was considerable rock and rock outcrop. Horses were the main source of power and transportation.

Along the St. Croix River and in

Wisconsin, horses were brought in from the farms of Illinois, southern Wisconsin and Iowa as soon as freezing weather started in the fall. Several farmers would pool their horses and hire them out together to a logging company for the winter. The horses were shipped north by barge, boat or railroad as far as possible and walked the rest of the way into the camps. They returned the same way in the spring.

In northern Minnesota, many of the horses came from the farms of the southern part of the state and the Dakotas. There were several horse companies in the Twin Cities and in Duluth that brought these horses in from the farmers and hired them out in groups to the logging companies. Other companies owned horses and hired them out as a group. Tom Smart of Bemidji was one of these operators and had beautiful horses that went into the woods as a group every winter.

The moving of horses to and back from camps was quite a job, and I remember complete trainloads of horses coming south on the Canadian Northern and M & I Railroads when camps were breaking up in the spring. As a boy in the Bemidji area, I have sat all day by the rail and

watched horses being driven south from the camps. Two or three men would bring a long string of horses, each in harness with the halter type tied to the horse ahead.

Besides the many horses hired each year, most logging companies had horses of their own. Some of the logging companies that had their own sawmills worked the horses around the mills during the summer. Other companies shipped their horses south to work on road and other construction jobs during the summer, while some, like Northern Lumber Co., had large pasture camps where the horses were kept while not working.

Cloquet Lumber Camp No. 26, in Sec. 8-55-14, was one of those summer pasture camps, as were the Virginia and Rainy Lake horse camps near Casson. The company horseman would meet every horse returning to pasture with a greeting as if it were one of his family.

Buying and hiring good, big horses for the woods was always a problem, but they were always the best obtainable. Most were Percherons, weighing from 1,800 to 2,400 pounds apiece. Considerable effort and care was given to matching up the horses in color, weight and gait, and no one would allow splitting up teams once they were well matched. The larger and faster walking horses were used on the sleigh hauls, while the smaller ones were used for skidding.

Four-horse teams who worked year after year for the same companies wanted the same teams back each year and took great pride in keeping their horses in good shape while hauling the biggest loads. Some camps had “barn bosses” who fed and cared for the horses, but in most camps the teamsters did these jobs. Each horse was different, and a teamster learned how to feed his horses to keep them in the best condition. Most horses would do well on six quarts of oats twice a day; others needed more or less. Over feeding probably killed more horses than anything.

But good care of horses was always a rule, and very few were ever sick in

Oxen did best at skidding, but not moving the big loads.





camps. There was an occasional case of colic, but because the teamsters knew how to feed, this was rare.

Men like J. C. Campbell, Sr., who was woods superintendent for Northern for a number of years, and Ed Day, who cared for Northern horses, liked and appreciated their teams and made sure of good care. All large companies had a vet come into camp regularly and float the horses' teeth for a horse that could not grind his grain well could not be kept in the best of shape.

Occasionally, a horse would slip into a hole in a swamp and break a leg, but this was rare. More commonly, horses "walked" themselves—stepping on their ankles with sharp shoe calks. For these injuries, the teamsters would apply turpentine or kerosene, and while the horse would prance around a lot, the cuts seemed to heal in a few days.

For hired horses, logging companies would always be responsible if an animal was hurt or killed, but not if it died of natural causes.

As horses got old they were taken off the sleigh hauls and used to skid wood around camp, haul lunch out to the woods and for other odd camp jobs. Many companies kept their old horses around the pasture camps until they died or were disabled so they had to be disposed of. To my knowledge, no lumber company ever let one of its horses that had worked for a number of years be sold for hook or fox food.

In making up teams, the lead team was usually a little smaller than the pole team. The lead team wore a lung tug harness without a breeching, while the pole team wore a breeching harness with side straps and twin neck yokes. The whiffletrees and spreader of the lead team hung on the end of the sleigh pole to keep them off the horses' heels when going down a grade. The pole was held up by a rod attached to the beam of the sleigh.

A small platform was built just back of the front runners of the sleigh, and the teamster stood on this platform on a sack of hay. While four horses were usual, six horses were used sometimes if there was much upgrade on the road. On short grades a snatch team was hitched in front of the four to help over the hill. When roads went downhill, hay was placed in the ruts to slow the sleigh.

The usual sleigh haul was four to five miles for a two trip road. A six or seven mile road was considered a horse killer for two trips. A haul of eight miles was considered a one-trip road, and sometimes one team took the load halfway and was met by another team to finish the trip.

A teamster knew his horses and just how much they would pull—and he could get every ounce of pull out of them just by talking to them. I have seen horses get

down and pull until they pulled their shoes right off—with the nails breaking loose from the hoofs. Teamsters were always on the watch for sore shoulders or pecks and watched that a rivet on the harness did not rub or make a sore.

As a rule, a driving team was kept at camp for the foreman to use in making his rounds of the jobs or for camp jobs like hauling mail. Each camp had its tote team that hauled in hay, grain and camp supplies. Working often started before the camp was in operation, bringing in lumber for construction. Tote roads usually followed the highland, with trips up to 40 miles.

Horses for toting were picked for their ability to travel over rough, rocky roads and over the many soft spots. A well-trained tote team driver was quite an asset to a camp. Frank McMinn, who toted for Northern Lumber Co. for a number of years, was one of the very best. Every jack around Duluth and north-eastern Minnesota knew his team of two black and two half-breed bays.

About the only time you would see more than four horses pulling together would be on one-planting—and I've seen as many as 20 horses pulling a snow plow. And in the old logging days, that meant 20 horsepower!



Men in the woods were always proud of horses' performance.

The teamster stood on a platform built at the front runners.



# Classifieds

To serve our readers better, the Timber Bulletin offers free classified ads of up to 85 words to all members and associate members of the Minnesota Timber Producers Association. All ads must be submitted in writing to the Association office. The MTPA assumes no responsibility for ad contents and accepts free ads on a first-come, first-served basis within space limitations.

## USED EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

### FOR SALE

1996 International 9300, Limited Edition, Golden Eagle, with transferrable one million mile/6 year warranty. (no deductible - 100% parts and labor) 242" WB, 555,000 miles, exc. rubber, 72" hi-rise pro sleeper, 18 speed spicer, maint. records, 455/3406E CAT, 150 gal. tanks, lots of extras. \$45,000. Leave message 218-666-5577.

### FOR SALE

1992 Siiro delimeter slasher  
1980 Treefarmer C7D grapple skidder  
1975 Drott 40 feller-buncher  
1984 Clark 667 grapple skidder  
1992 Franklin double bunk forwarder  
Don Nelson • 218-376-4638

### FOR SALE

**CABLE SKIDDERS**  
1965 C4 TF .....\$ 4,000  
C4 TF .....8,500

**GRAPPLE SKIDDERS**  
1993 450C TJ, low hours, dual function.....50,000  
1993 518C Cat, new trans.....49,000  
S-10 International .....14,000  
1983 540B JD .....22,000  
1985 540D JD .....24,000  
1990 548D JD.....POR  
1988 548D JD .....34,000  
1978 640 JD, dual function.....21,000  
1980 640 JD, dual function, rebuilt trans.....23,000  
1990 648D JD, dual function...39,000  
1989 170XL Franklin, 6-cyl. Cummins, new tires.....30,000  
1995 F67G Clark Ranger dual func., 4,723 hours, 35.5x32 rub., very clean.....55,000

**CRAWLERS**  
1990 650G, 6-way blade.....42,000  
1988 D4H LGP, 6-way blade...45,000

1987 D4H LGP, 6-way blade, encl. cab .....43,000

**KNUCKLE BOOM LOADERS**  
1986 1187B Case log loader.....30,000  
1987 210C 6 cyl. JD slasher package.....27,000  
Prentice 90 on tandem truck, 19' bed .....9,500  
Prentice 150 .....9,500  
1987 XL 175 Husky .....19,000

**HARVESTERS**  
50' Harricana on Cat. 225 .....34,000  
1993 Risley Black Magic Lim-mit 2000 .....135,000  
1990 John Deere 690D with 1993 453 Pro-Pac delimeter.....84,000

**FELLER-BUNCHERS AND SHEARS**  
1986 490 JD w/20" Timbco shearhead .....35,000  
1993 T445 Timbco, w/22" Quadco sawhead w/side tilt.....165,000  
1989 643 JD w/Koehring sawhead.....38,000  
1993 Risley Black Magic, w/Risley sawhead .....120,000  
1976 544B JD, 20" shear .....21,000  
1990 Super T Bell, 24" .....28,000  
1988 910 Cat, 17" shearhead, rebuilt trans.....37,000  
1987 311B Hydro-Ax .....20,000  
1987 411B Hydro-Ax .....20,000  
1986 511B Hydro-Ax, 6 BT Cummins.....POR  
1984 611B Hydro-Ax .....20,000

**WHEEL LOADERS**  
1979 544B JD .....18,500  
1981 644C.....28,000

**MISCELLANEOUS**  
2-roller Fabtek processing head .....12,000  
1997 72" circular slasher .....12,000  
1990 210C JD 4x4 backhoe .....20,500  
Terrain King 6300 self-propelled sweeper.....8,000  
20" Koehring sawhead to fit 643 JD .....9,000  
1989 400D JD excavator .....32,000  
*We have other equipment not listed.*  
New and used parts, new and used tires and chains. Something you're looking for? Give us a call. We may have it or be able to locate it for you!!!  
We are distributors for Aftermarket Parts and Rud Chains.

**NORTHERN TIMBERLINE EQUIPMENT, INC.**  
6000 Co. Rd. 8  
Littlefork, Minn. 56653  
Phone 218-278-6203  
Fax 218-278-6716  
Richard or Cam Hardwig

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