

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

# TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

MARCH/APRIL 2011

VOLUME 66

**Following the Vision:  
Dick Walsh Forest Products  
TPA's Timber Sale Task Force  
Lessons from Losses:  
Addressing Safety on Logging Roads**



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# TIMBER BULLETIN

Volume 66  
March/April 2011  
Duluth, Minnesota

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### ON THE COVER

Brothers Robin and Steve Walsh harvest timber and look to the future. For their story, please see page 8.

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**W**ell there is another winter in the books, the good, the bad and the ugly. The good news is septic and water lines did not freeze. The bad news is nothing else did either. The ugly was trying to log the swamps.

Now that spring is here many of us are thinking about Log Safe and MLEP. The Loggers Conferences seemed to have a

## President's Column



good variety of classes again. I am sure they are always looking for new ideas – so keep thinking. We can make it as interesting and exciting as we want it to be by

giving them new ideas.

We all think of wood being used in the traditional sense for lumber and paper products, but did you know that trees also provide ingredients used in eyeglass frames, skin lotions, artificial vanilla flavoring and football helmets? Interesting, huh? So instead of squinting to read this column maybe you should consider a pair of glasses . . . just to help out the industry!

Things are probably a little slow now, but remember safety is as important in the shop as it is in the woods.

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## Early Loggers in Minnesota

by J. C. Ryan



First-hand recollections by storyteller "Buzz" Ryan of the loggers, loaders, swampers, wood butchers and bull cooks who ruled the woods in the heyday of the pioneer lumberjacks—with dozens of historical photographs.

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*Minnesota Timber  
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**Board of Directors Meeting**



**TPA Golf & Fishing Outing**

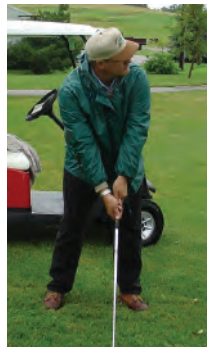
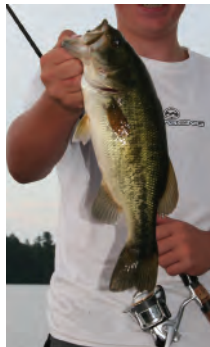


**Annual Meeting**



**Annual Banquet**

**Thursday June 9th & Friday June 10th  
At Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge**



It's a fun and informative 2-day event for all TPA members,  
as well as vendors and other related organizations

Look for information and complete details to be mailed soon to all members

**We look forward to seeing you there!**

**P**lan ahead. Plan your work and work your plan. Always good advice.

Where will you be logging or getting your wood from on July 1 this year? Don't bet that it will be a DNR sale. Why? Because July 1 is the start of the state's fiscal year. If a state budget is not passed and signed into law by then, July 1 will be the shutdown date for "non-essential" state activities.

I usually pride myself on being able to divine how a legislative session will end. It's not coming to me this year. The past eight years you knew that Governor Pawlenty was going to win. The legislature was always ultimately going to send him a budget that he would

## Executive Vice President's Column



sign. I don't see Governor Dayton signing an all cuts budget. I don't see the

House and Senate sending him any significant state tax increases. So if one side is not going to raise revenue and the other side is not

going to approve balancing the budget with all cuts where does it leave you? Gridlock. Shutdown? Think about it. Plan ahead.



What is the fairest question that you can ask any organization that you belong to? That question is "what have you done?" Every year TPA publishes a brochure titled "What has TPA done for you lately." It's a snapshot of the outcomes of things that the association has done during the past year that have made a difference for our members.

We only put the things that we worked on in the brochure. We put the things that we think made a difference for our members in it. Because making a difference for our members is what its all about.

Our work is done by our committees, task forces, members and staff. Members may not know about a project until its done if

they're not on a given committee. And, we don't announce that something is done until it is. If that means TPA is slow to take credit for something so be it. We know what we've done.

It's a little bit like a high school buddy of mine. He was an enthusiastic football player but not a great player. Lot's of times he was the last guy in on a tackle. Which made him the first guy to jump up. You know how it goes.

Look for the latest "What has TPA done for you lately" later this year.



The TPA Annual Meeting is coming up June 9-10 at Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge. A great program is being planned including the fishing and golf events. Mark your calendar now for a fun and informative event.



Diesel prices beyond four dollars a gallon – again. Possible government shutdowns. Family events to plan and participate in. Cell phone calls and texts. The fishing opener coming soon. Lots of things to think about. Lots of things to distract us.

Don't let these or any other

distractions keep you or your employees from working safely. It's easy to let the mind wander but that's when accidents can happen. We all need to focus on what we're doing to do it safely.

It only takes a second of distraction for an accident to happen.



You may recall that I wrote the following item in my last column:

*Now here's an optimist – as I write this we are in the midst of the February thaw. I was visiting with TPA President Mike Warren and asked him about conditions in his area. As I expressed my concern about conditions he said that he thought the thaw might knock the snow down and allow some frost to get into the ground when the weather turned cold again making conditions better for the rest of the winter. Now there's a guy whose glass is always half full!*

We all know how the end of the winter played out. So not only is President Warren an optimist but he's clairvoyant. I'm sure that he'd make himself available to anyone that wants to take him along to Las Vegas.



Steve and Robin Walsh

# Following the Vision

**Dick Walsh was a visionary. Now Robin and Steve Walsh are following the course their father set.**

by Ray Higgins

It's late March. It's been two weeks since spring load restrictions went into affect, but Robin and Steve Walsh are thinning pine just southeast of Park Rapids in their cut-to-length harvester and forwarder.

Most logging companies have stopped operations this time of

year. The ground can be too soft for much of the equipment used in mechanized logging. But not for the Walshes.

It's one of three sites their company is working on today. In addition to the cut-to-length crew working this site, another crew is finishing a job three miles from here with conventional equipment, and three feller-bunchers are

beginning harvesting operations on a site near Badoura.

"We bought this wood for break-up," says Robin Walsh of the pine thinning where the cut-to-length operation is working. "We knew it was good ground. We've worked here before in this country. We're next to a nine-ton road. We may have a one-week period where it might be too wet to work in here.

But it dries out real quickly. When we look at timber sales we'll look for this type of sale and we'll pay a little extra for this stuff so we can keep working during break-up.

"This spring during break-up so far it's been cold," he says, "so even if it does get a little muddy in the afternoon, our trucks can get in and out of the woods in the mornings when it's frozen"

It's a strategy learned from Robin and Steve's father, Dick. In fact, the business still bears his name: Dick Walsh Forest Products, which will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year.

Dick started the business in 1962, deciding to go off on his own after working for his cousin Chester Walsh, when Steve and Robin were one and two years old. It wasn't long before Dick had them in the woods helping out.

"He used to take Steve and me to the woods if he knew he was going to get his pick-up stuck, when we were six years old, to push him out," Robin says. "He had a little 1010 John Deere cat, and all you had to do was push a little lever to make it go forward. He could put it in gear, so he'd just get the Cat up behind his truck, and when he honked his horn you just had to push the lever forward.

"That happened quite a bit," Robin says. "It was a whole different world back then. You'd never do that today."

Those experiences fueled the boys' desire to go into business with their dad. They each ran chainsaw for the business after school, on weekends, and during summer breaks, while attending Park Rapids High. Both tried college for a while, Robin at UMD and Steve at a vo-tech in the Twin Cities, but eventually found their way back to the woods.

"I went to Alaska one summer and worked in a gold mine," Steve says. "I also worked road construction in Texas. Then I came back and figured out this is where I wanted to be."

Through the years, the brothers learned the business from one of the giants of Minnesota's logging industry. Dick was always involved in the industry, including serving on the Minnesota Forest Resources Council and a stint as



An aerial look at the shop and yard of Dick Walsh Forest Products, just north of Park Rapids.

president of TPA, and the Minnesota Loggers Education Program Board.

Dick was also a visionary in terms of the latest advancements in logging. Dick Walsh Forest Products was among the first to purchase cut-to-length logging equipment back in 1996. They were also among the first to buy a chipper and market chips. That was 19 years ago.

"Dad had been trying before that to produce clean chips (without bark) but nobody wanted them," Robin says. "Then for some reason

Boise came down about 19 years ago and they were looking for extra external chips. We proved to them we could produce a clean chip in the woods and they've been buying from us ever since.

"Dad's philosophy was if you're the first one in the market, that's the best place to be," Robin says. "You have to be able to take risks in order to survive in this business. He was a big risk taker. And he was always looking for new markets."

Another lesson learned from their father is the importance of



Steve Walsh runs the Ponsse Elk forwarder.



maintenance. The company's 10 trucks are washed every night when they get back to the shop. They also make sure each piece of woods equipment – feller buncher, harvester, skidder, forwarder, etc. – returns to the shop for routine maintenance two or three times a year.

"We probably have 14,000 hours on our slasher," Robin says. "It still looks like new. If you keep it clean, it runs more often. More efficient. Our maintenance is ongoing."

The brothers became partners with their dad in 1994. Soon thereafter, they took over the management of the logging operations due to Dick becoming deeply involved at the policy level within the timber industry. The boys bought the business from Dick in January 2006, and Dick remained involved, running forwarder, going to the occasional auction when needed, and of course, offering advice.

"He was always good about giving his input," Robin chuckles.

Emphysema claimed Dick two years ago at the age of 69. But not before a lifetime of the greatest lesson of all.

"He always told us," Steve says, "to do the best you can."

It's difficult keeping all of the balls in the air necessary to keep business running smoothly. Steve and Robin comprise the cut-to-length crew – Robin in the harvester and Steve in the forwarder. They also own a slew of conventional logging machines: four feller bunchers, five skidders, two delimiters, and a loader/slasher and four separate loaders. In addition, there are two dozers, a payloader, and two fuel wood chippers, as well as two telehandlers. This equipment is generally divided among several jobs. Separate crews also run a clean chipping operation and a grinding operation.

"The chipping operation will come in after the conventional crew pulls the roundwood out," Robin says. "The chipping crew will come in with a skidder and make 'clean' chips for Boise and Abitibi in Fort Frances. And then the grinding crew comes in after that and grinds everything for



Robin Walsh operates the Ponsse Ergo harvester on a state sale southeast of Park Rapids.



This Tigercat 720E feller buncher was one of three working on a clear-cut on a site near Badoura. The Walshes own four bunchers in all, including one with tracks. As far as other conventional logging equipment, the Walshes also own five skidders (one Tigercat and four John Deeres), two John Deere Delimiters, and a Tigercat loader with a Hanfab slasher.

biomass. That typically goes to Minnesota Power in Grand Rapids.

"There are times when we will have six or seven sites going at the same time," he says.

The company also employs 10 of its own trucks and utilizes three

custom haulers. One of those independent truckers, Ron Wattenhofer, typically works with Steve and Robin on the cut-to-length crew. On this day, he's on the landing loading red pine.

"We do it that way because he

has his own loader on a straight truck with a pup," Robin says.

Owning all of those trucks and woods equipment means making payments. That means cash flow needs to be constant.

"That's why we have to work twelve months out of the year, just to keep the cash flow going," Robin says. "We do stockpile wood back at the shop for the chipping crew, to keep the chipper running this time of year during break-up."

With Robin and Steve running the cut-to-length crew, all of the other aspects of running the business – dealing with foresters, buying stumpage, etc. – are difficult. Robin estimates it will take three to four weeks to harvest the 500 cords of red pine and aspen on this site, not only because of surface conditions this time of year, but also because they have to do the other things necessary to keep the business operating.

"Checking on the other crews, running around making sure the roads aren't too muddy to truck on, keeping guys moving, that sort of thing," Robin says



Harvested red pine waits on the landing to be trucked to the Potlatch mill in Bemidji.

The Walshes also tried hiring someone to run the harvester so Robin could be off doing other things. But any efficiency gained on the administrative side was lost in terms of producing wood.

"He ran the harvester for six

months. He'd run it all day long and I'd go out in the evenings to keep things rolling, and I'd cut more wood in two hours than he would all day. I just knew how to be efficient after doing it so long."

Regardless, things seem to be working out. The red pine bolts being harvested today will go to Potlatch, and the aspen will go to Verso and Norbord. Boise is also a good market for the Walshes, buying wood, chips, and biomass from the company. As a result, the chipping crew is often operating on tracts to the north, in the Warroad or Baudette areas.

The brothers get strong support from their immediate families. Their mother, Sandra, still helps out with the books, and Robin's wife, Jodi, runs the office.

"I couldn't do it without her," Robin says of his wife of 15 years.

Steve's wife, Kristine, owns her own business so she knows what it takes to be successful. Steve says her support is a huge help.

"As a business owner, she understands why I'm never home," he says.

The kids are getting into the act as well.

Robin has two sons, Charley 12, and Kaiden 8, while Steve has 11-year-old twin boys Jack and Tim, as well as Dan, who is 8. They've already had the chance to help out.

"They love to work in the woods," Steve says of the boys. While the boys might be the future of the company, Steve and Robin would like to see conditions improve in the more immediate future. The company has encountered similar challenges as other loggers have since the industry downturn began in 2006.

"They said it was going to be a two-year deal," Robin says.

"They're still saying it's going to be a two-year deal, just trying to keep everything rolling. I'd like to replace some of the equipment. We've been holding off just because of the economy. We've been replacing stuff as needed. We used to trade all of our machines every four years. We never had more than 8-10 thousand hours on them. Now most of our equipment has over 10,000 on them."

Still, another lesson from their father, Dick, keeps the brothers looking ahead, moving forward.

"He used to say," Steve says, "if you're not moving forward, you're falling behind. So you have to keep growing."



A Peterson Pacific grinder works on stockpiled wood outside the Walsh shop just north of Park Rapids. The biomass will be hauled to Boise in International Falls. The Walshes also utilize a Peterson "clean" chipper that removes bark, and also a Vermeer chipper.



Park Rapids trucker Ron Wattenhofer loads red pine bolts to be hauled to the Potlatch mill in Bemidji. Wattenhofer typically hauls the wood from Walsh cut-to-length operations. The Walshes also have 10 trucks of their own and also utilize contract haulers when necessary.

# Epperly and Landwehr Talk Timber at Wood Fiber Council

**P**resentations from new Minnesota DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr and Division of Forestry Director Dave Epperly highlighted the March meeting of the Wood Fiber Employees Joint Legislative Council in St. Paul.

The Wood Fiber Council brings together labor and management of Minnesota's forest products companies throughout the state with a goal of speaking to lawmakers with a united voice on legislative issues affecting jobs and the economic health of the timber industry. During the three-day conference, delegates discussed potential legislative positions, heard presentations on a variety of topics important to the forest products industry, and paid visits to legislators from all over the state.

Commissioner Landwehr, whose major at the University of Minnesota was forestry for a period of time, said a key member of the department's leadership



Sen. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) speaks to members of the Wood Fiber Employees Joint Legislative Council over breakfast about the challenges of the 2011 legislative session. At left is TPA Executive Vice President Wayne Brandt. At right is Wood Fiber Council member Justin Oswald of Sappi Fine Paper.

team will be former state forester Mike Carroll. He's been named

assistant DNR commissioner for field operations and community outreach but will continue to work out of Bemidji where he had been Northwest Regional Director.

"Because so much of what we do takes place in northern Minnesota," Landwehr told the Wood Fiber Council, "this will hopefully make the commissioner's office more accessible. The number one thing I hear from around the state is that the DNR isn't responsive. The only way to do that is to make the leadership team responsive and put more ears out there."

Landwehr said that because one of Governor Mark Dayton's priorities is seeking out new economic opportunities, that becomes a priority of all departments. For the DNR, that means a strong timber sale program.

"We'll do what we can to make sure the wood is put up and you get the sales you need," Landwehr said.

The challenge will be to do that within the constraints of the state's current budget deficit, which will likely mean cuts to state agencies. But he cited another

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message from the governor's office, that government should deliver lean, efficient citizen-centered services.

Ultimately, Landwehr said it's important to promote the importance of forestry – and logging – in keeping Minnesota's forests healthy.

"I would love for school children to think, when they see a clear-cut, that's a good thing," Landwehr said.

Epperly's said during his presentation the division would like to hire ten new foresters this year. The DNR has actually lost 80 foresters over the past two years due to retirements and other attrition. The positions haven't been filled due to budget and revenue constraints. Even with ten new hires, the division would still be without 70 filled positions. But Epperly says it would be a step in the right direction.

"These hires will help up us meet our targets," Epperly said. "We're committed to offering a minimum of 800,000 cords of timber this fiscal year."

After a day of presentations, the



Newly elected state Sen. John Carlson (R-Bemidji), center; meets with Wood Fiber Council member Tony Hoopman of UPM Blandin, left; and Blandin forester Quintin Legler, right; during Wood Fiber meetings at the Capitol. Wood Fiber members visited the offices of all 201 Minnesota legislators during the February meetings.

Wood Fiber Council spent a day on Capitol Hill making visits to every legislator's office, sharing the importance of logging and the forest products industry to our state's economy.

# USFS Adjusting Cruise Estimates

**T**he U.S. Forest Service will be making adjustments to inventory cruise estimates to existing contracts and advertised sales. The Forest Service is making the move after errors were found in formulas that predict volume based on cruise data.

USFS staff researched the formulas in response to concerns raised by various groups, including TPA, that the new volume equations were over-estimating timber sale volume.

For sales already purchased, USFS staff will notify purchasers and

adjust timber volumes.

For advertised sales not yet offered, the Forest Service may temporarily

## Timber Talk

withdraw sales, adjust volume and re-advertise ASAP. It is expected this will not greatly impact the timing of sales, resulting in a delay of less than one week in most cases.

## Bills To Increase Interstate Truck Weights Introduced

**F**our bills that would allow states to increase truck weights on interstate highways, including one authored by Rep. Chip Cravaack (R-Minnesota) are working their way through the U.S. Congress.

Cravaack's legislation (HR 801) would allow trucks to haul 99,000 pounds of cargo if the truck has a 6th axle, as is currently allowed on Minnesota trunk highways and county roads.

The measure is similar to a bill introduced by Rep. Mike Michaud (D-Maine) and Rep. Jean Schmidt (R-Ohio) (HR 763) that was also introduced in 2009 but died in committee.

Two truck weight bills have also been introduced in the U.S. Senate: S747, authored by Sen. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), and S112 sponsored by Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine)

All four bills have been referred to committee in their respective chambers.

## Minnesota Unemployment Statute Adjusted to Help Family Business Employees

**W**hen Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton signed into law a bill that extends unemployment benefits another 13 weeks, he fixed a provision passed last year that harmed family members of business owners.

In 2010, legislation was enacted that removed the ability of children of business owners to collect unemployment. Previously, this had only applied to "minor" children of business owners, but the word "minor" was removed.

This affected children of TPA members who were laid off from their logging jobs, making it no longer possible to collect unemployment benefits. Northeastern Minnesota lawmakers were contacted and when the legislature moved to extend unemployment benefits, the word "minor" was added back into the statute.

The law now indicates those ineligible for benefits includes, *"the spouse, parent, or minor child of any individual who owns or controls directly or indirectly 25 percent or more interest in the employer,"* thus making adult children of business owners again eligible for unemployment benefits.

In addition, the new language is retroactive to enactment of the 2010 statute, meaning those affected by last year's change are now able to apply for benefits. Those affected should contact their local unemployment office to take advantage of the change in law.

## USDA Announces May Deadline for BCAP Proposals

**T**he USDA Farm Service Agency announced the deadline for project area proposals for the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP). To be

considered, proposals must be submitted to the applicable state office by close of business, May 27, 2011.

According to information released by the USDA last year, project areas are specific geographic areas where certain producers would then be eligible to apply for annual payments under BCAP. Among the criteria used for selection as a project area are, the amount of dry tons of eligible crops to be produced, the anticipated economic impact in the proposed project area, the impact on soil, water, and related resources, and the variety in biomass production approaches within a project area, including agronomic conditions, harvest and postharvest practices, and monoculture and polyculture crop mixes.

Woody eligible material collected or harvested must come directly from the land and, if outside BCAP project areas, must be a byproduct of preventive treatments that are removed to reduce hazardous fuels, to reduce or contain disease or insect infestation, or to restore ecosystem health. All eligible material must be harvested in accordance with an approved conservation, forest stewardship, or equivalent plan. Biomass producers in BCAP project areas can receive annual payments up to five years for herbaceous biomass (annual and perennial) and up to 15 years for woody biomass (annual and perennial).

BCAP was authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill and provides incentives to eligible farmers, ranchers and forest landowners for the establishment and production of biomass crops for heat, power, bio-based products and biofuels. BCAP project areas are specific geographic areas where producers grow eligible biomass crops. Producers then receive annual payments for growing those crops.

In another development, Congress capped the funds appropriated for the BCAP program at \$112 million. The USDA says this will impact all aspects of BCAP.

An announcement about the availability of matching payments for

woody biomass is anticipated for mid-summer 2011. At present, matching payments for woody biomass is not authorized. FSA expects that a future announcement about authorization of matching payments for woody biomass outside project areas will be based on limited funds and on targeted needs or other environmental concerns.

Establishment and annual payments for woody biomass will be available for approved project areas.

For more information, visit the USDA Farm Service Agency's website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap).

## Valmet is Now Komatsu

**K**omatsu America Corp. announced in March that products manufactured under the Valmet trademark have become full members of the Komatsu product family. Valmet, the well-known brand of wheeled harvesters, forwarders and harvesting heads, and a pioneer in the area of mechanized logging, now carries the Komatsu brand.

Komatsu Ltd. marketed cut-to-length products under the Valmet brand for seven years and will continue to focus on quality, cut-to-length machines.

"The first cut-to-length machine was introduced in the early 1960s, signaling the start of specialization in forest machine development," said Norio Kido, executive vice president, Forestry Products, Komatsu America Corp. "And now, with the global strength of the Komatsu brand, we will provide excellent value and service support to our forestry customers and dealers. We understand our customers' needs and our dedication to technical innovation, combined with Komatsu's industrial tradition, manufacturing technology and quality assurance, means we can deliver the best the forestry industry has to offer."

Komatsu America Corp. is a U.S. subsidiary of Komatsu Ltd., the world's second largest manufacturer and supplier of construction, mining and compact construction equipment. Komatsu also serves forklift and forestry markets. Through its distributor network, Komatsu offers a state-of-the-art parts and service

program to support the equipment. Komatsu has proudly been providing high-quality reliable products for nearly a century. Visit the website at [www.komatsuamerica.com](http://www.komatsuamerica.com) for more information.

## Chura Named to IRRRB

**M**innesota Loggers Education Program Executive Director Dave Chura has been named to the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) by Minnesota House Speaker Kurt Zellers.

Chura has been MLEP's executive director since 2003. He came to the position from the Minnesota State Legislature, where he worked on the committee staff for the Minnesota House of Representatives' Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committees. Before that, he served on the staff of U.S. Sen. Rod Grams.



Dave Chura

The IRRRB is a state of Minnesota economic development agency headquartered in Eveleth. The Taconite Assistance Area served by the IRRRB encompasses approximately 13,000 square miles of northeastern Minnesota. The governor makes one appointment to the board of the economic development agency. The rest are appointed by leaders from both chambers of the Legislature. Along with Chura, other board members are: Senators Tom Bakk, John Carlson, Paul Gazelka, Tom Saxhaug, David Tomassoni; Representatives Tom Anzels, David Dill, Carolyn McElpatrick, Carly Melin, Tom Rukavina; and Mr. Joe Begich, and Mr. Jack Ryan.

## Wallwork Truck Center Receives Kenworth Excellence Award

**W**allwork Truck Center has been presented with the Kenworth Dealership Excellence Award for 2010

Performance.

"It's due to our employee's hard work and perseverance that we are one of the few to be recognized," said Mike Lausch, general manager at the Fargo location. The award is presented to dealerships throughout the United States and Canada.

The Excellence Award is based on Kenworth's more than 130 extensive and separate criteria of Dealer Excellence Standards, which measure performance in terms of customer satisfaction, management practices, personnel, parts, body shop and service capabilities, efficiencies and facilities.

"We would not have received the award without our customers' support; we attribute our success to our customers and the service they receive," said Lausch. This is the 16th year that Wallwork has received recognition from Kenworth.

Wallwork Truck Center has been a Kenworth dealer since 1969 and serves the Upper Midwest with locations in Fargo, Bismarck, Williston, N.D., and Fergus Falls, Minn. For more information on Wallwork Truck Center Sales and Services that are available go to [www.wallworktrucks.com](http://www.wallworktrucks.com)

## Mark Your Calendar

**H**ere are some of the events in the coming months you'll want to make sure are on your calendar:

Sept. 8-10

Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association  
66th Annual Lake States Logging & Equipment Expo  
Escanaba, MI

Visit: [www.timberpa.com](http://www.timberpa.com) or  
Call: (715) 282-5828

Sept. 16 & 17

58th North Star Expo at Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids, MN. Parking \$3, admission is free. For more information, call the TPA office at 218-722-5013.

# Annual Meeting Returns to Grand Rapids

## Meeting Again Combined With Board Meeting, and Golf and Fishing Event

**M**ark your calendars for June 9 and 10 for the 2011 TPA Annual Meeting, Board of Directors Meeting, and Golf and Fishing Event at Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge just south of Grand Rapids.

It's an opportunity for TPA members to attend three major events in just two days. Both days will not only feature information to help members run their businesses, but also the opportunity to socialize with fellow loggers and vendors.

Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge features a beautiful golf course and clear, blue Sugar Lake. We've again chosen this location not only because of the success of last year's events, but also because it is centrally located just south of Grand Rapids.

Registration forms for the 2011 Annual Meeting, Board of Directors Meeting and Golf and Fishing Event are being mailed in April. Watch your mailbox and join us for these great events!

### Schedule

#### Thursday, June 9

Morning – Annual Meeting  
Afternoon – Golf and Fishing Event  
Evening – Social Hour and Banquet

#### Friday, June 10

Morning – Board of Directors Meeting



L-R: Quintin Legler of UPM Blandin, Jim Scheff of Scheff Logging, and Gene Grell of UPM Blandin get ready to hit Sugar Lake at the 2010 TPA Fishing outing.



L-R: Mike Rieger of Rieger Logging, Ryan Milette of Road Machinery, David Hughes from Hughes Timber, and Dave Hensel of UPM Blandin posted the best score at the 2010 TPA golf outing.



# TPA Timber Sale Task Force Works Through Issues with DNR

**T**PA created its Timber Sale Task Force last year to examine DNR timber sale policies, identify areas in which those policies could be more logger-friendly, and develop recommendations for the DNR.

Over the course of three meetings last fall, the task force identified nearly two dozen separate issues on which it made recommendations. Among these issues were: additional security required on over-run sales even when there is still a balance on the security that has been provided; required up-front payments for small amounts of "added wood" on sales; the process in which a purchaser is charged with trespass and is suspended from operating on state sales; over-the-counter prices that are higher than the auction price on no-bid sales; and sale expiration dates that don't always allow for full season(s) of operation depending on when the sale is sold.

The Task Force met in December with various DNR staff members, including Division of Forestry Director Dave Epperly, in Grand Rapids and presented recommendations on these and other issues. Some have been rectified, while TPA continues to work with DNR staff to find solutions for these issues.

Issues already resolved include: small values of "added wood" will be billed as part of the quarterly billing process, rather than requiring an up-front check; over-the-counter prices on no-bid sales will be the same as at auction; and sale expiration dates are being adjusted to allow for full seasons of operation.

On some issues, such as requiring additional security even when the purchaser still has a balance, and the suspension of operations for minor trespass issues, DNR and TPA are still working on finding solutions. In some cases, state statute may need to be changed if an administrative fix isn't possible.

Another set of issues raised by the Timber Sale Task Force have to



do with how auctions are scheduled and conducted. The Task Force has asked the DNR to hold auctions on the same day and in the same location as counties, where possible, as is done in Aitkin County and Pine County. The DNR has also been asked to consider holding at least some fall auctions in October rather than during the December logging season. And the state has also been

asked to help reduce the time spent at an auction by reading the boilerplate "terms and conditions" only once – if at all – when regular and intermediate auctions are held back-to-back, and to schedule the intermediate auction so that it begins immediately following the regular portion. DNR is currently reviewing its scheduling policies and has agreed to work on solutions to these issues.

# Save a Forest: Print Your Emails

## It's okay to use paper. Trees are renewable, recyclable and sustainable.

by Chuck Leavell and Carlton Owen

The following opinion piece originally appeared in the Wall Street Journal. It is reprinted with permission of the authors.

**W**ell-intentioned email taglines inspired by sincere desire to help the planet have become ubiquitous in recent times: "Please don't print this email," "Save trees: Print only when necessary," or "Please consider the environment before printing this email."

However, the World Wildlife Fund has taken this to the extreme with a new nonprintable electronic document. Patterned after the highly successful PDF (Portable Document Format) that has revolutionized electronic document sharing and storage, the WWF format takes the decision away from you.

This tact is sure to frustrate and increase inefficiency, leaving some saying, "Wait a minute, I really needed to print that document!" What many folks don't realize is that it also may indirectly hasten the conversion of forests to other uses like strip malls, parking lots and housing developments—because the nation's forest landowners can't keep growing trees without markets for this natural, organic and renewable product.

Chuck's email tagline reads: "Notice: It's OK to print this email. Paper is a biodegradable,



renewable, sustainable product made from trees. Growing and harvesting trees provides jobs for millions of Americans. Working forests are good for the environment and provide clean air and water, wildlife habitat and carbon storage. Thanks to improved forest management, we have more trees in America today than we had 100 years ago."

Now, understand that we don't advocate wanton waste of paper or any other material, but avoiding the print option does absolutely nothing to save the planet or forests. More forests are dying of insect infestation and disease or being paved over across this country right now than could be converted to an email print-out in a thousand years.

Paper is good. Around 105 A.D., man discovered that paper traveled

and transcribed better than stone; it became the renewable medium of choice. Frankly, the human eye can only stare at a computer screen for so long.

We appreciate and applaud people who are sensitive to environmental issues. We both love forests and are avid environmentalists. But we are going to continue to print out those necessary emails without guilt.

Honest, it's okay to print. Trees are renewable, recyclable and sustainable.

*Mr. Leavell is a musician, tree farmer, environmentalist and author. Mr. Owen is a forester, wildlife biologist and CEO of U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities.*

# Vehicle Accident on Winter Mixed-Use Road

To help TPA members avoid accidents resulting in injury or damage to property, the Timber Bulletin will publish details of actual incidents and what can be done to avoid such occurrences in the future. The following information was provided by the U.S. Forest Service after an incident in Northeastern Minnesota.

## Accident Description:

On March 2, 2011, two U.S. Forest Service employees were returning to their duty station, driving a pickup truck on a county portion of a forest road near Hoyt Lakes. The pick-up was towing a trailer with

## Lessons from Losses

two snowmobiles onboard. The afternoon was clear and sunny. The gravel road surface on the Skibo Road had patches

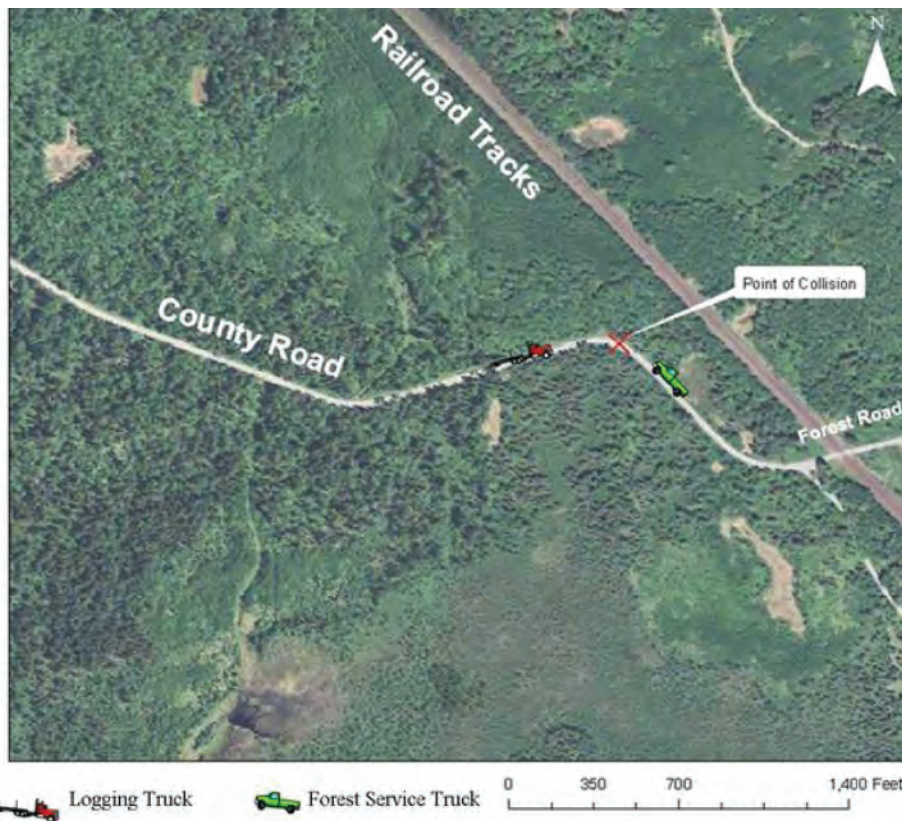
of snow and ice.

At approximately 2:45 in the afternoon as they approached a curve on a flat roadway, a log truck (with no logs) appeared, heading in their direction. The log truck, operated by an independent owner/operator, began to skid and the truck-trailer “jack-knifed.”

The driver of the Forest Service vehicle slowed, moved to the side of the road, and stopped. Due to the presence of a snow bank, they couldn’t move the vehicle and trailer completely off the roadway.

After bouncing off the snow bank on the opposite side of the road from the Forest Service vehicle, the log truck slid into the driver’s side of the Forest Service pickup – and continued around the corner coming to a stop approximately 250 past the pickup.

The impact of the log truck pushed the Forest Service vehicle into the snow bank on the passenger side. The collision was sufficient to cause the Forest Service vehicle’s airbags to deploy. The two snowmobiles broke free of their secured mounts on the trailer



and one landed in the roadside ditch approximately 40 feet beyond the trailer.

The local Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer responded to the accident site and took charge of the incident. County law enforcement and state commercial enforcement also responded and determined that this incident was a

“no fault” accident.

Damage to the Forest Service pickup and snowmobiles exceeded their value. The log truck also sustained major damage: its rear axle was bent back at a 30 degree angle, rendering the vehicle inoperable. Additional damage occurred to the log truck’s wheel in front of the rear axle. The log truck



driver was not injured.

It was reported by the investigating Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer that – prior to the accident – the log truck driver had used a Citizen’s Band (CB) or a two-way radio to broadcast that he was “coming up the road” in order to find out if there was any oncoming traffic. The Forest Service vehicle did not have the frequency in use by the truck driver and did not hear the message, nor could they respond that they were coming down the road.

**Conditions at Accident Site:**

Travel on roads during the winter months presents numerous hazards. The two primary hazards present when this accident occurred:

- Road surface conditions were characterized as intermittent patches of snow, ice, and gravel
- Daily vehicle traffic

The road width – 22 feet at accident site – was sufficiently broad to provide safe conditions for oncoming vehicles to pass each other.

Visibility was unimpaired with regard to weather conditions. It was a clear day – with no rain,



snow, or fog.

According to the Forest Service driver, site distance was “good” for a corner on a forest road. When the log truck was first sighted, site distance was approximately 200 feet.

A sign had been posted at the entrance to the road indicating log trucks were hauling on the road.

This particular corner was also signed ‘slow’; using white paint on a damaged red fender hanging on a tree in the middle of the corner.

*Good communications are essential to preventing such incidents from occurring. The Forest Service is seeking input on how to avoid such accidents in the future.*

# On the Markets

The Timber Bulletin publishes information regarding results of a sampling of recent timber sales and other market indicators, as well as other market-related news items.

## Recent Timber Sales

Average prices, as reported by each agency

Agency                      Regular      Intermediate

### St. Louis County

February 17 – Sealed Bid

Aspen pulpwood	\$30.02	NA
Balsam fir pulpwood	\$25.90	NA
Birch pulpwood	\$13.80	NA
White spruce pulpwood	\$29.52	NA

### Cass County

February 24 – Sealed Bid

Aspen	\$21.96	\$21.39
Balsam Poplar	\$12.00	NA
Birch	\$14.72	\$14.49

Four tracts were available on the intermediate auction and three were available on the regular auction.

### Becker County

March 11 – Oral Auction

Aspen – Mixed	\$29.27	NA
Birch – Mixed	\$ 8.97	NA
Jack Pine – Mixed	\$ 8.99	NA

### DNR – Backus Area

March 16 – Sealed Bid

Trembling Aspen (WC)	\$18.63	\$19.92
Tamarack (WC)	\$ 2.57	NA
Oak Species (WMP)	\$37.25	\$18.01
Red Oak (WMP)	\$12.00	NA

The regular and intermediate auctions had a total of five tracts each. On each, four tracts were sold and one on each auction received no bids.

### Cass County

March 31 – Sealed Bid

Aspen	\$19.07	\$25.37
Birch	\$11.96	\$18.62
Basswood	\$15.07	\$ 9.61

Five tracts were available on the intermediate auction and four were available on the regular auction.

### Crow Wing County

March 31 – Oral Auction

Aspen	\$27.84	
Birch	\$14.40	
Oak	\$21.44	
Maple	\$11.05	

### Beltrami County

April 13 and 14 – Oral Auction

Aspen pulpwood	\$31.24	
Birch/Maple	\$18.42	
Hardwood pulpwood	\$12.94	

### Products:

PB= Pulp and Bolts

WMP= Woodsrun mixed products

WC= Woodsrun cordwood

ST=Sawtimber

WST=Woodsrun Sawtimber

LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

## "Bull Cooks in the Camps"

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*



To the average lumberjack, the name "bull cook" means the "end of the road" or—in lumberjack jargon—the "bottom of the barrel." The reason for this is that quite often the bull cook in the early lumber camps was a man who had passed his prime and could not do the jobs of the woods that required a rugged and active man, and often the job of bull cook was held by someone who was partly disabled, having broken a leg or sustained some other injury.

However, there was no job in a lumber camp that was more important to the welfare of the lumberjack than that of a good bull cook.

Every lumber camp had at least one bull cook, and some of the larger camps had up to three, with one assigned to the kitchen and office and probably the saw filers'

shack and the railroad men's shack, and the other two handling the bunkhouses. But in the average camp, one bull cook handled the job.

The duties of the bull cook were much the same as a janitor—to keep the bunkhouse clean. However, he had much more authority than a janitor, as he was, without a doubt, the boss of the bunkhouse. And some bull cooks could get very cranky when the men did not cooperate in keeping the bunkhouse clean. As a rule, he slept in the bunkhouse with the men, but in camps that had a separate sleeping shack for saw filers, he often slept there so as not to wake up the men when he got up during a cold night to stoke the stoves. And on many a cold night, the bull cook did not go to bed at all, but stayed up to keep the stoves going.

When he did go to bed, he was the first man up in the morning—to light the bunkhouse lamps so the men could find their clothing on the drying racks around the stove, and to be sure there was plenty of hot water on the stove for the men to wash up.

As soon as the lumberjacks left the bunkhouse for the woods, the bull cook's work of cleaning up the bunkhouse began. As a rule, the bunkhouse floor was scrubbed each day, but in some camps only twice a week. After sweeping the floor well, he would throw on pails of warm water and scrub the boards with a broom, letting the water run off through the wide cracks between the boards. Most bunkhouse floors were kept quite clean despite the hard use given them.

Each bunkhouse had one or more home-

This bunkhouse of a railroad lumber camp had a coal burning stove—not typical of camps away from railroad lines.



made “spittoons” made of a box filled with sawdust or sand. Under the stove was a box filled with sand to keep the heat of the stove from burning the boards, and, although the men were cautioned not to spit in this, some would, and from time to time this box had to be cleaned and replenished with fresh sand.

On top of the stove would be a large kettle or boiler that had to be kept filled as a warm water supply for washing up. The clothes drying racks above the stove would, as a rule, be free of clothing during the day, but sometimes a few pieces of clothing that did not get dried during the night would hang on the rack all day. The lamps would have to be filled with kerosene and the chimneys cleaned each day, and some of the good bull cooks really kept their lamps shined up.

Near the wash-up sink at the end of the bunkhouse was a cold water barrel which had to be kept full at all times. Towels on rollers were changed each day, and each day the bull cook washed the dirty towels. He also made sure there was soap and that the wash basins were scoured clean.

It was an unwritten law in the camps that each man made his bed each morning. If a bed was not made, it was the bull cook’s job to notify the offender—but each man’s bunk was his own and was never touched by the bull cook or anyone else. The only personal gear the bull cook might touch would be shoes or rubbers, moved from the floor by a bunk to the deacon seat while the floor was being scrubbed and drying. It was also an unwritten law that no man took another man’s clothing, mitts or socks from the drying rack.

Each bunkhouse had a rack for wood, and after cleaning up each morning, the bull cook carried or hauled wood on a handmade sled from the wood pile and filled the wood rack with the proper amounts of kindling and heavy wood for night burning. In some camps, special wood cutters were used to cut and pile the wood, but in smaller camps the bull cook also cut and piled the wood supply.

After finishing with the bunkhouse, the bull cook turned his attention to the kitchen, where he had to haul in the wood to the large kitchen stove and also the cooking ranges. Some cooks were very particular about the wood used for baking and gave the bull cook a hard time if he did not have the proper wood for the kitchen ranges. Two large barrels—one of hot water and one of cold—in the kitchen were kept filled by the bull cook. However, he did not have anything to do with the cleaning or filling the kitchen lamps; these were jobs of the “cookees.”

Kerosene was brought to camp in barrels and kept on a rack near the bunkhouse door so the log sawyers could fill their bottles each morning before starting for the woods. It was the bull cook’s job to see that this kerosene was available, put a new barrel on the rack and report to the

The 1898 bunkhouse at top is typical of the small log buildings of the early camp crews. The camp in the center was photographed in 1923; the logs in the foreground are on the ice of the Whiteface River. More typical of the 1910s and '20s were the bunkhouses of boards and tarpaper in the bottom photo—and they were easier for the bull cook to keep clean.



clerk when the supply was running low so more could be ordered.

If it snowed during the night, it was the bull cook's job to shovel the path between the bunkhouse and the kitchen and—most important—between the bunkhouse and the outhouse, as there was always much traffic here early in the morning.

If the bull cook was a good manager, he usually had time for a nap in the afternoon. However, he had to have the fires going and the lamps lit and the bunkhouse warm by the time the crew arrived from work.

While the job of bull cook was often filled by an older man, there were men who made a career of bull cooking, and a camp foreman was always on the lookout for a good bull cook as it meant so much in keeping the men happy.

I know several bull cooks who made a career of it, but I think the best one I ever saw was an old Swede by the name of Victor Bloom, who worked up and down the M.&I.R.R., mostly in the A. C. Johnson camps.

And while the bull cook was not the highest paid man in camp, I feel that the man who lit the lamps at 4 a.m. and blew them out each night at 9 p.m. was a pretty important man in the logging of our vast pine stands.



Sharpening axes in the bunkhouse around the turn of the century, and an early camp kitchen well stocked with firewood by the bull cook.





# 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.

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## WANTED

Barrel stave logs – White Oak and Burr Oak butt cuts 12-inch diameter and up – random lengths  
For more information call  
Robert Staggemeier at  
Staggemeyer Stave Co. Inc.  
Caledonia, MN 55921  
Office: 507-724-3395  
Cell: 608-792-7598

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## WANTED

Private Land Timber Sales  
for Biomass  
South and Southeast Minnesota  
Area  
TPA / MLEP member, DNR  
Certified Logger  
Call John at 612-867-1282  
Dakota Wood-Grinding, Inc.  
Rosemount, MN

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## FOR SALE

60" Siiro Slasher.  
Call 218-787-2264 for details

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