

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

MARCH/APRIL 2005

VOLUME 61

College of Natural Resources
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



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TIMBER BULLETIN

Volume 61
March/April 2005
Duluth, Minnesota

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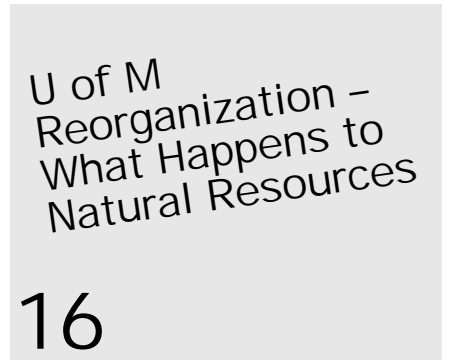
ON THE COVER

The University's Board of Regents plans to reorganize the College of Natural Resources. The future of this top rated school is up in the air.

The Timber Bulletin is published six times annually, in February, April, June, August, October and December by the Minnesota Timber Producers Association, located at 903 Medical Arts Bldg., 324 W. Superior St., Duluth, Minn. Minnesota Timber Producers Association members receive the Timber Bulletin at an annual subscription rate of \$15 which is included in their membership dues. Periodicals postage paid in Duluth, Minnesota. Advertising rates and data on request. The views expressed in the Timber Bulletin do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Minnesota Timber Producers Association.

Postmaster: Please send address corrections to **TIMBER BULLETIN**, Minnesota Timber Producers Association, 903 Medical Arts Bldg., 324 W. Superior St., Duluth, Minnesota 55802, Phone 218-722-5013.

Issn: 10973532 – USPS: 016208



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Minnesota
Timber Producers
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Greetings

With spring load restrictions going on basically the last week of March, it provided an extended logging season over what would be considered normal. This extra time shows up in stockpiled wood along roads and in wood yards across Minnesota. Considering the low inventories last fall, this extra is very timely and much needed.

U.S. Rep. Oberstar recently convened a "Forestry Summit" in Duluth. Along with the congressman, attendees included representatives from the staffs of Senators Coleman

President's Column



and Dayton. Paul Momper and Norm Wagoner represented the Superior and Chippewa National Forests. Vice President for Forest Policy Tim O'Hara gave a presentation on historical trends

for Minnesota Forest Industries and Wood Fiber Council co-chair Bob Olson spoke about the importance of fiber availability in relation to jobs. Various mill managers also spoke about current supply and demand dynamics. Executive Vice President Wayne Brandt, along with field representative Maureen Talarico, Tom McCabe and myself represented the MTPA.

The main theme of the meeting was how to get the National Forests to their full ASQs in a three year period. Softwood lumber, stumpage prices and growth versus harvest also were discussed. As always, it seems money is the big issue, but there were many good policy and structural ideas discussed. Please support and encourage national forest staff as they perform their duties.

It's Annual Meeting time. Many speakers are lined up to inform and entertain. There will be safety and tree farm presentations, and there will be a drawing for door prizes at the banquet. Make plans to attend. Bring the family! April 29 at Spirit Mountain Lodge in Duluth. Please take time to relax and recharge this spring.

Thank you,

Jack A. Emberson

TPA Annual Meeting April 29

Be sure to mark your calendars for the TPA annual meeting to be held Friday, April 29, at Spirit Mountain Lodge, in Duluth. This year's event will be one to remember, with the day's speakers to include the DNR, the U.S. Forest Service, and Capt. Ken Urquhart of the Minnesota State Patrol, plus MnDOT's District 2 District Engineer Lynn Eaton and a representative from District 1.

The evening's featured guest is Davis Helberg, the former executive director of the Duluth-Superior Seaway Port Authority. Helberg contributed much information and help to authors Bill Beck and C. Patrick Labadie, who have just released the most comprehensive history of the Duluth-Superior Port, titled "Pride of the Inland Seas- An Illustrated History of the Port of Duluth-Superior."

Chapter Six of the book is called "Timber Port" and features a historic look back on the role the port played in the timber industry. Here is an excerpt from the book:

The steady expansion of the lakes lumber trade out of Duluth Superior caused a boom in lumber wharf construction during the 1890s. Most of the wharves were located along a three-mile stretch of St. Louis Bay in West Duluth between the end of

Rice's Point and the end of Grassy Point. And the great majority of the wharves were piled high with lumber for much of any given year. The wharves along Rice's Point could handle vessels up to 250 feet in length. Those farther upriver handled shallower draft boats of up to 150 feet in length. The work of loading the steam barges and their lumber hookers was one of the most labor-intensive activities in the port at the time. Every piece of lumber had to be loaded into the hold of the vessels by hand, although steam hoists were used for heavy timbers like railroad ties or mine timber. It typically took three days to load a lumber hooker for its voyage down the lakes to Saginaw, Chicago, or the Tonawandas. Crews of "lumber shovers" made up to seventy cents an hour for loading vessels, which occasioned a local editorial writer to point out that "seven dollars a day beats many railway presidents' salary, and for unskilled labor, too."

There is much, much more fascinating information regarding the Timber Port and the entire port history that Helberg will feature on Friday evening. This is one presentation you surely will not want to miss. If you have not registered yet for the annual meeting, please contact the TPA office at 218-722-5013 by April 20.

I hope to see everyone at the TPA Annual Meeting on April 29 at Spirit Mountain in Duluth. It's a great chance to hear what's going on in your association and learn a lot about important topics.

DNR Division of Forestry Director Mike Carroll will give his final talk before he moves on to a new position in the DNR. We'll also have presentations on the new forest plans from Superior NF Supervisor Jim Sanders and Chippewa NF Supervisor Norm Wagoner.

Executive Vice President's Column



In the afternoon we'll have a comprehensive presentation on transportation plans from MNDOT regional staff. A new speaker in the afternoon will be Capt. Ken Urquhart who is in charge of commercial vehicle enforcement for the State Patrol.

Our old friend Mike Kilgore from the University of Minnesota will be presenting some of his latest research on forest land transactions, certification and an exciting new economic analysis that he's seeking our help on.

The evening banquet will also feature a new activity. For the first time the state Tree Farm program will be presenting their Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year awards. Several TPA members have been recognized by this important program and we're very pleased that the Tree Farm program has chosen to partner with us.

The banquet will be capped off by our keynote speaker, Davis Helberg. Davis, the retired director of the Seaway Port Authority of Duluth, is a well known raconteur who has a media presentation about the history of the port. The history of our industry and the history of the port are intertwined in many ways. The basis for the keynote address is a newly published book *Pride of the Inland Seas* which was co-written by TPA

historian Bill Beck. I think that it will be a great presentation; I know I'm looking forward to it.

If you need banquet or lunch tickets please call the TPA office at 218-722-5013.



The legislature is in full swing and we've had one major, historic victory already. For the first time ever, funds have been included in the recently signed bonding bill to invest in our forests. The DNR provided \$2 million and the counties \$1 million for planting trees and improving their forests. We worked with the DNR and counties for over a decade to convince state finance officials that public forests were a capital asset of the state and as such should be able to receive bonding dollars.

We cleared that hurdle several years ago and got funds included in the bonding bill for tree planting but then Governor Ventura vetoed them. As everyone knows, due to political gridlock there was no bonding bill last year. But this year we got this important initiative to the finish line.



I'm pleased to report that we had a safe winter logging season with few injuries. This is a major accomplishment given the length of this year's winter and the amount of wood that was produced. Good news like this only happens when each and every one of us makes safety a priority and pays attention to it every day on the job. LUA's Bill Dupont will have a comprehensive update on our TPA/LUA programs at the Annual Meeting.



As you will see in another article in this issue of the *Timber Bulletin*, the University of Minnesota is reorganizing some of their programs. The College of Natural Resources is on the block as part of this reorganization. With 10,000 lakes, 17 million acres of forestland, 20 billion trees and a way of life in

our state that is inextricably tied to natural resources, both socially and economically, we hope the end result will be stronger natural resources programs at the U of M. We fear that this may not happen.



On the federal scene TPA is working hard to help get the resources to implement the new forest plans on the Superior and Chippewa National Forests. I've been to Washington a few times this year already to help push our agenda. We recently had a lengthy meeting with Congressman Oberstar and representatives from Senator Dayton's and Senator Coleman's staffs, along with senior staff from the two forests. This meeting included TPA President Dale Erickson and Executive Committee member Tom McCabe, along with company officials. We're hopeful that with continued hard work the two forests will get back on track and implement their plans.



Keep working safely. I'll see you at the TPA Annual Meeting on April 29 at Spirit Mountain in Duluth.

Logger Survey Shows Trends in Industry

A new survey by the Blandin Foundation reports some interesting findings regarding Minnesota's logging community. The Blandin Foundation periodically assesses the impact and effectiveness of investments made by the Foundation to the Vital Forests/Vital Communities Initiative. In October of 2004, surveys were sent via mail to 434 logging firms on the Minnesota Logger Education Program membership list. Of those, 135 were returned, and 122 were fully completed and suitable for analysis. Most of the loggers that responded are full time and the average time spent in the profession was just over 25 years.

According to the summary of the report, some interesting survey findings include:

- A major "settling out" and restructuring of the logging industry has been underway over the past 10-15 years. The image of the woods teeming with chainsaw toting loggers working as 1-4 person operations has given way to a reality of fewer but much larger operations with huge investments in up-to-date highly efficient equipment.
- The essential relationship

between the numbers of loggers by size of operation to the amount of total wood harvested seen in 1996 was repeated in 2003. That is, small operations account for the greatest number of loggers but handle a small portion of the total volume while a relative handful of large operations account for a disproportionately large portion of the volume. Nearly one-third of the total volume was harvested by just nine percent of the loggers (the largest operations), while just over half the loggers, all small operations, accounted for only 16 percent of the total volume.

- Moreover, the pattern noted above intensified between 1996 and 2003. The very small operations (<5,000 cords/year) lost market share of the total volume harvested (23 percent to 16 percent); mid-sized firms (5,001-10,000 cords/year) grew in number but had a constant portion of total harvest volume; and the larger and largest firms grew in number and increased their share of the total volume harvested.
- Increasing mechanization and changing equipment are major trends: chainsaw usage declined dramatically in just over a decade, the use of

mobile harvesters (feller-buncher and cut-to-length) increased, and use of cable skidders declined while the use of grapple skidders and forwarders increased.

- Business owners saw needs for training related to: application of new technologies such as GPS, and Geographic Information Systems; timber sale pricing and bidding; retirement planning; timber sale planning and layout, and, marketing of the resulting harvested wood; marketing the business to new clients, job costing, assessing whether to buy or lease equipment, and business taxes.
- Training needs for employees included: marketing the business to new clients, accounting, and assessing whether to buy or lease equipment; machinery maintenance and safety; machinery operation; and learning about site-level guidelines.
- It comes as no surprise that the greatest issue facing loggers is the high price for stumpage, followed closely by the cost of doing business and the availability of timber.
- Although competition was further down the priority rankings, an issue for one-third of the respondents, many of the written comments addressed this topic. The comments did not focus on general marketplace competition, but on specific areas where they perceive unfair practices tip the scales toward larger or otherwise favored firms, especially concerning prices paid for wood by mills.

This survey was conducted as part of a new curriculum development initiative MLEP is undertaking, with financial support from the Blandin Foundation. Besides charting which future changes can be made as a baseline study, the survey will also serve as a valuable tool for gauging training needs throughout the industry.

For more information on MLEP's Blandin Foundation-supported efforts to support quality training

for logging operators you can go online to [http://www.blandinfoundation.org/html/documents/2004 Logger Survey Report_Final.pdf](http://www.blandinfoundation.org/html/documents/2004%20Logger%20Survey%20Report_Final.pdf)

To view the complete survey results, log onto: http://www.blandinfoundation.org/html/public_vital_evaluation_2004%20logger.cfm

Portions of this article were reprinted, with permission, from the Blandin Foundation.

New Civil Weight Enforcement Policy in Effect on 6th Axle Forest Permit Civil Penalties

There has been much confusion in the past seven months regarding civil weight laws since the new forest products permit for hauling more weight with an extra axle was implemented. While the new permit was never intended to remove the 10-percent overweight allowance in a civil weight review, the wording of the statute was unclear and enforcement varied among officers. After a meeting with Senator Rod Skoe, Capt. Ken Urquhart of the State Patrol, Brian Erickson of the State Patrol and Office of Permit's Gene Halvorsen, language was drafted to amend the law and clarify that the 10-percent is still allowed in civil weight slip reviews.

The technical amendment has passed one committee and is going through other committees at print time. In the meantime, until the end of the legislative session, a new policy is in effect.

If a load of forest products is being hauled with the overweight permit and the load was hauled before the winter weight increase, it is allowed 10-percent over the permitted 90,000 pounds in a record search before a civil weight case will be filed. A load would then be legal up to 99,000 pounds on a record search.

If a load of forest products is being hauled with the overweight permit and the load was hauled after the winter weight increase went into effect, it would be

allowed up to 108,000 pounds in a record search before a civil weight case would be filed.

Any cases that have not been settled prior to this clarification will be held and not filed. Tickets paid previous to the Feb. 28 memo will not be refunded.

The new policy is in effect until

the legislative session ends, then the clarification in the law will hopefully have passed.

The State Patrol wants to remind haulers that this is only for Civil Weight Enforcement. On Roadside enforcement, they will only allow 5-percent over the permitted weight.

Owens Forest Products: Success through the Years

by Maureen Talarico

Bob Owens is one of the industry's most successful entrepreneurs, building up from scratch not one, but two manufacturing businesses, Heritage Veneer Products and Owens Flooring Division. Both companies are thriving, winning awards and commanding attention on the national and international scene. It's a far cry from the early days, when Bob and his wife, Mary Ellen, sold lumber out of their Victorian-era home in Duluth's historic east end.

It all began after Bob Owens' honorable discharge from the U.S. Army in 1961. He worked at various positions with the J.C. Campbell Co. in Duluth and Two Harbors. Bob and Mary Ellen formed Owens Forest Products in 1974. They sold pulpwood and softwood lumber in direct shipments out of their home and started up a softwood lumber distribution yard in leased space. As the business grew, so did the need for space, and Owens Forest Products eventually moved to the old Klearflax Manufacturing Company building owned by Superwood Corp. The site was later purchased from Superwood Corporation and major improvements were made to facilitate lumber handling. This business was sold in 1995.

In 1977 Owens Forest Products started custom kiln drying



The new 120,000-square-foot Owens Flooring Division facility.

hardwood lumber. The company purchased green hardwood lumber for shipment into various custom kiln facilities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and Indiana. In 1983 the company purchased a dry kiln facility in Marathon, Wis., to better control quality and timely shipments. The capacity of the operation was doubled a short time later to meet the growing demand for basswood in the specialty-window-covering market. The 1980-1982 recessions hit Owens Forest Products hard, as they did many businesses. With interest rates higher than 20 percent, many of Owens' largest customers did not survive, resulting in substantial losses to the company. However, through passion and persistence, Owens survived this difficult period and emerged from the 1982 recession into a period of rapid growth. However, this operation

became the core business through the '80s and '90s. This operation was eventually sold in 2002.

In December 1997, Owens Forest Products bought an industrial truck floor manufacturing business from Anderson-Tully Corporation, Memphis, Tenn. The acquisition resulted in the eventual evolution, design and launch of an engineered, plank flooring product that has significant and unique application within the residential and commercial flooring marketplace.

In February 1992, Owens Forest Products purchased some of the equipment of the former Heritage Hardwoods Division, Morgan Doors, located in Shawano, Wis., which was the beginning of the new division, Heritage Veneered Products, manufacturing door jambs and door components. This division is now one of the largest in the country domestic stile and rail interior door manufacturers, with over 20 customers distributing the products from Denver to the East Coast. They offer doors in various styles and sizes in stain grade including red oak, maple, birch, poplar, cherry, alder, pine, fire-rated doors and other doors for paintable applications.

Currently, Owens Forest Products employs 247 employees and operates two successful divisions within the forest products industry: Heritage Veneered



Heritage Veneered Products facility in Shawano, Wis.

Products (door manufacturing) and Owens Flooring Division (flooring products). The Duluth office location is home to administrative and financial support personnel.

Owens Flooring Division

The flooring product provides easy installation, stability and resistance to moisture under the brand name "Plankfloor." In September 2004, excavation and construction was initiated on a 25-acre building site within Shawano's Bay Lakes Industrial Park to accommodate growth. The flooring operations are now in the new 120,000-square-foot manufacturing facility. In the past year, the growing Owens Flooring Division has added 26 jobs.

Heritage Veneered Products

Heritage Veneered Products occupies a 220,000-square-foot manufacturing facility and employs 166. It has become a leading manufacturer of high quality, interior hardwood passage doors, which are marketed nationally under the "Woodport" brand name, as well as through OEM private labels. The doors range from traditional to custom designs and are available in a variety of natural wood species. In just 10 years the company has gone from offering one product to 30,000 style and size variations. HVP's relationship with its distributors, combined with vast product offerings, on-time shipment history, and one of the highest quality rankings in the industry, has resulted in double-digit growth opportunities and set it apart from offshore and national competitors. Since 1992, annual sales growth has averaged 12-15 percent per year, and door production increased 15 percent from 2003 to 2004. In the last year, the company created 27 new jobs.

In 2004 Owens Forest Products celebrated its thirtieth business anniversary, with commitment to employees and excellence of products and services as a backbone to its success. Over the years, the company has been recognized for many awards, including the "Business of the Year" award to Heritage Veneered Products in 2002 by the Shawano Area Chamber of Commerce. In 2003, Heritage Veneered Products



Left to right: Bob Owens, CEO and chairman of Owens Forest Products, and Bob Nolan, general manager of Heritage Veneered Products, accept the 2004 Manufacturer of the Year Award at a black-tie ceremony in Milwaukee, Wis.

received state-wide Business of the Year recognition for its "Commitment to Employees." "Our employees are our most important asset, which is one of our core values that we articulate daily in our decision making. We are a people-driven organization" Bob Owens says, "Our commitment to employees is the foundation of our culture, which affects all other aspects of our product and relationships with customers."

On March 3, 2005 Heritage Veneered Products received the state of Wisconsin 2004 "Manufacturer of the Year" Grand Award for medium-sized manufacturing companies which employ between 100 and 300 workers. "It is truly exciting that our company and employees are recognized with the MOTY Award as one of the outstanding manufacturing companies in Wisconsin," says Bob. "Our vision of 'exceeding the expectations of our employees, customers and suppliers' is our guiding principle, with the ultimate goal of having all stakeholders being zealous advocates for the company and its products."

"We are proud to honor these manufacturers that are responsible for creating jobs and keeping our local economies strong," said Tim

Christen, CEO of Virchow Krause, one of the sponsors of the prestigious award. "When manufacturing is strong and growing, services, retail, construction and other industries will have strong paths as well."

Heritage Veneered Products also involved some unique management techniques to increase productivity and employee moral and independence. It rotated lunch breaks, color coded parts by day to enhance the flow through production departments, and automated the scheduling of critical parts. In addition, the company has placed emphasis on employee cross-training to help standardize processes between shifts and encourage continuity between the operations. Employees are empowered to make safety a priority in planning, training and operations. In just one year, recordable injuries decreased 36 percent, and the lost time rate reflected a 70 percent improvement. The company has undertaken a comprehensive customer satisfaction initiative and instilled solid marketing communications in its business plans. Plus, the company assists its distributors with an extensive merchandising program, including point-of-purchase displays, product



The beautiful finish and high quality flooring products set Owens Flooring Division apart from its competitors.

literature and samples. In addition to extensive in-house leadership training, the company encourages the pursuit of self-development that may or may not be related to business, providing 100 percent reimbursement.

Manufacturing Process

Heritage Veneered Products' manufacturing process flows through eight specialized departments; each department plays a key role in producing a high quality interior door.

• Rough Mill

The start of the manufacturing process is in the Rough Mill. Raw lumber comes into our facility and is ripped and planed to obtain the best overall yield. Once cut, the sticks 4/4 are inspected manually for defects and then go through the optimizing saw where defects are removed and the sticks are cut to the appropriate lengths. To minimize waste, the edge sticks are cut out of (4/4) lumber and split in two to provide the edge sticks as needed and to maximize the use of each (4/4). This department has been successfully using a "LEAN MANUFACTURING" supermarket philosophy to prepare cut lumber and maximize the yield.

• Particle Board Breakdown

Particle board is the core of all the major components of our

stile and rail doors. The particle board core provides stability to the door components and the doors themselves and is an environmentally-friendly wood product. In this department, particle board is cut to finished dimensions to accommodate the edge sticks prepared in the rough mill. Work-in-process moves through the department where the edge gluing adheres onto the sawn particle board cores.

• Lamline

The Lamline takes the non-veneered stile, rail and panel blanks and raw materials to manufacture the corresponding veneered blanks. This requires both sides of the part to be calibrated and sanded, then the veneer is applied with glue and is sent into the press to cure the bond of veneer to the blank. To maximize the yield and increase productivity, this blank is equalized (cut to length) for ease of handling and immediate use in the next process.

• Machining

The veneered component blanks are then cut to the proper length to become a door rail. The panel type or glass application is determined at this point and the appropriate cope design is applied to the rail. Once the proper cope is applied, the door rail is sent through a molder to receive a matching profile. The final operation, drilling, gluing

and inserting the dowels, is completed in one automated process. The veneered blanks are also used to make the door stiles. A specialized automation process for boring and molding the stiles to the finished specifications finishes these parts.

• Door Assembly

Finished stile and rail door component parts are sent to one of the door assembly stations. At these stations employees craft the various door parts into a complete door slab, clamping the parts together to create a finished product. Door assembly utilizes two hydraulic clamps and an RFS clamp.

• Door Sanding

The assembled door slab moves to the sanding operation where the top and the bottom of the slab are trimmed for a clean and flush edge. The slabs are then sent through automatic sanders where all sides are sanded. Automated door flippers

(continued on page 14)



Heritage Veneered Products manufactures engineered stile and rail, raised panel, flat panel and French glass interior architectural doors now in seven natural wood species. Knotty alder and select alder were added in 2004, in addition to oak, maple, cherry, birch and poplar. Paint grade and medium density fiberboard (MDF) doors are also available. WOODPORT® Interior Doors utilize select North American hardwoods and veneers, and environmentally-friendly engineered substrates.

*Mark your calendars
now for the*

TPA Annual
Membership
Meeting

Friday, April 29, 2005

Spirit Mountain,
Duluth Minn.



Left to right: Bob Nolan, general manager of Heritage Veneered Products; Bob Owens, CEO; Keith Richmond, general manager of Owens Flooring Co.

(continued from page 12)

are used to reduce the need to handle the heavy doors. The doors are sent along a conveyor through a dot matrix printer that applies the label to each door. The dot matrix label identifies the species, panel type, dimensions and date of manufacture.

- **Custom Shop**

The Heritage Veneered Products custom shop is responsible for all the special door part production. These parts consist of unique panels in various arch and eyebrow designs and other specialized door parts too unique to be produced in large production runs. The special automated equipment allows this department to produce many styles of panels including the flat panels used in the WOODPORT

Flat Panel door line.

- **Second Shift Operations**

The Heritage Veneered Products second shift operation continues to be responsible for the production of all the engineered door panels. This year the demand has allowed Heritage Veneered Products to double the second shift employees and

increase their duties to include production of various door components, including the lock and bottom rails. This increase in component parts has allowed Heritage Veneered Products to dramatically increase the assembly line's production rates. The need to expand and continue to meet demand will see second shift in the near future grow to include production of all component parts as well as door assembly.

- **Continuous Improvement / Operational Excellence**

The newly-developed rearrangement team continues the journey to strive for world-class production processes. The team is focusing on lean thinking principles, continuous flow, and the tools needed to transform the manufacturing space and processes into a facility focused

on manufacturing excellence. The Production Team and the entire staff organization are committed to achieving the highest quality product through a continuous manufacturing process in the shortest time period practical.

Heritage Veneered Products and Owens Flooring Division are two great examples of blending state-of-the-art technology in the manufacturing process with the creativity and skill of a talented and independent workforce. Deeply rooted in the business and manufacturing processes are "Five Cornerstones" that have served as the company's roadmap to continued growth and success. These cornerstones of Customer, People, Quality, Safety, and Housekeeping are the driving force that keeps their priorities in focus. "Business and life has been constantly changing, testing our flexibility and adaptability to meet the challenges of the day," says Bob. "It pays to absorb all the knowledge available to be prepared for unexpected decisions to continue growing a sustainable business in this competitive environment. Part of our success has been developing and executing according to our strategic plan for long-term growth and adjust to changing market conditions. The building material industry historically been cyclical, but having products that are required for both new construction and remodeling has given us confidence to operate a sustainable business, giving employees and stakeholders confidence in the future."



Employees outside Heritage Veneered Products in Shawano, Wis. One of two divisions of Owens Forest Products.

U of M Reorganization – What Happens to Natural Resources?

The University of Minnesota began a strategic positioning process in August 2004. This led to a blueprint that was endorsed by the board of regents in March. As part of this process, two task forces were established dealing with academic positioning and administrative issues.

Some recommendations from the academic positioning task force are being fleshed out during April. These recommendations will be presented to the board of regents in early May. The board of regents will act on the recommendations in June after holding one public hearing on May 16.

After approval by the board of regents, additional task forces will be appointed to implement recommendations with most task forces reporting back by Dec. 10, 2005.

The task force reports are available at: www1.umn.edu/systemwide/strategic_positioning/

The recommendation (20) from the academic positioning report reads as follows:

We recommend that a Task Force be charged with developing and implementing a reconfiguration of the sciences and engineering that best integrates and promotes academic synergies, teaching and research among four current colleges: Biological Sciences (CBS); Institute of Technology; Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (COAFES); and Natural Resources (CNR).

Among the important strategies the report cites that must be achieved in this area are:

- Realigning and integrating the College of Natural Resources into a broader framework that strengthens environmental science and increases administrative efficiency.
- Enhancing the university's currently dispersed strengths in environmental science and related fields.

The report also goes on to advocate for the establishment of a new Institute of the Environment that would draw from CBS, COAFES and CNR.

This approach is contrasted in the academic positioning report with the recommendation for the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) which reads:

(21) We recommend for consideration a Task Force on CLA, empanelled by the President and Provost and composed of visionary leaders from both within and outside CLA who share a strong commitment to enhancing undergraduate and graduate education within the University.

The most likely scenarios for the future of the College of Natural Resources are as follows:

- 1) CNR is abolished and its programs are moved wholesale into another college such as COAFES
- 2) CNR is abolished and its programs are moved piecemeal into other programs e.g. bio-sciences to Institute of Technology, forest resources to COAFES, fisheries, wildlife and conservation biology to CBS and parts of each of these programs to the new Institute of the Environment.

There is nothing in the task force reports that would indicate that CNR will be recommended to continue as a college. There also are no indications that consideration is being given to strengthening CNR by adding logical disciplines to its portfolio. These disciplines could include soils, entomology, parts of biology, applied economics, Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI) and geography to name a few.

The College of Natural Resources has been a pillar of support for forest management and the forest products industry during its 102 year existence. It has provided crucial support research and outreach on policy issues including Forest Inventory and Analysis, Generic Environmental Impact Statement on Forest Management and Timber Harvesting, Sustainable Forest Resources Act, Sustainable Forest Incentive Act, water quality,

forest management, forest modeling, paper science, wood science and many others.

If CNR is eliminated or its programs subsumed and de-emphasized within other academic units it will be a significant set back to forest management and the forest products industry in our state.

Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) Can They Help You?

by Dan Zobel, CIC

Businesses today who offer group health insurance to employees have some new options in their benefit programs. In recent years, employers have seen some cost saving measures by turning to managed care, implementing different types of co pays and deductibles and by changing insurance carriers when it makes sense. These solutions are usually temporary at best. Medical inflation and increased utilization continue to drive health care costs, which end up raising insurance premiums even for groups with good experience.

Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) offer employers the opportunity to try a new approach. The new program utilizes what is called a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) and requires at least a \$1000 deductible for individuals and at least \$2000 for families. An HSA allows both the employer and the employee to make contributions to a tax favored IRA-type account which can be used to pay for qualified health expenses. A big difference in HSA accounts is that the unused funds can roll over from year to year without a "use it or lose it" provision. The idea is that an employer can take the premium savings from switching their benefit plan to a high deductible and fund the employee's account. An employee who participates in paying for part

of the cost of the health plan can estimate their savings and may decide to contribute as well.

HSA's have many rules and regulations regarding contributions and qualifications which seem to be changing and being updated often. The jury is still out on whether this is the "silver bullet" on fixing health care. The real question employers have is, how does this save money? In reality, if an employer uses all of the premium savings from going to a high deductible to fund the accounts, there would be no immediate savings. The real savings is projected to come from changes in utilization by employees. For example, an employee may decide to take a generic drug in lieu of a non-generic drug to conserve the money in the HSA and thus lower utilization of the health plan. Lower utilization on an overall basis by way of the consumer being the watchdog on their funds and

how the funds are spent should result in lower overall costs for health plans. This is the concept and in a number of years we may have an answer on whether it will work.

Many challenges are on the horizon for these plans. Employees will need to be educated on how the rules of the plans work. Health care providers will be challenged with patients asking them the cost of procedures before they're done. That should be interesting. Employees who are in good health and have very few claims will more than likely find these plans attractive. Employees who are high users will likely end up with more out of pocket expense being generated at a faster pace than a traditional plan.

Dan Zobel, CIC, is with Otis-Magie Insurance Agency, Inc. in Duluth, Minn. Dan can be reached at 1-800-241-2425 or 218-625-2121 with any questions.

Update the Endangered Species Act to Actually Save Plants and Animals

by Dan Dessecker

Since the Endangered Species Act was passed over 30 years ago, over 1,300 species have been listed as threatened or endangered, yet only seven have recovered sufficiently to be taken off the lists. This overriding goal of the Endangered Species Act – recovering species before they go extinct – is as important today as it was in 1973. But we have learned a great deal in the past three decades and one inescapable conclusion is that the Endangered Species Act must be strengthened if it is to effectively protect our most imperiled species.

One of the basic laws of physics states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction; put another way – everything is connected to everything else. This is especially true as we assess the effects of habitat management activities, a central focus of the Endangered Species Act.

Take for example the protection of two seriously imperiled forest songbirds in the eastern United States, both of which could eventually warrant listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. One, the golden-winged warbler, requires very young forest habitats, sustained today almost exclusively through active forest management. The second is the cerulean warbler, a brilliant blue bird that prefers to breed in relatively mature forests. If we provide habitats for one of these species, we are in essence destroying habitats for the other – the opportunities for dueling lawsuits are endless.

The process outlined in the Endangered Species Act for the identification and conservation of threatened and endangered species has become all but unworkable. Far too much time and money is spent producing paperwork, rather than protecting species. The courts now make decisions that are best left to trained natural resource

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professionals.

One well-recognized problem with the Endangered Species Act is the mandate that critical habitat for a species must be identified “concurrently” with the decision to list that species as threatened or endangered. It sounds only reasonable; after all, a species can’t exist in the absence of required habitats. But this is where the best of intentions runs headfirst into reality. The reality is that the identification of critical habitats can be a daunting task, a paper chase that takes limited personnel and funds away from on-the-ground efforts to protect species.

Special interest groups with more money and lawyers than sense routinely file lawsuits to force the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to spend time and money to designate critical habitat once a species is listed, time and money that could be better spent working to recover species.

This is not a partisan issue. Officials from both the Clinton and Bush administrations have singled out the critical habitat conundrum as a primary impediment to the conservation of threatened and endangered species. Currently, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has a backlog of hundreds of threatened and endangered species for which critical habitats have not yet been identified. Many of these have been the subject of lawsuits that seem to serve little purpose other than to divert attention and resources from other more pressing needs, such as the conservation of threatened or endangered plants and animals.

Recovering less than one percent of endangered and threatened species over 30 years is a clear indication of the need to improve the Endangered Species Act. We can and must do better.

Dan Dessecker is Senior Wildlife Biologist with the Ruffed Grouse Society, an international forest wildlife conservation organization. You may contact him at rgsdess@chibardun.net. You can find the Ruffed Grouse Society at <http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org>.

MnDOT, State Patrol, Forest Service and Counties Meet with Forest Industry in Bemidji

The Bemidji Area Forestry Affairs Council met with members of the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Minnesota State Patrol, the U.S. Forest Service and several counties on Feb. 11. The monthly meetings are designed to bring various groups together to discuss industry issues and concerns. The BAFAC formed about 14 months ago with goals that include increasing fiber availability, educating the public about forestry, serving as an information base on timber issues, and discussing transportation issues as they pertain to the industry.

Much of February’s meeting focused on winter weight increases and spring load restrictions. Lynn Eaton, District 2 district engineer, spoke to the group, along with pavement engineer Curt Turgeon, Roger Hille, a truck weight educator, and other MnDOT representatives.

Turgeon’s presentation on seasonal weight limits enlightened many people about the science behind the decision on when to post roads. Turgeon said, “The whole zone can suffer the fate of the warmest city in the zone.” And he encouraged people to monitor their own community temperatures and compare them to the conditions posted on the website



Pavement Engineer Curt Turgeon explains the science behind seasonal weight limit postings.

(www.mrr.dot.state.mn.us).

MnDOT also presented the group with some information regarding problematic bridges and where the lower capacity postings would take place. Then Roger Hille told the group about the Truck Weight Education Project, begun in 2001, which to this point has had more than 2,000 participants. Hille spoke of a new website expected to come out by this summer that will allow haulers to type in their truck configurations, and the computer will figure out the gross weight allowance.



Jim Haffner, Norbord Minnesota, and Dave Goetz, Cass Forest Products, listen to the presentations.

Many Important Training Sessions Coming Up

Forest Management Guideline Training

This two-day training is required of all new MLEP members, both provisional members and applicants, as well as those reapplying for MLEP membership.

**May 3 and 4, 2005 –
Cloquet Forestry Center**

**May 3, 2005 – Day One –
Introduction to Forest
Management Guidelines**

Forest Management Guideline Education is part of the ongoing introductory training on “Sustaining Minnesota Forest Resources: Voluntary Site-Level Forest Management Guidelines.” This session will provide an overview of the guidelines and participants will receive a copy of the guidelines manual. Topics include: cultural resources, forest soils, riparian areas, and wildlife habitat in the context of timber harvesting and forest road building. Field exercises will explore ways to apply guidelines to achieve landowner objectives.

**May 4, 2005 – Day Two –
Protecting Site Quality**

This one-day training session will provide participants with opportunities to better understand and further assist implementation of the site-level guidelines within Minnesota. The workshop begins with indoor presentations including an overview of pressures and performance standards facing the timber industry, why protecting site quality is important, and guideline monitoring results. Participants will then travel to a field-site where demonstrations and group exercises will be held, with a focus on stream and wetland approaches and crossings, water diversion structures, and spill prevention and cleanup. **This training is held every two years, and is not expected to be offered again until 2007.**

Cost: Free for MLEP members, \$75 for nonmembers for each day

of training.
Call MLEP at 218-722-5442.

Logger Conferences

These conferences are part of MLEP’s efforts to provide “one-stop shopping” for logger education. The conference format should reduce the need to travel to several cities on different dates in order to fulfill training requirements.

The conference will offer the required MLEP training on Day One. During Day Two, LogSafe training will be offered. NOTE: This conference is for those who want to complete both LogSafe and MLEP training. Conference attendees will need to attend both days of the conference, no separate registrations will be accepted.

Day One

The conference will begin with a group session that will include opening remarks and an update on guideline implementation success. Participants will then choose from a variety of breakout sessions. Breakout session options will include any required industry contractor training and other topics designed for business owners and employees.

Day Two

The LogSafe safety program is a one-day, eight-hour seminar. Attendance is required for application to the Targeted Industry Rebate Program, pursuant to MN Statutes §176.130, and business owners are required to attend to maintain membership in MLEP. Participants can choose between two tracks:

Track I: CPR/First aid – A half-day session about CPR certification and recertification, and a half-day session about first aid that meet OSHA standards.

Track II: Logging Safety training – An all-day session about employee noise exposure, OSHA’s Right-to-Know Program, written safety and health plans and fire extinguisher training (classroom and hands-on).

Conferences will be held at the

following locations:

**April 12-13, 2005 –
Giants Ridge, Biwabik**

Special room rates for the conference are \$59/King suite and \$79/Queen suite, plus tax. Specify the MN Logger Group when making reservations and rooms must be held on valid credit card. Call 877-442-6877 (The Lodge at Giant’s Ridge). Reservations at group rate can be made until April 1, 2005. Cancellation penalty applies if cancelled less than three days before arrival.

**April 26-27, 2005 –
Northern Inn, Bemidji**

Special room rates for conference are \$64.99 plus tax per standard (2 dbl) room. Specify group #3121 when making reservations. Call (800) 667- 8485. Reservations at group rate can be made until April 12, 2005.

Conference size is limited, so register early!

Cost: Free to MLEP members, \$75 for nonmembers.

Call MLEP at 21-722-5442 to register.

Introduction to GPS

This workshop will be a hands-on course that includes training in the classroom and the field. The workshop curriculum will familiarize participants with the basics of Global Positioning System (GPS) technology, equipment, and how loggers and resource managers can benefit from the use of GPS. Garmin GPS Map76 units will be provided for use during the workshop. **Class size is limited to 30 participants, so register early!**

Priority will be given to MLEP members. COST: \$10 equipment fee for MLEP members due when submitting your registration (\$85 for nonmembers).

Workshops will be held at the following locations:

| | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| April 8 | International Falls |
| May 7 | Cloquet |
| August 23 | Bemidji |
| October 8 | Rochester |

Advanced GPS

This Advanced GPS workshop is designed for those who have taken the Introduction to GPS course. The workshop topics include: a brief review of the key concepts from the introductory course; setting up tracks; activating and navigating a route; managing waypoints; tracks and routes and transferring maps into the GPS receiver. This is a hands-on course that will include classroom and field instruction. Garmin GPS Map76 units will be provided for us during the workshop. Please note that participants must have completed the MLEP Introduction to GPS course prior to registering for this course. **Class size is limited to 30 participants, so register early!**

Priority will be given to MLEP members. COST: \$10 equipment fee for MLEP members due when submitting your registration (\$85 for nonmembers). Workshops will be held at the following locations:

| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| May 18 | Cloquet |
| August 24 | Bemidji |
| September 14 | North Shore/Ely |
| September 15 | Grand Rapids |

Facility name and location will be sent to you along with our registration confirmation notice.

Truck Weight Compliance Training

This workshop is ideal for those trucking entities that want to load to the maximum legal weight possible and need to understand and comply with Minnesota's legal weight limits.

Participants will review the laws governing gross weights, road-restriction weights, axle weights, and seasonally increased weights. The workshop will also address the differences between the state and local systems, road damage issues, reading weight charts, and the advantages and reasons for proper tire sizes, axle spacing, and axle configurations. Professional and easy to understand classroom and "take home" materials will help you identify potential concerns with your own trucks and assist you in optimizing your own

configurations and options. This workshop is being funded by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The instructor is retired State Patrol Lt. Greg A. Hayes. During the last 16 years of his career, Greg supervised the commercial vehicle enforcement in northwestern Minnesota. **Class size is limited to 30 participants, so register early!**

COST: \$25 due when submitting your registration.

Workshops will be held at the following locations:

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Ironton | April 5 |
| Duluth Township | April 7 |
| International Falls | April 21 |

Facility name and location will be sent out to you along with our registration confirmation notice.

Call MLEP office to register: 218-722-5442.

Improved Marketing & Utilization

Participants will learn about the current markets in Minnesota, how to cut for grade to increase log value, how sorting can improve profits and why bucking can have a greater impact on sawlog value than sawing, edging or trimming. This workshop will include classroom and field instruction. The in-woods demonstration will provide a firsthand look at how bucking affects products and value. Participants will also use HW Buck, a bucking computer simulator, to compare their own bucking decisions to the optimal cut for maximum value recovery. **Class size is limited to 30 participants, so register early!** Priority will be given to MLEP members.

COST: Free for MLEP members, \$75 for nonmembers. Workshops will be held at the following locations:

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| Southeast MN | June 2 |
| Aitkin | April 9 |
| North Shore | August 11 |

Facility name and location will be sent to you along with your registration confirmation notice.

LogSafe

Participants can choose between two tracks:

Track I: CPR/First Aid – A half-

day session about CPR certification and recertification, and a half-day session about first aid that meet OSHA standards.

Track II: Logging Safety Training

– An all-day session about employee noise exposure, OSHA's Right-to-Know Program, written safety and health plans and fire extinguisher training (classroom and hands-on).

Each seminar is 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., with registration at 7:30 a.m.

Workshops will be held at the following locations:

| | |
|----------|-------------------------------------|
| March 31 | Rochester National Guard Armory |
| April 5 | Baudette Sportsman Lodge |
| April 6 | International Falls Holiday Inn |
| April 7 | Cloquet Forestry Center |
| April 13 | Biwabik – MLEP Conference |
| April 19 | Grand Marais USFS Gunflint District |
| April 20 | Two Harbors Grand Superior Lodge |
| April 21 | Eveleth Days Inn |
| April 27 | Bemidji – MLEP Conference |
| May 3 | Bemidji Northern Inn |
| May 4 | Brainerd National Guard Armory |
| May 5 | Grand Rapids Sawmill Inn |
| Oct. 11 | International Falls Holiday Inn |
| Oct. 12 | Bemidji National Guard Armory |
| Oct. 13 | Cloquet Forestry Center |
| Dec. 14 | Chisholm IronWorld Discovery Center |

On-Site Equipment Training

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| July 13 | Location to be Determined |
| August 17 | Location to be Determined |

You may register for LogSafe training by phone, fax, or email: Phone: 218-362-5915 or 1-800-657-3776 Fax: 218-362-5916

Email: ed.lafavor@state.mn.us

You may also register for the LogSafe training during the MLEP conferences by contacting MLEP at 218-722-5442.

Wood Fiber Day at the Capital



Ed Zabinski jots down legislative issues at the Wood Fiber Council meeting.



The Wood Fiber Employees Joint Legislative Council is a joint labor-management organization representing unions and companies in Minnesota's forest products industry. Each year, the Council hosts a Wood Fiber Days at the State Capital. This year, the event was held March 2-4.

According to Jim Marshall, UPM-Blandin, "Our Wood Fiber Council delegates look forward to the annual spring meeting and day on the hill. They know the direct interaction between legislators and 'real' people is effective. Every year, we hear from the senators and representatives that they need to hear from us to help understand our concerns."

Since 1973, the council has

represented thousands of employees working in Minnesota's forest products industry. Union and management delegates from throughout the state speak with a united voice on legislative issues affecting jobs and the economic health of the industry.

Bob Olson, co-chair of the council, says "When we're sitting in the offices talking with these folks face to face, we can see how they react, and know when we've connected and helped them understand our issues. They may not always agree with us, but they do understand. I think they're impressed that a bunch of us come down from northern Minnesota and spend time with them in St.

(continued on page 24)



Representative Loren Solberg and council co-chair Jim Marshall at the Capital.



(continued from page 22)

Paul.”

This year’s legislative issues include:

DNR Forestry Budget

The council supports funding of the DNR Division of Forestry budget as recommended by the governor. This appropriation will enable the DNR to implement its planned timber harvest on state forest lands. Also included in this appropriation is funding for the Minnesota Forest Resources Council, the state organization promoting long-term sustainable management of Minnesota’s forests.

Road Weight Limits

The Governor’s Task Force on the Primary Forest Products Industry recommended increasing road weight limits to make Minnesota competitive with neighboring states. The legislature

in 2004 approved a 10,000 pound increase for trucks delivering logs to mills. The council supports legislation to increase weight limits now by 10,000 pounds for outbound forest products, and a pilot US Highway 2 commodities corridor.

DNR Forestry Bonding

The council supports the Senate’s position of \$7 million for DNR forestry project bonding (tree planting, road/bridge maintenance, state and county forest management, land acquisition).

Biomass Energy

The Council supports developing renewable energy sources, but the council opposes including commercial timber in the proposed statutory definition of biomass. The council also opposes creating unfair competition by selling public wood fiber resources other than at public auction.

Mike Carroll Named DNR Northwest Region Director

Mike Carroll has been named Northwest Region director for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) by Commissioner Gene Merriam, effective June 1.

Carroll is currently the DNR’s Forestry Division director. He and his family live in Park Rapids. His new position will be based in the DNR’s regional office in Bemidji.

“Mike has done outstanding work as our forestry division director during challenging times,” Merriam said. “His experience makes him ideally suited to direct our work in northwestern Minnesota. He has a keen understanding of our regional issues.”

Carroll is a 25-year DNR veteran who has served in a variety of forestry positions, including area forestry supervisor in Park Rapids, superintendent of the Badoura State Forest Nursery, Forest Resource Management Program supervisor, and regional forest health specialist.

“I look forward to working with the dedicated staff and cooperators of the northwest in conserving the diverse natural resources of the region,” Carroll said. “I will draw heavily on my Northwest Initiative and Blandin Community Leadership Training to reinforce DNR’s role as a neighbor and long-term contributor to the economic, social and environmental health of the region.”

Carroll holds a bachelor’s degree in forestry from Syracuse University and a master’s degree in entomology with academic distinction from the University of Missouri-Columbia. In 1995, he served as Minnesota chair for the Society of American Foresters. During his DNR tenure, he has received numerous awards for outstanding achievement.

Carroll replaces acting regional director Roger Tietz, who will return full time June 1 to his job as the DNR Enforcement Division’s regional supervisor in Bemidji.



Autumn colors on a cool day in September make tree planting for the WFEJLC delegates and Two Harbors’ sixth-graders a little easier on a site in the Lake County Demonstration Forest.



A proud Two Harbors sixth-grader with Senator Tom Saxhaug planting spruce trees in the Lake County Demonstration Forest north of Lake Superior.

LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

"Early Fire Control"

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*



For the past 30 years, northern Minnesota has enjoyed a period of fairly wet weather, free from any large forest fires. Now, in the fall of 1976, we have had fire conditions following a very dry spring and summer with many fires throughout the northern half of the state. And, while

the condition is bad to say the least, it is not new.

From the time logging began in the state in the 1840s, the northern half of Minnesota has been confronted with many dry years and bad fire conditions. In the early years of logging, forest fires were

not much of a problem to the logger, mostly because the logging camps operated only during the winter months and settlers had not started to open up the land for farming. While there was some loss to the companies, it was mostly in fire-killed timber. In a few cases, fire may have been of some help in removing brush and debris, making logging easier.

However, following the Hinckley fire of Sept. 1, 1893, when logging camps and equipment and much standing timber were destroyed along with over 400 lives, the loggers, like the settlers, became aware of the terrible threat to life and property that uncontrolled forest fires could cause. When the town of Chisholm was wiped out by another fire on Sept. 4, 1908, with vast damage to property and timber, loggers became even more aware of forest fires. The Chisholm fire burned over 20,000 acres with two million dollars' worth of standing timber.

In the fall of 1910, 16 years after the great Hinckley fire, another fire struck Minnesota along its northern boundary and wiped out the towns of Baudette and Spinkner. The year 1910 was the hottest and driest on record so far, and on Oct. 9, the forest fire, driven by a southwest wind, rolled in on the two towns and reduced them to ashes with the loss of 42 lives. Following this fire, public sentiment demanded a better fire control system, and as a result the legislature of 1911 appropriated funds and passed laws setting up a system of rangers and ranger districts throughout the forested area of the state.

These laws required loggers and timbermen to burn slashings and report their cuttings, putting loggers directly into fire control work by the reduction of what was considered a fire hazard. Ranger patrol systems for disposal of whatever slash they considered hazardous. Railroads and logging companies were required to patrol their railroads and take steps to see that their locomotives did not set fires. Each camp foreman became responsible for carrying out the fire control and prevention within his camp operations area. Besides this, fire patrolmen were used to patrol all engines



Early fires in northern Minnesota, sweeping through a pioneer site (above) and threatening a small town (below).



over the logging spots.

With the coming of railroad logging and the operation of steam jammers, the chance of fire became much greater. Fire fighting and control still remained the responsibility of the district rangers. However, ranger districts were large and greatly undermanned, and the rangers depended pretty much on the logging companies to cover their work areas.

In order to supplement the work of the scattered state rangers and patrolmen, some of the larger companies hired summer patrolmen for their operations and timber stands. With the help of the weather, fires were cut down in number considerably between 1911 and 1917. However, with the dry weather of 1917, followed by another dry year in 1918, fires again began to get out of control. Many small fires were burning throughout the area and with a hurricane wind developing on Oct. 12, fires rolled over the towns of Moose Lake, Cloquet, and the smaller villages of Kettle River, Lawler, Munger, Brookston, Adolph and all the area in between, even threatening the city of Duluth. Property damage was estimated to be \$28 million and 438 lives were lost.

In order to try to establish blame for the fire (or fires, as it was found that there were at least six distinct strips of burned over areas), many lawsuits were started to collect damage from the larger lumber companies and the railroads.

Since the railroads were under government control at that time, the government finally paid most of the claims. While the lumber companies won all of their suits, it cost them many thousands of dollars. After the 1918 fire and the damage claims, all the logging companies operating in northeastern Minnesota greatly increased their efforts to control any fires that might start in their operations or logging areas and result in claims for damage. Several fire control organizations were formed to work with and under the direction of the district rangers.

The Oliver Iron Company woods operation in the Brecknon and Bemisville area had set up a system of fire patrolmen who worked throughout their operations during the summer months. This was composed of camp clerks, foremen, straw boxes, cruiser and other supervising personnel who worked in the camps during the winter months. In case of fire, they used the little fire equipment available in the camps.

In 1919, the first private fire control organization, known as the Wales Forest Protective Association, was established with Noah Dattineau in charge and Leo Fay as his assistant. Their headquarters was set up at Scott Junction on the Wales branch. This organization assumed responsibility for all fire control in the area lying east of the Duluth and Iron Range Railroad to St. Louis County, consisting of

about four townships, and about 10 townships in Lake County lying south of Township 53 and north of Township 54 as far east as Range 9. This relieved the state of a large portion of District 3 and gave the chance to spread help to other portions of District 3, which was greatly undermanned.

The Wales Forest Protection Association was financed by several companies that had timber operations and stands of timber in the area. Each company paid according to the number of acres in its holdings. Some of the main timber holders in this area were the Oliver Mining Co., Cloquet Tie and Post Co., North Star Timber Co., Consolidated Paper Co., Scott Graff Co. and the Duluth and Iron Range Railroad Co. They built and maintained lookout towers, telephone lines, and carried on all fire protection work with as many as 20 patrolmen working during the summer months. Most of their travel was done by foot or by railroad motor car.

West of the Iron Range, between the Range and Duluth, the timber was mostly owned by the Combined Weyerhaeuser Companies of Cloquet and many camps were in operation. The few patrolmen they had helped some in controlling fires, but the summer of 1922 proved to be a bad fire season. In August a large fire started

near White Face station on the Duluth Winnipeg and Pacific Railroad and burned through to Marblum. Much of the standing pine timber in 55-13 and 54-16 was burned. The National Guard was called out to help fight this fire, which was brought under control with the help of some rain. All of the burned timber had to be cut in order to salvage some of it.

The Combined Weyerhaeuser Companies had been planning to expand their protection program for some time, and following this 1922 fire, action was taken. James Ryan, my father, had been directing the mapping of the 1918 fire and handling the field work in connection with the lawsuits filed against the companies. He was called into the office of William Kenedy, general manager of the Cloquet companies, and given the job of setting up a fire control organization similar to the Wales Association. This was to cover the companies' work area west of the Duluth and Iron Range Railroad in St. Louis County south of the Iron Range.

The organization would differ from the Wales Association in being financed by the Cloquet companies only. More time and effort would be spent in collecting information on fires that might protect the companies from suits. However, the main objective would be the control and

Timber destroyed by one of Minnesota's early fires.





A crown fire in action and one of the early wooden lookouts built by the Fire Patrol Association throughout the Cloquet Fire Patrol District. Some of these lookouts were replaced later by steel lookouts.



suppression of fires. This organization, as the Wales organization, was to be under the approval and direction of Percy Vibert, the ranger in District 9 at Cloquet. In 1923 Vibert's district consisted of most of St. Louis County south of the Range and extended across Lake County to the Cook County line. During the spring of 1923, plans were made to establish headquarters at the crossing of the DNE Railroad and Highway 4 known as the Vermilion Trail. The organization was known as the Cloquet Fire Patrol Association, and lasted from June 1, 1923 to Feb. 1, 1930. In setting up the boundaries of the area to be served by the association, we took over districts that had been manned part-time by state-paid men at Cotton, Markham, Central Lake and Bowditch, thus giving Vibert a chance to hire more men in the fringe areas to the south and west.

In May of 1923, buildings were set up at the headquarters site, consisting of a combination bunkhouse, kitchen and office, a two stall garage, a speeder house, a warehouse and food storage building, and an ice house. A four-stall garage and two log cabins were built in 1924 as well as horse racks, etc. I had been working as a pulpwood scaler and log cutting inspector for the St. Louis Mercantile Co., one of the Weyerhaeuser companies. I was transferred to headquarters to work as supervisor of this organization under the supervision of my father, who had other duties with the companies, such as checking contract loggers and timber estimating supervision. However, much of his time during the summer months in the first years of the organization was spent at headquarters.

We built lookout towers (several wood towers at first, later replaced by steel towers) and telephone lines. Much of our travel was by railroad motor car or "speeders," with men on hand speeders patrolling after the jammers and locomotives. We had charge of all the brush-burning around logging camps and along railroad spurs that were to be used during the summer months. Patrolmen were assigned to fire control wherever there were company men working along the rivers during the drives. During the spring of 1925 we had 600 men burning brush during the month of April. We set up a system of patrol beats that were covered regularly throughout the district with register boxes where patrolmen would record the weather and conditions. Watchmen were stationed at timber landings along the railroad where fires might cause considerable damage.

Our fire protection area covered all land south from Township 59 to and including Township 63 and parts of Township 58 in Ranges 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, parts of Range 17 and also in the Hall Junction operations in Ranges 18 and 19. We also had a special

man in the Beaver Rivers operations in 51-15 during the summers of 1924 and 1925. During the peak years we had about 23 summer patrolmen. Most of these men were straw bosses, camp clerks and scalers who went back to work in the lumber camps during the winter months, with only two or three men working over winter checking slash.

All railroad patrols were under our supervision and we ordered that the trains be patrolled whenever we thought the danger of them starting fires existed. Besides the regular patrolmen, we had men stationed in the camp work areas who would work checking jammers, locomotives and work areas. These men would work the duration of the particular job, lived in the camps under our direction and were paid by us.

Upon the organization of the Cloquet Fire Patrol Association, all camp foremen clerks were notified that they were to give us the greatest cooperation, that all work would stop and the crews turned over to us in case of fire and that they must enforce any rules on fire prevention that the association might prescribe. All of the association's regular patrolmen were commissioned by the state Forestry Department and had the full power of state rangers. We employed about 15 seven-month patrolmen during most of the time the association was in operation. During the later years some state funds were available and a few of our men were paid from those.

When the association was formed in 1923, the Combined Cloquet Companies had about 700 to 800 million board feet of pine still standing. All of this virgin timber had been harvested by 1929. Of this, about 500 million was in the Stroud area, the balance was in the 55-13 (Comstock Lake) area west of Mile Post 81 on the Iron Range Railroad in 57-13, in 55-12 around Stone Lake, in 51-15 on the Beaver and several lesser scattered blocks.

In the summer of 1924 some 100 million board feet of cut logs were hung up in Island Lake when the power company drew off the water. This created a bad fire hazard and some logs burned.

Some 20 large 200-man camps and 30 or more jobber camps were in operation during the life of the association. The fire-fighting equipment was cached throughout the district and was composed mostly of hand tools and pump tanks. At headquarters we had large amounts of hand tools and pumps, blankets, dishes and tents to handle fires and men who had to be fed and camped.

During most of the time, our first line of defense for fire suppression came from the camps, and when they were not in operation, lumberjacks would be picked up from the employment offices in Duluth. Settlers and local people were used in the fringe and settled parts of the district. Much of

our transportation was by railroad speeder and up to 12 automobiles were operated by the association. While we cannot take all the credit, as the weather did cooperate, the fire loss in our district from 1922 to 1929 was cut down considerably. We had several fires of around 200 acres, but all were brought under control without too much loss.

In the fall of 1929 we had what was known as the "Harvey fire" that burned along the west side of 55-15 and into 56-15. However, it was not until shortly before the association was dissolved that we had a really bad fire. While we were enjoying pretty good success in our district, the Wales Association to the east of us had several large fires in the spring of 1926 that burned over most of two townships (56-57 P).

My father had taken another position with the companies and in 1929 the supervision of fire control work came under Ed Marshall, an ex-supervisor of the Chippewa National Forest who had been hired by the companies to head their forestry program. Reggie Vibert, brother of the ranger Percy Vibert, was given some of my father's duties and was on the payroll of the association that last six months of 1929.

In late fall of 1929, the companies decided to dissolve the association and on Feb. 1, 1930, all equipment of the association, along with a sum of money, was turned over to the state as they could assume the job of taking care of any fire hazards that may have been left by the logging operations in the form of slash.

Thus, after about seven fire years, the Cloquet Fire Patrol became a thing of the past. During the time it was in operation the checks of the Cloquet Tie and Post Co., nonoperational at this time, were used to pay for all the men and supplies. Most of our fire fighting was done at the rate of 40 cents per hour and most of our patrolmen were paid \$100 per month plus room, board and expenses.

During the time that the Cloquet Fire Patrol was in existence, two other associations sprang up. One was known as the Kabetogama Fire Patrol Association and handled fire control in the operations of Virginia and Rainy Lake Counties. The other was known as the Galvin Fire Patrol Association and handled fires in the Galvin branch of the International Lumber Co. (M&O) in Keweenaw County. Both of these were short-lived. The Oliver Mining Co. still maintained some patrolmen in their Burnside holdings but not to the extent of the association.

Even the time the state Forestry Department was set up in 1911 until the closing of the logging camps in the early 1930s, the logging camps were the first source of organized fire crews and with private fire control organizations, loggers played a large part in early fire control.



These photos all show destruction of 1931 fires - including weather's home (above) and cars abandoned and burned in a flash in the May Creek area.



The hofstein cow and the spike buck above suffocated but were unringed in 1931 fires. The deer below suffocated and burned.



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.

USED EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

FOR SALE

CABLE SKIDDERS

1991 JD 640E, new tires35,500
 1969 TF C4P.O.R.
 1970 JD 440A10,500
 640 JD rebuilt engine
 and transmission14,500

GRAPPLE SKIDDERS

1991 TJ 450B, Cummins eng...18,000
 1982 JD 540B w/studded
 chains21,000
 1989 JD 648D, dual func.....30,000
 1998 JD 648G II, single function,
 enc. cab with A/C55,000
 1980 TF C6, with 23.1x26 tires..9,000

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 1995 D3CLGP Cat, new
 undercarriage, very clean ...33,000
 1975 450C, 6-way blade.....12,500
 1990 650G, 6-way blade.....32,000
 1977 D6D LGP27,000
 1987 D4H LGP, 6-way blade,
 encl. cab27,000

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 w/60" slasher45,000
 1987 210C 6 cyl JD
 slasher pkg27,000
 1995 1000B Morbark self-prop.
 carrier, pull thru delimeter,
 60" circular slasher55,000
 1969 Brown semi trailer
 w/centermount loader6,500
 1987 XL 175 Husky, on truck..17,500

TRUCKS

1978 GMC 2-ton w/hydr hoist,
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DELIMBERS

1981 JD 74314,500
 1995 320 Cat w/3500
 DM Denbarco75,000
 Siiro delimeter/slasher.....7,000

EXCAVATORS

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 1990 JD 490D27,000
 1984 JD 690B13,000
 Kobelco SK50UR mini
 excavator9,000

Hitachi EX50URG mini

excavator10,000
 1996 Yanmar B6U mini
 excavator13,750

FELLER-BUNCHERS

AND SHEARS

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 20" sawhead102,000
 1991 775B Barko39,000
 1979 Drott 40, shearhead.....17,000
 1978 Drott 40, JD eng.....13,000
 1993 JD 590D w/18'
 Roto saw27,000

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Koehring sawheadP.O.R.
 1995 JD 643D, w/Koehring
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 w/2001 AFM #60 3 dr. roller
 processor head, 3000 hrs.
 on head95,000

1993 Risley Black Magic
 w/Risley sawhead65,000
 1976 JD 544B17,000
 1976 JD 544 20" shear.....21,000
 1988 910 Cat, 17" shearhead,
 rebuilt trans.....32,000

1984 411B Hydro-Ax.....15,000
 1987 411B Hydro-Ax.....20,000
 1986 511B Hydro-Ax, 6 BT
 Cummins27,000

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 Timbeo bar saw25,000

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 1992 JD 410D backhoe27,000

JD 544B.....15,500
 1979 JD 544B18,500
 1981 JD 644C25,000

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 loader6,700
 Cat V80D 8,000# forklift6,500
 54" slasher w/power unit6,500
 60" slasher w/power unit14,500
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 to fit 643 JD9,000
 New Hanfab slasher, 60"P.O.R.
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