

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

JULY/AUGUST 2020

VOLUME 75

**2020 North Star Expo
Canceled**

**DeLack Logging -
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TPA Annual Mtg
October 20th
Timberlake Lodge



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TIMBER BULLETIN

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Duluth, Minnesota

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ON THE COVER

An empty Itasca County Fairgrounds. For more on the cancelation of the 2020 North Star Expo, please see page 12.

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What started out as a dry summer has definitely changed in the last week or so. Some areas have been hit with several inches of rain and unusually high wind storms. Not good for anybody in the timber industry, or ANY industry for that matter. As usual, we will survive. We hope mother nature gets leveled out and we can get some of the mess cleaned up before the snow gets here.

It was with deep regret to have to throw in the towel on the North Star Expo this year. With our current administration's orders in place, it just wasn't going to be feasible to make it happen. I can assure you that TPA staff and the Expo committee did look at all options to try to make it go on. Unfortunately, at some point they just were not going to let us go forward with what would have been an effective event for our vendors. A deep disappointment to have to cancel one of the highlights in our industry for the summer. We look forward to next summer to be back with a bigger and better Expo.

President's Column



With our legislators at a severe impasse, the legislative session was (in my opinion) a failure. At some point in time, we need to get across to these folks that not everyone is going to get their way and decisions need to be made and compromises met for the betterment of our state.

It seems to be getting worse more now than ever that the two sides cannot meet in the middle and come to a resolution. In the meantime, hardworking people are losing jobs and careers to the fault of inconsistent policies and adversarial actions from elected officials. That being said, it makes it very hard for TPA staff to effectively get some of our items looked at and changed. The work goes on and we must thank our staff for being very diplomatic

and persistent in their work.

The TPA Annual Membership meeting date has been set to October 20th at TimberLake Lodge in Grand Rapids. The agenda has been changed to fit mandated orders and you will see an agenda coming soon from the TPA office. We hope to see a good membership turnout!

With all the industry changing directives, and market related downtimes etc. etc., I hope that our members, and all members of our logging community, have remained healthy, safe, and found a new sense of normalcy at some level. With fall approaching, remember to get out and enjoy some time with family and friends. The trees will be there.

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Years ago, the Grateful Dead released an album titled, "What a Long, Strange Trip it's Been." The way things are going this year, maybe the same can be said for COVID-19 and its impact on our state and nation since mid-March.

For TPA members and

Executive Vice President's Column



Minnesota's logging community, virus limitations and state guidelines

forced the cancellation of this year's North Star Expo. Even though it's an outdoor event on spacious grounds, guidelines would

have required us to limit attendance to 250 people.

For an event that regularly draws several times that number, it would have severely limited participation and engagement for loggers, truckers, vendors, and other attendees.

We typically have between 175 vendors and volunteers on-site before we open the gates – and restricting or policing attendance would be counter to what the event is intended to do – which is to bring the logging community together!

The Expo also gives vendors maximum exposure to customers and potential clients. Limiting attendance to 250 people wouldn't allow that.

We're disappointed, but it doesn't dampen our enthusiasm for next year. The Expo is a great event – and we plan to be back in 2020 hosting the 67th North Star Expo,

September 17 and 18, 2021 – so please mark your calendars!

Despite the negativity of the virus news, we are seeing some signs of economic recovery. USA Today reported in early August that the U. S. added 1.8 million jobs in July as states and businesses reopened. Job growth occurred even as some southern states battled coronavirus hotspots and outbreaks.

New home sales rose for the third straight month in June. According to the industry publication *Random Lengths*, this summer saw price records broken for softwood lumber and structural panel markets.

But COVID-19 mileage varies – with results impacting different markets in different ways. The biggest impact to our industry and the region: Verso's paper mill closures in Duluth and Wisconsin Rapids.

TPA staff has been busy working with local, state, and Federal agencies to seek relief for existing timber sales for markets that no longer exist because of the closures. Several counties and the DNR have responded with assistance – either announced or planned. More information has been sent to TPA members and can be found elsewhere in this issue of the *Timber Bulletin*.

The U.S. Forest Service also announced COVID-19 extensions, called SOPI extensions, earlier this spring. Additional relief for loggers has been introduced in Congress and we will be working with state legislators on additional relief for state timber sale permits when the Minnesota legislature convenes its next regular session in January.

The stage is set for the November general election. The virus has thrown traditional campaigning by the wayside, and some of the August primary results were eye-opening.

Incumbent state Senator Erik Simonson (DFL-Duluth) lost his seat to newcomer Jen McEwen. She ran as a "progressive" candidate

with an endorsement from the Sierra Club. Simonson was helpful on energy policy and joined other northern Minnesota legislators this past session to seek an "Essential Services" listing for the entire forest products supply chain during the early stages of the Governor's stay at home Executive Order.

Simonson was also helpful on other legislation in support of the forest products industry. The change reflects the shift underway in urban areas throughout the state – with "progressive" candidates earning victories over moderate incumbents.

On the Federal front: 8th District Republican Pete Stauber will be challenged in November by DFLer Quinn Nystrom; 28-year-incumbent Democrat, Rep. Collin Peterson (District 7), will face a challenge from former Minnesota Lieutenant Governor Michelle Fischbach; and incumbent DFL Senator Tina Smith will face former Minnesota Congressman Jason Lewis, the Republican challenger.

At the top of the ticket, will President Donald Trump and VP Mike Pence earn another four years? Or will it be Joe Biden and his VP pick Kamala Harris?

Voting is a right and a privilege. We'll have to endure the barrage of negativity and messaging before November. But don't let it deter you from exercising your right to vote Nov. 3.

We hope to see you at the TPA Annual Meeting in Grand Rapids, Tuesday, October 20. Until then, here's hoping we return to a sense of normalcy soon.

In the meantime, stay safe and healthy – on the job and off. A healthy logging and trucking community in Minnesota will keep timber moving safely from the woods to the mills.

Be well – and stay safe.

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Member Feature...



Scott and Neil DeLack

Great For Logging

It's been a warm, dry summer in northern Minnesota, great for logging. Even in Koochiching County, which tends to have a lot of soft, swampy ground that takes a while to dry up following spring break-up.

"The weather's been good," logger Scott DeLack of Littlefork says. "It's good for production."

DeLack's logging operation is just getting back to work now that the toasty temperatures have dried things out. They're starting the year on a sale about 40 miles east of Littlefork, east of Highway 53 off the Camp 90 forest road. It's

actually DeLack's third time at the site, now finishing up a 6000 cord harvest of mostly aspen.

"There are dabs of birch, balsam, and spruce in there, too," DeLack says. "But it's pretty much aspen. We cut part of it last summer, and another part this spring. And now we're cutting the last portion of it. It's great summer ground."

For the folks at DeLack Logging, it's good to be back in the woods, back to a degree of normalcy, after the COVID pandemic and the resulting loss of markets and disruption in Minnesota's logging community.

"It's been an interesting year,

hasn't it?" the 54-year-old DeLack asks. "It'll be interesting to see what comes next."

The origins of the DeLack Logging can be traced back more than eighty years, to when Scott's grandfather Glen worked in the Promersberger Logging camp and participated in the "Last Log Drive on the Littlefork River" in 1938. Scott's dad Neil—Glen's son—came along and helped out in the woods until graduating from Littlefork High in 1959.

Despite veering off to work in well drilling for a couple of years, Neil was back working in the woods, for the Koochiching County Land Department, putting up timber sales



Joe Anderson operates a John Deere 2154 stroke delimitter with a 2100C Lim-mit on DeLack's Logging's job 40 miles east of Littlefork. Anderson has worked for the company for 38 years.

for nine years. But at night and on weekends, he was also hand falling wood and delivering to the Boise mill in International Falls. By 1969, it was time to start DeLack Logging.

"I ran the Littlefork district for Kooch County," Neil says. "I was cutting a little wood at night, making extra money. I had bought a John Deere 440 dozer with one of those little trailers behind with a loader on it. It had lights on it and I'd hand fall trees and skid at night. I finally decided, why don't I do that full time?"

"I took that dozer and I bought one of the first shears they ever made and put it on it," he says. "That was an improvement. Then I bought a used skidder—I never had much for skidding other than a dozer—and it just grew from there."

Neil and his wife Laurel had a son and a daughter. Scott was primed to follow in his father's footsteps, helping in the woods during his school years, before graduating from Littlefork in 1984. He did attend Bemidji State to consider his career options, but after a couple of years was back in Littlefork, working alongside his dad.

"I just figured this was good as anything was going to be," Scott says.

Scott started out driving truck,

hauling wood to the Boise paper mill in International Falls—now Packaging Corporation of America—for DeLack's one crew. Neil mostly ran the business and did the dozer work, while a couple of other ran the woods equipment, harvesting timber.

Through the years the DeLacks

built a good relationship with Boise, and the business grew.

"We added a crew," Scott says, "so we had two then. And then Boise expanded so then we added another one. But we still weren't keeping up with what they wanted, so in the winter time we started running four."



Tanner Nordlund drives DeLack Logging's John Deere 748H skidder.

In addition, Scott was buying into the business little by little. By 2005, Neil was 65-years-old and wanted to take a step back—not that he fully went away, building a lot of roads over the next ten years or so. Still, Scott was ready to buy the company outright, armed with lessons learned over years of working with his father.

“He taught me the importance of hard work,” Scott says. “Also the importance of good maintenance, and about treating people as you want to be treated. Employees especially.”

That outlook has paid off in being able to hire and retain employees over the years. In fact the guy running the stroke delimeter over on the Camp 90 road—Joe Anderson—has been working for the DeLacks for 38 years.

“When you get good people,” Scott says, “you want to hang onto them.”

On summer days like this one, Scott is taking care of business back in the shop in Littlefork. In another week or two they’ll open another job and work right along until freeze-up when all four crews are operating and DeLack Logging is running at full capacity. In the meantime, they also have plenty of wood from last winter’s harvests yarded around the area to keep them busy hauling wood to the Falls.

Like his dad, Scott now has a partner in the business. His 24-year-old son Taylor has returned to Littlefork after earning a finance/entrepreneurship degree from the Business School at Bemidji State in 2017. It’ll come in handy if and when the day comes when he’s ready to take over DeLack Logging. Taylor spends a lot of his time in the winter building woods roads, for the company’s various logging jobs, but on this day he’s hauling yarded wood that was harvested over the winter to PCA. Of his college buddies from business school, Taylor is about the only one now driving truck.

“That’s about right,” Taylor laughs. “I know of one kid from North Dakota, and he’s a farmer, so he’s back on the farm and helps drive truck, but otherwise, not many. Just us two. A lot of the guys got accounting degrees and they’re



Taylor DeLack with a load of tree length aspen delivered to PCA’s Internatioal Falls mill.

CPAs for big accounting firms in Minneapolis. For most of the kids, it’s big cities. You move to where the big corporations are.”

But that wasn’t Taylor’s plan. He’s perfectly happy back in Littlefork, learning the business and driving truck.

“It was good to get away for a little bit,” Taylor says, “but it’s

always good to be back home.”

Taylor’s mom Leah—she and Scott are celebrating thirty years of marriage in September—is also involved in the business, handling the bills, payroll, all the paperwork. Scott and Leah also have a daughter; Paige is a teacher and lives in Aurora with her husband and their daughter.



Gary Nordlund harvests aspen with a Tigercat 845D feller buncher.

Thanks to the COVID-19, all logging businesses in Minnesota face challenges. For the DeLacks, Verso's Duluth mill had been a market for their spruce and balsam volumes, so the mill's closure in June hit close to home. Other mills in the state saw demand for finished products due to the pandemic, tightening markets and increasing concern among loggers.

Still, this business is what DeLack knows. Certainly there have been ups and downs over the years, and 2020 has presented its share of challenges. But being outside, working in the woods, is one of many reasons DeLack loves what he does.

"Just being independent," DeLack says. "If I want to take tomorrow off, I can take tomorrow off. I don't have to ask anybody. That's pretty nice."

If there's a silver lining, it's these warm and dry conditions, enabling companies like DeLack Logging to get to work.

"It's good to be back out there," Scott says. "Nice and dry. Great for logging."



One of several tree length aspen loads leaving a site harvested over the winter, bound for PCA's International Falls mill. The DeLacks have eight trucks, as well as trailers to haul both tree length and 100-inch timber.



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2020 North Star Expo Canceled

Due to Minnesota state guidelines as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the North Star Expo will not be held in 2020.

TPA started the North Star Expo in 1953. This year's event at the Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids was to be the 67th annual.

"It's a major disappointment," TPA's Expo committee chair Chad Lovdahl said. "We work hard throughout the year for the fun of the two-day event when we get to see everyone else from the industry from around the state. We'll miss getting together this year."

The State's largest logging equipment show not only draws loggers from throughout the state, but also vendors from around the country, as well as lawmakers, agency personnel, other industry stakeholders, even school kids from around the region, learning about the logging industry. The Expo is the largest timber industry gathering each year in Minnesota.

In the weeks leading up to the announcement, vendor registration for this year's event was strong. TPA staff had had numerous conversations with our stakeholders, including members, vendors, Itasca County officials, and more about the possibility of holding the Expo during the pandemic. Most—if not all—expressed a desire to hold the event this year.

Current Minnesota guidelines limit events to 250 attendees at a time. Including vendors and volunteers, the Expo typically has between 175 people on-site before the gates are even opened, and several times that number throughout the two-day event.

"Restricting attendance would be unmanageable for several reasons," TPA Executive Vice President Mike Birkeland wrote in a memo to members and vendors, "including the fact that we want to give our vendors maximum exposure to as many clients and potential clients as possible. Limiting attendance to 250



Usually a hub of activity every September, The Itasca County Fairgrounds will be empty and quiet due to the cancelation of this year's North Star Expo.

doesn't allow that."

Dates for the re-scheduled 67th North Star Expo are already set: September 17 and 18, 2021 at the Itasca County Fairgrounds.

Information for vendors will be available Spring, 2021.

"We are looking forward to 2021," Lovdahl said. We can't wait for next year's Expo."



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Please mark your calendars for September 17-18, 2021 for the 67th Annual North Star Expo at the Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids!

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
Becker County		
<i>May 22—Oral Auction</i>		
Aspen Mixed	\$28.08	NA
Oak Mixed	\$14.15	NA
Birch Mixed	\$11.07	NA
Jack Pine Mixed	\$18.15	NA

10 of the 11 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—Baudette Area *June 8—Sealed Bid*

Aspen		
Species (PB)	\$23.99	\$36.62
Aspen		
Species (PW)	\$34.43	\$37.12
Black		
Spruce (PB)	\$14.28	\$14.05
Tamarack (PW)	\$ 5.11	\$ 6.10

20 of the 25 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—Central Region *June 8—Sealed Bid*

Norway		
Pine (PB)	NA	\$12.71
Aspen		
Species (PB)	NA	\$18.20
Oak Species (PB)	NA	\$24.71

3 of the 27 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—NE Region *June 9—Sealed Bid*

Aspen		
Species (PW)	\$33.34	\$25.01
Trembling		
Aspen (PW)	\$32.85	\$15.96
Norway		
Pine (PB)	\$22.68	\$54.46
Black		
Spruce (PW)	\$32.38	\$29.23

25 of the 48 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—Bemidji Area *July 10—Sealed Bid*

Aspen		
Species (PW)	\$31.46	\$31.37
Black		
Spruce (PB)	\$21.36	NA
Tamarack (PW)	\$ 4.36	\$ 5.10
Balsam Fir (PB)	\$20.99	\$19.31

30 of the 37 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—NW Region

June 11—Sealed Bid

Aspen		
Species (PW)	\$13.94	\$21.77
Norway		
Pine (PB)	\$40.88	\$40.57
Jack Pine (PB)	\$15.61	\$39.15
Balsam Fir (PB)	\$24.46	\$13.25

32 of the 44 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Itasca County

June 12—Sealed Bid

Aspen	\$37.46	\$36.11
Red Pine	\$50.14	\$25.47
Balsam	\$16.90	\$12.83
Jack Pine	\$34.97	\$32.59
Spruce	\$20.29	\$21.29

43 of 49 tracts offered during the sale were purchased. The two unsold tracts were purchased after the auction.

DNR—Warroad Area

June 21—Sealed Bid

Aspen S		
pecies (PW)	\$11.65	\$17.25
Mixed		
Spruce (PB)	\$17.91	\$32.38
Jack Pine (PB)	\$23.83	\$22.55

26 of the 33 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Lake County

June 17—Sealed Bid

Maple P&B	\$ 9.63	NA
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Aspen P&B	\$24.57	NA
Birch P&B	\$ 9.18	NA
Spruce P&B	\$19.34	NA

5 of the 11 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Cass County

June 25—Sealed Bid

Aspen	\$42.44	\$40.99
Red Oak	\$39.81	\$37.81
Birch	\$29.33	\$19.04

7 of the 8 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Hubbard County

July 6—Oral Auction

Aspen Pulp	NA	\$25.99
Norway		
Pine Mixed	NA	\$36.42
Jack Pine Mixed	NA	\$42.56
Birch Pulp	NA	\$ 8.36

12 of the 14 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Koochiching County

July 8—Oral Auction

Aspen P/B	\$28.10	\$33.23
Spruce P/B	\$20.44	\$20.39
Balsam P/B	\$ 8.36	\$11.27
Jack Pine P/B	NA	\$49.08

33 of 36 tracts offered during the sale were purchased. Two of the unsold tracts were purchased after the auction.

Cass County

July 30—Sealed Bid

Aspen	\$38.70	\$38.04
Basswood	NA	\$20.12

5 of the 6 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Beltrami County

August 4—Sealed Bid

Aspen Pulp	\$27.72	NA
Tamarack Pulp	\$ 5.76	NA
Red Pine Bolts	\$52.12	NA

6 of the 7 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Beltrami County

August 6—Oral Auction

Aspen Pulp	\$39.56	NA
Red Pine Pulp	\$19.78	NA
Jack Pine Pulp	\$35.51	NA
Balsam Pulp	\$14.77	NA

12 of the 14 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Koochiching County

August 5—Oral Auction

Aspen P/B	\$31.76	\$32.60
Spruce P/B	\$17.64	\$19.27
Ash P/B	\$ 5.86	\$ 7.52
Norway		
Pine P/B	\$46.17	\$37.28

All 22 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

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Agencies Provide Relief to Loggers

Over the past several weeks since Verso announced the closure of the Duluth paper mill, several agencies have worked to provide financial relief to impacted loggers.

Since the Verso announcement, TPA has been in constant contact with these agencies: TPA made presentations at board meetings in St. Louis, Itasca, and Lake Counties, and had several informal conversations with commissioners and county staff. In addition, Koochiching County commissioner Wayne Skoe attended July's TPA Regional Board meeting in International Falls, and St. Louis County staff attended the Duluth Regional Board meeting and exchanged ideas with TPA members that same week. In August, agencies began to roll-out their programs.

For all of these programs, agencies planned to reach out to eligible logging companies, who would then need to make application for the funds.

When this issue of the *Timber Bulletin* went to press, not all agencies had finalized details of their individual programs. What follows is the latest as of the time of publication.

St. Louis County

In August, the St. Louis County Board passed several programs that provide economic relief to those affected by the Verso closure. The programs are funded by federal CARES Act dollars, created as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- \$500,000 has been allocated to the Land Department to provide relief for loggers.
- \$750,000 was approved for "Right-of-way" clearing. The County plans to only allow loggers to bid on these projects. Multiple projects were created in the \$10-15k range, and (initially) individual firms are limited to work up to \$50k.
- \$6,000,000 for "small business assistance." "Phase 1," opened August 24th and is for any business in St. Louis County



St. Louis Planning Director Matt Johnson and Land Commissioner Mark Weber (at left) discuss potential logger relief with TPA members and staff at July's Regional Board meeting in Duluth.

with 25 or fewer FTE—including loggers—could apply for grants of \$1000 per employee. Eligible uses of the monies are focused on COVID-related expenses incurred by the business including PPE, cleaning supplies, signage, safety barriers, etc. In "phase 2," businesses of up to 100 employees can apply with the exception that the loss of revenue due to COVID-19 is an eligible expense. This phase would not open until Phase 1 is closed. A tentative start date to this program would be September 7th.

Loggers are eligible for all of the above programs and can receive funds from each.

Itasca County

The Itasca County Board has dedicated \$300,000 for COVID-19 logger relief grants for loggers in Itasca County. Each logging business headquartered in Itasca County is eligible to receive something.

Koochiching and Lake Counties

Each County Board has been working with its Land Department in developing a program to distribute CARES Act funding, but nothing had been finalized when *The Timber Bulletin* went to press.

Minnesota DNR

In August, the DNR Division of Forestry sent notice to all permit



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holders, sharing the options that are currently available.

"We understand that the extended downtime at multiple mills, as well as Verso's decision to idle their mills at Duluth and Wisconsin Rapids, will affect our state's timber industry," wrote Forestry Deputy Director Craig Schmid. "A strong forest industry is critical to a healthy state economy and to managing Minnesota's forests."

The tools/options outlined by DNR include:

- **Permit Extensions:** If a permit has not yet received a regular extension, expires before June 1, 2021, and includes at least 50 cords of spruce or balsam, a 1-year regular extension without interest is available upon request. Extension requests are granted when the permit is within 30 days of its expiration date.
- **Scaling Extensions:** With approval, operators can stockpile products at an alternate landing for later delivery. Scaling extensions are available upon request if the permit is set to expire.
- **Utilization:** Statute requires that the permit holder shall remove all timber specified to be cut under the permit. For permit-holders concerned about changes in the marketability of their permit species, DNR utilization and marketing staff are available to assist and identify market options.
- **Cutting Block Option:** The permit holder can request to split a permit into smaller pieces to reduce the security required to open a permit. Under this approach, the permit holder would still be liable for the full



permit value.

- **Future Permits:** Future DNR timber appraisals will reflect the reduction in the value of balsam fir and spruce. These species may be offered as an optional or no-bid species. Forestry Area Offices may offer some permits up to a maximum term of 5 years.

In the letter, Schmid wrote, "We recognize that the above options do not address every issue or concern of the logging community. In addition to the above, we are listening to the concerns from the logging community, speaking with stakeholders and partners, and engaging in discussions about additional options to assist timber permit holders. Please keep in mind there are few state permits expiring before May 31, 2021. We hear your concerns and welcome your input as we work collectively to weather the impacts of COVID-19

on Minnesota's economy as a whole, and the forest industry in particular."

Schmid directed questions or concerns to DNR Timber Program Supervisor Jon Drimel at jon.drimel@state.mn.us or by calling 651-259-5289.

As far as financial relief, the state cannot amend or otherwise change timber contracts without legislation. That will be addressed during next full legislative session after the first of the year.

U.S. Forest Service

The U.S.F.S. also can't amend or change contracts without legislation. Earlier this year U.S.F.S. made "Substantial Overriding Public Interest" (SOPI) extensions available. Contact your local national forest office or the TPA office for information.



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PotlatchDeltic Sells 72,000 acres to The Conservation Fund

PotlatchDeltic Corporation agreed in June to sell approximately 72,000 acres in Minnesota to The Conservation Fund for approximately \$48 million in cash. The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions and is expected to close in the second half of 2020.

“This transaction represents a significant milestone in our long-term strategy to maximize shareholder value through rural real estate sales,” said Mike Covey, chairman and chief executive officer of PotlatchDeltic. “Proceeds from this transaction will further enhance our already strong liquidity position and flexibility. Our Minnesota ownership was approximately 330,000 acres when we began our rural land sale program over a dozen years ago. The timberlands that we currently own in Minnesota are heavily weighted to more remote areas, ideal for conservation and working forest protection. Nearly all of our ownership in the state is now under contract with a series of closings scheduled to occur through 2022.”

“The Minnesota’s Heritage Forest acquisition will be one of the largest land conservation efforts in Minnesota in recent history. Our goal is to ensure the 72,000 acres remain forested and sustainably managed as working timberlands,” said Larry Selzer, President and CEO of The Conservation Fund. “Our purchase and the ultimate protection of the PotlatchDeltic land will support northern Minnesota’s long tradition of timber production and outdoor recreation by preserving working forestlands and safeguarding jobs, while also protecting water quality and wildlife habitat, helping mitigate climate change, and contributing to local economies.”

This outcome is a culmination of long-standing work The Conservation Fund and PotlatchDeltic have been able to complete together to achieve



conservation and economic goals. With this transaction and others underway, this partnership has been the catalyst to conserve more than 200,000 acres in the State of Minnesota for various conservation purposes, including working forests, protection of important habitats and public access. The Conservation Fund’s purchase will be made possible through its Working Forest Fund®, dedicated to protecting large, ecologically and economically important forestlands from subdivision and fragmentation, allowing time for

permanent conservation solutions to be developed and implemented with local partners that strengthen rural economies and conserve natural ecosystems.

“The PotlatchDeltic lumber mill in Bemidji will continue to operate successfully, as it has for nearly 30 years,” said Bemidji mill manager Wade Semeliss. “The property being sold to The Conservation Fund as a working forest will continue to supply logs to our mill and provide for the protection of the essential jobs required to deliver and process the trees.”

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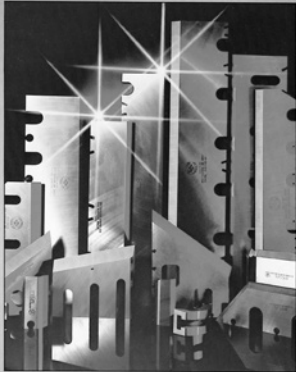
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Chippewa NF Gets New Supervisor

Lee Stewart has been named new forest Supervisor of the Chippewa National Forest, replacing Darla Lenz.

A native of Louisiana, Stewart comes to the Chippewa from the Superior National Forest, where he has been LaCroix District Ranger in Cook for two years. While on the Superior he completed a 120-day assignment in Duluth as the Public Services Staff Officer. Prior to arriving in Minnesota, Stewart spent three years as a District Ranger in New Mexico's Santa Fe National Forest.

Stewart began his career with the Forest Service in 2002 as a District Archaeologist on the Kisatchie

National Forest in Louisiana. He's also served on the Daniel Boone National Forest in New York.

Lenz served as Supervisor on the Chippewa since 2010. She leaves to become Supervisor of the Ottawa National Forest, stationed in Ironwood, Michigan.

America serving nearly 3000 OEM, distributors, and dealers. John Wallingford, President of Wallingford's Inc. stated "We are very excited with this new relationship with Veriga and look forward to bringing this great brand across the Atlantic."

Timber Talk

the Superior he completed a 120-day assignment in Duluth as the Public Services Staff Officer. Prior to

Wallingford's Announces Distribution of Veriga to North America

Wallingford's Inc. is pleased to announce a new partnership with Veriga, one of the largest global manufacturers of tire chains and forestry tracks.

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“We are looking forward to our cooperation with Wallingford’s Inc.,” said Mitja Peterlin, CEO of Veriga. “We have been trying for quite some time to find the right partner to introduce our products to the North American

market. We have enormous trust in Wallingford’s, which has tradition and is a true specialist in the required field. Together we will make sure that we will give customers the best possible service that they deserve.”

Komatsu Upgrades XT-5 Family of Tracked Feller Bunchers

Komatsu is upgrading its XT-5 family of tracked feller bunchers, adding performance and operator improvements, as well as covering the machines with a special 2-Year/5,000-Hour warranty program.

The XT430-5, XT445L-5 and XT465L-5 models were introduced in 2018, and these advancements were made based on customer feedback.

To further boost multi-functioning performance for its

customers, Komatsu added 7% more horsepower (331 hp vs. 310 at launch) to the Cummins QSL9 engine and increased the hydraulic flow, while maintaining excellent fuel efficiency.

Travel speed was increased by 25% to further improve productivity. The XT445L-5/XT465L-5 models now reach 3.3 mph (5.3 kph); the XT430-5 model, 3.2 mph (5.1 kph). Added lighting elements improve nighttime visibility of the right track and when using the rear camera, for a total of 13 LED lights brilliantly illuminating nighttime operations.

“Working with, listening to, and responding to customers is the cornerstone of our product development process, so when they said that our XT-5 machines would be even better with a boost in speed and multi-functioning performance, we got to work,” said Todd Miyake, vice president, forest division, Komatsu America Corp.



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Safety Pays

By JOHN SACCOMAN, Mackinaw Administrators, LLC.

DEEER RIVER—When the hot days of July and August are in full swing and Minnesota’s unpredictable weather rolls in, it’s hard not to pay attention to what Mother Nature has to say.

Lightning and storms are commonplace during the summer logging season, even as we move into the fall. For those harvesting the state’s rich forest bounty, it comes as part of the territory with working in the woods. But it doesn’t mean even a logger with 30-years’ experience doesn’t sit up and take notice.

“It’s a horrible feeling,” Jason Newberg of Newberg Forest Products, Inc., said with a chuckle when referring to being caught in weather with lightning. “The hair stands up on the back of your neck and you’re thinking ‘when’s my turn here?’”

Although Newberg, who runs a small logging operation out of Deer River, said he hasn’t been struck by lightning in his experience, that isn’t to say he hasn’t been involved in some sticky situations.

“I’ve had a few times logging on hills and I’m cutting trees down or running the log-loader and you feel like you’re playing this game of ‘come and get me,’” Newberg said.

Newberg said he has heard of storms that move through and lightning will strike machinery at night. There’s a lot of metal with all the equipment parked in the woods, usually in an area that’s just been cleared.

“Think of the delimiters or loaders, especially when they’re parked and the boom is high,” Newberg said. “It’s like you’re a cell tower out there.”

If caught in a fast-approaching storm, Newberg said his lightning protocol is to mostly shut down and stay in the equipment for 30-minutes past the last bolt of lightning or crack of thunder.

“Sometimes when you’re in the machines, if the lightning isn’t close, you don’t know where it is,” he said. Soundproof cabs in today’s equipment make hearing the thunder even more difficult. “You may hear some static over the radio, but when it starts really barking down, I get a little queasy.”

Newberg recalled one time several years ago working a ridge south of Grand Rapids, MN, on Sugar Lake when a huge lightning storm moved in. It was all his crew could do to scatter.

“Uff,” he said. “Luckily nobody got hit. But it was an eerie feeling just to get to your pickup and get the heck out of there.”

The electrical potential in a lightning strike can be as much as 100-million volts. Lightning strikes can occur over distances as great as 40 miles. Lightning travels both in front of and behind a thunderstorm, so strikes can hit in the same place and often spreads out 60 feet over the soil around the strike point.

Despite the popular myth that being struck by lightning is an unlikely event, the statistics show that lightning strikes occur frequently. In many cases of the world, lightning strikes are second only to flooding as



White pines snapped off in a storm and landed on top of Jason Newberg’s feller buncher.

the greatest cause of storm-related death and injury.

Forestry professionals are at high risk because their work is outdoors and close to known strike points such as tall trees and heavy equipment. Loggers can increase their chances of avoiding a lightning strike by following a few simple safety practices:

1. Designate a member of your crew to
 - a. Monitor daily weather forecasts
 - b. Observe local weather conditions
 - c. Alert all other members of the crew when a possible lightning threat develops.
2. When a storm moves nearby, don’t start or continue any work that cannot be stopped immediately.
3. Anticipate a high-risk situation and take action early by moving to a low-risk location. Do not hesitate. If there is lightning, you are in danger.
4. Obey this rule: If you see lightning, flee. If you hear thunder, clear.
5. Remain in your safe location for 30 minutes after the last sight of lightning or the last sound of thunder.

Thunder always accompanies lightning. When lightning occurs, the air through which it travels instantaneously is heated to a temperature that may be in excess of 50,000-degrees F. The air expands rapidly due to the heating, then quickly contracts as it cools. This contracting shock wave is what we hear as thunder.

Newberg agreed that the end goal is really to be pro-

active and try to stay on top of the weather. Ultimately, at the end of the day, the safety of you and your crew is most important.

Newberg said he remembers one storm that exacted a bit of payback on his crew. The crew was finished logging for the day, and it was in an area where several white pines were reserved. The machines were parked along the adjacent logging road.

“The big storm came blowing through and snapped a bunch of the white pines off and they were leaning and hanging all over the top of my machine,” Newberg said laughing. “The trees got their revenge.”

Mackinaw Administrators, LLC is the third-party administrator of the TPA/Northern Capital Workers Comp Insurance Program, working with program participants to increase safety, thereby reducing costs, including insurance premiums. For information on the TPA/Workers Compensation Insurance Program, call the TPA Office, or Jay Eystad (218-255-0446) or Bill Dupont (952-913-6950) of Northern Capital.



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TPA Annual Meeting Re-scheduled for October 20th

TimberLake Lodge will be the site of this year's TPA Annual Membership meeting, Tuesday October 20th at 1:00pm.

The meeting was originally scheduled for June at Sugar Lake Lodge, but the COVID-19 pandemic forced cancelation.

As always, the Annual Meeting will include TPA's Report on Association activities, featuring the organization's accomplishments over the past year, as well as election of officers. TPA staff is still working through the list of guest speakers for the event. It is expected that MLEP credit will be available for those who attend.

Due to the changes in date and venue, there will be no TPA Golf/Fishing event or Dinner this year. Those events are expected to be re-instituted in 2021.

The day will start with a meeting of TPA's Board of Directors in the morning:

Schedule of Events

10:30am	TPA Board of Directors Meeting
Noon	Lunch
1:00-5:00pm	TPA Annual Meeting

Registration materials will be sent to members in September, including a list of speakers. For more information, please call the TPA office at 218-722-5013.



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TPA: Making a Difference—For You!

Each year, TPA produces a brochure of accomplishments that we send to our members and also use when we talk to loggers about joining our Association. That brochure has been completed and you'll be receiving one in the mail in the coming weeks.

Among the highlights:

"Essential" Designation During Pandemic

TPA was at the forefront of making sure the Forest Products Industry was among businesses allowed to remain "open" through the pandemic. When Governor Walz issued his Executive Order in March, our industry was included in the "Critical Infrastructure Designation." This "Essential" declaration allowed loggers to continue in the woods, as well as allowed mills to keep making their products during the pandemic.

Response to Verso Closure

When the Duluth mill announced its closure, TPA staff immediately started conversations with lawmakers and policy makers at the county, state, and federal levels, seeking ways to give loggers relief on permits that no longer have markets.

There's much more in the brochure, including a listing of membership benefits like our Workers Comp Insurance program, Drug and Alcohol Testing program, and more! These are just some of the ways TPA works for its members on a variety of fronts—and we'll continue to do so, making it easier for you to run your business.



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LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

Care Given to Old Jacks

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*



I spent my childhood in the Bemidji area, and grew up with the logging industry. I have known most of the big and near big logging companies and many of the smaller jobbers that worked for the larger firms.

One of my pet peeves is to hear people today sound off about the terrible living conditions of the old-time lumberjack. There seems to be a tendency to picture old-time logging companies and loggers as exploiters of labor that had little thought or feeling towards the lumberjack other than to work him 10-12 hours daily, give him the poorest housing, feed him the worst food, give him meager pay and send him off to the poorhouse to die when he was old. *This was far from the truth!*

Most companies and independent loggers took very good care of their workers and older men. They and their foremen had a following of jacks that worked for them year after year, and they made a special effort to help and keep their working force.

Men who worked many years for a company often were kept on the payroll long after they were able to produce, and were paid as long as they were able to walk to the table to eat.

It was not uncommon to see several old jacks working around camp – piling, splitting wood, filing lanterns and doing minor chores while they recuperated from illness or injury (or were just too old to work in the woods.)

I remember going to a Crookston Lumber Co. camp, where George Brown was foreman, and seeing 12 old jacks just able to hobble to the table. Only when they couldn’t walk to the table were they taken from the camps.

Many older jacks were kept on as camp watchmen or were allowed to take care of a few head of horse during the summer months when the camps were not in operation.

They were given jobs that they were capable of such as watching railroad crossings, haying hills on the ice roads and working as night watchmen.

Some companies set up shacks and furnished food for their old-timers. During slack times. I have seen camp foremen stop

on the street and pick up several old-timers and take them to the camps to rest and be fed. One could always stop at a camp and stay several days even if the camp was not hiring at the time. Very few old lumberjacks went to the poor house or became recipients of public care.

In 1916, there were about 30,000 men working in lumber camps in Koochiching County; there were only five old men in the county poorhouse.

In some smaller towns, companies set up small hospitals where their men could go if hurt or sick and stay until they were able to return to camp. During the peak of logging days, many jacks had hospital tickets they bought from the “Lumberjack Sister” of St. Mary’s Hospital in Duluth: and they could go there if sick or disabled. The companies often paid for these hospital tickets.

Much has been said about the poor food that was given the jacks. This was not true. While I worked as log inspector in 1922. I ate and stayed at more than 70 camps that winter, and with the exception of fresh fruit and milk, the food was as good as or better than food served in leading hotels. The best food available under the conditions was always served, and the camp foremen were always looking for the best cooks. They knew that a well-fed crew was a happy crew and put out the best work. It was only in a few of the smaller jobber camps that one occasionally found poor food.

It was true that no inside toilets or shower baths were found in the camps, but

very few homes in the small towns had these facilities during the early 1900s. However, most camps had a small building where men could wash their clothes and “boil-up” to get rid of lice. The men themselves did a good job of policing. If a man came to camp that they thought might bring lice, they insisted that he “boil-up” before sleeping in the bunkhouse. There was always plenty of soap and hot water available.

The lumberjack was a happy, clean living individual in camp. This was not true when he went to town to blow his stake. He then slept in “dump hotels” or boarding houses and lived under pretty tough conditions until his stake was gone. Then he was ready to return to camp. His camp foreman or company man would rescue him from the “vultures,” get him back to camp and give him a few days to get back into shape for work. I have seen these men stay in camp up to two weeks before they were able to go back to work after blowing a big stake.

There were no relief rolls during the heyday of the logging industry and it was not until the late 1920s and early 1930s that transient and W.P.A. camps were set up to take care of these men. This was after most camps had closed and companies had gone out of the logging business. During the peak days of the logging industry, it was the companies and loggers that looked after their workers. If all industry took as good care of its workers as the logging industry did there would be few complaints.



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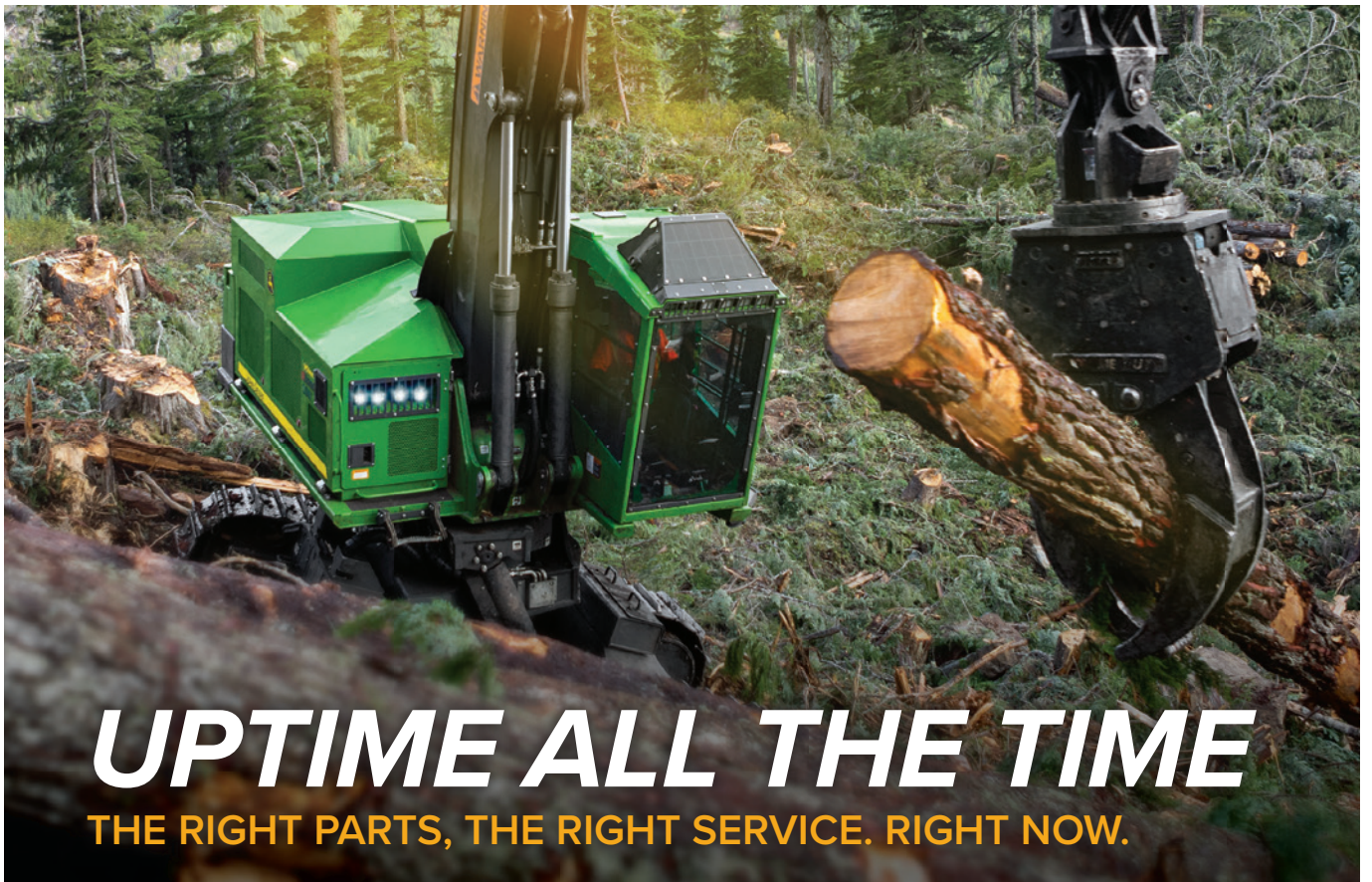
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