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TIMBER BULLETIN

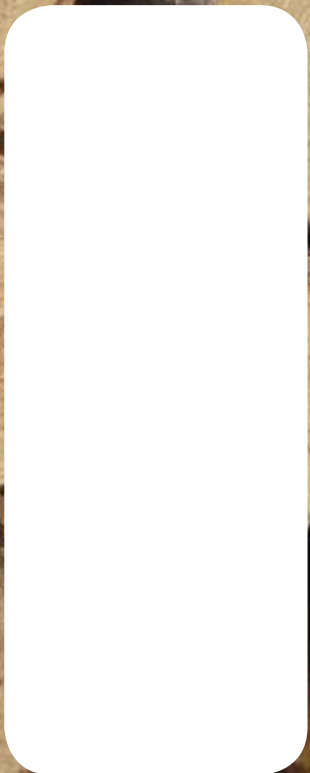
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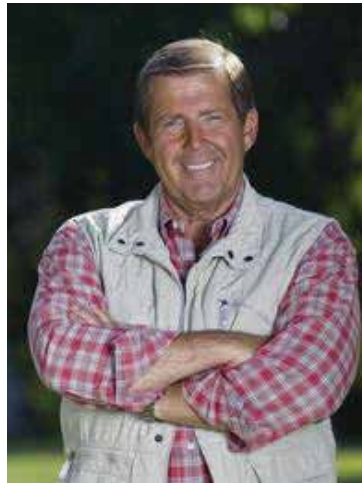
Springing Into Spring - Edin Logging Minnesota Loggers to be Surveyed





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Guest Speaker

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The Banquet caps a day full of events, including informative presentations at the TPA Annual Meeting, as well as the Golf and Fishing events.

Contact the TPA Office for tickets.

We look forward to seeing you there!

TIMBER BULLETIN

Volume 72
March/April 2017
Duluth, Minnesota

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ON THE COVER

Harvested red pine on the landing of Edin Logging's harvest near Menahga. For more on Edin Logging, please see page 8.

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It is a wet snowy morning in April as I put pen to paper. The winter was a bit short for many of us.

We all need to extend a thank you to TPA staff for working hard with MnDOT to delay road restrictions as long as possible this past winter.

I would like to remind our membership to attend our Annual Meeting. We will be convening this year at Ruttger's Resort on Sugar Lake south of Grand Rapids on June 14. The guest speaker this year will be outdoor TV personality Ron Schara. There will

President's Column



be lots of opportunity to mingle with members while fishing, golfing, and socializing. I hope to see you there!

Sadly, I am reminded of how fast life passes. Lyle

Jokinen, a life-long friend and the slasher operator for Berthiaume Logging for the last 30 years, died unexpectedly at his home this winter, leaving my life something less without him. It's a reminder that we need to spend as much time as possible with those who matter to us.

Let's all take the time to be safe. Remember, the trees will always be there.

David Berthiaume

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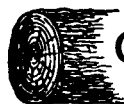
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Lowell Pittack was one of the good guys. Always a twinkle in his eye, a smile on his face and a positive, can-do approach to whatever was in front of him or us. Sadly, Lowell passed away from complications of ALS. Lowell served on the TPA Board of Directors and the TPA Executive Committee though he retired before becoming president. In retirement

Executive Vice President's Column



Lowell continued to help with the North Star Expo when it was in Grand Rapids and was always the source of some good advice or a kind word. I enjoyed working with Lowell and send our sincere

condolences to his wife Judy, son Scott and entire family. I will miss him as will TPA.



Pete Aube retired from Potlatch earlier this year. A strong supporter of TPA and one of the more remarkable people I've known, Pete built the Bemidji sawmill and was its only manager until the day he retired. In a remarkable show of courage and leadership, he kept the mill running when the bottom dropped out of the lumber markets when housing crashed a decade ago. Pete always pushed hard for doing the right thing for the forest, using the latest research for innovative silviculture and working together. He gave his time and talent to help many organizations including TPA. With his retirement we should put all fish on notice that Pete will be looking for them.



It must be the time of the year because Kent Jacobson also retired.

A longtime wood procurement leader for Potlatch and Ainsworth, Kent finished his career with a stint with the MN DNR. He brought lots of ideas, business approaches and analytics to the DNR that helped make their program better. Kent was a longtime member of the TPA Mechanization Committee which preceded the North Star Expo Committee in running our show. Best wishes for a long and happy retirement.



As I write this the Minnesota Legislature has returned from their Easter/Passover break and begun Conference Committees. This usually doesn't happen until May so the pace has picked up. One issue that has come to the surface is Xcel Energy's efforts to get out of their commitments to purchase biomass-based electricity.

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were part of the deal that allowed Xcel to store nuclear waste at their nuclear power plants on the Mississippi river.

These biomass markets have become big business for a number of our members. If Xcel gets its way most of these people will be out of business. This would be incongruous given all of the political rhetoric about trying to help and strengthen the rural economy in our state.

Word is that Xcel is seeking to use Minnesota's Renewable Development Fund to help pay for getting out of these contracts and putting our members out of business. Yup, they want to use a fund established to promote renewable energy to shut down renewable energy production. If it wasn't so outrageous it would be funny.

A deal is a deal. So long as Xcel is still storing the additional nuclear waste that the Legislature approved they should be required to purchase the biomass generated electricity that was part of the deal. A deal is a deal!



What winter there was has run its course. We dodged a bullet when MN DOT held off on most spring load restrictions during the February thaw. We are grateful for their decision which allowed many of our members to continue working into March. TPA VP Ray Higgins has done a great job communicating with MN DOT staff, developing strong relationships and helping them understand our situation, our commitment to sound roads and safe trucking.



Congratulations to all of our members for a safe winter season. We had very few injuries reported which is a testament to the attention that each of you pay to safety every day!



If you live in Duluth and have a window, Lake Superior will tell you a lot about the seasons. Smoke on the water when the cold air hits and the lake is still open. Fog and mist downtown and sunshine over the hill and waves washing over the piers when a northeaster hits.

Today it's the arrival of fish in the western end of the lake. As I look out the office window I count 31 boats on the lake. It must be Spring.



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Member Feature...



Marcus Edin

Springing Into Spring

For Minnesota loggers like Marcus Edin, spring logging often means harvesting pine on sandy soils. But finding the right sites isn't always easy.

By Ray Higgins

There's a private landowner in the Menahga area, active in the Tree Farm program, who continually manages his forestland, mostly for deer habitat. This spring, he wanted a logger to harvest red and jack pine throughout the 360-acre property. Over the years he's often hired Edin Logging, because he likes the job they do on his property.

"This is the fourth or fifth time we've worked for him," Edin says. "We're here every three years or so. His first forest management plan was written in 1980, so he's

been into it for quite a while. Deer hunting is what matters to him most. He has food plots and tree stands all over, and right now has a turkey blind up, too.

"We cut the spruce over here two years ago," he says. "You can see they're ready to replant. They have a stewardship plan and they follow it really closely."

The weather this spring has been mostly favorable. One of the few positives from this year's unusually warm winter is that Edin and crew haven't been battling with marginal ground conditions because there wasn't much frost to thaw and rise

from the soil in the first place.

"We had some rain yesterday," Edin says, "so we're not running our feller buncher today. But with very little frost last winter, we haven't had to slow down, for the most part.

For Edin Logging, based in Verndale, just west of Staples, the logging business is a family affair. Marcus is joined in the woods by his brothers, Randy and Tom, and son Lance to make up the four-man business.

The Edins got their start as kids. Their father Ken logged in the wintertime, cutting for the old



Marcus Edin uses a John Deere 703 cut-to-length processor with a 622B cutting head. The Edins use the processor for delimiting on the site. The wood is then forwarded to the landing with a John Deere 1010 single-bunk forwarder.

Hines Sawmill in Verndale.

“My dad started out skidding,” Marcus recalls, “just hauling out for him with a B-model John Deere tractor and a two-wheeled trailer. That’s how we learned.”

Like so many Minnesota boys born into logging and farming families, the Edin boys were indoctrinated in the logging business at an early age, and continued working in the woods into their high school years.

“During Christmas vacation in particular,” Marcus says, “we’d go out there and limb trees with an axe. So I learned to cut with an axe. We used to get two or three cents a stick to limb with the axe. When you’d get 200 sticks, you had a good day.”

In high school, Marcus branched out a little, working as a cook at Holm’s Café in Verndale. By the time it was time to graduate from Verndale High in 1978, he’d decided

to leave the woods behind.

“My older brother, Mike, was working construction in Fargo,” Marcus says, “so I went to live with him and got a job at the Country Kitchen as assistant manager.”

That started a successful career in the restaurant business for Edin.

“I got in with Hardee’s restaurants,” he says, “and I was actually working for one of the franchisees, training managers in four states. I wore my suit and tie every day, putting on the classroom sessions.”

That continued for more than ten years. But by the early 1990s, the economy began to wobble and the restaurant business struggled. Funding for Edin’s training program was eliminated and he had the option to go back and manage one of the franchises. But that wasn’t for him.

“I said no,” he says. “It was to go back to what I enjoy.”

That of course was logging.

Marcus returned to Verndale and found another B-John Deere and a two-wheeled trailer, along with a chainsaw to purchase, and off to the woods he went.

“That’s what I started with,” he says. “That’s what I knew, so that’s what I bought.”

In the meantime, younger brothers Tom and Randy had gone off to join Mike in North Dakota and were working in the Dickinson area in the midst of the state’s first oil boom. When that died and were looking for work to do, Tom and Randy returned to Verndale and joined Marcus in the woods.

“They just joined in,” Marcus says, “and we developed a company and went from there.”

In time, the three brothers added more conventional logging equipment. Marcus’ son, Lance, joined the operation, too. These days, Edin Logging has evolved



Harvested pine is dragged to the landing with a John Deere 848L skidder.

into utilizing a unique equipment configuration. About five years ago, they decided to try combining the standard conventional equipment

with a cut-to-length processor and forwarder as well.

As a result, the four-man crew shapes up like this: Randy runs the

feller buncher and also the skidder from time to time; Tom operates the slasher-loader and also skids; Lance drives skidder and a CTL forwarder,



Pine is slashed into various lengths, depending on the wishes of the customer. Here, 16-foot lengths have been slashed and are being piled with a Barko 495B slasher/loader.

while Marcus operates the CTL processor, which the Edins use instead of a delimber. Years ago, they were looking for a way to speed up production and decided to give the processor a try.

"We learned right away with the processor that we could limb with it faster than I could with an overhead delimber," Marcus says. "Plus, it's so much more versatile. We can go out and do a lot of different things with it. With pine when I was using a delimber, the slasher could keep up. When I started limbing with this thing, I could pull away. So we learned it's very effective that way. I'm surprised more people haven't gone to this. This is faster."

When the Edins are working in a clear-cut, they'll use the processor as a delimber. In pine thinnings, like the site they're currently working, skidding is more problematic. So they also have a small single-bunk forwarder—a John Deere 1010—to work in the tighter conditions of a thinning.

Either way, whether working in a clear-cut or a thinning, most of the wood is harvested with the feller buncher. The Edins' John Deere 843L feller buncher is smaller and has rubber tires, so it can get the job done in a thinning as well, particularly when they also have a processor at their disposal.

"There are plusses and minuses to both of it," Marcus says. "Randy is very good at maneuvering the buncher around and picking out trees. If he can't maneuver in, or if he tells me his basal area isn't quite there, I'll reach

continued on page 14

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The private owner of Edin's harvest site is managing his timber for wildlife, and has several deer stands and turkey blinds around the property.

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At the Edin Logging job, harvested jack pine and red pine in various lengths wait to be loaded on trucks and hauled to the mill.

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Edin Logging's John Deere 843L feller buncher features rubber tires rather than tracks.

continued from page 11
 in and grab another tree or two along the way because I can reach farther in with the harvester.

"One company forester we work with says, 'I don't know how they do it, it doesn't make sense to me, but I like the end result.' And the end result is what matters. As long as we're getting the right basal areas, in the end, the product is there."

On this site, the Edins are taking roughly a third of the trees from a seven-acre block of Norway pine, plus there's another 20-acre block that's mostly jack pine with a little Norway mixed in. The bolts will mostly head to Potlatch in Bemidji. As for the pine pulp here, markets are tighter. Some will go to making fence posts, some will hopefully end up as turkey shavings.

These days, in addition to the Edin brothers and Marcus' son Lance, Tom's wife Tina takes care of the bookkeeping. They've talked

about adding employees from time to time, but they like how things operate with just the family.

"We've never had employees outside the family," Marcus says. "We've discussed it and debated it, we probably could do well with it, but we don't know if we could afford it, so between workers' comp, and providing benefits, and finding somebody good, we looked at it and decided that we were just going to do what we do best, and sub-contract the rest. So we sub-contract our trucking—Jim Alexander handles that—but otherwise it's just us."

Once this job is complete, the Edins will move elsewhere, potentially working in more pine, or maybe aspen, which they typically market to Sappi in Cloquet. Oftentimes, they work on public land, purchasing county or DNR sales, and they work a fair amount of private jobs, as well. But they'll look forward to returning

to this tree farm near Menahga, where the wood is good, and the landowner is diligent about managing his forest.

"It's a good relationship," Marcus says. "When you get somebody who takes care of the woods as well as this landowner does, it's good to work with him."

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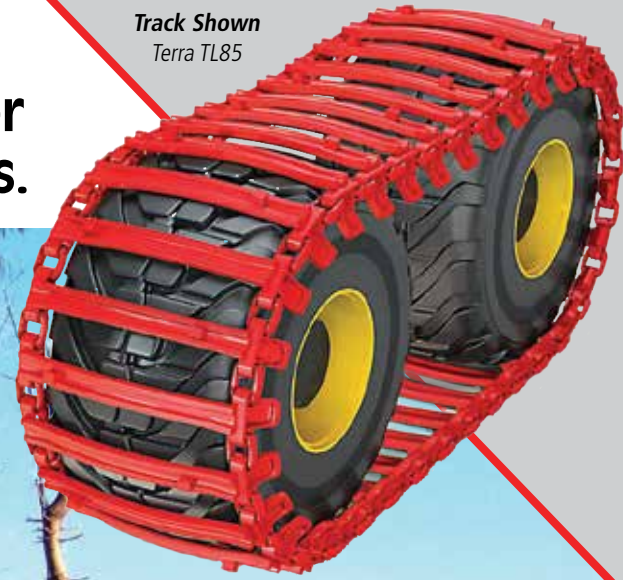
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Minnesota Loggers to be Surveyed

The University of Minnesota Department of Forest Resources, in conjunction with Minnesota Forest Industries and the Minnesota Logger Education Program is conducting a survey of the state's loggers to better understand the health of the industry in Minnesota.

The survey is the follow-up to a similar study conducted in 2012 on trends in the logging sector, and seeks to determine what has changed over the past five years.

"The data we gathered in the last survey was invaluable in understanding the financial health of the industry in our state, said professor Charlie Blinn of the University of Minnesota. "But a lot has changed in Minnesota over the last several years and we want to be able to quantify how that has affected our logging businesses."

When the study was last conducted, results showed that 60% of loggers say they were less profitable in 2011 than three years earlier. The survey also showed that over time there had been a trend toward larger producers who harvested an increasing percentage of the state's total harvest, and that loggers were slower to invest in new equipment, keeping their older machines longer than before. The 2017 version of the study will seek to find out whether those trends have continued or have changed.

In the coming weeks, loggers in the state will be sent the survey and asked to return it. Study organizers assure that all survey information will be kept confidential, via a "double-blind" process in which respondents are only known by survey code. No information will be released that can be linked to individual companies. Once the responses are received and tabulated, focus groups will be held to gain a deeper understanding of what the data showed

"We hope everyone will take the time to fill out the survey and send it back," Blinn said. "The more responses we receive, the better data we'll have to paint a more accurate picture of our industry at this time."



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Dobbs Logging Named Minnesota Logger of the Year

The Minnesota Sustainable Forestry Initiative® State Implementation Committee (SIC) named Dobbs Logging as its 2017 Logger of the Year during the Minnesota Logger Education Program conference recently held in Bemidji, Minnesota.

“Dobbs Logging is a significant economic driver in northern Minnesota,” said Jason Evans, chair of the Minnesota SIC. “Since its establishment in 1947 by Elmer Dobbs, this professional logging company annually produces large volumes of timber, contributing to the success of the International Falls-based Packaging Corporation of America/Boise (PCA) pulp and paper mill.

“This highly-respected and long-time northern Minnesota employer promotes the ideals of sustainable forestry throughout its business – from working with private landowners on harvest prescriptions and guidelines, to being involved in issues affecting the forest industry on the policy level,” Evans added.

Dobbs Logging is a second-generation business, started by Elmer Dobbs in 1947. He began producing wood with a bow saw and horse for the International Falls company, the Minnesota & Ontario Paper Company, predecessor to PCA. Seventy years later, while Elmer continues to work on building roads and skidding woods, his twin sons Gordon and Glenn run the business. Lori Dobbs, Gordon’s wife, does the company’s bookkeeping.

Dobbs Logging employs 12 people, including a third generation, Gordon’s son, Ethan. The company stresses the importance of safety, ensuring its employees are trained in safety practices, as well as keeping its equipment in top running condition. Employees annually attend Minnesota Logger



Shown, (l to r) are Gordy Dobbs, Mary Perala (PCA forestry and SIC vice-chair), Elmer Dobbs, and Glen Dobbs of Dobbs Logging, Minnesota’s Logger of the Year.

Education Program (MLEP) workshops to keep abreast of new developments in the areas of forest management guidelines, Best Management Practices, timber harvesting, and trucking.

Sustainable forestry is practiced throughout the company’s operations, particularly when placing roads and landings and working along streams, lakes, and rivers. Dobbs Logging is focused on the management and production of northern timber; however, it is committed to speaking out on policy issues. Gordon serves on the board of directors of the Minnesota Timber Producers Association.

The northern community of Littlefork, the home of Dobbs Logging, benefits significantly in economic activity from the company. “The Dobbses have been members of MLEP since its inception in 1995, and Gordy has served on our board of directors,” stated Rachel Peterson, executive

director of MLEP.

“Dobbs Logging employees have a strong sense of community, participating in the Log-a-Load for Kids campaigns and supporting local civic and church activities,” Dan Klocek, forester with PCA wrote on his nomination form. “The company not only operates at a state level and community levels, but shows its commitment to its own employees by offering liability, health, and life insurance, as well as a retirement program.”

The Minnesota SIC includes representatives from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, forest companies, the University of Minnesota, family forest owners, the Minnesota Logger Education Program, Minnesota Timber Producers Association, Minnesota Tree Farm Program, the National Wild Turkey Federation, and SFI-certified county land departments.



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TPA Annual Meeting Set for Grand Rapids

Meeting Combined With Golf and Fishing Event

Mark your calendar for Wednesday June 14, 2017, TPA Annual Meeting, Golf and Fishing Event, and Membership Banquet at Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge just south of Grand Rapids.

The events not only feature information to help members run their businesses, but also the opportunity to socialize with fellow loggers and vendors.

Highlighting this year's Annual Banquet will be guest speaker Ron Schara. A longtime outdoors writer and television personality, Ron has spent years telling his stories with his black lab sidekick, Raven, as the star. All along, Ron has become a vital resource and champion for outdoor issues. A member of both the National Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame and the Minnesota Fishing Hall of Fame, Ron understands how the forest needs to be managed, and will share stories from his years in the woods.

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

Registration forms for the 2017 Annual Meeting and Golf and Fishing Event have been mailed. Call the TPA Office for more information. We hope you'll join us for these great events!

Schedule

Thursday June 5

Morning—Annual Meeting

Afternoon—Golf and Fishing Event

Evening—Social Hour and Banquet

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Among those participating in a previous TPA golf outing at Ruttger's Sugarbrooke Course, were (L-R): Mike Warren of M&R Chips, David Haley of Haley Logging, Quinton Legler of UPM Blandin, and Joe Ulwelling and Dan Holen from Border State Bank.



Outdoor writer and TV host Ron Schara spoke at the 2006 TPA banquet and returns to speak at this year's event at Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge.

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Int'l Falls Noise Ordinance Proposed

Both the City of International Falls and Koochiching County considered noise ordinances, based in part on complaints along County Hwy 332, the designated truck route for the PCA/Boise wood yard. After several meetings, both the Kooch County Board and Falls City Council decided not to act, maintaining the status quo.

However, both bodies are asking truckers to police themselves, including limiting the use of engine brakes, if possible.

Timber Talk

A petition signed by approximately ten property owners along Hwy 332 cited speed, noise, and public

safety as areas of concern.

The Falls City Council considered a proposed ordinance that would have made it illegal to use engine brakes that caused excessive noise after being illegally modified—such as with straight pipes—except in an emergency.

Falls Mayor Bob Anderson said it wasn't just logging trucks along the truck route, but also cited pickups with straight pipes and loud motorcycles as sources of noise complaints.

During a discussion at the council meeting, several TPA members pointed out that engine brakes are a necessary safety feature, and their use cannot be limited. In addition, Hwy 332 is a truck route, and residents should expect truck traffic.

City Attorney Steve Shermoen pointed out that state statute already covered noise issues and the city didn't need to enact anything further. The council tabled the proposed ordinance and will direct city staff to post signs saying state noise laws will be enforced.

The Kooch County Board discussed the issue at a meeting and took no action, deciding to meet with area loggers and truckers. At that meeting, county staff acknowledged that the vast majority of truckers were acting



A truck hauling tree-length timber heads to the PCA/Boise mill along Kooch County Hwy 332, the designated truck route around International Falls.

appropriately. Most problems occur when trucks are empty and heading back south on 332 after unloading. Staff asked the logging/trucking community to “self-police” those not in compliance. The county will also look into posting “dynamic” speed limit signs that show a driver’s speed as they drive by.

Thieves are Stealing Birch Trees

Thieves are illegally cutting thousands of birch trees in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and selling them for home decorations.

In St. Louis County, a case was submitted to the county attorney’s office by the DNR’s enforcement division, alleging illegal birch cutting in the Aurora and Tower areas. The alleged thefts took place on both state and Superior National Forest land.

In a Facebook post, Chief Deputy Mike Richter of Washburn County, Wisconsin, wrote, “Birch theft has become the new trend in Northwest Wisconsin. This theft is replacing

theft of scrap metal or copper that for a long time has led to quick money for drug addicts and habitual criminals.”

“Whole stands are coming down throughout the Iron Range,” DNR Lt. Shelly Patten told the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Also, Chief Deputy Richter reports Douglas, Bayfield, Sawyer, and Ashland Counties, as well as Washburn County, have all experienced birch thefts.

Many of our Washburn County residents have seen some of this activity, but were not aware of the problem. Subjects involved are hauling birch products in pick-up trucks and trailers, unlike professional loggers that have specialty equipment built to haul large volume.

Tariff proposed on Softwood Lumber Imports

The U.S. Department of Commerce has announced a preliminary determination to

impose tariffs on softwood lumber imports from Canada. The federal government ruling substantiates that Canada subsidizes softwood lumber production, distorting the U.S. softwood lumber market to the detriment of U.S. sawmills, their employees and communities.

Under U.S. trade laws and its international trade agreements, the U.S. industry has a right to offsetting duties. Duties will vary depending on which Canadian company produced the lumber, but the average duty will be roughly 20%.

The Department of Commerce will continue to study information that led to the preliminary ruling, with a final determination on a tariff scheduled for September 7.

The Department of Commerce is still considering U.S. industry claims that Canadian lumber is also dumped in the U.S. market. Dumping duties are added to countervailing duties imposed to offset subsidies. A preliminary antidumping ruling is scheduled for June 23.

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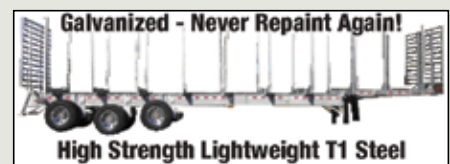
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On the Markets

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.

DNR Among Agencies to Offer Extensions

Based on an unusually warm winter throughout the state, The Minnesota DNR has developed a timber permit extension to assist loggers who were unable to operate in adverse surface conditions.

DNR is offering extensions on permits that expire between February 22, 2017, and December 31, 2017. Extension requests will be reviewed and granted on a permit-by-permit basis. The permit holder must submit a written, signed request to the Area Forestry Office administering the permit no later than May 31, 2017, or by the permit expiration date, whichever is earlier.

The terms of the extension will vary as follows:

- For Regular and Intermediate winter-accessible permits purchased in calendar year 2012 or older: a one-year extension with a 5% annual interest rate will apply for this extension period.
- For permits purchased in 2013: a one-year extension without interest will be granted.
- For permits purchased in 2014 or later: a two-year extension without interest will be granted if there is no salvage condition stated on the permit. If a salvage condition is stated on the appraisal, a one-year extension without interest will be granted.

In addition, for all informal winter-accessible permits, regardless of year sold, a one-year extension without interest will be granted.

For summer-accessible permits of any type, a one-year extension with a 5% annual interest rate will apply for this extension period.

This extension may be applied to permits already under another "regular" or "emergency" extension. Permit holders will receive a notification letter from DNR that confirms the emergency extension was granted for each eligible permit extension that was requested. All

other terms and conditions of the original permit will remain in effect. Please contact your DNR Area Forestry Office if you have any questions.

Other public agencies offered extensions on their permits, including Koochiching and Lake counties. In addition, St. Louis County slightly altered its policy to account for contractors who harvested blowdown timber from last summer's storms.

Recent Timber Sales Average prices, as reported by each agency

Agency **Regular** **Intermediate**

Cass County

February 23—Sealed Bid

Aspen	\$46.80	\$32.94
Red Oak	NA	\$24.44

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

Cass County

March 30—Sealed Bid

Aspen	\$40.21	\$39.69
Red Oak	\$38.70	\$38.66
Birch	\$28.16	\$22.52
Maple	\$24.46	\$20.60

All 5 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

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Crow Wing County

March 31 – Oral Auction

Aspen	\$44.01	NA
Oak	\$24.70	NA
Birch	\$28.69	NA
Red Pine	\$51.82	NA

All 15 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Clearwater County

April 5 – Oral Auction

Aspen Pulp	NA	\$42.64
Basswood Pulp	NA	\$14.41
Maple Pulp	NA	\$20.41
Birch Pulp	NA	\$20.39

All 5 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Hubbard County

April 10 – Oral Auction

Aspen Mixed	NA	\$53.24
Aspen Pulp	NA	\$45.32
Birch Pulp	NA	\$17.03
Oak Pulp	NA	\$30.34

All 11 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Beltrami County

April 11 – Sealed Bid

Aspen Pulp	\$40.32	NA
Red Pine Pulp	\$14.56	NA
Ash Pulp	\$15.43	NA
Jack Pine P/B	\$41.05	NA

All 7 tracts offered during the sale

were purchased.

Beltrami County

April 13 – Oral Auction

Aspen Pulp	\$61.77	NA
Tamarack Pulp	\$22.08	NA
Red Pine P/B	\$30.20	NA
Birch Pulp	\$16.30	NA

All 11 tracts offered during the sale

were purchased.

Becker County

April 14 – Oral Auction

Aspen Mixed	\$42.28	NA
Jack Pine Mixed	\$15.05	NA
Balsam Fir	\$14.13	NA

All 9 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.



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LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

Logging in the Winter of '07

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*



Snow removal still remains the worst problem that the logger has to contend with in his winter operations. Last year [1969], by February 1, the snow in the Cloquet Valley district was 52 inches deep at the Cloquet Valley station and 60 inches deep in the Brimson areas.

The snow settled from the bottom as there was no frost in the ground. By March 1, the snow cover was down to about 42 inches over most of the district. Many small logging operators had to give up their operations entirely, and the production of pulpwood and other forest products was greatly curtailed.

However, there have been other years of deep snow; and while it always seems to slow production, it never entirely stops it. Man always has figured out a way to overcome the obstacles. The winter of 1936 was a bad one, but the deepest snow I recall came in the winter of 1907.

Back in those early days there never was such a thing as a blocked logging road. The reason for this was that when the first snowflake fell, the camp foreman ordered out the snowplows, which plowed all during the storm. When the storm was over, the roads were still open. It they had allowed the roads to become blocked, they probably would have remained closed. I have seen as many as 24 horses pulling a snowplow. The plows were all made of split pine logs shaped into a “V”. When the snow was deep, two of the logs were fitted, stacked one on

top of the other.

While the logging roads were always kept open, there were times when log production stopped and the whole crew was sent to tramp roads. If a new road had to be opened along in the month of March to a new tract of timber and the snow was four feet deep, the crew would be out to tramp roads leading to the tract. After the tramping, the road bed would freeze so that horses could walk on it, and the road then was cut by a snowplow and “rutter.” The worst problem caused by deep snow was that it covered all the logs that had been cut early, and many were never found by the “swampers” and “skidders.” Also, any pine tree felled in deep snow would sink almost out of sight.

Nearly every year, some hunter stops at the station and tells about finding several big pine logs lying in the woods, mostly rotted away, and wonders why the industry could be so wasteful in leaving good timber. These are probably the results of the winters of deep snow when the logs could not be found.

In the winter of 1907, north of Bemidji and near Lake Beltrami, was one of the nicest stands of Norway pine I have ever seen. As a boy, I, along with my mother and other women of the once busy lumbering town of Turtle River, picked blueberries in the area. The pine was all cut clean; this resulted in large open areas of blueberries. Most of this area was cut by the Bemidji Lumber Co., but there was one area —

owned by another firm — of several forties which was cut during the winter of 1907. In wandering about, picking blueberries, we always could tell where we were because of the high stumps. Most of the area’s stumps during 1907 were twice the height of stumps in the area cut during other years. Old-timers told me that snow reached 6-7 feet high that winter and that many logging companies had to send crews in the next summer to pick up logs missed by the skidders.

Because of the chance that the snow would become deep later in the winter, a good camp foreman never allowed sawyers to get more than a week ahead of the skidders. The foreman tried to keep the skidders as close on the heels of the sawyers as possible. Not only was there a chance of logs being covered by snow, but the longer the logs lay the harder they froze into the snow, making it difficult for teams to get them broken loose. Obviously, the ideal situation was to skid the logs the same day they were felled.

Early snows that came before the ground was frozen were always a problem to the loggers; all low spots had to be tramped first by men and frozen before horses could cross. Rivers and creeks would not freeze and often flowed across a logging road — if deep snow came early.

While deep snow caused much more work for the logger, the keeping of the main logging roads open seems to have been one of the least of problems.



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Teaching Seasoned Loggers New Tricks

Lovdahl & Sons, Inc. make use of TimberNavi technology to run more efficiently

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The wheels for Lovdahl & Sons, Inc. were set in motion when original owner, Brad Lovdahl's grandfather came to Effie, Minnesota, in 1898. In 1930, Brad's father, Theodore, began logging and became one of the first contract loggers in the area. Forty-four years later, Brad began logging and became sole owner of the business 10 years later in 1984.

Brad branched out and began a brushing business along with custom felling in 1986 but reverted to the contract logging business in 1994 when he received a contract for Boise, Inc., a division of Packaging Corporation of America (PCA). Brad's son-in-law, Curt Youngkin is now in charge and runs the brushing side of the business.

Currently, Brad's sons, Corey and Chad, own the logging business and are taking it to the next level with the use of new technology. The brothers predominantly harvest Aspen and are able to harvest twice as much wood in the winter than in the summer months. "We have been very fortunate to have a great crew to work with," said Corey Lovdahl. "They really make everything run smoothly. We couldn't do it without the dedication and time they put in." In fact, the crew runs so smoothly that Lovdahl & Sons were named Minnesota Logger of the Year by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Program in 2010.

The business currently runs with 90 percent of their fleet being John Deere Equipment including the following machines:

- 853M Feller Buncher
- 2154D with a ProPac
- 2154D with a Risley
- 748L Skidder
- 648H Skidder
- 648GIII Skidder
- 650G Dozer
- 750J Dozer
- 770BH Grader
- 490 Excavator
- 120 Excavator

The brothers said they like using John Deere equipment because of the reliability and how operator friendly it is. Not to mention, the employees enjoy running them.

Embracing new technology

The company recently purchased TimberNavi for the 853M Feller Buncher. Corey said he has already seen advantages to using it including knowing where you are in the cutting block at all times, and increasing production.

"We find we have more time harvesting and less down time chasing lines," he said. He went on to explain other aspects of the technology that he enjoys, "It's easy to use and takes the guess

work of out felling. The 10-inch screen is easy to see and it's a big help for logging at night or in heavy cover areas so we don't have to get in and out of the machine to find boundary lines." The 853M the company originally purchased was pre-wired for the TimberNavi monitor so installation was a breeze, according to Corey.



An example of a TimberNavi map that shows live positioning, cut block boundaries on a rugged monitor display inside the cab.

Nortrax has been an integral part of Lovdahl's business, especially with the integration of TimberNavi. "The service at Nortrax has been good and they are great people to work with," said Corey. "The store is close and convenient and what we like best is that Nortrax stands behind the equipment and helps out when needed."

Forester, John Berglund, has worked with Lovdahl & Sons, Inc. on implementing TimberNavi and echoes many of Corey's sentiments. He said that he is seeing more mapping and technology in the woods and that TimberNavi makes map creation easy. It also helps make the customer more efficient and increases production. "With

TimberNavi, the customer has the sale laid out in front of them; it takes the guess work out of it and just makes it easy and smooth to work with the customer," John said. "For foresters, it saves time and helps us give the loggers more freedom in the woods.

Nortrax has been great to work with," he went on to say. "They provided us with the training and tools necessary to get the customer the maps and information needed to get the job done."



Pictured L to R: Brad Lovdahl, the original owner of Lovdahl & Sons, Inc. with his sons, Chad and Corey, who now own the business.

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