

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

# TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2003

VOLUME 59

*Happy  
Holidays*



# TIMBER BULLETIN

Volume 59  
November/December 2003  
Duluth, Minnesota

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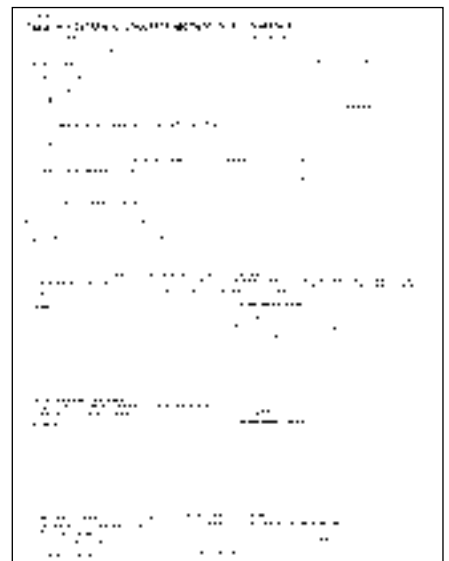
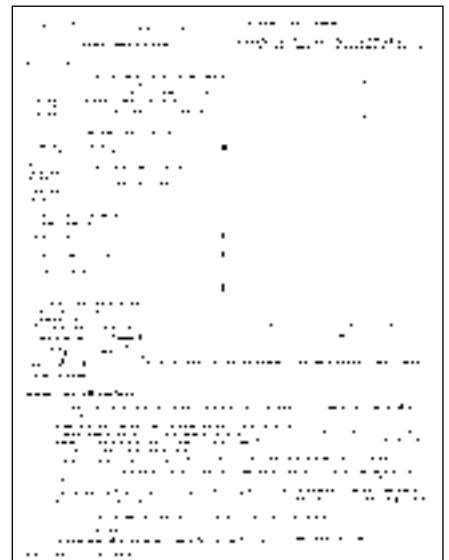
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### ON THE COVER

Christmas in the northland.

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In Minnesota the fall season brings on a very busy time for the logging community. Besides our normal routine of cutting timber, most everyone gets involved in hunting birds, elk or deer and in some cases, all three. Getting ready for winter at home and on the job is also a time consuming task.

## President's Column



By the time you read this column the TPA board of directors meeting will be past. The various committees have been at work the past several months and we are looking forward to hearing from them. Timber availability and transportation issues are again high on the list of things to work on. As a result of the Governor's Advisory Task Force Report on the Competitiveness of Minnesota's Primary Forest Products Industry we are hoping there can be some positive changes in the truck weights for us here in Minnesota.

I would like to thank everyone for their hard work on our committees, and remember safety first on the job each day.

# Coming Events

## Truck Weight Training Offered

There's still time to attend several workshops regarding weight limits throughout the state before winter's end. MnDOT's State Aid for Local Transportation division and the Local Road Research Board are working with the Minnesota Local Technical Assistance Program, the Department of Public Safety, and Northland Community and Technical College of Thief River Falls and East Grand Forks on educational courses. At the sessions you will learn about the laws governing gross weights, axle weights, tire weights, road restriction weights and seasonal increased weights.

According to sponsors, the training is to promote voluntary compliance, thereby reducing damage to public roads and highways. The program is designed to educate industry freight shippers, carriers, and public agency personnel on the proper application of Minnesota Commercial Vehicle Weight Laws. Goals include empowering truckers to haul legal loads; how to properly read weight charts and make competent decisions regarding truck loading; advantages and reasons for proper tire sizes, axle spacing, and axle configurations; to explain the current weight laws; and explain options which allow the most legal weight possible on various combinations.

The sessions will be taught by Northland Community and

Technical College of Thief River Falls and East Grand Forks. Retired State Patrol Lt. Greg A. Hayes, who supervised commercial vehicle enforcement in northwestern Minnesota the last 16 years of his career, will be the instructor for the course.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with class starting at 9 a.m. and concluding at 3 p.m. Coffee and rolls will be available at 8:30 a.m. Registrants are on their own for lunch. Classes are limited to 30 attendees.

Sessions still available include:  
January 7, 2004

Blue Earth County Public Works,  
35 Map Drive, Mankato, Minn.

January 12, 2004

District 6B Headquarters,  
1010 21st Avenue NW, Owatonna,  
Minn.

February 19, 2004

Goodhue County Justice Center,  
454 West Sixth Street, Red Wing,  
Minn.

February 25, 2004

Otter Tail County Government  
Services Center,  
520 W. Fir, Fergus Falls, Minn.

For more information, contact:  
Teresa Washington, 612-624-3745 ,  
twashing@cce.umn.edu

## Corrections

The last issue of Timber Bulletin omitted Doug Hustad of Hustad Logging as providing the slasher for the Log-a-Load annual event.

Due to an error in printing, Keith and Glenn Larsons' identities were reversed in photographs regarding Larson Lumber's sawmill closing.

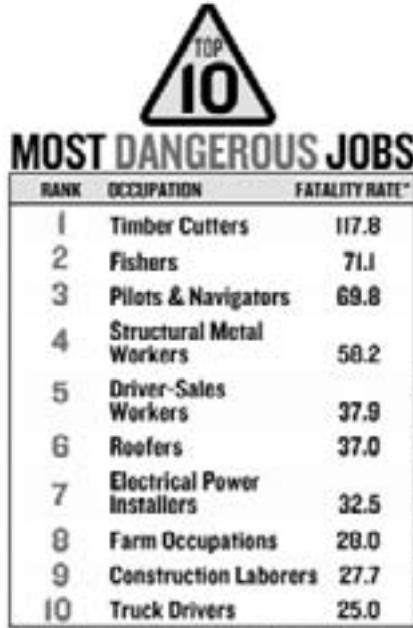
# Timber Cutters: Nation's Most Dangerous Job

We've always known working in the woods is a dangerous profession. Now, based on numbers from the U.S. government, CNN/Money has listed timber cutters on the top of its "Nation's Most Dangerous Jobs" list.

The mortality rate among lumbermen heads the list of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in America for 2002 at a rate of 118 timber cutters per 100,000 workers. The figure comes from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a fact-finding agency for the federal government in the field of labor economics and statistics.

Last year, 5,524 people died on the job. While fatal highway incidents were down three percent, they are still the most frequent type of fatal workplace event for 2002.

According to the 2002 numbers, timber cutters' on-the-job mortality



\* Selected occupations had a minimum of 30 fatalities in 2002 and 45,000 employed.

Courtesy: USDA Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

rate is more than 26 times that of the average U.S. worker. Keeping in mind we're working with statistics, other jobs, based on different criteria, are technically more dangerous. For example, by sheer numbers alone, 808 truck drivers died on the job, more than any other vocation. However, since there are so many more truck drivers than timber cutters, the mortality rate is only 25 per 100,000, so truck drivers rank tenth on the list of most dangerous jobs.

And what about mining? Mining is listed as the most dangerous industry, but miners are not listed under the top ten most dangerous jobs. So, what does all this mean? Most of us in the forest products industry know the dangers that exist. This statistic should serve as a sobering reminder for everyone to keep safety first, every hour, every day.

It's easy to take the power of nature for granted when you see it every day. I recently spent some time out in the woods with one of my daughters and a friend of hers. They were working on a science project. We visited a number of previously harvested sites that ranged in age from one to 20 years. My daughter's friend was amazed at the differences found in a 20-year-old stand versus a 10-year-old stand. She also couldn't believe

## Executive Vice President's Column



when we see it through another person's eyes.

that those little one-year-old aspen suckers could become nice stands of "real" trees so fast.

We may take nature's power for granted, but we can get a renewed appreciation of it



Congress passed the Healthy Forests legislation. I had the opportunity to attend the event in Washington, D.C., where President Bush signed the bill into law. After 25 years working in and around politics, this was the first presidential bill signing that I had been to. This is the most significant change in laws governing the management of our National Forests since the National Forest Management Act in the mid 1970s. An article in this issue of the *Timber Bulletin* describes the law that was passed. I'm very pleased that both Senators Coleman and Dayton support the bill. In the House of Representatives, Congressmen Oberstar, Peterson, Gutknecht, Kennedy, Kline and Ramstad all supported it too. With eight of our 10 members of Congress supporting this legislation, it is the strongest vote of support for forest management that we have seen in many years.



The TPA board of directors met on Oct. 30 in Grand Rapids. In addition to setting next year's

budget, positions and priorities for legislative issues in 2004 were established. Leading the way will be support for the initiatives flowing out of Governor Pawlenty's Advisory Task Force Report on the Competitiveness of Minnesota's Primary Forest Products Industry.

The board specifically endorsed: increasing truck weight limits to those in effect in Wisconsin; legislation that would allow the hauling of full legal loads from the woods to the nearest 10-ton route; establishing a state dedicated forest management fund so that a portion of the DNR's timber sale receipts will be invested back in the land; voluntary third party certification of public forestlands; and creating a single statewide auditing program to meet the standards of a forest certification program.

The board set the top priority as timber availability. Specific efforts will be undertaken to ensure that the DNR offers their full planned volume of timber for sale and to work with county land commissioners and county boards to increase county timber sales.

On other issues, the board endorsed seeking reclassification of loader trucks and seeking legislation to give counties the ability to use letters of credit to provide security for timber sales. The board also unanimously voted

to oppose the so-called "right to practice forestry" legislation until substantial changes are made to the proposed bills.

A resolution was also adopted endorsing having the state of Minnesota contract with the Minnesota Logger Education Program for the administration of the LogSafe program.

All in all, a busy day with a lot of discussion on issues and priorities.



As TPA President Clarence Johnson reported in his column, the work of the Governor's Advisory Task Force continues to move forward. Implementation strategies have been devised for the recommendations and legislative recommendations are moving back to the governor's office. We anticipate that this will result in a full menu of legislative proposals for the 2004 state legislative session.



I would like to wish each of you a safe and happy holiday season. With the start of the heavy winter logging season, take a minute to discuss safety with your crew. Don't let the busy holiday season distract you from maintaining the safety of your operations.

# Safety Comes First at Lakes States Tree Service

by Maureen Talarico

Combine chainsaws, hazardous chemicals, and high voltage power lines and you could have a recipe for disaster, but it's all in a day's work at Lakes States Tree Service, Inc.

The Grand Rapids-based company, founded in the late 1950s by Judd Welliver, is now owned by Lake Country Power and is one of the top tree service companies in the region. On any given day, Lake States will have crews in Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin.

"We specialize in providing tree clearing services for electric utilities," says Renee Patrow, accounting manager. "We clear right-of-ways for new power lines, but a majority of our work is focused on reclearing trees and controlling the growth of vegetation within existing power line corridors. We use a range of machinery and equipment – everything from herbicide applicators, to aerial trucks and mowers, to chippers that are used to chip brush."

As you can imagine, safety is a top priority, especially when working with aerial lift trucks, stick chain saws, and heavy duty mowers like Kendall Cutters and Hydro Axes. Safety and Human Resources Coordinator Shari Undeland has worked for Lakes States for four and a half years, and says employees out near the lines have to have special training.

"When you're working near power lines, safety training is imperative. And special certification is necessary when working within 10 feet of the line. Our employees have to be certified annually in CPR, first-aid, and aerial bucket rescue training. They are also required to take an EHAP test (an electrical hazard awareness program,) which provides an annual overview of electrical hardware recognition and electrical safety standards."



Lake States Tree Service, Inc. main building in Grand Rapids.

Lake States has 85 employees, down a bit from a high of 120 or so a few years back, but the company has remained relatively stable in tough economic times. "It's a cyclical industry," says Patrow. "Results have decreased the last couple of years because of increasing competition and a slow economy. This year has been probably our most challenging year we've had in quite a while, but things are looking better for next year. More work seems to be available."

Mark Kutz, general foreman, has worked for Lake States for 19 years. He's seen a lot of changes in that time: the company switching from a private, family-owned business to an electric co-op ownership and fluctuations in economic conditions. But most notably, Kutz says, is the emphasis now more than ever on safety. "Chaps, we never used to use the word chaps. We had them if we needed them. And ear protection or eye protection – we had it then too, but now it gets used. It doesn't make sense not to."

Kutz actually began as a logger for the former owners of Lake States, and that's how he became interested in tree service. "My

father logged for Judd and his son Steve. But I quit the logging part of it and started in the tree business. It was a lot different. I was used to working in the woods all the time. And I'd never worked with aerial devices on a logging job."

Lake States uses a variety of equipment and herbicides on the  
*(continued on page 10)*



Darren Hughes, foreman, and John Duffey, ground laborer, clearing trees near lines south of Grand Rapids.



**Shari Undeland, safety and human resources coordinator.**

*(continued from page 8)*

job. For clearing, Gyro-Trac, skidder buckets, A.S.V., aerial lifts and chippers are used. For spraying, crews use skidders with tanks, six-wheelers with tanks, bomb sprayers and broadcast sprayers. Kutz says, "We use EPA-approved herbicides, and application methods vary with the terrain. Sensitive areas require different procedures than higher ground. We also keep substations



**Renee Patrow, accounting manager.**

completely clear to maintain the safety of the system."

The biggest challenge for Undeland, who runs the safety programs, are the dangers of working near the power lines. "You just need to be aware and know what you're doing. And, it's physical labor, which makes it hard on a person. So that's a big challenge - keeping everybody safe. It's a constant challenge to keep people safe and keep people going home every night to their families."

Another challenge for employees is pleasing the customer. While 95 percent of Lake States business is utility work, they do residential service as well. The day I visited, crews were clearing lines on a co-op member's property as part of routine maintenance.

"We see and hear a wide range of views when we're cutting and trimming trees. Sometimes it's the hardest part of the job - people will let you know when they don't want a tree cut. But if it interferes with safety and reliability for the utility, it has to be addressed. Overall

though, I like working with people. I like working with the guys. We've got a bunch of good guys that work here with us."

Another misconception is that many people hear the words tree service and think of an entirely different business says Kutz. "When you tell them you work for a tree service they wonder if you're planting trees. We're not in the business of planting trees, we're in the business of clearing them to keep the lights on." It's a business that not only helps improve line service, but also improves safety around the high voltage power lines. "The most challenging part is to make a tree look good after you're done. It doesn't take much talent to go up there and cut a branch off; to actually shape the trees so it looks good...you want them to look as good when you're done as when you start," says Kutz.

It is dedication like that that helps make the team at Lake States Tree Service, Inc. one of the most successful, professional tree service companies in the region.

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# Congress Passes Healthy Forests Restoration Act

Congress has passed H.R. 1904, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) providing a significant step in addressing the urgent forest health crisis on federal lands. The favorable votes occurred after House and Senate negotiators agreed on final language for the bill.

Many stakeholders worked with the House and Senate to ensure the bill gives professional foresters the active management tools necessary to address the forest health crisis. At the same time the legislation maintains ample opportunities for public input and guarantees environmental protection. The bill will help reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfires, control the spreading of insects and disease, encourage energy use for biomass, assist private forestland owners with conservation efforts, and more. The legislation also protects private lands from the forest health problems that originate on public lands.

The agreement between the House and Senate completes more than a year of often tense negotiations. In the end, both chambers broke through gridlock and passed the bill overwhelmingly. With passage, the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management will be authorized \$760 million annually to

conduct hazardous fuels reduction treatments on up to 20 million acres of public land. At least half of the funding will be used to treat areas near homes and communities. Since this is an authorization of funding, Congress must annually appropriate the funds necessary to implement the new law.

## Specifics of the Final Bill

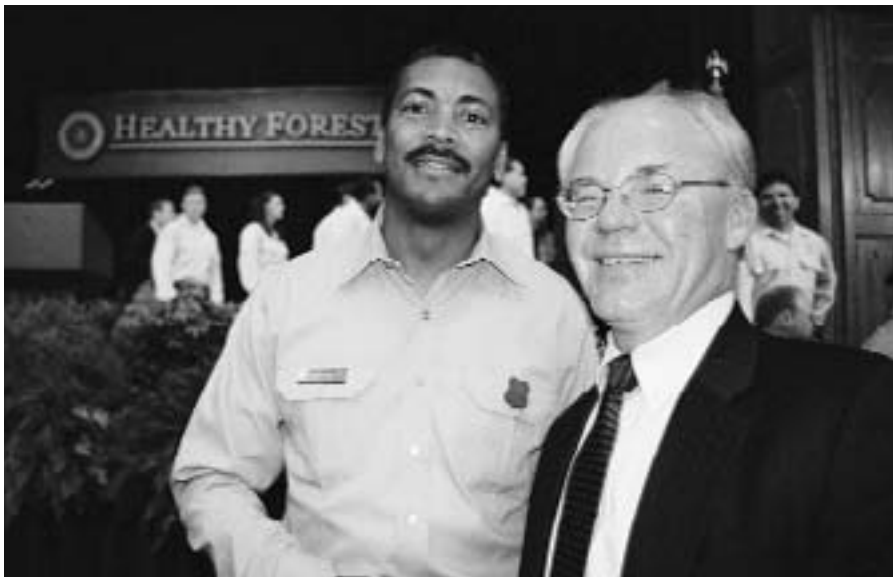
**Where projects may occur:** HFRA limits lands where authorized hazardous fuels reduction projects may be implemented. The lands authorized are federal lands: 1) in the wildlife-urban interface as defined by the bill; 2) in fire condition class three in proximity to a municipal water supply system or a stream; 3) in fire condition class two located within fire regime I, II, or III in proximity to a municipal water supply system or stream; 4) impacted by windthrow or blowdown, ice storm damage, or the existence or threat of disease or insect infestation, which pose a significant threat to federal or adjacent non-federal land and where these conditions increase the risk of catastrophic wildfires; and 5) containing habitat for endangered species threatened by or benefiting from fire. The agencies may conduct similar

projects on other lands but the special procedures in the new law would not be available.

**Modifying procedural requirements:** The new law changes requirements for environmental reviews and administrative appeals. The national Environmental Policy Act usually requires agencies to analyze “reasonable alternatives” to a proposed agency action. Under HFRA, agencies must consider at most only two alternatives to an authorized hazardous fuels reduction project, one of which is a “no action” alternative. For projects within 1.5 miles of homes and communities, they must consider only one. HFRA directs the USFS and BLM to hold public meetings and encourage public participation during preparation of environmental documents. The USFS must establish a pre-decision administrative review process as the “sole means” by which persons may obtain review of their objectives to a proposed authorized project.” Only those persons submitting substantive comments during the public comment period will be allowed to seek review under the new pre-decision process.

**Special protection of old growth and large trees:** Projects are required to maintain, or contribute to restoring, the structure and composition of old growth stands according to the pre-fire suppression old growth conditions characteristic of the forest type. The HFRA directs that projects should focus on small diameter trees. Large trees will be retained in accord with the ecosystem conditions and the purposes of the new law.

**Judicial Review:** HFRA encourages the courts to expedite judicial review proceedings on challenges; establishes a 60-day limit on preliminary injunctions, subject to renewal; and directs the courts, when considering an injunction against an authorized project, to balance both the long-term and short-term effects of implementing the project against those of not carrying out the project. Only persons who obtained review under the new



USFS Region-9 (Milwaukee) Forester Randy Moore and TPA Executive Vice President Wayne Brandt exchange greetings after President Bush signed the Healthy Forests Restoration Act in Washington, D.C., on Dec. 3.



pre-decision process will be allowed to seek judicial review, and then only in the federal court district where the project was located.

**Biomass:** The new law focuses funding on developing facilities to use the biomass produced by authorized hazardous fuels reduction projects, as well as other projects on public lands.

**Insect and Disease:** The new law authorizes research opportunities on insects and disease that are damaging forest health. These provisions direct that the research results be applied on the ground.

**Watershed Forestry:** The new law authorizes funding for states to establish a "watershed forester" in state forestry agencies. The watershed forester will focus on monitoring and improving forestry practices with respect to water quality.

**Healthy Forests Reserve Program:** HFRA also establishes a Healthy forest Reserve Program for private landowners. Under this program, landowners will have the option to restore forested habitats for rare and endangered species

through 10-year cost-share agreements and 30-year and 99-year conservation easements.

*This article reprinted with permission by American Forest and Paper Association.*

## Hedstrom Lumber Celebrates 600+ Days of Safety

**N**ovember 19, 2003, marked a new milestone for Hedstrom Lumber Company. The company celebrated 600 days without a lost-time injury! Prior to achieving this, the company had gone 561 days without a lost-time injury, and then experienced one lost-time injury (minor complications from a bruise.) Considering this, to date the company has gone almost 1200 days without a lost-time injury of any significance. Hedstrom officials say this achievement is almost unheard of in this industry.

According to Denise M. Murray, Hedstrom Lumber Company's safety director, "Reaching this

milestone has been a long process and one accomplished only by a great deal of effort, hard work, and commitment to safety by our employees."

The company celebrated the employee accomplishments by rewarding the production workers with a day of special activities including a luncheon, gifts, and of course, more safety training. Donations by vendors, customers, and industry contacts provided each employee with several gifts.

Murray says, "We are so proud of our 40 employees for reaching this major milestone for our business! The number one objective of our safety program is to protect the health and well-being of every employee. We look forward to continued success with our safety program."

## Boise's Mary Perala Receives 2003 BASF Outstanding Achievements in Sustainable Forestry Award

The American Tree Farm System® (ATFS), a program of the American Forest Foundation, along with BASF Corp., named Mary Perala of International Falls, Minn., as the winner of the BASF Forestry Products Outstanding Achievements in Sustainable Forestry Award for 2003. Perala received her award during the National Tree Farmer Convention held in Columbus, Ohio, *Hardwood Country, The Heart of it All*.

Perala, who has worked for Boise Cascade Corp. for 16 years, is the timber sale supervisor in Boise's Midwest Woodlands. In this position, she has had the opportunity to interact with close to 100 private landowners in the region annually and has used those interactions to further the good name of sustainable forestry. Her work with the landowners has included such projects as creating management plans and overseeing the harvesting and replanting of trees on their land.

However, Perala's position with Boise is only one of the many outlets she uses to promote sustainable forestry. She has been involved with ATFS at the regional and state levels in Minnesota for nine years. She served as chair of the committee last year and has recently taken on the large responsibility of re-inspection chair. In this capacity, Perala has worked through a backlog of recertifications, assuring that 2,200 landowners and the 900,000 acres they manage will continue to be certified under ATFS.

"I couldn't be here if not for landowners like you," Perala said at the award ceremony. "Thank you so much. Your dedication just keeps inspiring me."

While helping landowners manage their land sustainability is key to Perala's mission, she also realizes the need to expose future generations and those not directly involved with managing forest lands to what the words "sustainable forestry" really mean when put into practice. With this in mind, Perala leads a Girl Scout troop and is the Timber Talk

coordinator, having conducted sessions with fourth grade classes in the region for 15 years. Her true heart for forestry shows in her multiple commitments and in her drive to see more good forestry on more acres.

"Mary truly deserves this recognition," said Bob Simpson, director of the American Tree Farm System. "Her passion for sustainable forest management stretches well beyond the confines of her job. In fact, Mary has spent many hours getting involved and reaching out to her community to help broaden the message of good forest management."

Throughout her efforts to spread good practices of sustainable forest management, Perala has shown true leadership. Upon receiving her award she told an audience of more than 350 that she would be turning the award check over to the Minnesota Tree Farm Committee and putting the money back into her home state.

For more information about the American Tree Farm System, visit their website at [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org)

## Rajala Companies Closes Grand Rapids Sawmill

Rajala Companies closed its sawmill in Grand Rapids at the end of October. "To ensure that we are one of the survivors of a very tough, worldwide forest products economy, we must make the difficult move to consolidate our primary manufacturing operations and focus on continuing growth in our value-added products," said John Rajala, vice president. "We are nearly 10 years into our value-added expansion, which began with the building of our veneer slicing plant and continued three years ago with the construction of our millwork component facility," which are both in Deer River. Hardwood lumber production will now shift to the Rajala mill in Bigfork.

"Our expansion came just as world economies were beginning to stumble and attaining profitability has been more difficult than we anticipated, although we

recently secured some very exciting business in the wood window and door industry," Rajala added. "We remain committed to the blended strategy of both primary and value-added manufacturing, which we feel is the best future for the sustainability of our business and of the forest on which it depends."

No loss of production for the company will result from the shift from Grand Rapids to Bigfork. In fact, the Bigfork sawmill has greater capacity and flexibility than the Liila sawmill. But 12 jobs were eliminated.

Rajala Companies has owned and operated the Liila sawmill, located one mile south of Grand Rapids on Hwy. 169, since 1984. The facility focused primarily on sawing hardwood logs into lumber, which then went to Deer River for further processing and for sale to customers around the world.

## New Hours-of-Service Rule Goes into Effect Soon

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has updated its rules regarding hours-of-service for the first time since 1939. FMCSA says the changes will improve highway safety and help reduce the number of truck crashes by addressing driver fatigue.

“Safety is the Bush administration’s top transportation priority,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta. “Over the last several years, FMCSA has made great progress in reducing commercial vehicle crash fatalities, and this rule should help to continue that momentum. If we can lower the cost of moving freight by one-percent, the additional benefit to the economy would be more than \$98 billion annually.”

The new rules allow drivers to drive 11 hours after 10 consecutive hours off duty. Also, drivers may not drive beyond the 14th hour after coming on duty, following 10 hours off duty. Similar to existing rules, drivers may not drive after being on duty for 60 hours in a seven-consecutive-day period or 70 hours in an eight-consecutive-day period. This on-duty cycle may be restarted whenever a driver takes at least 34 consecutive hours off-duty.

As for short-haul truck drivers, those drivers who routinely return to their place of dispatch after each duty tour and then are released from duty may have an increased on-duty period of 16 hours once during any seven-consecutive-day period. The 16-hour exception takes into consideration legitimate business needs without jeopardizing safety. FMCSA estimates that without the extra two on-duty hours, the industry would be required to hire at least 48,000 new drivers, actually reducing crash-reduction benefits.

The current rule allows 10 hours of driving within a 15-hour on-duty period after eight hours of off-duty time. Also, drivers may not drive after their 15th hour on duty in a workday or after 60 hours on duty in seven consecutive days or 70 hours on duty in eight consecutive

days.

The FMCSA estimates the new rule will save up to 75 lives and prevent as many as 1,326 fatigue-related crashes annually. There were an estimated 4,902 truck-related fatalities in traffic crashes in 2002.

This rule governs drivers transporting freight in interstate commerce in a property-carrying commercial vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,001 pounds or more, and operating vehicles transporting hazardous materials in quantities requiring vehicle placards. Carriers will operate under current hours-of-service regulations through Jan. 3, 2004. Vehicles used in oil-field operations, ground-water well-drilling operations, utility service, and transporting construction materials and equipment retain the 24-hour restart provision provided by the National Highway System Designation Act. Agricultural operations will retain their current statutory exemption from driving time requirements when occurring within a 100 air-mile radius of a farm or distribution point during planting and harvesting seasons.

**FMCSA and its state enforcement partners will begin enforcing the final rule beginning Jan. 4, 2004.**

## Protect Your Hearing

The logging industry is a noisy business and loggers that are exposed to high noise levels often suffer varying degrees of hearing loss. For this reason, it’s important for loggers and employers to be aware of what they need to know to prevent hearing loss. Prolonged exposure to high noise levels can cause a noise-induced loss. The first sign of hearing loss is usually a temporary hearing loss. A person may also have difficulty in conversation with someone, or the ears may feel plugged or “ring.” Over time, a person who experiences repeated temporary hearing loss will have some permanent, irreversible damage.

Prolonged exposure to noise levels of 85 or more decibels (db) can be hazardous to a person’s

hearing. Anyone exposed to 85 db on a Time Weight Average (TWA) should protect their hearing by wearing hearing protection. The following are some typical noise levels experienced in the logging industry.

Equipment	Idling	Working
Log Trucks	70 db	82 db
Cats	90 db	90-105+ db
Skidders	86 db	90-96db
Loaders	79-92 db	85-97 db
Chainsaws	90 db	96-114+ db

Another good reminder is to make sure your required hearing protection fits you well. A good seal must be achieved in order to block out unwanted noise. Hearing protection must be kept sanitary when used. Dirty ear protection can cause discomfort, which may cause a person to go without the needed ear protection. The reduction of noise by hearing protectors is called attenuation. This is expressed in decibels. The manufacturer of each hearing protector will indicate the amount of attenuation for each type of protector. It will be listed on the package as the Noise Reduction Rating (NRR.)

Audiometric testing is a means of determining your hearing ability. Annual audiometric testing will show if an employee has suffered a hearing loss, and to what extent. As a person ages, a natural hearing loss will take place. This hearing loss will be shown when annual audiometric test results are compared year to year. A cold, ear infection, or recent high noise exposure can cause a temporary hearing loss which would show on the test results. A person should inform the technician if they are experiencing any of these conditions at the time of the test.

# Obituaries

## Industry Loses Timber Legend

**B**enhart Rajala, charter and long-time member of the Timber Producers Association, has died at the age of 86. Rajala passed away Oct. 31, 2003, from complications related to bladder cancer.

Born in 1917, Rajala experienced the mechanization of the logging industry firsthand. First he worked with horse skidders and large lumber, and then eventually witnessed the modernized equipment of today. He began his distinguished career working with his brothers clearing the family farm and working on various logging projects. Benhart experienced many opportunities, including mining gold and limestone in Montana and Wyoming, and working as a hired hand on ranches and wheat lands in Montana, Idaho and North Dakota. He strove to build the timber industry, working with his brothers in South Dakota, British Columbia, Montana and Alaska.

Benhart Rajala also served his country in World War II. Shortly after he and his brothers founded the Rajala Brothers Sawmill in 1941, Benhart joined the U. S. Navy. There, he logged timber for the war effort on behalf of the Oliver Mining Company. His military service was aboard ship and ashore during bombardments in the Marshall Islands, then to Guam until the end of the war with his Seabee battalion, which loaded LST ships with war materials.

After WWII ended, Benhart returned to Bigfork and continued operations there until 1964, when he moved to Grand Rapids and began the Great River Veneer Company in Deer River and the Great River Lumber Company. It was during this time that Benhart and longtime friend Bob Daubendiek collaborated in efforts to reforest Black Walnut. That led him to perhaps his greatest legacy and labor of love, working to reestablish the American Chestnut

as a viable timber crop throughout its natural range.

Benhart wrote two books, "Timberr 1" and "Timberr II," which explored his experiences in Minnesota's rich logging history. In his retirement years, Benhart co-organized and regularly participated in the "Old Logging Days" at Buena Vista, near Bemidji.

Benhart was preceded in death by his six brothers: Art, Bill, Norman, Hub, Sam and Donald; and two sisters: Lillian and Hazel.

He is survived by his five children: Brian, Kitty, Nikki, Kris, and Mary, eight grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and several cousins.

His family says Benhart loved the forest and the timber industry that were a part of his life, especially the tall, straight white pines. They say he was blessed with an incredible memory and it is incredible memories of the man and his works that will keep his legacy alive.

## Logging Pioneer Passes Away

**T**he logging industry bid goodbye to a true pioneer as **Wesley Hedstrom** died Nov. 7, at the age of 79, after suffering a stroke in his garden.

Hedstrom served many years on the Cook County board and was past president of Hedstrom Lumber, one of the largest private employers in Cook County. A 1942 graduate of Grand Marais High School and a veteran of World War II, Hedstrom served as county commissioner for 16 years, from 1984 until his retirement in 2000.

Hedstrom's father emigrated from Sweden and in 1914 founded Hedstrom Lumber on the North Shore. Born in Grand Marais, May 30, 1924, Wes was the youngest of 13 children. He and his five brothers eventually took over the business from their father. Wes served as company president from 1986 to 2000 and was always active in issues concerning the timber industry. "He had a big influence on the direction of the company for a long time," said current president Howard Hedstrom, Wes' nephew. "He was a huge part of our success

and he was always a mentor to me, someone I could go to with questions. He was a great font of history and how things worked in the old days. I never knew him to be mean or ornery. He was always very friendly."

Hedstrom worked to bring and also preserve funding for higher-education classes at Grand Marais High School. He convinced Minnesota legislators classes were a must because the nearest college classrooms were hours away. He worked tirelessly for the historical society and volunteered for the group along with his wife, Thelma. Hedstrom testified in Washington, D.C., and in St. Paul in the late 1970s during the creation of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. He was an usher at First Congregational Church, was a member of the economic-development association of Cook County, strongly supported the community library and was often seen at the fishburger stand at the Fishermen's Picnic, one of the most popular annual parties on the North Shore.

Wes is survived by his wife of 53 years, Thelma; daughters Linda Noble (Steve) of Indianapolis, Ind. and Jeanne Hedstrom (Edward Finnegan) of New York City, N.Y.; son Bob (Mary Sanderlin) of Golden Valley, Minn.; and four grandchildren.

"Wes was clearly one of the most important leaders of his generation," said Wayne Brandt, executive vice president of Minnesota Forest Industries. "He transcended the business and the government worlds. He was a guy who was willing to give a lot of himself. He clearly was one of the giants of his generation."

LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

# Rivers Moved the Logs

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*



There was no phase of the logging industry as colorful or as exciting as the log drives in our rivers. Transporting logs by water started in Maine—the birthplace of the logging industry in America—and it

is still done in that state to quite an extent. By the time log driving reached Wisconsin, with the many drivable rivers of that state, much had been learned about this phase of log transportation. The

border waters between Minnesota and Wisconsin became the great water transportation routes, sending logs to the mills at Stillwater, Minneapolis and Winona. Much can be written about log transportation on these great rivers.

Log driving on rivers and streams fell into two main types—on waterways with few rapids and deep water, and on those that had many rapids, small falls and shallow water in places.

The deep water rivers, as a rule, had high banks, and during the spring when the snow melted they ran bank-full for a week or two. Rivers of this type were less of a problem to drive, but there was always the problem of losing logs in high water. On rivers of this type, logs were usually landed on the bank or rolled down over a high landing so they would start to move as soon as the water rose.

If a mill or hoist was situated along the river, piling would be driven in the river and sorting pockets were set up to catch the logs to be sawed or hoisted there, and a by-pass was made so the other logs go by.

If the water in the river rose very fast, boom connections would break and the logs would be lost. Of course, these streams also had some rapids, and some small dams sometimes were built on the tributaries to raise water was needed. However, the main problem with this type of stream was getting the logs all moving out while the water was high and being able to hold them in the desired pockets at the sorting works.

Rivers like the Littlefork and Bigfork, which flow north, as well as some of the upper streams flowing into the Mississippi were rivers of this type.

However, the bulk of the rivers of Minnesota were those with rapids, falls and shallow spots—requiring dams built at intervals along the main streams and on tributaries to hold water to carry the logs down stream.

These dams, as a rule, were built on all the smaller streams flowing into the main river above where logs had been landed.

Dams on the main streams were usually eight to ten feet high, with a spillway to shoot logs through. When the gates were



Above: early driving on the St. Louis River. Below: logjam on the Littlefork River, 1937.



opened, the logs would then go down stream to the next dam, where the water would be caught and again sent through this dam to the next.

In rivers of this type, the drive foreman had to know just how long it took water to get from a certain dam and what size opening was needed to entry the logs to the next dam. Each river had its own problems: there were eddies, where logs would not run downstream, but just circle around and around, and there were jams caused by logs piling up on a rock in the center of a stream or by too many logs caught in one place in the river when the water began to fall.

Sometimes piling and buoys had to be put in to keep logs out of the eddies. Bad log jams were sometimes broken with dynamite, but most were broken by drivers picking the logs off with peaveys. Wing jams were the worst, and men have drowned trying to get to shore when one of these jams started to move. People talk about a key log in a jam, but you never know which the key log is until the jam starts to move.

In some places, flumes—or channels made of logs had to be provided to shoot logs over bad rapids. At some of the main driving dams, logging companies kept watchmen year around to keep the dams in repair and control the water.

Almost every stream in northern Minnesota has had logs driven down it, and I have seen streams only four feet wide where railroad ties were being driven.

While at Turtle River last summer, I looked at the stream above Turtle River Lake with only a trickle of water, and it was hard for me to visualize when as a boy in 1906 I stood and watched pine logs three feet at the top going down that river for days.

This was true with about every stream. I remember as a boy making a trip to Crowston just when the Wild Rice drive was on and seeing the river way out on the prairie running full of logs.

The early driving in Minnesota took place on the rivers to the south, with the Hum, Kettle, Grandstone and others being the first to be driven, then the Mississippi with all its tributaries, and then later the St. Louis and its tributaries—the Cloquet, Whitefish, Palisade, Beaver, etc.

Some of the North Shore streams were driven a little, but the Pigeon on the Canadian border was the only one that was driven in any extent. The Stoney and Kawishiwi were driven some; the Litchfield and Bigfork were driven early, with logs going into Canada.

Driving companies were formed on the larger rivers to drive the logs for the loggers for so much per thousand board feet. Many a good logger who was successful in logging, went broke when he started to drive logs. It was a hard game and weather conditions played a large



Top - driving dam across the Mississippi in Itawa State Park. Above: driver makes logs through a small timber dam. Below: Fred P. Murchie rides a log through the flume over Second Falls of the Burnetts River in 1907.



part in getting the logs down river.

Most driving crews consisted of three parts, the watering crew that got the logs started, the heads and rapids crew that kept them going, and the rear crew that cleaned up the river and brought all the logs that had been hung up into their start downstream. Work on the rear crews was hard, and sometimes many men were needed to move a stranded log from a sand bar to the water.

Floating wanigans were used to house the men and their cook shack during the drives. A wanigan was usually about 10 feet wide by 25 feet long and would sleep about 25 men. As a rule, there were two bunk wanigans and one cook wanigan floating behind the logs on a drive. Sometimes, if they tied up for a few days, the crew would set up a cooking and eating grounds on the bank of the river.

Drivers were a special breed of lumberjack—men who liked excitement.

Drivers always got about a third more pay than did laborers in the woods. Food was always the best, hours were long, and each man carried a little canvas sack called a "nose bag" that he filled with food each morning, as he could not leave his post on a bend until all the logs had gone by or until he was relieved and sometimes he had to watch a bend for 16 hours straight.

All drivers wore calked boots, usually Jefferson boots, and I remember as a boy in Turtle River how we had to walk barefooted in the streets because the calked boots of the drivers had made the wood sidewalks so slippery. The drivers wore wool underwear and wool pants and shirts, as water did not feel so cold if you were wearing wool.

Cold water did not bother the drivers' feet, but if the drive carried on into late June and the water started to warm up, men would quit as their feet got sore from working in warm water. When this happened, the foreman would pass out unsalted butter or lard to the men, and they would put about a quarter of a pound into each boot in the morning and this would keep their feet from getting sore.

In northeastern Minnesota, most drives would start about April 15 and be over by June 1 each year. The last drive on the Whiteface River was in 1928, and the following year came the last log drive on the Cloquet and St. Louis Rivers.

I followed the Cloquet River part of this last drive from start to finish. Crist Lee was "walker" on that drive, with "Hanging" Jones, Paul Yllard and Bill Dewar as his foremen.

Log driving was probably the most colorful of all the work in the logging industry. As I sit in a canoe slowly drifting down the Cloquet River it is hard to visualize the struggle that once took place there—bringing the white pine logs to the mills to make lumber for the homes of the Midwest.



Wanigans were floating bunkhouses and cook shacks for the driving crews—on the Bigfork Ice Road and the Littlefork (above). Below: a wanigan with the logs jammed on one side of the fuel—during the last drive on the Cloquet River in 1924.



# Classifieds

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

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### FOR SALE

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1969 C4 TF.....	P.O.R.
1973 C5 TF.....	7,500
1970 440A JD.....	10,500

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1993 518C Cat., new trans.....	40,000
1989 170XL Franklin, 6 cyl Cummins.....	16,000
1991 450B TJ, Cummins eng...	18,000
1998 460 TJ, dual function.....	52,000
1978 540B TJ, 28Lx26 tires.....	19,000
1986 648D JD, dual function...	27,000
1980 C6 TF, with 23.1x26 tires..	9,000

#### CRAWLERS

1993 D31P20 LGP Komatsu crawler dozer.....	25,000
1995 D31P20 LGP Komatsu crawler dozer.....	35,000
1995 D3CLGP, new undercarriage, very clean.....	33,000
1975 450C, 6-way blade.....	12,500

1990 650G, 6-way blade.....	32,000
1987 D4H LGP, 6-way blade, encl. cab.....	27,000

#### KNUCKLE BOOM LOADERS

1987 210C 6 cyl JD slasher pkg.....	27,000
160 Barko on tandem truck....	11,000
Prentice 90 on tandem truck, 19' bed.....	8,500
1987 XL 175 Husky.....	14,500

#### TRUCKS

1998 Peterbilt, 470 Detroit, 18 sp.....	36,000
1978 GMC 2-ton w/hydr hoist, flatbed dump.....	4,500

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1992 Mitsubishi MXR55.....	12,000
1997 JD 690E.....	39,500

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1981 743 JD.....	15,000
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1985 125B Case w/3000 Denis.....	27,000
1986 JD 693C w/3000 Denis...	25,000
1995 CAT 320 w/3500 DT Denharco.....	79,000

#### FELLER-BUNCHERS

#### AND SHEARS

1979 Drott 40, shearhead.....	17,000
1978 Drott 40, JD eng.....	13,000
1993 JD 590D w/18' Roto saw.....	29,000
1998 JD 653E w/20" Cameco sawhead.....	98,000
1993 T445 Timbco, w/22" Quadco sawhead w/side tilt.....	95,000
1993 Risley Black Magic w/Risley sawhead.....	65,000
1976 544B JD, 20" shear.....	21,000

1988 910 Cat, 17" shearhead, rebuilt trans.....	32,000
1979 411 Hy-Ax w/Timbco bar saw.....	14,000
1987 411B Hydro-Ax.....	20,000
1986 511B Hydro-Ax, 6 BT Cummins.....	30,000

#### WHEEL LOADERS

4500 Ford backhoe.....	7,000
1992 410D JD backhoe.....	27,000
544B JD.....	15,500
1979 544B JD.....	18,500
1981 644C JD.....	28,000

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