

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

JULY/AUGUST 2022

VOLUME 77

North Star Expo Preview

Diesel Price Historical Analysis

**Accepting Challenges
Waste Wood Recyclers**



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Itasca County
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TIMBER BULLETIN

Volume 77
July/August 2022
Duluth, Minnesota

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ON THE COVER

Waste Wood Recycling utilizes
duals on one of its skidders.
For more on Waste Wood
Recycling, please see page 8.

The Timber Bulletin is published six times annually, in February, April, June, August, October and December by the Minnesota Timber Producers Association, located at 903 Medical Arts Bldg., 324 W. Superior St., Duluth, Minn. Minnesota Timber Producers Association members receive the Timber Bulletin at an annual subscription rate of \$25 which is included in their membership dues. Periodicals postage paid in Duluth, Minnesota. Advertising rates and data on request. The views expressed in the Timber Bulletin do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Minnesota Timber Producers Association.

Postmaster: Please send address corrections to TIMBER BULLETIN, Minnesota Timber Producers Association, 903 Medical Arts Bldg., 324 W. Superior St., Duluth, Minnesota 55802, Phone 218-722-5013.
Issn: 10973532 – USPS: 016208



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President's Column



Corey Lovdahl

First I would like to give a big thanks to Rod Enberg for his term as TPA president. His term wasn't an easy one with our disconnection between TPA and MFI. Rod put in a lot of extra effort during this difficult time and his endeavors were very much appreciated.

In upcoming events, we are looking forward to hosting the 68th annual North Star Expo on September 16th and 17th in Grand Rapids. Staff has been working hard getting everything ready and we can't thank our Expo committee enough for all their hard work. We also would like to thank our vendors for coming to the Expo and supporting our industry. It's always a great two days for our loggers and friends to get together and "solve the worlds problems!" We sure hope to see you all there!!

I am honored to be your TPA president. If you have any thoughts, concerns, or issues, please don't hesitate to contact Ray, myself, or any member of the executive committee.

Always remember to stay safe out there and keep your stick on the ice.

Respectfully,
Corey Lovdahl

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PROUDLY SERVING THE TIMBER INDUSTRY SINCE 1980

It's always difficult to say goodbye, especially to two men who were great friends of the timber industry.

Ed Gudowicz was a longtime forester at Louisiana Pacific—42 years to be exact—buying wood from loggers for LP's mills in Two

Executive Vice President's Column



Ray Higgins

dealing with Ed. He was fair and encouraging, which is a great combination. His passing in August is a loss for all of us.

And then there's Senator Dave Tomassoni of Chisholm, who lost his battle with ALS. When he was diagnosed a year ago, we knew he wouldn't be able to carry on forever, but Dave went down swinging. He was able to continue working through this year's legislative session, thanks to some of the remote working protocols established during the COVID pandemic. Despite his prognosis, Dave continued representing his Iron Range constituents, as well as all Minnesotans. His efforts over the past thirty years in the legislature to improve life in the woods for all loggers won't be forgotten.

Rest well, Ed and Dave. We'll see you further on up the road.

The North Star Expo is right around the corner. We're excited to be back at the Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids for the show on September 16 & 17. It's always great to see loggers from all over the state, as well as folks from every corner of our industry in Minnesota, from the vendors to the foresters, policy makers from

state and county agencies, and lawmakers on the county, state, and federal levels. It's why we like to borrow from our friends at the State Fair and informally call the Expo the Great Minnesota "Logging" Get-Together.

We couldn't do it without hard work from a lot of people: our vendors, who get their products ready and transport them to Grand Rapids for display to our members; our sponsors, who support this great event financially; our Expo committee members who meet throughout the year to make sure things go off without a hitch; Ann Todd in our office who coordinates everything and makes sure everyone is in the right place at the right time; and of course Minnesota's logging community that shows up in full force. It truly is a great weekend for everyone involved, one that we look forward to all year.

Again this year, we'll have more than 200 high school students from around the region participating in the "Future Forest Stewards" program, developed by the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce, Itasca Economic Development Corporation, IRRRB, and others. It's a great way for the students to learn about forestry and for us to showcase our industry. Who knows? Maybe some of these students will catch the "logging bug" and come work at one of our fine logging companies when they graduate. We all know how important it is to find folks who want to work in the woods.

This will be the 68th time TPA has sponsored the Expo. 68. That's a lot of Expos. It speaks to the strength and longevity of our association. And we look forward to serving you for many more years to come.

I go to a lot of meetings. One recent meeting was regarding some snowmobile trails—sometimes when we're working, a snowmobiler or two won't like that we're there and feel we're "in the way," and they call the county or state about it, and/or they complain to the logger. Of course, we were there to make the point that without logging, many of those trails wouldn't even be there.

At this particular meeting, one of the loggers was able to point out that over the years he'd personally donated his time and the use of his dozer to build snowmobile trails for the local clubs. The trouble is that snowmobile club groomers and members come and go over the years and don't always understand the history of their trails and the role the logging community played in their development.

Fortunately, the folks at the DNR and county land departments "get it." They know the critical role our loggers play in a wide variety of forest management scenarios, including the building of trails that can be used for recreation by all Minnesotans, not just loggers. In fact, it was St. Louis County's Jason Meyer who spoke up and said, "It's logging that allows counties like ours to keep this land base."

Well said.

A member called to say his fuel provider wanted to deliver biodiesel instead of straight diesel for use in his woods equipment. Fortunately, the member recalled that TPA had fought for an exemption to the biodiesel mandate more than 15 years ago. (Thank you, Wayne Brandt!) We provided the correct information so the member could get the correct fuel.

So if you hear something similar from your fuel provider, here are the facts: According to Minnesota statute, "off-road logging equipment and machinery" is exempt from the biodiesel mandate. In addition, Number 1 diesel for winter use in your trucks is also exempt. If you'd like to quote the statute, the exemption can be found in Minnesota Statute 239.77.

And of course, if we can help in any way, call us in the TPA office.

Over the past two decades, Michael Cowles has been TPA's attorney. Michael has decided to retire in September.

Our members have seen Michael at our Annual Membership meetings, as well as at TPA Board or Directors and Executive Committee Meetings. He's also done a ton of work behind the scenes, advising TPA leadership and staff on a variety of issues over the years,

most notably through last year's process of separating our staff from MFI.

Personally, Michael and I have spent a lot of time together, driving to meetings, but also at Duluth East high school hockey games where he and his wife have closely followed the Greyhounds, as I have. He's a good guy, one whose company I've always enjoyed, and I hope to continue to bump into him around Duluth.

Michael's retirement is well-earned. I know Wayne Brandt and Mike Birkeland greatly appreciated his guidance, as have our TPA leaders. I'd like to thank him for his counsel to our Association. He will

be missed.

It seems that our costs are rising on everything. In fact, this issue of The Timber Bulletin includes a discussion on rising diesel prices. Most of the time there's little we can do about it. But one cost we can control is workers compensation insurance. Rates are determined by how safe we are in the woods. The safer we operate, the lower our rates will be.

TPA members have another advantage thanks to our partnership with Choice Insurance and their Forest Products Self-Insurance Group. Because the members of the group are good operators,

premiums are very competitive. Group members have access to the loss prevention skills of John Saccoman, who writes a regular column on safety here in the Timber Bulletin. And you have to be a TPA member to participate. If you're not currently in the Self-Insurance Group, Jay Eystad of Choice Insurance will have a booth at the Expo.

So let's think safety, work safely, and prevent injuries through constant vigilance!

Ry Hjiri



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Garrett Campbell

Accepting Challenges

As Garrett Campbell arrived at his company's logging site near Brimson this July morning, he wasn't all that surprised by what he was seeing. Heavy rains from last night, on top of an already wet summer, is making this job on St. Louis County land increasingly difficult to harvest.

"The year in general has been wet," Campbell says. "That road was actually put in last year and was totally fine. And then now this

year we could hardly get trucks over it. It's to be expected this time of year to a certain extent, but we hadn't expected this much rain."

The sale has around 4500 cords, mostly aspen and birch, and they'll be here for most of the rest of the summer. Campbell is working closely with the county to make sure the impacts are being minimized during harvesting operations. In fact, the county forester is on site today for a previously scheduled

visit. Fortunately, the soils in this part of northeastern Minnesota are particularly rocky, which helps in terms of limiting soil compaction throughout the harvest area.

"That's why we planned to be here in the summer," Campbell says. "Normally the rocks are on decent ground and all that works together to hold you up during the wet season. The rocks are hard on all the track equipment, hard on all the buncher teeth. You add some expense to that, but are thankful you can work in the spring. So you're going to take the good with the bad."

Another step Campbell has taken to deal with the wet conditions is put "duals"—another set of wheels and tires all the way around to distribute the machine's weight across a wider tire print—on one of his skidders. It costs a lot to do it, roughly \$40,000 just to purchase

the additional tires and rims. Plus, it takes about three hours to put them on at the start of the summer and another three hours to take them off before winter, amounting to nearly a day's worth of lost production. Even so, Campbell says it's worth it.

"It's becoming a must," he says. "We've been talking about it for the last couple of years, but this year definitely pushed us over the edge to spend the money and do it. It was a good year to try it. We were sitting doing nothing, so we had to definitely put them on. We wouldn't have been able to move at all for the last six weeks if it wasn't for the duals. Then usually the non-dual skidder stays around the landing where we can control things a little better."

Campbell's logging business is called Waste Wood Recyclers, a reference to how he started out, focusing on producing and hauling biomass. As those markets changed, he needed to transition the business to a focus on roundwood. Looking for solutions and solving problems is something the 46-year-old Campbell has been doing nearly his whole life.

Campbell grew up in a logging



Waste Wood utilizes "duals" on one of its skidders in the summer time to better operate on softer ground.

family. His father Roger has run a feller buncher for nearly fifty years, operating Tom McCabe, Sr.'s first mechanized buncher, and today still works for Josh Hull.

"Growing up, dad would always bring my three brothers and me to the landings," Campbell says. "He'd give us rides in the skidders. He made a custom seat behind his seat in the buncher so we'd spend the day bunching with him at times. So we grew up on the landing."

When it was time to enter the work force, Campbell's brothers all

service in the Duluth area for a stretch. By 2000, he was opening his own repair shop, East End Auto. But it wasn't Campbell's first stint owning a business.

"I actually had a decent sized lawn mowing business when I was a kid," he says. "I had my first employee when I was 15 years old, so I liked the idea of being an entrepreneur."

"East End was a small one or two-man operation," he says. "In that process we had the towing company. So the repair turned

into towing, towing turned into hauling equipment, small equipment, where some of the rental fleets and customers around Duluth—Titan, John Deere—we'd haul all their under 10,000 pound stuff. Then they asked us to move some of their bigger stuff, so we bought a semi-truck and a



Tops and limbs are fed into a Vermeer WC 2300 chipper to manufacture biomass.



Kyle Ledin operates a John Deere 753J feller buncher for Waste Wood Recyclers.

low boy. And I quickly realized that was a lot of seasonal work. That truck was busy all summer, but then we had a truck and low boy and payments. Come winter, you find out that there's not much for that driver and truck to do."

Roughly eight years ago, Tom McCabe, Jr. knew Campbell was looking for wintertime work, so asked him to pull one of his chip trailers for the season, hauling biomass to Minnesota Power's Hibbard plant on Duluth's waterfront. Soon, Garrett had two trucks and two chip trailers of his own, hauling McCabe's biomass. That's how Waste Wood Recyclers was born.

"We grew pretty quickly," Campbell says. "We had multiple drivers, multiple semi-trucks. Two trucks and two drivers were hauling chips, a low-boy driver filling in here and there, pretty much working seven days a week. The market was good in the biomass. We couldn't move it fast enough. We couldn't find enough product between the mills or the loggers. They weren't producing it fast enough. It was either shut a truck down and go backwards, or buy a chipper or a grinder. So we bought our first grinder around seven years ago and started grinding for multiple outlets."

Business was good. In 2016 a major windstorm hit Duluth, leveling trees throughout the area, enabling Waste Wood to add a

second grinder and a second crew to help with the cleanup. Then the Laurentian Energy Authority facilities in Virginia and Hibbing were increasing their biomass usage, so Campbell bought a chipper and started delivering there, too. But to keep up with demand, he also needed to purchase some logging equipment.

"We had been predominantly going in after the logger took the roundwood," Campbell says. "They'd leave, and then we'd come in and clean up their site after the fact. But we could get rid of twice as much biomass as we had. The loggers we were following, they

weren't making the product fast enough, so we bought a buncher and a skidder."

Campbell started buying timber, going after sales that were very low grade, with little or no merchantable timber.

"They were sales that nobody else wanted because there wasn't enough merchantable timber to make them profitable," he says. "We were buying the sales that were over the counter and nobody purchased, but also trying to stay in the private sector more than buying county or state stuff."

After about three years, Waste Wood Recyclers had 13 full-time employees, as well as a couple of part-timers who could help out on weekends. And then the biomass market collapsed. The LEA facilities significantly reduced their biomass usage to a fraction of what it had been. Hibbard was still burning biomass, but supply far exceeded demand. Waste Wood Recyclers was at a crossroads.

"We were just starting to figure the biomass stuff out and now all of a sudden we were thrown a whole different spin on things," Campbell says. "We had way too many employees, way too many pieces of equipment and no market. We just instantaneously lost half of our outlet. So we had a decision to make: Either we buy for-sale signs and start selling stuff, or do we downsize a little bit and buy some



Garon Campbell operates the recently purchased John Deere 803MH processor, which replaces a stroke delimber and slasher on Waste Wood's landing.

roundwood equipment and try to see if we can wait this out and hope the biomass market comes back?"

Campbell decided to go with option b.

"The first couple of years were challenging, trying to figure out how to be productive and making all the new contacts with the mills for roundwood," he says. "That was a challenge, but I think we're finally starting to figure it out a little bit."

These days, Waste Wood is delivering roundwood to Sappi, Louisiana Pacific, and Savanna Pallets. The company has seven employees, operating with a buncher, chipper, and two skidders. Campbell also recently purchased a tracked cut-to-length processor and uses it on the landing instead of a stroke delimber to process his wood.

"This is like our second sale using the processor," he says. "We want to be able to better sort bolts for Savanna. It was a little tricky with big slashers to sort out the bolts. In our area, the wood is such variable sizes, it was really hard to pick out one or two bolts at a time, versus now we can make separate piles with the processor. It's a little bit more versatile than a slasher, but I would say it's definitely slower production. So we're paying for it a little bit but we can get rid of the product."



Gary Campbell, Jr. drives a John Deere 748E skidder.

On top of all of that, Hibbing Public Utilities is ramping up its biomass usage, which is what Waste Wood Recyclers was started for in the first place.

"We might be on the brink of multiple options," Campbell says. "Hibbing is talking biomass again. Wood markets, I won't say stabilized, but roundwood markets are there. So how do we predict the next few years and what do we do as a team to use our abilities

and tools to do what's best for the company?"

The original businesses, East End Auto and East End Towing, are still going strong. Trying to figure out what's going to happen to all of the businesses, including Waste Wood Recyclers, in this economy—with labor issues, supply chain issues, high costs for parts and fuel—is difficult, to say the least.

"Markets are changing quickly," he says. "How do we roll with this? It's a great place to be, but it's been some highs and lows. Does a guy continue to ride those highs and lows and make the right decision the first time so we can sustain the highs and lows that you know are coming? You have to enjoy the challenge of trying to make it every month, and the joy of trying new things to see what the outcome is, whether that's a positive or a negative outcome. And I think enjoying that challenge or that risk of trying to make it is certainly one of my driving factors. It can't be the money every month because you don't make money every month and you have to be able to let some stuff roll off your back and move with the changes. I guess in the last two years, we all have experienced lots of changes and you have to be able to accept that as a challenge and move forward with it or fold and roll away."



Harvested birch on Waste Wood's county forest job site.



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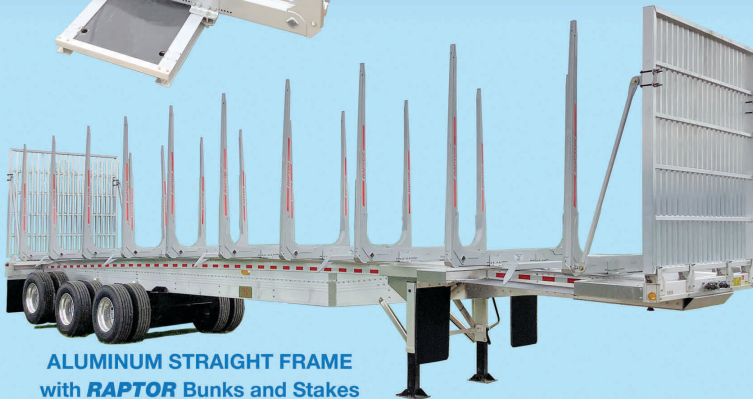
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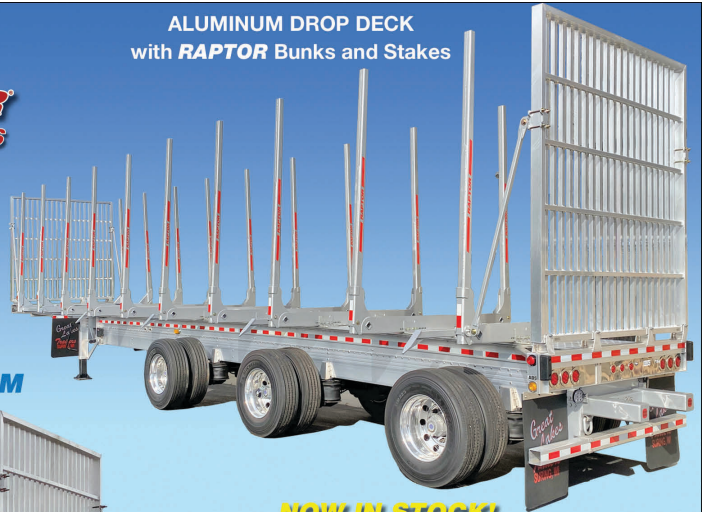
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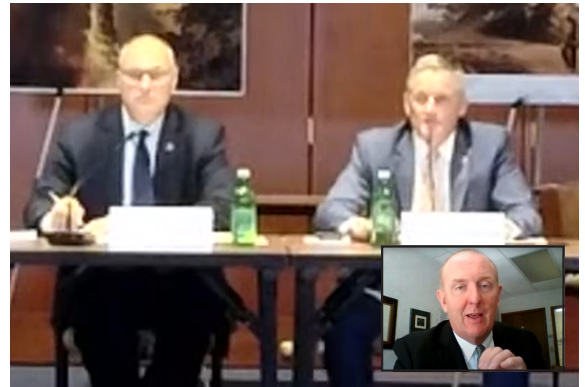
Congressional Forum on Solving Wildfire Crisis

In July, US House committee on Natural Resources Ranking Member Bruce Westerman (R-Arkansas) hosted a forum to hear from witnesses across the country on the impacts of catastrophic wildfire and the need for long-term forest health.

Rep. Pete Stauber (R-Minnesota) was among the members of Congress participating, asking questions in search of answers to the issue of fire in our national forests. TPA's Ray Higgins was among those who testified in the online event, including stakeholders from California, Arizona, New Mexico, Montana, and other states.

"The sobering fact remains that we are completely and utterly failing to turn the tide against this crisis," said Rep. Westerman, who

worked as a forester before serving in Congress. "Decades of poor management combined with historically unrivaled drought conditions and rising temperatures have turned far too many of our nation's forests into ticking time bombs. With over 1 billion acres at risk for wildfire across the nation it is not a matter of 'if' these forests will experience catastrophic wildfire, but 'when.' There's a saying that 'if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got.' This is sadly exactly what has happened over the last several decades as we've continued to neglect our fire-prone forests and



Rep. Pete Stauber (R-Minnesota) and Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-Arkansas) listen to testimony from TPA's Ray Higgins (inset) during a Congressional Forum on the Nation's Wildfire Crisis.

naively expected different results. As a licensed forester, it pains me greatly to see such foolishness continue to go unchecked. The fact is that active forest management has proven effective whenever it has been applied, and if implemented on a broader scale, would return resiliency and restore health to our fire-prone forests. Contrary to the ridiculous fearmongering promulgated by out-of-touch activists, active forest management does not lead to indiscriminate logging, but instead requires land managers to follow the science to meet the individual challenges facing the unique ecosystems seen in our nation's forests."

"The catastrophic fire seasons of 2020 and 2021 provided a wake-up call that should finally change the way the Forest Service manages its lands," Higgins said. "As Forest Service Chief Randy Moore has acknowledged, many acres of our Western National Forests are extremely overstocked, and under a changed climate and long-term historic droughts, are very susceptible to catastrophic fires. We've seen massive fires in western National Forests and many more remain at risk."

As of early July, nearly 5 million acres had already burned in the 2022 wildfire season, more than double the ten-year average, and nearly triple the same amount burned last year at the same time. Based on the testimony received at the forum, Westerman, Stauber, and the other committee members are better informed as they address forest health issues going forward.



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68th Annual Expo Returns to Grand Rapids!

The North Star Expo is returning to the Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids. Minnesota's largest logging equipment show is in its 68th year and will be held Friday and Saturday, September 16th and 17th. As always, there will be lots to see and do, including the latest and greatest in logging equipment from all of the region's top vendors.

Continuing the Expo tradition of great food, networking, and conversation, two "must-attend" events highlight this year's Expo:

- A Friday night reception for all vendors and attendees at the TimberLake Lodge in Grand Rapids. The reception will feature FREE hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar, as well as door prizes. The reception runs from 5:30PM to 7:30PM on Friday night September 17th.
- McCoy Construction and Forestry will again provide a free pancake breakfast on Saturday morning from 7AM to 9AM.

"I can't believe it's already been a year since the last Expo," said TPA Expo Committee chair Chad Lovdahl. "We had a great event last year, and it looks like we'll have even more vendors than a year ago. It's always great to see everyone from all over the state. It's the highlight of the year and we're looking forward to it."

Also, the *Future Forest Stewards* program returns, for high school students from around the region to learn about our industry. The event is again sponsored by the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce, the regional economic development organization APEX, Itasca Economic Development Corporation, the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training, and the Applied Learning Institute, which strives to enhance technical education in northeastern Minnesota.

Like at any Expo, there will be plenty of competitions:

The Best Load contest is taking place again this year. Only the wood will be judged, not the truck it is hauled on. Points will be scored on

the timber quality, product quality, product manufacturing, load appearance, and load securement. Monetary prizes are awarded to the top finishers.

The Loader Contest will also be held again this year, as well as the Master Loader contest. Winners will receive cash prizes!

The Coloring Contest will take place this year as well. In this issue of the Timber Bulletin, you'll find a pull-out poster for the little ones to enter. Just have them color the poster and either bring it to the Expo or mail it to the TPA office. Entries will be posted at the Expo for all to enjoy.

Don't forget to bring in your wood cookies for the Big Cookie Contest. Remember to attach a list indicating species, where taken, company name and *register at the Registration Desk first!*

Test your visual skills and Guess the Weight! Entry forms will be available near one of the Best Load trucks.

Again this year: The south grassy area to the left of the main entrance will be used for parking. There will

be no parking to the right of the entrance near the campground.

Vendor displays previously located in the grassy area have been moved elsewhere on the Fairgrounds, including to the north, past the racetrack area. Parking will also be available in the west parking lot as usual.

We'll have fun for the whole family. See you September 16th and 17th in Grand Rapids!

Good food and great people are always hallmarks of the North Star Expo, especially at our Friday Night Reception at TimberLake Lodge.



68th North Star Expo 2022

Schedule of Events

Friday, September 16

9:00 am - 5:00 pm	Equipment Displays Open
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Future Forest Stewards
9:30 am	Display Contest Judging
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Loader Contest (sign up at site)
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	Celebrity/Media Loader Contest
12:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Loader Contest (sign up at site)
5:00 pm	Equipment displays close
5:30 pm	Cash Bar & Social Hour begins @Timberlake Lodge in the Oak Room With heavy Hors D'oeuvres & Door Prizes

Saturday, September 17

7:00 am - 9:00 am	Free Pancake Breakfast (Sponsored by McCoy Construction & Forestry)
9:00 am - 1:00 pm	Equipment displays open
9:00 am - 11:00 am	Loader Contest (sign up at site)
10:30 am	Coloring contest winners announced
12:00 pm	Winners announced for Loader, Master Loader, and Best Load contests
12:30 pm	Winners announced for Guess the Weight, Big Cookie, Vendor Drawing, and Wood I.D.
1:00 pm	Equipment displays close

CONTESTS

Guess the Weight - Guess the weight of a fully loaded truck, cash prize

Wood Identification - See how many tree species you can identify, cash prize

Loader - Test your skills against the clock, cash prize

Masters Division Loader - Loader contest for those 50 and over - sign up at site, cash prize

Best Load - Come and see the Best Loads of Wood on Display

Big Cookie - Enter to see if your wood cookie is the biggest of its species, cash prize

For additional information, contact:

Minnesota Timber
Producers Association

324 W Superior St #903

Duluth, MN 55802

218/722-5013



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Extreme Duty Ironworks

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Great Lakes Manufacturing

Hancock Fabrication

Hedstrom Lumber

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MN SFI Implementation Committee

Molpus Woodlands Group LLC

Nelson Wood Shims

Northern Timberline Equipment

Packaging Corporation of America

Petro Choice

Pomp's Tire Service

Ponsse North America, Inc.

PotlatchDeltic

Purple Wave Auction

RDO Vermeer LLC

rachelKcpr

Renegade Truck Equipment

Road Machinery & Supplies Co.

Sappi

Savanna Pallets

Service Trucks International & Tiger Cranes

Titan Machinery

UPM Blandin

Wallingford's, Inc.

West Fraser, Inc.

Ziegler Cat

68th Annual North Star Expo Vendors

The following is the list of vendors who have registered for the North Star Expo as of August 16th. We expect more to be added!

AW Ludwig	Hood Equipment	Ponsse North America
American Pressure	Industrial Lube	Purple Wave Auction
Ballantine	Iron Nitey	rachelKcpr
Bobcat of Bemidji	Itasca Woodland Services	RDO Vermeer
Cardy4everoil	Klinner Insurance	Renegade Truck Equipment
Choice Insurance	LMS Equipment / Laona Machine Supply	Rice Blacksmith
Compeer Financial	LVI Supply	Rihm Kenworth
Corporate 4 Insurance	McCoy Construction and Forestry	Road Machinery
Diamond Industrial Cleaning Equipment	Metsa Machine	Royal Tire
Diamond Mowers	Mid-State Truck	Savanna Pallets
Don Dens	Mid-States Equipment	Serco Loaders
Evans Insurance Agency	Minnesota DLI-OSHA	Service Truck International & Tiger Cranes
Extreme Duty Ironworks	Minnesota DNR	Sylva Corporation
Fleet Pride	Minnesota Forest Industries	Titan Machinery
Forestry Trader	Minnesota Logger Education Program	Towmaster
Great Lakes Manufacturing	Minnesota State Patrol	Waldo
Halvorson Wood	Northern Star Co-op	Wallingford's, Inc.
Hancock Fabrication	Northern Timberline	Western Wisconsin Fab
Heatmor	Petro Choice	ZieglerCAT
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Impact of Skyrocketing Fuel Prices on Forest Products Transportation

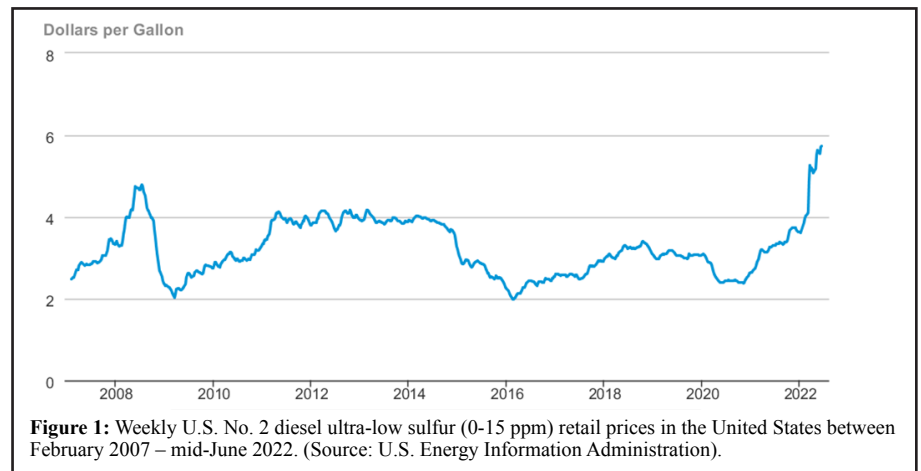
By Charlie Blinn, Professor, U of MN, Dept. of Forest Resources

The following analysis of the rise of diesel prices nationwide and its effect on logging was conducted by University of Minnesota professor Charlie Blinn and published by the Forest Resources Association. Our thanks go to FRA's Tim O'Hara and to Professor Blinn for allowing us to re-print this article in the Timber Bulletin.



Rising fuel prices impact everyone's pocketbook through increased costs which are driving up prices. This increase in cost is especially true for the trucking industry, which is critical to maintaining the supply chain and is often viewed as a barometer of the U.S. economy. While 2020 data from the U.S. Department of Energy Alternative Fuels Data Center shows that the average fuel economy for cars was 24.2 miles/gallon, it was 5.29 miles/gallon for heavy trucks with a gross vehicle weight rating exceeding 33,000 pounds, such as a 5-axle tractor-trailer log truck. As trucks are vital for moving raw forest products from in-woods harvest sites to mill consumers, rising fuel prices significantly impact the cost of those deliveries.

Recent news events have highlighted the impacts of increasing fuel costs on the economy. To get a better understanding of that impact on the transportation of raw forest products from in-woods operations to the mill, online data were used to look at the history of diesel fuel prices over the past 15 years as well as the impact of rising diesel prices



on log trucks and delivered wood today.

The average increase nationwide is 141.0%.

Historic View of Diesel Prices Since 2007

Across the entire U.S., No. 2 diesel retail prices generally were within the range of \$2 – \$4/gallon between 2007-2021 (Figure 1). During mid-June 2019, the average retail price for No. 2 diesel across the U.S. was \$3.105/gallon before falling to \$2.396/gallon during the same week in 2020 as consumption dropped due to falling demand and rising supplies during the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. In response to rising demand worldwide, changes in U.S. energy policy reduced domestic production and by OPEC, along with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the average price rose to \$3.286/gallon in mid-June 2021 and to \$5.718/gallon today.

The mid-June 2019 – 2022 retail price per gallon for No. 2 diesel fuel is shown in Table 1. Between mid-June 2020 to today, the retail price in Minnesota has increased by 151.4%.

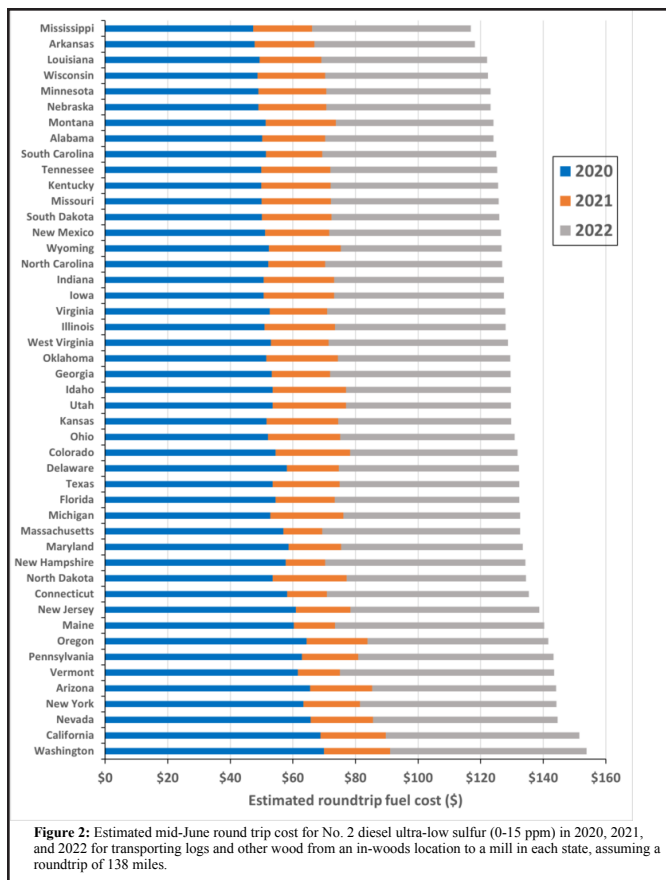
Estimated Roundtrip Cost of Diesel to Transport a Load

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Census on Transportation 2017 (Table A5a), the U.S. average roundtrip distance to transport "logs and other wood in the rough" is 138 miles. After equipping 31,170 Class 7 and Class 8 trucks with a telematics tracking device for one year, Geotab created a map of average miles per gallon (MPG) for heavy-duty trucks in states and provinces across the U.S. and Canada. (Data were not available for Alaska, Hawaii, and Rhode Island.) Using the Geotab average fuel efficiency by state, a roundtrip of 138 miles, and mid-June retail prices for No. 2 diesel ultra-low sulfur (0-15 ppm), the estimated roundtrip cost for diesel from an in-woods location to consuming mills was calculated for 2020, 2021 and today in 2022 for each of the 47 states (Figure 2).

Diesel Price/Gallon in Minnesota for 2nd week of June

2019	2020	2021	2022	Increase since 2020
\$3.00	\$2.24	\$3.23	\$5.63	151.4%

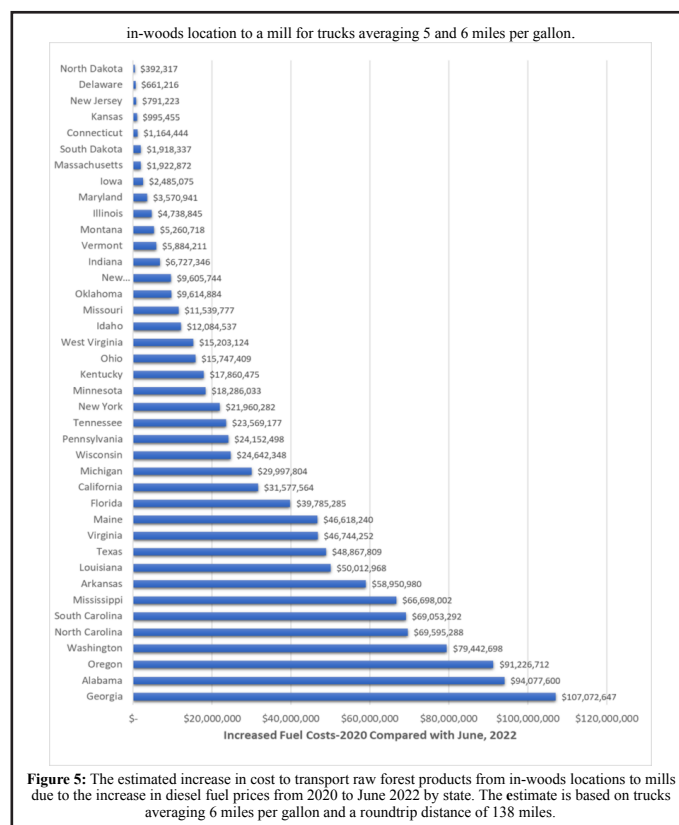
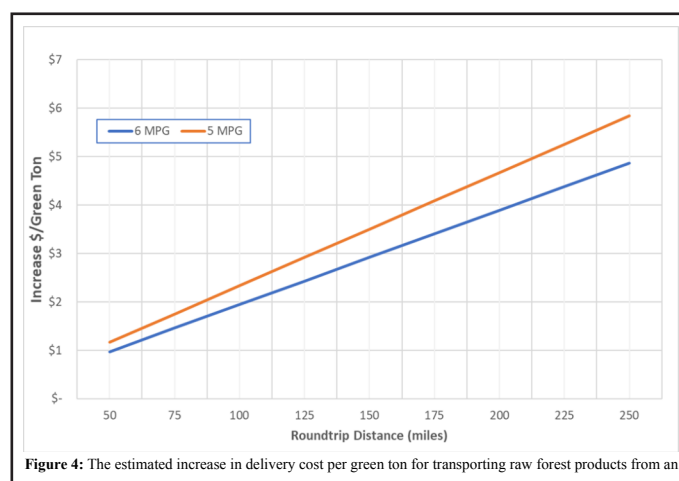
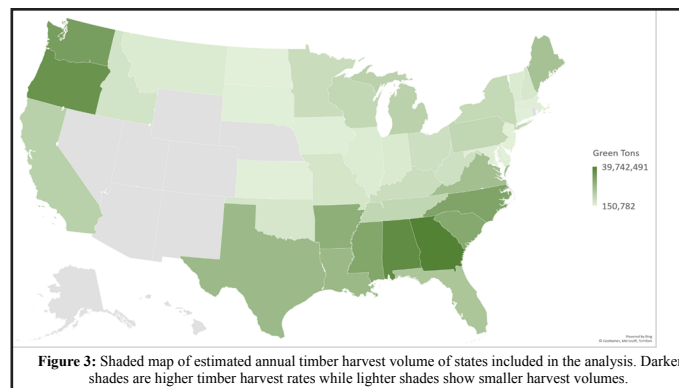
Table 1: The mid-June 2019-2022 retail price per gallon by state for No. 2 diesel. (Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration).



Under those assumptions, Figure 2 shows that the roundtrip cost for diesel fuel is much higher today than it was two years ago. While the range in roundtrip fuel costs was from \$47.28 – \$69.91 in 2020, it is \$116.89 – \$153.88 today with Mississippi being the lowest in both years and Washington the highest. Regionally, the Gulf Coast states (Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, and Texas) have the lowest roundtrip fuel cost, and the West Coast states (Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington) have the highest cost.

Estimated Increase in Delivered Costs

The USDA-Forest Inventory and Assessment estimate that the current timber volume harvested is 446.3 million green tons with the highest harvest rates in the U.S. West and the Southeast (Figure 3). Hauling that amount of volume from in-woods locations to the mill would take approximately 15.4 million truck deliveries (based on 29 green tons per load). Using the information presented above for an average haul distance of 138 miles (roundtrip) and an average 6 MPG, the change in diesel fuel prices from 2020 to 2022 has resulted in an estimated average cost increase of \$2.88 per green ton for delivered raw forest products (Figure 4). The total impact to the forest products sector is estimated at more than \$1.2 billion in added fuel costs from 2020 to June 2022 to deliver raw forest products from in-woods operations to a manufacturing or energy facility. The largest impacts are in Georgia, Alabama, and Oregon (Figure 5).





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Safety Pays— Preventing Fire Losses

*By John Saccoman,
Mackinaw Administrators, LLC.*

Pierz, MN

Kevin Banick has been working in the logging industry for 48 years and in that time he's never lost a piece of equipment to fire. That changed this past February.

"That's my first thing that's ever burned," Banick said. "I couldn't sleep for several nights after it happened. Banick owns a small logging company based out of Pierz, MN. "We work so hard to prevent that from happening, but it still does happen."

Banick said he was driving a load of logs from the landing to the main road when one of his operators called him and said he blew a hose. He shut down the machine and called the skidder operator to come and get him. The plan was to get towed to the landing and perform the necessary maintenance to fix the blown hose.

"He called me back in a few minutes and said it's on fire," he said. "He tried to put it out with the fire extinguisher but couldn't. It took off too fast."

Banick said his other operators used their 4-5 big fire extinguishers too, but by the time he got back into the woods, flames were shooting a couple hundred feet above the machine. The location was deep in the woods in a place where even a fire truck couldn't access.

Though he didn't know for certain, Banick said the blown hose and its fluid came into contact with a hot surface and probably started the fire.

Both he and his crew are diligent in trying to prevent machine fires, Banick said. Some jobs and environmental hazards require his crew to be extra careful. "Depends on what kind of wood we're working with, but this past spring, with all that fuzz and pollen, we were on it daily."

Remaining vigilant and removing combustible sources is a requirement to preventing fires.

"We're always cleaning around the exhaust pipes and looking

things over," he said. "We've had small fires in the past, but we've always been able to get them out before this last time."

With the dry season upon us, it is incumbent on all loggers to maintain an eye toward fire safety. The greatest chance of fire to equipment in the woods is when a crew is actively working, and machines are operating.

Logging equipment fires can have an enormous effect on a logging company's bottom line. Equipment damage leads to loss of production. With the industry being as financially tight as it is, nobody has the luxury of losing a vital piece of equipment for an extended time. And to be sure, fire is a huge cause of equipment loss.

Aging equipment, along with fluid leaks and worn electronics are hazards that lead to equipment fires. In addition, combustible debris such as chips, sawdust, bark, and branches in and on equipment tends to accumulate quickly.

When reviewing for combustibles, ignition sources should also be identified. Hot engines, electrical faults, and exhaust surfaces are all considered dangerous hot spots.

There are steps you can take to reduce the risk of fire on your machinery. Focusing your cleaning efforts for even 15 minutes a few times per day greatly helps eliminate the risk of fire.

Here are some other helpful reminders for preventing fires.

Removing debris from engine and mechanical

compartments is probably the first step in reducing the exposure to fire. Be sure to look for flammable material in the belly pans, side shields, and access guards. These areas collect leaves and other debris that can be a fire hazard, especially if working in dry conditions or during the summer and fall. Use compressed air and power washers to help clean these areas.

Check for a buildup of oil, grease and fuel from leaks or spills. Clean it up if it's identified.

Implement a proactive review of electrical systems and wiring components. It may be helpful to document these efforts to keep track of how often it's being done.

Keep a fully-charged fire extinguisher, shut down equipment before fueling, and implement a no-smoking policy. And at the end of the day, remain on site for 15-30 minutes to monitor for fire ignition.

Banick said it isn't easy to replace burned up equipment and the potential loss of time and production can be crippling to a small logging company.

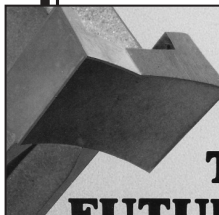
"You don't want anything to burn up right now because you can't even replace it," he said. "Nobody can afford to buy the new stuff and it isn't hardly available anyway. You have to take care of what you have."



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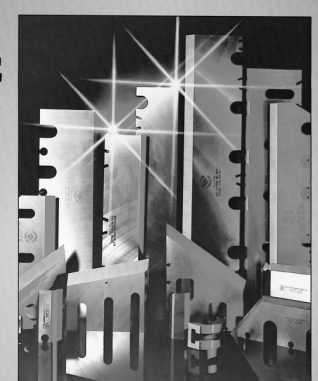
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On the Markets

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.

Recent Timber Sales

Average prices, as reported by each agency

Agency Regular Intermediate

DNR—Central Region

June 7th—Sealed Bid

Aspen Species (PW)	\$40.17	\$36.00
Maple Species (WMP)	\$10.38	
Basswood (WMP)	\$ 6.37	

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

DNR—Northwest Region

June 8th—Sealed Bid

Aspen Species (PW)	\$25.23	\$26.21
Tamarack (PB)	\$10.60	\$ 5.68
Norway Pine (WST)	\$60.10	\$91.51
White Spruce (PB)	\$71.77	\$15.72

42 of the 51 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—Northeast Region

June 9th—Sealed Bid

Aspen Species (PW)	\$26.77	\$32.02
Black Spruce (PW)	\$32.66	\$19.96
Paper Birch (PB)	\$13.06	\$24.97
Norway Pine (WST)	\$76.58	\$80.45

30 of the 40 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—Good Neighbor Authority

June 9th—Sealed Bid

Trembling Aspen (PW)	\$34.48
Norway Pine (PB)	\$37.11
Jack Pine (PB)	\$22.47
Balsam Fir (PW)	\$ 7.34
Paper Birch (PB)	\$19.74

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

Clearwater County

June 27th—Oral Auction

Aspen	\$34.97
Birch	\$16.57
Maple	\$17.34

All 5 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Hubbard County

July 11th—Oral Auction

Aspen Pulp	\$18.96
Birch Pulp	\$ 6.35
Norway Pine Mixed	\$27.78

All 10 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—Deer River Salvage

July 19th—Sealed Bid

Trembling Aspen (PW) \$33.54

The only 21 tract (2070 cords) offered during the sale was purchased.

DNR—Warroad Area

July 26th—Oral Auction

Aspen Species (PW)	\$ 7.95	\$16.53
Jack Pine (PB)	\$15.62	\$22.84
Mixed Spruce (PB)	\$11.25	\$17.29
Balsam Fir (PB)	\$10.13	\$10.03

12 of the 18 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Cass County

July 28th—Oral Auction

Aspen	\$37.33	\$34.92
Red Oak	\$38.32	\$43.03
Birch	\$15.54	\$16.60
Maple	\$14.32	\$16.30

16 of the 18 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Koochiching County

August 3rd—Oral Auction

Aspen P&B	\$33.77	\$39.08
Norway Pine P&B	\$85.89	\$62.54
Spruce P&B	\$22.55	\$14.57
Jack Pine P&B	\$43.24	\$53.88

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

Products:

PB = Pulp and Bolts

WMP = Woodsrun Mixed Products

WC = Woodsrun Cordwood

ST = Sawtimber

WST = Woodsrun Sawtimber

PW = Pulpwood

SLV = Sawlogs/Veneer

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STAN GROSSMAN
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Choice Insurance Hires Saccoman

John Saccoman, MIS (Master of Industrial Safety), recently joined Choice Insurance as a Loss Control Consultant based in Grand Rapids, MN.

As a Loss Control Consultant, John will be responsible for safety and loss control activities, primarily for the Forest Products Commercial Self-Insurance Group. The self-

Timber Talk

insured fund includes many of the independent loggers in rural Minnesota. In addition to the loggers, there are other wood product employers including sawmills, pallet makers and hardwood flooring manufacturers.

Saccoman has been working with the members of the self-insured fund for the past several years as an

employee of a Bloomington, MN-based Third Party Administrator, so he has already met many of the membership's owners and operators. He's excited to be working full-time with the members of Forest Products Group.

"The employers in the forest products group, which includes a majority of logging companies, are made up of such salt-of-the-earth, hard-working folks. It's rewarding for me to try and help them comply with the many state and federal OSHA regulations," Saccoman said.

John describes himself as a "people person" who enjoys working one-on-one with clients to foster long-lasting, positive relationships. He enjoys working on a local community-fund board in his adopted hometown of Coleraine that supports area non-profit organizations. John and his wife have two growing kids who are involved in sports and activities that keep them running from event to event.

Saccoman has 25 years of experience in loss control working with companies in the logging, construction, manufacturing, and healthcare industries. He is a graduate of Hibbing High School, Hibbing Community College and has both undergraduate (1992, Communication/Journalism) and graduate degrees (1997, Master of Industrial Safety) from the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

"We are so excited to welcome John to Choice Insurance," said Chuck Klabo, Director of Insurance. "His history and expertise with loss control in the logging industry will be a tremendous asset for our Minnesota customers."

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Ed Gudowicz — 1952-2022

Longtime Louisiana Pacific procurement manager Ed Gudowicz died in July, at home surrounded by his family.



Ed Gudowicz

Ed was born July 30, 1952 to Edwin and Julia (Wall) Gudowicz in Laona, Wisconsin and grew up in Armstong Creek. He graduated high

school from Armstong-Goodman School before attending UW-Steven's Point, obtaining a degree in forestry. During high school, Ed spent his summers working in the wood mills for Louisiana Pacific and after college continued his employment there as a forester, first in Goodman, then Hayward, and in 1984 was transferred to Two Harbors. Ed retired after working 42 years with LP.

Ed was a member of Holy Spirit Catholic Church and the Loyal Order of Moose. He enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren, hunting, and watching his children and grandchildren play sports.

Truck-Weight Compliance Training Scheduled

The Minnesota Truck-Weight Education Training Program has announced six September dates for compliance training, including one session in Duluth.

The Duluth session will be held September 13th at the MnDOT Office at 1123 Mesaba Avenue, and begins with registration at 8:30AM.

Attendees learn how to configure their truck-trailer combinations and their axles to maximize legal allowable weights. They'll also learn about road-weight regulations

during various times of the year, including the winter load increase and spring load restrictions.

The six September sessions are:

- September 6th: Clay County Highway Department, Moorhead
- September 7th: St. Cloud MnDOT Office
- September 13th: Duluth MnDOT Office
- September 19th: Owatonna Public Library
- September 20th: MnDOT Training Center, Shoreview
- September 26th: Chippewa County Sheriff's Office, Montevideo

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Komatsu Acquires Manufacturer of Attachments for Silviculture

Komatsu Forest AB has announced it is going to acquire Bracke Forest AB, which develops, manufactures, and sells application-

specific attachments for silviculture.

Tree planting is expected to expand worldwide for lumber production and environmental concerns, such as the promotion of carbon neutrality. At the same time, the need for mechanization is growing, especially because tree planting is labor-intensive work, with an increase in planting in remote areas, and a decrease in the workforce. With extensive know-how of silviculture over the years, Bracke develops, manufactures, and sells application-specific attachments for use in silviculture processes. Since 2014, Bracke and Komatsu have engaged in joint development by sharing respective technologies and experience accumulated over the years, respectively in forest and construction machines.

Komatsu's forestry business upholds sustainable forestry, which not only engages in harvesting and forwarding, but also includes silviculture and forest management. Komatsu also works to mechanize dangerous work, facilitate wide use of forest machines that contribute to safety, and promote smart forestry that analyzes drone and satellite-based data for the management of forests, including the number and height of trees.



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LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

Minnesota Lumberjacks

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*



Over the years when logging was one of our leading industries of the north county, the men who kept the logs acoming in to the sawmills were referred to by several different names. In Maine, the birthplace of the lumber camps, they were called “shanty boys,” probably because the camps of the early days in Maine were more or less “shanties.” As the industry moved to New York and Pennsylvania, they were often called “choppers,” because in the early days the logs were all chopped with axes.

By the time logging reached Michigan, they were called “timbermen,” “timberjacks,” and “lumberjacks.” These names carried on through Wisconsin and on into Minnesota. While men who worked on the log drives were known as “drivers” or “river pigs,” the broad term used to describe any man working in the logging industry was “lumberjack.”

Many of the early lumberjacks of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota were

French-Canadians, Scotch and Irish, and other mixed nationalities who had followed the industry from Maine, New York and Pennsylvania, but by the time the industry hit its peak in Minnesota, a good many Scandinavian immigrants had joined them and by 1890 Scandinavians probably were in the majority. The Finns came along after 1900 and by the time the logging camps were closing, Finns made up quite a large part of the working force.

In the southern portion of the pine area of Minnesota, many of these lumberjacks were married men with families who had acquired land by homesteading or other means and were clearing up farms and making homes for their families, working on the farm in the summer months and going to the camps for the winters. I knew men who had gone to the camps every winter all their lives.

There were others who worked summer in the sawmills of Minneapolis, Stillwater, Little Falls, Cloquet and other towns and

went to the camps each winter.

In the early days, very little logging was done during summer months and the camps would open about Oct. 1 and run until about Mar. 10 when the ice roads broke up. Men who did not follow the drives then returned to their summer jobs. Those who followed the drives usually went down and blew their “stakes” and were back on the drives by Apr. 10. In camps where all logs were landed on rivers, there were men who stayed right through from October until the drive was in — usually in late May or early June.

Not all men returned to their summer jobs or farms, as there were a number who never got further than the nearest town to blow their stakes and then came back to the woods. This aspect of the lumberjack’s life has been much overdrawn, and while there was some “wild and wooly” days in the lumbering towns when the camps broke in the spring, these episodes were confined to but a small minority of the

This small 1880 camp was typical of most in the early period in Minnesota.





Above: An early load of logs near Two Harbors in 1901. Below: Bateau taking men to work in an early river drive. It took skill to run these rapids.



Early corner-bind loads (below) were tripped by hitting grab hook with a cant hook. After 1900 most sleighs had stakes that could be tripped from the opposite side.



lumberjacks and could not be considered normal when viewing the whole group that worked in the camps over the years. The lumberjack, on the whole, was a hardworking, honest, rugged type of individual.

Each logging company seemed to draw men from a certain part of the state and each foreman or walking boss had his following of lumberjacks. For an example, when Ed Netser was walking boss for the Combined Cloquet Companies on the Cloquet River, one could be sure that the camps in that area would be filled with farmer boys from the Pine City-Rush City area. Netser, a man who stood over six-foot-three and weighed around 225, was an Irish-Polack, and the camps under his supervision were about equally filled with Irish and Polish farm boys – all good lumberjacks who came back every year. The Oliver Mining Company that operated camps further up the Cloquet River had an Irish-Canadian for walking boss, and their camps were filled with mostly Canadians. And so it was with other companies, each having its own following of men.

The camps of the Alger Smith Company drew their men from the Duluth sawmills and the Duluth area. As a rule, the foremen were married men and had their families in towns nearest to the logging operations. Most of the logging industry of northeastern Minnesota drew its manpower from the Duluth area. To the west along the Mississippi River and in the Grand Rapids area, many of the early lumberjacks came to the woods via steamboat up the river from the farming areas to the south and from Minneapolis.

In the Bemidji area and up along the M.&I.R.R., the bulk of the early jacks came

from the mills of Minneapolis and Little Falls and from the farming areas around St. Cloud and the fringe area of the pine country. In later years, many men came from the prairie area along the western part of the state and from Dakota. The M.&I.R.R. camps always drew a great number of men from around Red Lake Falls, Thief River Falls, Brooks and Oklee. These were mostly French-Canadians and all good lumberjacks. In the early days around Brainerd, many of the camps were filled with men from eastern Canada.

Each year camps just seemed to fill with men who had worked in a camp the year before and came back bringing a partner. There was always competition for good men, and the foremen tried to feed the men well and use them well so as to maintain a good crew. Lumberjacks were a happy, good-natured bunch while in camp, with little or no fighting, with each man doing the best he could on his job with but little animosity towards each other.

By the time of the First World War, the whole picture changed and there was a shortage of men in the woods. Men were sent to camps from the employment offices in the cities, many unqualified. Good men no longer stayed in camp all winter and a new type of worker came to the woods. Piecework took over in place of monthly wages, mancatchers were hired to conscript workers, and most any type of man was sent to the camps. It was said that there were three crews for every camp: one coming, one working and one going. By the end of World War I, the days of the true, old lumberjack were over.

Throughout the time the logging industry flourished in Minnesota, wages varied some, but over the years the more or less standard wage for general woods work was \$26 per month, or \$1 per day. There were times when monthly wages were as low as \$16 and as high as \$90. Good food and a good foreman meant more to the old-time lumberjack.

The following schedule of monthly wages paid in a camp in 1915 will show the spread:

4-horse teamster	\$35
Skidding teamster	\$26
Sawyer	\$26
Swamper	\$22
Cook for large crew	\$60
Cooke	\$22
Hooker, loading crew	\$26
Blacksmith	\$40
Handyman	\$30
Top loader	\$40
Canthook man	\$26
Saw filer	\$30
Bull cook	\$22
Barn boss	\$35

Sometimes a man would be paid a little more if he was an old-timer with the company. I have heard old-time loggers say that if a man is good enough to keep in camp he is worth a dollar a day.



Above: An early logging camp on a northern Minnesota lake. Note the good stand of timber on the island.
Below: A group of early lumberjacks.



Below: An early camp kitchen. Lumberjacks liked good food – more than big wages, and the foreman saw they got it.



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