

TIMBER BULLETIN

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This last winter will be remembered as the one that wasn't. It was a nice "living" winter but with the late freeze and early break-up, the logging season was short. With break-up comes the meetings and workshops; time to catch up on Log Safe, MLEP and the TPA annual membership meeting. Spirit Mountain in Duluth is the site of this year's annual meeting, Friday, April 28.

DNR Commissioner Alan

President's Column



Garber will be at the annual meeting this year. It will be an opportunity to meet him and hear the plans for the DNR. With the changes in the DNR

planning process and proposed changes in the future, one thing is clear, there will be change.

If you have not had a chance to hear about the Canadian lynx listing as an endangered species, the afternoon session will be of interest to you. It will show how a non-issue can be blown up into an issue that threatens to change the way we manage our forests. Also on the agenda will be county and DNR timber sales plans, now and in the future.

Because of all the ever-changing issues, I guess will have to join the "information age" if we want to survive as an industry.

See you at the annual meeting.

DNR's Garber to Keynote TPA Annual Meeting

DNR Commissioner Allen Garber will be the Keynote Speaker for the TPA Annual Meeting Banquet. The Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, April 28, at the Spirit Mountain Recreation Area in Duluth.

Other highlights of the Annual Meeting will be a panel of county land commissioners making presentations on their forest management and timber sale plans; a presentation on DNR timber sale accomplishments for each region and responses on past accomplishments and future plans by DNR regional foresters and staff; and presentations on the status of the Canadian lynx and the implications of its recent listing as a threatened species.

For more information on the Annual Meeting or tickets for the banquet, please contact the TPA office at 218-722-5013.

USFS Sets Plan Alternatives

The Chippewa and Superior national forests have announced "preliminary" alternatives that will form the basis for revising existing forest plans. Seven alternatives have been prepared including the

"No Action" alternative which would maintain current plans for the forests.

Of the six remaining alternatives, five would reduce timber harvesting on the Superior and Chippewa including one which would eliminate timber harvesting completely. One alternative would increase the level of timber harvesting on the Superior and maintain it on the Chippewa.

The alternatives announced do not incorporate the input given by TPA. TPA provided alternatives previously which would balance age classes on the two forests, specify compliance with Minnesota Forest Resources Council site-level forest management guidelines and provide Extended Rotation Forests as utilized in the Generic Environmental Impact Statement on Forest Management and Timber Harvesting.

In response to the announced alternatives, TPA President Ray Killmer said, "We are extremely disappointed in this set of alternatives. With five of the alternatives showing a decrease in timber harvesting and forest management, it looks like the Forest Service has already made its decision. We spent a lot of time putting together the TPA alternative. We think it should have been considered but the Forest Service must have thrown it in the waste basket."

Copies of the alternatives can be obtained from the TPA office.

Mark your calendars to attend the

TPA Annual Membership Meeting

Friday, April 28, 2000

Spirit Mountain, Duluth, Minn.

This is your membership meeting!

It can be frustrating to deal with the public agencies that manage forests. But, we need to thank the people on the ground and in the field in these agencies who have worked very hard since last year's

Executive Vice President's Column



July 4
windstorm. Many of the foresters, technicians and staff people in DNR Area offices, counties and Forest Service Districts have gone the extra mile in setting up timber sales to clean up the mess.

TPA thanks you. The forests that will now grow thank you. And, the people, many not yet here, who will use and enjoy the resources in these forests in the future thank you.

* * *

We're only a few days away from the TPA Annual Meeting (April 28 at Duluth's Spirit Mountain Recreation Area). From DNR Commissioner Al Garber's keynote address at the banquet to presentations on DNR timber sale programs, county timber sale programs and the Canadian lynx, it should be an interesting day. Call the TPA office if you need banquet tickets or information on the day's events.

* * *

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) approved Boise Cascade's Environmental Assessment Worksheet for improving the pulp mill on a 5-1 vote. TPA President Ray Killmer testified at the hearing. The anti-harvesting crowd was out in full force including one fellow who dressed up as the devil. The devil had painted his face in red with black streaks, had a skull hat, skeleton gloves and a scythe.

Even though the MPCA approved the project, the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) has sued to overturn the decision and require Boise to do an EIS. MCEA is also asking that MPCA regulate forest practices in the air

permit Boise is seeking. MCEA refers to the new forest management guidelines as being "embarrassingly short" of regulation.

Maybe I missed something. The guidelines, which TPA thought people were negotiating in good faith, are voluntary. The whole program in Minnesota is based on people working together, getting training, agreeing to implement, and avoiding the unproductive costs of regulation.

It looks a lot like MCEA got what it could, in seemingly poor if not bad faith, through negotiation and is now seeking whatever else it can get through litigation and regulation.

* * *

DNR Forest Management chief Bruce ZumBahlen underwent sextuple coronary bypass surgery in late March. He was discharged in less than a week and will recover at home for six to eight weeks. Bruce is a good guy and we wish him the best for a full and complete recovery.

In other DNR health news, Doug Ford has been suffering from kidney problems and is to undergo surgery. Doug has made great strides in the timber sale accounting/finance system. We wish him the best.

* * *

The MN Forest Resources Council has completed a scientific peer review of the riparian and seasonal pond portions of the new site-level forest management guidelines. Four two-person teams of scientists reviewed the guidelines. The rankings, on a scale of 1 to 4, came out with a 4, two 3s and a 1. The low ranking of 1 was given by the silvicultural team which thought that more harvesting should be done in some cases to promote structural and compositional diversity in riparian forests.

While this review provided a pretty good thumbs up to the guidelines, the controversy that the environmental activists want to generate will continue. One environmental group has now proposed that the guidelines be changed to a 200 foot no cut buffer around all streams, lakes, rivers,

wetlands and seasonal ponds. By any estimate that would be millions of acres. This issue will be considered by the Forest Resources Council in April. Hopefully, science and cooler heads will prevail.

* * *

Finally, it's time for the LogSafe meetings and TPA Truck Driver workshops. TPA encourages all loggers to attend these sessions. They may seem a bit repetitious at times, but, when it comes to safety – like so many other things – practice makes perfect.

MLEP Logger of The Year

The Minnesota Logger Education Program (MLEP) is sponsoring a Logger of the Year program for Minnesota loggers. The objective is to recognize an outstanding logger, increase the visibility of competent professional loggers, to encourage other loggers to emulate the performance of the winners and to improve forester-logger-landowner relations by publicly recognizing outstanding performance as an essential element of every timber harvest. State winners will receive an engraved plaque and a one-year paid MLEP membership.

Nominations must be submitted to MLEP by June 1, 2000. Award nominations are available from the MLEP office, 626 Board of Trade Building, Duluth, Minn. 55802. The telephone number is 218-722-5442.

State winners will be entered in the Forest Resources Association Inc. (formally the American Pulpwood Association) Lake States Regional Technical Division Policy Committee Regional Logger Competition. For additional information contact MLEP.



Left to right: Roger Campbell and Tom McCabe.

McCabe Forest Products

The week before spring road restrictions went into effect I visited TPA Director Tom McCabe, who is also the second generation owner of McCabe Forest Products. The logging job he was working on was northeast of Duluth on the Little

Knife River. This State timber sale contains four upland cutting areas. The major species are birch, aspen, maple and balsam. The spruce is reserved. Even though the sale contains upland harvest areas it should be mentioned that there are several miles of winter roads

needed to access this site. Due to the mix of species on this sale the crew is producing both roundwood and chips. The felling is being done with a Timbco 425 feller-buncher. Roger Campbell has been with McCabe Forest Products for 30 years and operates the feller-buncher. The bunched trees are skidded by one of two John Deere 648 grapple skidders. These machines are operated by Royal Abrahamson and Rick Olson who have been with the company for 29 and 24 years respectively. The birch and aspen go directly to the Serco loader and Siiro slasher where the trees are slashed into 100-inch length. The tops are piled to be chipped later. The other species are skidded directly to the Morbark chipper. "We try to skid the balsam when it is frozen in order to accomplish most of the limbing, but with the warm weather lately it has become difficult," Tom commented. Both the chipper and the slasher are operated by Tony Ernest, who is the second generation in his family to work for the company and has been with them for three years.

The company runs three trucks. On this job two are hauling chips and one is hauling pulpwood. Tom, driving one of the chip trucks, and Bill Fronckewicz, who has been with the company for 21 years, drives the other one. Gary Campbell drives the pulpwood



Left to right: Tony Ernest, chipper and slasher operator; Royal Abrahamson and Rick Olson operate the grapple skidders.



Bill Franekewicz is ready to haul another load of chips to Duluth (or is it Superior?).



Gary Campbell hauls pulpwood to the mills (Roger Campbell is his father).



Roger Campbell cuts another paper birch with the Tembco 425 feller-buncher.

truck. He is also the second generation in his family to work for the company and has been with them four years. Gary is hauling the birch and some of the aspen pulp to Louisiana-Pacific. The rest of the aspen is going to Potlatch. Tom and Bill are hauling the chips to Georgia-Pacific in both Duluth and Superior.

This state timber sale incorporates nine riparian management zone (RMZ) research units that are a part of a larger riparian research project being done on three different watersheds in Minnesota. There is a 15-foot buffer along the stream on all units where no trees will be cut. Three of the units will be controls, with no entry into the RMZ. Three other units will be clear cut. The remaining three units will leave 25

square feet of basal area after being harvested.

Because very few riparian studies have been done in the Midwest, this project will provide extensive data for harvest economics as well as the impacts of harvesting on soils, vegetation, regeneration, water chemistry, fish and wildlife habitat stream morphology and cultural artifacts. The results of this study will apply more directly to the Lake States area than similar studies done in Maine or the western United States. Ultimately, the information will provide a scientific basis to verifying or modifying Minnesota's best management practices (BMPs).

Funding and cooperation for this project comes from the Minnesota Forest Resources Council,

University of Minnesota's College of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Research Institute, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service Northeast Forest Experiment Station, Minnesota Extension Service, UPM Blandin Paper Company, Potlatch Corporation, Boise Cascade Corporation, and the St. Louis County Land Department

"We hope to complete the logging in all the research within the next week if the weather holds," Tom mentioned. This was Tuesday, Feb. 22. Spring road restrictions went on Saturday, Feb. 26, and the job was shut down. It looks like they will be back on this sale next winter, provided we have a winter.



Tony cuts the aspen into 100-inch lengths with the Serco loader and Siiro slasher.



The Morbark chipper makes quick work of the birch.

Minnesota Timber Producers Association *Meet the Directors*

Kit Hasbargen was born in Baudette, Minn., into a family that was in the logging business. As a result he began working in the woods at a young age. In 1973 Kit went to work full time for Hasbargen Logging and is presently the owner of the company.

Kit has been an active member of TPA, serving on the mechanization committee for several years. He is also a very active member of the Group Health Insurance Trustees. He is also involved in local activities and has served as vice president of Clementson Lutheran Church.

Kit and his wife, Lynn, live in Birchdale, Minn. They have two



daughters, Trisha and Laurel, who have no trouble keeping their parents busy. When asked what he does in his spare time Kit just smiles. However, considering the area, you would have to guess that he has wet a line and done some hunting.

together and share a strategic vision. And what better place to meet than in the pristine environment of the high Sierra."

Following the Forest Products Society meeting, a Wood Adhesives Symposium will take place (also at Harveys) on June 22-23.

To receive a complete program and registration information on the conferences, please call 608-231-1361 ext. 208 or e-mail to conferences@forestprod.org. You can also visit the Annual Meeting website at www.ucfpl.ucoop.edu/fps2000.

The Forest Products Society Presents: "The 2000+ Wood Odyssey"

How can we ensure a healthy environment and still provide wood products consumers need, want, and most importantly, demand? Can we take steps now to preserve the clarity of Lake Tahoe for generations to come? Will lumber continue to be the building material of choice?

Those and many other subjects will be addressed in an informative, comprehensive manner during the opening of the Forest Products Society's 54th Annual Meeting, "The 2000+ Wood Odyssey," at Harveys in South Lake Tahoe on June 19, 2000.

Among the distinguished speakers at the event will be Dr. Patrick Moore, director of GreenSpirit, founding member of Greenpeace and former director of Greenpeace International. Moore will discuss his thoughts on environmental campaigns and his belief that they have spread misinformation and confusion about forests and forestry. Additionally, Dr. Charles Goldman

of UC Davis, recipient of the 1998 Albert Einstein Award of Science, will speak at the event. Goldman, who has been researching the effects of development of Lake Tahoe, will discuss the current conditions of one of the most beautiful forested sites in the world and what the future holds for the lake.

Also at "The 2000+ Wood Odyssey," industry experts will be featured on such topics as timber policy, sustainability and certification, timber imports, wood alternatives and biomass-based products. Following this opening General Session are two days of technical meetings covering a broad spectrum of forest products manufacturing issues.

"We feel it is imperative that experts in the forest products field attend this very important annual meeting," said Art Brauner, executive vice president of the Forest Products Society. "With changes in our industry accelerating at an astoundingly rapid pace, it is key for us to gather

Years Ago

20 YEARS AGO

- Chippewa National Forest started their tree planting program in April. This year they will plant 2,024,000 soft wood trees. Included is the planting of 20,000 white pine seedlings which are "blister rust resistant."
- John Chell has been appointed by DNR Commissioner Joe Alexander as regional administrator for Region 5 (southeastern Minnesota).
- Louisiana Pacific Corp. announced at its annual meeting that it has abandoned plans to build a waferboard plant in Bemidji, Minn. Their decision was based on "saturation" of plants in the Bemidji area.

30 YEARS AGO

- Darwin Anderson has been promoted to superintendent of the DNR's Carlos Avery Nursery.
- U.S. Forest Service is providing paper sleeping bags to their fire fighters when they have to stay overnight at the scene of a fire. The bags can be used about three nights and cost less than the price of having a cloth bag cleaned and prepared for reuse.
- Dr. Frank Kaufert, director of the University of Minnesota School of Forestry was presented the Timber Producers Association 1970 Paul Bunyan Award for his service and professional leadership to the forestry community, the university and the timber industry. Dr. Kaufert was a strong advocate for forest management and timber harvesting.
- The Timber Producers Association has started a new safety contest for TPA members. There will be two divisions: sawmill and logging. The awards for these programs will be presented at the TPA annual meeting.

guideline training sessions during 1999 are being asked to attend the equivalent of two days of training during 2000. This year's requirement includes attendance of LogSafe training and eight additional credits in elective training from among the over 65 MLEP sponsored and approved workshop opportunities. 2000 programs offerings have also been arranged to allow more flexibility since sessions are being offered at different times of the day, at a wider range of locations throughout the state, and for an extended period of time throughout the year lasting from April through October. New partnership opportunities are also being introduced during 2000 including workshop offerings being made available for credit at the North Star Exposition and services being made available through the Center for Economic Development. Beginning this year, members can also take advantage of MLEP's continuing education policy to request attendance of non-MLEP sponsored and approved workshops. Taken together, MLEP sponsored and approved services will provide 2000 participants with more options in selecting and attending workshop offerings that are convenient, relevant and meaningful to their individual business needs.

For further information regarding MLEP membership and services, or to receive a copy of the 2000 Logger Education Calendar of Events and Registration Materials, please contact MLEP, 626 Board of Trade Bldg., Duluth Minn. 55812 or call MLEP at 218-722-5442.



Minnesota Logger Education Program

by Mike Turner

Since its inception nearly five years ago, MLEP has played an important role in the development and delivery of training programs that benefit Minnesota's logging and forestry communities. And, with a membership approaching 500 business owners, additional measures have been taken to enhance the accessibility, flexibility and convenience of program services.

One of the developments being introduced to members during 2000 is MLEP's new Continuing Education Policy. The policy was designed by MLEP's Board of Directors to clarify educational requirements and to promote attendance of a wider range of training programs by its members. Business owners who have completed both forest management

NaturTek Innovations Target Global Markets to Grow Local Jobs

The University of Minnesota, Duluth (UMD), Minnesota Power, Inc. (NYSE:MPL) and Potlatch Corp. (NYSE:PCH) have launched a partnership to glean valuable natural compounds from birch bark in quantities never before attainable. With research facilities located at UMD's Natural Resource Research Institute (NRRI), the new company called NaturTek will use a patented technology to develop innovative products for global markets.

University of Minnesota, Duluth, scientists developed the technology that converts birch bark into compounds for industrial and agricultural uses. Suberin, for example, has applications as an industrial coating and lubricant. The industrial coatings industry alone is a \$9.9 billion market. University researchers will work with Potlatch and Synertec, a

subsidiary of Minnesota Power, to license the patented process and drive commercial development of new products.

"The strength of this partnership lies in the unique expertise of each partner," said University of Minnesota, Duluth Chancellor Kathryn A. Martin. "NRRI has proven research capabilities, while Minnesota Power and Potlatch bring business development and operating expertise. This venture reflects UMD's ongoing commitment to bring our research into the public arena."

According to NaturTek project manager David F. Peterson, "The process is environmentally and economically sound. Plus, there is substantial interest in commercial applications of the compounds."

"This partnership is an extension of our long-term investment in the region," said L. Pendleton Siegel, Potlatch chairman and chief executive officer. "Bark byproducts have traditionally been used as fuel, but NaturTek offers

access to alternative markets for value-added products that will better utilize the existing resource."

"NaturTek is about economic development and diversifying the region's natural resource-based economy," said Edwin L. Russell, Minnesota Power chief executive officer. "We are excited about the business potential of this partnership."

Synertec is a subsidiary of Minnesota Power, Inc., a multi-service company with corporate headquarters in Duluth, Minn.

Potlatch Corporation, headquartered in Spokane, Wash., is a diversified forest products company with timberlands and manufacturing facilities throughout northern Minnesota.

The Natural Resources Research Institute, a principal research arm of the University of Minnesota, Duluth, fosters economic development of Minnesota's natural resources in an environmentally sound manner to promote private sector employment.

Company Mergers and Acquisitions Continue

The turn of the century has seen an accelerated pace of mergers and acquisitions in the forest products industry. While largely untouched for several decades, Minnesota mills have been in the middle of this recent wave of industry consolidation.

The late 1990s saw the acquisition of Blandin Paper Co. by Finland's UPM-Kymmene, and Consolidated Papers Inc. of Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., buying Lake Superior Paper Industries and Superior Recycled Fibers Inc. These transactions integrated stand alone mill operations into major international and national companies.

1999 saw longtime forest industry leader Weyerhaeuser Corp. returning to the manufacturing sector in Minnesota. This was accomplished as Weyerhaeuser acquired MacMillan-Bloedel and then Trus-Joint International. These twin

purchases gave Weyerhaeuser ownership of the joint venture Trus-Joint/MacMillan parallel strand lumber plant in Deerwood, Minn.

In February 2000 two major transactions occurred. UPM-Kymmene announced a \$6 billion deal to acquire Champion International, including the Sartell, Minn., mill, thereby creating the world's third largest paper manufacturer based on revenues. Less than a week later, Finland's Sora Enso Oyj, the largest European paper manufacturer, announced a \$5 billion acquisition of Consolidated Papers Inc., including its Duluth facilities.

So, in a matter of months, five facilities – in Duluth, Deerwood, Grand Rapids and Sartell – have changed hands. In addition to these transactions, other recent deals have seen Abitibi-Consolidated Inc. and Donohue Inc. merging; International Paper buying Shorewood Packaging Corp.; and Smufit-Stone Container

Corp. purchasing St.Laurent Paperboard Inc.

Analysts note a number of factors for these mergers and acquisitions including depressed stock prices, high capital costs, economies of scale and the worldwide nature of business, and predict that more transactions will likely occur.

While some of these mergers may result in mill closures, Minnesota mills are believed to be well positioned to avoid this. In the 1980s and 1990s over \$3 billion was invested by owners into Minnesota mills. The up-to-date facilities operating in Minnesota, no matter who owns them, will continue to run.

Then and Now

by Mary Hoff, guest writer, Roots newsletter, April 2000, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry

(Editor's note: Fire is becoming a "hot" topic due to the BWCAW situation. Here's a study about fire and its role in some of Minnesota's counties.)

We all know that disturbance plays an important role in shaping the composition of forest. But do different types of disturbance produce different types of forest? Six years ago Steve Friedman, a graduate student in the University of Minnesota College of Natural Resources, set out to answer that question for the southern boreal forests that stretch across northeastern Minnesota.

"Historically, fire was the natural disturbance," Friedman says. "Now we have basically eliminated fire and replaced it with logging. So the basic ecological question is whether forest community response to disturbances are similar following fire and logging events."

To answer that question, Friedman is using the general land office historical records developed during the original public land survey maintained by the DNR to reconstruct tree species composition and distribution patterns on roughly 8.5 million acres of land in Lake, Cook and St. Louis counties. This analysis provides a clear picture of what the northeastern forest was like prior to settlement and logging activities carried out by the first Europeans to settle this part of the state.

Furthermore, he is comparing that information with data from the 1990 Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) survey to develop a measure of the changes in the forest that have occurred since the late 1880s. In addition to noting the location of various species, he also examined how tree species were associated with environmental conditions relying on environmental data, including soils, geology, and presence of other tree species.

Findings

Friedman found that the presettlement forest, in which fire was the main source of disturbance, had a markedly different species composition than today's forests, which have been largely influenced by logging and are about 30 percent paper birch and aspen. That probably comes as no huge surprise. What may come as a surprise, however, is what that presettlement forest actually looked like.

"A lot of people have the perception that white pine was a very ubiquitous species. The historical data don't support that perception," Friedman says. Although the pines may have been noteworthy in terms of sheer physical size and economic importance, they were not exceptional in either abundance or distribution. Rather, black spruce, paper birch, and larch were the predominant species, representing about 50 percent of the trees in the study area. White pine was represented by only six percent of the general land office records, and maps Friedman has produced using these records show patchy distribution patterns.

What Else?

Friedman's analysis yielded a second surprise as well. He found that, historically trees in the region were much more likely to be associated with other members of their own species than with trees or other species. That means that even though the diversity of the forest was relatively low – there were only nine species represented by at least one percent of the total number of trees in the general land office records – there was still substantial heterogeneity on a landscape basis.

In addition to showing that fire and logging have different impacts on forest composition, Friedman says, the data – in particular the data indicating that species tend to cluster within the forest – underscore the importance of managing forests at the landscape scale rather than at the level of individual stands. Because there is so much variation from stand to stand, Friedman says,

landscape-scale assessments paint a far more accurate picture of things important to forest community dynamics, interaction between wildlife and vegetation, and effects of disturbance.

"The only thing that occurs in the forest that is subjective is our demarcation of stands," he says. "We have to throw away those boundaries. The forest doesn't know there's a township and range grid out there."

Editorials

Editors Note: The following opinion column was published by the Bemidji Pioneer and the Duluth News-Tribune in response to the column referred to in the second paragraph.

by *Wayne Brandt*,
executive vice president

Naivete in a small child is both compelling and instructive to view as a toddler discovers its world. The same quality in adults is embarrassing; and when they should know better it is regarded as foolishness.

That's what one is forced to think in reading the rambling and confusing diatribe of John Talberth and Karyn Moskowitz (Bemidji Pioneer and Duluth News-Tribune, March 19, 2000) as they attempt to make an economic case for ending logging on national forest lands.

The economics of public agency timber sales are easy to compare here in Minnesota. St. Louis County manages nearly a million acres of timberland. They do this with 13.4 full-time-equivalent (FTE) employees in the timber program. St. Louis County sells 13,660 cords per FTE, generates \$129.14 of revenue per hour and generates a gross profit of 74 percent for each dollar of wood sold. All of this is accomplished while harvesting a little over half of their annual growth of timber.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages about three million acres of timberland. They do this with 55 FTE's in the timber program. The DNR sells 9,738 cords per FTE, generates \$113.23 of revenue per hour and generates a gross profit of 25 percent for each dollar of wood sold. This is accomplished while harvesting 43 percent of their annual growth.

The Superior National Forest, like St. Louis County, manages about a million acres of timberland. They do this with 46.5 FTEs in the timber program. The Superior National Forest sells 2,600 cords per FTE, generates \$34.45 of revenue

per hour and generates a loss of three percent for each dollar of wood sold. They do this while harvesting only 20 percent of their annual growth.

Keep in mind that each of these three public land managing agencies sell their wood at public auction. Competitive bids determine the price and the highest bidder is awarded the sale.

All three public land managing agencies utilize sound, sustainable forest management and timber harvesting practices. Few, if any, observers could distinguish county, state, or national forest timber sales from each other if they did not already know who managed the land.

The financial performance of the under-managed national forests does not result from employee effort. The hard working professionals in this agency have been saddled with a cumbersome, time consuming, paper pushing decision making and documentation process that takes a lot of time and costs a lot of money.

But, the management of forest resources in the 21st century is much more than financial performance. Minnesota's loggers, sawmillers and papermakers have recognized this for many years.

Clean water is Minnesota's most precious resource. Over 10 years ago, water quality best management practices (BMPs) for forestry were implemented in Minnesota. Ongoing monitoring by the DNR has shown that compliance with these voluntary guidelines consistently exceeds 90 percent and that the guidelines are 99 percent effective in protecting our water resources.

In the early 1990s Minnesota's loggers and forest products companies partnered with the resort and tourism industry to develop visual management guidelines. These guidelines have been adopted and implemented statewide. They have provided the means to protect and enhance our tourism industry while continuing to manage public and private forestlands.

Minnesota, through our landmark 1995 Sustainable Forest Resources Act and its guiding board, the Minnesota Forest Resources Council, has adopted

comprehensive voluntary site-level forest management guidelines which go much further than water quality or visual management.

These guidelines, which were adopted in late 1998, address wildlife management, riparian areas, soils, forest productivity and a host of other issues. Just last year, over 1,100 loggers, foresters and natural resource professionals attended field and classroom training on the use of these guidelines.

Minnesota's loggers have also invested over \$40 million in new, environmentally-sensitive logging equipment and accessories. This is in addition to the estimated cost of up to \$10 million per year in higher logging costs to implement the previously mentioned guidelines.

Forest products companies, along with a number of counties, have adopted the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), which sets standards for sustainable forest management and activities. Last year, Minnesota's SFI state implementation committee was given the first national award as state implementation committee of the year.

Timber harvesting and forest management are much more than dollars and cents . . . whether on national, state, county, private or industry forestlands. Ending timber harvesting as a management tool on national forests, or any other land management area, makes no sense.

What makes sense is the progressive timber harvesting and forest management that we practice . . . every day.

Editors Note: The following letter to the editor was sent to the Duluth News-Tribune after the Sierra Club criticized TPA, the MN Forest Resources Council and the American Forest & Paper Association's Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

Editor:

As the Sierra Club moves further out of the mainstream of society and their peers in the environmental advocacy community, their attacks on Minnesota's loggers, sawmillers, papermakers and others associated with the forest products industry

(continued on page 11)

(continued from page 10)

are to be expected. When they move into broad brush attacks (Clyde Hanson, North Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, Minneapolis, Minn., Duluth News-Tribune, April 1, 2000) on anyone that doesn't subscribe to their views, they go a bit too far.

The Sierra Club describes the Minnesota Forest Resources Council as a "... publicly funded tool also used by the logging industry...". That they are a "tool" might come as news to the gubernatorially appointed members of this council who represent conservation organizations, county land commissioners, the Department of Natural Resources, environmental organizations, hunting and angling groups, research and higher education, the Indian Affairs Council, organized labor, nonindustrial forest landowners, the resort and tourism industry, secondary manufacturing and the USDA Forest Service.

BWCAW in Transition

by Mimi Barzen, *Roots newsletter*, April 2000, *Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry*

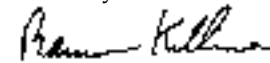
From all the talk, all the news reports, all the information available on the blowdown that swept across portions of northern Minnesota last July 4, one is led to believe this was a freak occurrence the Boundary Waters and other parts of northern Minnesota have never experienced. Such short memories we have. It just four years ago, almost to the day of that July storm, that another "super blowdown" hit northern Minnesota, devastating 375,000 acres of land.

We don't know if, in the past, major storms whipped across the piece of paradise knocking trees to the ground as if they were matchsticks, but we do know that vast areas have been swept over by fires, sometimes very large fires. In many cases such windstorms are the precursor to fires.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), also attacked by the Sierra Club as a "public relations effort," has the support or participation of such diverse groups as the Conservation Fund, Ducks Unlimited, National Association of Conservation Districts, National Association of Professional Forestry Schools and Colleges, National Association of State Foresters, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Ruffed Grouse Society, Society of American Foresters and the Wildlife Habitat Council, among many others. SFI licensees in Minnesota include St. Louis County, Lake County and Itasca County.

But, maybe we all missed the point of the Sierra Club's point of view. After all, it was published on April Fools day.

Sincerely,



Ray Killmer
President

According to Lee Frelich, research associate at the University of Minnesota and an expert on ecological disturbances in forests, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) has experienced huge catastrophes in the past. Because they happened before the turn of the last century, these events are not common knowledge.

Fire History

Bud Heinselman, a research ecologist for the North Central Forest Experiment Station, spent most of his professional career studying the BWCAW ecosystem. What he discovered is that in presettlement times (prior to 1900), the BWCAW was a young forest community due to the numerous fires that burned, some of which covered vast acreages. These fires were severe disturbances not unlike the storm of last July.

In 1863 and '64, fires raged across the entire North American continent and significantly impacted what we now consider the BWCAW. During that time, a single fire burned almost 280,000

SFIsm Program Surpasses 58 Million Acres

Located in New York's six million-acre Adirondack Park, Paul Smith's College chose to enroll 12,500 acres of forestland into the SFI program. The college, which is nationally renowned for its forestry curriculum, is the first educational institution to be licensed under the SFI program. "We are proud to have initiated the SFI licensing process, formalizing the commitment of Paul Smith's College to sustainable forestry practices," said director of facilities, Steve McFarland.

acres. The last big fires in this area occurred around 1894 when two fires burned a total of 130,000 acres. When combined with several smaller fires, the total area burned equaled 17 percent of the wilderness area.

Although 1894 was the last time big individual fires burned, the year 1910 had the last major impact. That year, nine separate fires burned about 50,000 acres. Since then, fire hasn't been the dominating part of the ecosystem.

Fire Study

How was this history determined? By studying tree rings Bud Heinselman aged trees and studied fire scars across the entire BWCAW area during the '60s. He recorded the ages of stands and made maps showing where historic fires occurred. In the entire 1.1 million acres, there were just three "old" trees dating back to 1595. The remainder were much younger.

The BWCAW is viewed as an area that was replete with red and white pine. Reality is another story. Historically red and white pine

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accounted for just 10 percent of all trees in the BWCAW. Because they are found on islands and peninsulas within 300 feet of water, this gives the false impression that they are by far the most dominant species in the BWCAW.

Species Composition

According to Bud, "the multi-aged groves of red and white pine maintained and renewed over the centuries by periodic light underburns and occasional more intense surface and crown fires are still there. Many of these stands have developed dense understories of balsam fire, spruce, and sometimes cedar. (But) many stands, especially red pine, have not had much successful recruitment of new age classes since the fires of 1910."

As a matter of fact, the uplands are currently a mixture of small patches of untouched forest with large areas of cutover forests that either regenerated on their own or were planted. It has only been 21 years since logging has been eliminated, but our viewpoint of this "virgin" forest remains intact.

To maintain the "natural" age and species structure of the BWCAW found prior to 1900 would require a fire rotation every 100 years. Since fires were curtailed, this rotation has jumped to once every 2,000 years. There is no way the current composition can be continued under this regime.

What Changed?

As previously stated, fire frequency has decreased significantly since the early 1900s. This was not only due to the new policies put in place during the first years of the century, but also because of forest fragmentation to the south of the wilderness area. This fragmentation acted like a shield, helping to stop fires from entering the wilderness. Climatic changes have also influenced stand composition.

With the number and magnitude of the disturbances in the BWCAW in the past, most of the forest was relatively young, with red and white pine minor components of the overstory canopy, and it is still true today. In fact, it was the taller, older trees that received the most damage in high winds.

When you think about it, it makes

sense. As trees age, they are attacked by insects and diseases. Even if the tree is able to withstand an attack, the tree is weakened temporarily, and in some cases permanently.

Environmental factors in the form of drought, excess heat, moisture, or cold further weaken susceptible trees and stress healthy ones as well. Trees that are taller than others in the vicinity also absorb more of the wind's force.

How do we keep red pine and white pine more than minor components in the BWCAW? The biggest problem in regenerating these species is the lack of fire. Both species benefit from burning. Although there is a "let burn" policy in the BWCAW, and fires do occur on a fairly regular basis, they tend to be small, reducing the chances for red and white pine to take hold on any particular site. Bud Heinselmann stated "much of the older groves of these species lack the younger age-class components they must soon have if they are to persist into the future."

What does this mean?

As devastating as the July 4 storm was, it certainly wasn't the first, nor will it be the last time something of this magnitude will occur. It may even provide the needed opportunity for red and white pine to retain a strong foothold in the wilderness area. However, what has changed is our perception of a very popular wilderness area that happens to be in our back yard.

Parts of the BWCAW have definitely changed and it is the implication of these changes that we now have to deal with. This wilderness is not an entity unto itself, although while visiting there, we like to think that. Rather, it is connected to everything beyond its borders. The 25 million toppled trees create a threat to not only those who live depend upon the wilderness for a livelihood, or those with lodges within the fire corridor, but for everyone else who has either set foot into the BWCAW or dreams of such a trek in the future.

Even though a collective "we" have been successful in keeping fire, for the most part, out of the wilderness for the last 90 years, fire is in our future, and it shall remain so for years to come.

Wood is Preferred Pallet Material

Wood continues to dominate as the pallet material of choice, as new market research reveals that 91 percent of pallet users' annual pallet purchases are solid wood pallets. As pallet users seek the lowest cost solution for their materials handling needs, many are concerned about the environmental

impact of the choices they make. A brochure is available to pallet users that illustrates that wood is the only pallet and container material that is reusable, repairable,



recyclable and comes from a renewable resource. Produced by NWPCA, the *Pallets and the Environment* brochure emphasizes that "wood is good" by describing how the pallet and container industry is committed to sound environmental practices, including proper forest management and aggressive reuse and recycling efforts.

The brochure is free to pallet users and may be requested from NWPCA's website: www.nwpc.com; or by contacting Tracy Libucha by email at palletpds@aol.com; FAX 703-527-7717; or phone 703-527-7667. Visit NWPCA's website to learn more about pallets, pallet quality and the products and services available from pallet and container professionals in your area.

NWPCA is an international trade association of unit load professionals who manufacture, recycle, and distribute reusable pallets and other unit load bases, containers and reels. NWPCA is dedicated to the success of its members by helping them create environmentally responsible, cost-effective solutions to meet their customers' changing unit load materials handling needs.

Third Generation 720 Feller-Buncher New 5700 Series Felling Saw



The new 720C feller-buncher is ideal for both thinning and final fell applications. Amply powered with choice of the new Cummins Elite, 174 hp engine or the John Deere 6068T PowerTech at 172 hp, the stable and highly durable 720C will perform in a variety of harvesting applications.

Widely recognized as the best in the woods, Tigercat drive-to-tree feller-bunchers benefit from a superior design. One key factor is the "reverse" engine orientation, providing improved access to the pumps and filters, better weight distribution and superior cooling airflow.

One of the major "C" series enhancements is a drive system similar to the Tigercat hydrostatic skidder drive. Hydrostatic drive combined with Tigercat's single-ratio transfer case provides infinitely variable speed control. The result is higher achievable wheel speed during harvesting. Shifting between high and low range is eliminated. The operator can precisely match wheel speed to terrain and harvesting conditions. Smooth, continuous traction minimizes wheel spin for improved performance in poor terrain and causes less stress on the driveline components.

The isolation mounted cab is quiet and spacious, with insulation and climate control. The heavy-duty, adjustable suspension seat has low-effort ergonomic joysticks mounted to the armrest for the steer and boom functions. Operators appreciate the smooth, responsive joystick steering.

The 720C is shown here with the

new 5700 series felling saw. The 5700 is a versatile single post felling saw capable of cutting and controlling big timber or bunching smaller stems in parallel alignment. The unique asymmetric design allows small trees to be tucked neatly into the pocket one after another, while

larger diameter trees are centered for maximum lateral stability. The innovative 5700 series felling saw is available on the Tigercat drive-to-tree and track feller-bunchers.

Tigercat industries designs and manufactures premium quality forestry and off-road equipment. For more information on the 720C, 5700 saw or other Tigercat products, contact Tigercat at 519-442-1000; E-mail: sales@tigercat.com; Internet: www.tigercat.com or contact your Tigercat dealer.

Blount Introduces New Hydro-Ax 18 High Capacity Saw

Blount, Inc. introduces the new Hydro-Ax 18 High Capacity saw featuring a two-stage expanded pocket capable of accumulating a 4-square-foot bundle of pulpwood between dump cycles. It's narrow 56-inch width enables the attachment to efficiently cut and accumulate wood from side rows as well as the take-out row. Hydro-Ax's unique saw blade design features tooth lugs that are offset, up and down, from the blade's center. This offset design enables the use of low-cost 1⁷/₈" rotatable teeth to cut a non-binding 2¹/₄" kerf.

Blount's product protection plan for high-speed saws provides two-year/4000 hour coverage on the saw motor, saw bearings, saw shaft and saw blade.

The new Hydro-Ax 18 High Capacity saw has been

performance matched with the Hydro-Ax 411EX tractor to provide pulpwood thinning contractors a highly-productive, lightweight, 4-wheel drive thinning tractor and attachment. The front axle ground pressure generated by the 411EX is only 8.5 psi with 28L tires, enabling the 411EX to work in sensitive soil stands, where heavier tractors must use 30.5 tires to achieve comparable ground pressure. Using smaller tires not only increases maneuverability, it saves money. The Hydro-Ax 411EX/18 High Capacity saw combination is the machine thinning contractors need to lower per ton thinning cost.

With the optional joystick steering on 411EX tractor, the operator enjoys reduced steering fatigue, and increased productivity during the attachment dump cycle as this system provides simultaneous gather and bunch arm opening when dumping.

For more information contact the Forestry and Industrial Equipment Division of Blount, Inc., 535 Todd Mack Rd., Zebulon, N.C. Phone 919-269-2474 or visit the Blount FIED web site at: www.blount-fied.com.



The new Hydro-Ax 18 High Capacity saw has been performance matched with the Hydro-Ax 411EX tractor and designed to handle the smaller, lightweight 18" attachments. For more information contact the Forest and Industrial Equipment Division of Blount, Inc., or Johnson & Beacham at 919-783-5559.



Tigercat Builds Next Generation 630B Skidder

The Tigercat 630 skidder has been redesigned. Major “B” series changes include increased engine horsepower and an improved heat exchanger arrangement. The 630B power plant has been upgraded to a Cummins 6CTA8.3, 240 hp after-cooled engine. The innovative cross-flow cooling system orientates the side-by-side radiator and oil coolers. Like its predecessor, the heat exchangers are situated in a well-protected location in front of the operator’s cab.

Airflow is accomplished with a hydrostatic powered, variable speed, reversible fan. The operator-controlled variable speed allows for improved fuel efficiency in cold conditions where full fan rpm is not required. The variable speed feature is also advantageous for cold weather start-ups. To avoid debris buildup at the air intake area, the operator can reverse the fan to quickly purge the coolers without leaving the cab.

The hydrostatic drive combined with Tigercat’s single-ratio transfer case provide infinitely variable speed controls from 0-10 mph (16 km/h) and offer a number of advantages. Maximum horsepower is always available, regardless of wheel speed. Gear shifting is eliminated for reduced operator fatigue. The operator applies one pedal to travel forward and the other to reverse. Smooth starts and stops minimize wheel spin and cause less stress on the driveline components.

Choice of grapples include Tigercat’s line of continuous rotation bunching grapples, on a

single or dual function arch. The isolation mounted, tilting cab is quiet and spacious with air conditioning, adjustable suspension seat and one low-effort joystick controlling all boom, grapple and differential lock functions. The seat and all controls are

rotated 40° to the right for reduced neck strain and a better view of the load.

New in the 630B cab is a hand operated lever to adjust maximum speed. The new controls allow the operator to effectively reduce the maximum speed of the vehicle while maintaining the full range of foot pedal travel. This new feature provides even more precise control of the skidder in extremely rough terrain.

The 630 series skidders are recognized as the best choice for high production transporting, especially in steep or wet terrain or in long haul skidding applications. Loggers appreciate the 630 because the machine can pull more wood in fewer trips – the key to higher productivity.

Tigercat Industries designs and manufactures premium quality forestry and off-road equipment. For more information on the 630B or other Tigercat products, contact Tigercat at 519-442-1000; E-mail: sales@tigercat.com; Internet: www.tigercat.com or contact your Tigercat dealer.

DNR Says ‘Be Safe, Not Sorry,’ Open Fire Website

In a year when the potential for wildfires is perhaps the greatest in memory, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has created an online Wildlife Information Center to help keep people informed about wildfire conditions. The DNR and other firefighting organizations are preparing for what could be a busy fire season. Minnesotans are urged to be prepared as well, by staying

informed about wildfire conditions.

During the wildfire season, the website www.ra.dnr.state.mn.us/fire will be updated on a daily basis. According to Olin Phillips, DNR wildfire protection supervisor, it will be the most up-to-date statewide source of information for anyone concerned about current wildfire conditions.

“While it’s nearly impossible to predict how severe the fire season will be, with the dry fall we had, and now with an early spring, conditions are very favorable for grass and forest fires in many parts of the state,” Phillips said. “We encourage people to check out the website regularly to get the latest information about wildfire conditions, burning restrictions and fire activity.”

“It is especially important this year, with the blowdown conditions in northeastern Minnesota, that businesses, residents and visitors keep current on fire conditions,” Phillips added. “We encourage people to check the website often.”

The DNR will have a toll-free telephone information line operating later this spring that will also provide wildfire updates and condition reports.

Forest Service Employees Union Denounces Roadless Area Initiative

The Forest Service Council, representing 14,000 Forest Service employees in 92 Forest Service unions across the country, has issued a letter denouncing the administration’s roadless area initiative. The council notes that this centralized “one-size-fits-all” prescription bypasses the current planning process of local decision making that is based on site-specific, scientific information for that particular area. The council also notes that the decisions leading to this initiative were neither open nor transparent, and the administration made no effort to gather consensus. The Forest Service Council asks that a moratorium be placed on this initiative.

Wearing Sunday Pants

by M. J. McLaughlin



Marty in 1979.



Marty in 1999.

Editors note: Marty McLaughlin has retired from LUA. We appreciate his years of service and the attached article. Marty is one of the good guys. We wish him the best and hope to see him around.

In the spring of 1979, during the presidency of James Earl Carter, the national economy was having fits and I was beginning a 21-year career as a representative for Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance, a specialty carrier in both property and what was then called "Workman's Compensation" insurance. Our customers included most of the larger retail lumberyard chains in Minnesota and surrounding states. Both primary and secondary wood manufacturers were targeted and we even insured a large northern Minnesota paper mill and a custom window manufacturer for work comp.

What about the loggers?

We did provide insurance to three firms that had logging as 100 percent of their business in 1979: two were in Wisconsin and one in South Dakota. But prior to 1981's endorsement by the Minnesota Timber Producer's Association to write the "Work Comp" for interested members, the only loggers we saw were associated with our larger sawmill customers in both northern and southern Minnesota, as well as Iowa and Wisconsin.

And there lies the tale.

Al Lupa, a safety disciple and manager of the J. C. Campbell sawmill in Two Harbors, Minn., agreed it would be a good idea for me to visit his logging crews. He would inform Woodlands Manager Ted Fulton, and I agreed to be

present on the morning indicated. This was in the winter of '79-'80.

Holed up in a Duluth motel the night before, I checked my calendar and noted we never set the exact time, just the date. It was too late to call so I commenced to deduce the proper arrival time myself. "Let's see, loggers probably start early and I should get there before 9 a.m. I'd even wager a hard charging man like Ted could be there by 8." Such was the conversation with no one else.

The next day I decided 8:30 was a more likely starting time to see the woods' crews. After all, Ted would probably have breakfast, open his mail and review various administrative things before getting ready to leave. I decided an 8:15 arrival time by me would provide a safe enough margin – and if I was too early I could use their office to dictate insurance reports.

So into the J. C. Campbell office strides the neophyte who announces to Mr. Lupa and staff, "I'm ready to go see loggers." After the out-of-control laughter died down, Al (with tears in his eyes) explained to me that I was *several hours* too late! I rescheduled and departed wondering, "How early do these guys get up? They must make a bundle of money to justify these kind of hours."

Ted and I did later connect and spent a great day visiting the various logging crews.

Phil Hedstrom of Grand Marais also agreed to escort me to his logging sites that same winter. When I arrived for the January visit the temperature was 25 below. Phil accused me of wearing "Sunday pants" after a quick review of my apparel before beginning. I wondered, "Could we be marooned or trapped in an avalanche or something?" As we advanced up the Gunflint Trail I became apprehensive. Then Phil tells me "the moose story" as we switch to a logging road. It seems one of those giant critters had bolted out of the brush at a right angle to his vehicle at some unspecified time gone by. Without breaking stride it hoofed across the hood and windshield, leaving a one-inch deep impression in the dashboard. Nervously, I started glancing left and right for any signs of this new wide-body, furry threat. I also made a mental

note to purchase steel-toed shoes, just in case.

On site, we could see Canada down below and it was cold. The "warming shack" looked like a good place for me as everyone else struggled to start the equipment. Later Phil came by and asked me where I was going to eat lunch. Lunch? To myself – "the warmest restaurant any place miles from here," but to Phil, "I'm not sure." "Here," he stated in mock disgust and handed me a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on white bread. In truth, I was really hungry and wolfed it right down – saved again.

Both Phil and Ted are gone now and northern Minnesota mourns their absence. Phil was both a true gentleman and woodsman; I am so much the better for having met him. Like the Northern Lights, shine on Phil in our memories.

Ted's passing, so tragic at such a young age; cost us a father, a husband, a son, a co-worker, an associate and a dear friend. Before his illness was known I can recall seeing Ted and his family at the North Star Expo. I had abandoned the "insurance booth" to stretch the legs and view the other displays. Ted and kids were at the conservation exhibit examining the various hardwoods and softwoods available. They didn't just look either. Ted's family became investors in several species of seedlings – and they all looked so happy carrying off their "baby trees!" I miss you Ted. Each young tree I see will remind me of you with your family.

There were many others I have and had worked with the last two decades and I just can't mention every name. If I did it would be like reading the phone book. Nevertheless, there are a few exploits worth mentioning: Lester Korhonen of Hibbing was able to immobilize a seriously fractured leg for a logger deep in the woods. Next he orchestrated the construction of a stretcher from scratch using bootlaces, shirts, pants and chain saws to make poles. Finally the crew carried the seriously injured man many miles to safety. A real tour-de-force. Lester was a true "paramedic" in earlier years. He jumped from planes to deliver medical help to

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inaccessible Alaska. Great job, if more than a little scary. Rest in peace, Les.

Doug Popham of Grand Marais is a fellow "jarhead" who experienced a personal logging incident that nearly cost his life. (See Doug for details). As a consequence, Doug became a safety "believer." He also focused on those steps a logger can take ahead of time to minimize the effects of a loss that does occur. For instance, like always having your vehicles turned around at the landing. Doug learned first hand it is difficult to turn around a pickup truck when not all of your arms and legs are working – and time is of the essence. *Never* work alone might be the bigger lesson.

Rich Wataja of Cook showed me a pair of safety glasses with one shattered lens at his plant box plant once. His employee (who would have been eligible for the "Wise Owl Award" from the American society for the Prevention of Blindness) could not react fast enough to get out of the way of a projectile, perhaps a kick back, that was violent enough to shatter his safety glasses and get his attention, but the *eye was unharmed*. Please wear your safety glasses and encourage others to do so.

March 1, 2000, is my first day of "retirement" (actually, my wife informed me I am just working someplace else). I plan to join the MNTPA to keep up with you and your constantly changing industry. The future looks exciting and

frightening. For instance, a sawmill customer further west is adding a "curve saw." A straight saw sounds better to me, especially since the investment is in the millions of dollars. They analyzed this from every angle, even if the national economy tanks, and decided to do it just to get 10 percent more lumber out of every log. Payback? Two years. Uncertainty? Enormous. Competitive advantage? I would not want to bid timber against them.

The Almighty gave us some real special people in the Forest Products Industry in Minnesota and I was able to work with many of them and I hesitate naming some for fear of offending others, but here goes: Russ Allen, Ange Haugen, Wayne Brandt and Bruce Barker of the Minnesota TPA – tireless workers, good friends and stalwart supporters of the Safety Group; Bob Latvala of Nashwauk – should have been on stage; Hank Larson of Grand Marais – perhaps the best guy I ever met; Al Kline of Pine River – much more than wooden reels; Conrad Johnson of Cannon Falls – square dealing is everything; Bob Holden of Finland, dedicated TPA man; Oscar Bergstrom of International Falls – nice business – nicer family; Bob Owens of Duluth had this sign above his desk: "God is greater than any problem I have" – hard to argue the opposite; Jack Rajala of Deer River – how do you top lunch at the Marcell Laundromat? Clarence Westberg of New Brighton – best safety program; and V.R. Hufnagle of Big Falls – succeeding despite long odds. Get well soon, Dick.

The future in Minnesota looks equally challenging and competitive for both the forest product industry and the property-liability insurance industry. Both industries must continue to innovate, both must cut expenses, and both need to find new markets for their products. I know little about the future and its impact on specific companies or individuals, yet I do know something about the past, and it is this: it has been my pleasure and good fortune knowing and working with you all. Thank you!

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