

Facts of the Week

Week of 7 January

- ❖ Attended the NRC meeting in Lansing. The meeting had a light schedule and no forestry issues were on the agenda. However, a group of citizens from Roscommon and Crawford Counties were on hand to speak against the forest harvesting practices being conducted by the DNR in these two counties. The group is very much against clear-cutting and its negative effect on the deer population. I spoke in support of the current harvesting practices and stressed the importance of harvesting our forest resource to help sustain our struggling industry, improve wildlife habitat, and improve forest health. Another topic of much discussion was the error found in the department's budget of about \$10 million in unspent funds. This has caused much grief for the DNR Director and Commissioners as they pushed hard for a fee increase for hunting and fishing licenses to help cover a projected budget short-fall in the Fish and Game Fund.
- ❖ Participated in a meeting focusing on how to encourage/increase forest management and harvesting on private forestlands, this meeting was hosted by MUCC. Representatives from various organizations attended this meeting and all are interested in working as a coalition on promoting and stimulation forest management on private forestlands. A mission statement of the proposed coalition is being drafted and those attending this meeting will be asking the organization they represent to join the coalition.
- ❖ Rest of the week was spent working in my office.

Week of 14 January

- ❖ Met with David Boerema of Michigan Rail & Storage Inc., regarding the possibility of using rail to ship raw and finished wood material to markets outside of Michigan. David used to operate his own trucking company and has since sold his company and starting his rail company. Currently a few MAT members are using David's company to send their products to markets on the East Coast. David is very interested in working with the Michigan Wood Producers Coop.
- ❖ MAT's Convention Committee met to discuss the upcoming convention in Boyne Falls and to decide where to hold the convention in 2009. This year's convention is going to have a theme "How To Improve Our Industry". We are also planning on having our Texas Hold' Em Tournament and Raffles, these two are dependent on acquiring the appropriate State licenses.
- ❖ MAT Board held their quarterly meeting. These meetings are held to review Association business that has taken place between meetings. Our year-end audit was reviewed and placed on file by Board action. We have five Directors whose terms will be expiring this year. They are Region 1, Jim Carey; Region 2, Doug Scheuneman, Doug will not be running for re-election; Region 3, Jerome Miller; Region 4, Dave Whittaker, Dave will not be running for re-election; At Large Position, Tony Furlich, Tony will be running again. Currently, Region 2 and 4 have no one running for re-

election, if you are interested in sitting on the MAT board please send your letter of interest to our office indicating which Region you would like to occupy.

Week of 21 January

- ❖ Time was spent trying to keep warm, working of written correspondence and working on our Policy Book.

Legislative Update

- ❖ Legislation to exempt 70 foot crib trailers from tie down requirements has been drafted and will be introduced in the House by Rep. Jeff Mayes, D-Bay City and in the Senate by Senator Jud Gilbert, R-Algonac.

SB 880 and 881, legislation to clarify the sales/use tax exemption law is expected to see legislative debate in early February. The measure was sponsored by Senator Michelle McManus, R-Lake Leelanau.

SB 981, sponsored by Senator Jason Allen, R-Traverse City continues to await debate by the House Transportation Committee. The bill earmarks \$5.25 million annually for the Mackinac Bridge Authority to be used for repairs.

Legislation to clarify the issue of hauling a slasher down the road has been requested by Senator Jerry VanWoerkom, R-Muskegon. We are ready as soon as the bill drafter is ready.

A joint DNR/MDOT work group continues to discuss the issue of cutting timber on MDOT corridors. The DNR has identified 5 pilot areas in the U.P. that could be put up for bid as soon as this summer. DNR would mark the timber, put it up for sale and recoup their costs only with the rest of the monies going to MDOT.

Upcoming Events

Mack Bridge Authority Meeting	29 January	Lansing MI
NRC Meeting	07 February	Lansing MI
Bio Economy Summit	25 February	Escanaba MI
Consulting Foresters Conference	28 – 29 February	Grayling MI
NRC Meeting	06 March	Lansing MI
MAT Truck & Logger Training	18 March	Grayling MI
MAT Truck & Logger Training	02 April	Baraga MI
ALC Spring Board Meeting	03 – 05 April	Washington DC
MAT Truck & Logger Training	08 April	Soo MI
MI & WI Logger Conference	18 April	Escanaba MI
MAT Convention	24 – 26 April	Boyne Falls MI