

Facts of the Week

Week of 28 January

- ❖ MAT was asked to participate in a meeting with the Mackinac Bridge Authority's Executive Director to discuss the creation of a Commercial Commuter Rate. Michigan Forest Products Council hosted this meeting and members from both MFPC and MAT participated too. The goal was to develop a Commercial Commuter rate for our industry, which would mediate the proposed toll increases that will go into effect on 01 March 2008. Truck rates will increase \$0.50 per axle on March 1. The proposal that we presented to the Authority's Executive Director would mirror the current commuter rate. The Commercial Commuter rate would increase \$0.10 a year, starting in 2008 and a minimum of 20 trips per month would be the triggering mechanism to get the Commuter rate. If you didn't make the required trips per month then the rate would default back to the regular truck axle rate. This rate increase would mirror the rate increase for the current passenger commuter rate.
- ❖ I spoke with Glenn Niezink who is the Fuel Management Consultant for Van Manen Petroleum Group out of Grand Rapids. I have asked them to prepare a proposal for diesel fuel program for the Michigan Wood Producers Co-op. This program would provide a fuel discount dependent on the volume of diesel purchased by the Co-op members.
- ❖ Rest of the week was spent working in my office.

Week of 04 February

- ❖ Had a meeting with Pat O'Shea and Bruce Anderson, both with Rowley's. This meeting discussed the possibility of establishing a lubricant program for the Michigan Wood Producers Co-op. They will be providing us with a proposal on what they can offer the Cooperative members. Rowley's services the Eastern half of the UP and all of the Lower Peninsula and they have a sister company that services the West half of the UP.

You may recall back in 2006 we sent a quick little survey out to you asking questions about forming a co-op and what services you were needing. The vast majority of responses indicated that fuel and lubricant programs were needed and desired. I am hopeful that we will have a program in place by the end of April. The overall goal of the Co-op is partnering with Michigan Wood Energy, LLC in establishing a wood pellet plant; however, we need to crawl before we walk. These two service programs will help get our Co-op going.

- ❖ Attended the Michigan Master Loggers meeting in Escanaba. Currently, there are 22 Master Loggers in Michigan, 20 in the UP and 2 in Lower Michigan. A major issue for our Master Logger Program is that our Master Logger Program does not have the "Seal of Approval" for producers of certified wood. Wisconsin and Maine Master Logger have received this "Seal of Approval" even though our programs are very similar. American Logger Council (ALC) established the Master Logger Program and any state

wishing to have Master Loggers has to follow the ALC template and get approval from ALC. Having the distinction of producing “certified wood” would be beneficial to both logging company and pulp consuming mill (paper mill). We have requested the help of NewPage and Verso to help us get our “seal of approval” and MAT will be talking with ALC leadership to get the approval for any state adopting the ALC Master Logger Program. All major certifying programs have national acceptance; each state is not looked at separately, unfortunately Master Logger does not have this yet.

- ❖ Attended the MFRA meeting. The new “Michigan’s Growing With Michigan’s Forests” brochure is ready for distribution. If you recall the old brochure was produced in the mid ‘90’s. If you would like copies of this brochure please contact our office and we will send them to you. A new chair and vice chair were elected, Mike Castle of Weyerhaeuser is the new chairman and I was elected the Vice Chair. MFRA will also be taking nominations for the Forestry Educator of the Year Award. If you wish to nominate a teacher please contact the MFRA office.

Upcoming Events

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