

Facts of the Week

Week of 3 March

- ❖ Well I now have an excuse for forgetting items or activities that we have been involved with, as I celebrated my 40th birthday this week. You really find out who your friends are and let me say with friends like mine I truly do not need enemies. For those younger than me, I will enjoy reciprocating as you journey towards forty and for those older than me....well you are just that.... older! Now on to more important issues.
- ❖ Warren Suchovsky and I attended the March Natural Resources Commission meeting in Lansing. We participated in the Land Use Committee where the major topic of discussion was the Forest Management Plan. Michigan Forest Products Council (MPFC) also participated in this meeting too and we both provided comments on the forest plan regarding our concerns. MAT and MPFC expressed concerns regarding absence of anticipated volumes of products that would be produced on the State Forest. We stressed the importance of having these numbers in the plan so prospective investors and forest products companies would have an idea of the quantity and type of forest products coming from the State Forest. DNR representatives indicated that they feel these numbers are better suited for the Eco-Regional/Regional plans, however, we believe if they can be made available in those four plans then it should be included in the State Plan. I made reference to the US Forest Service Allowable Sales Quantity (ASQ), which is what the forest is capable of producing on an annual basis and the Forest Service could harvest this amount or close to it if they have the funding and manpower to do so and we feel this would be a good thing for the State to replicate as well.

Another concern I expressed was the impact of the white-tailed deer on our forest. The State Plan does reference the impact the deer are having on the forest; however, in our opinion the impact is not expressed strong enough. The plan calls for “future desired conditions” and if our deer herd continues to grow our forest will not be able to achieve this condition. Also noted was that the forest health issue will continue to have issues as the deer are not browsing on ash and beech, two species that have insect and disease issues. The deer will have a dramatic impact on the vegetation of their habitat and this will have impacts on other wildlife species.

We expressed these same concerns during the open meeting portion of the NRC meeting where the public is provided the opportunity to speak in favor or against proposed DNR actions. The NRC will take public comments once again during the April meeting and the Director of the DNR may take action on this Forest Plan.

- ❖ MAT was invited to participate in the Emerald Ash Borer Summit – “Life with EAB” in Lansing. The objective of the summit is to bring together a coalition of stakeholders in an atmosphere that promotes the sharing of emerald ash borer initiatives, including successes and failures, so the coalition can establish a common platform of information and define actions that will focus future initiatives and investments in a common direction. Participants of this summit were from state with EAB infestations, government organizations, universities and forest industry. MSU researchers are

looking at various treatments that will reduce and kill EAB and are having some success with one treatment. An official from Canada discussed a failure they experienced when they decided to cut an “Ash Free Zone” which cost the government roughly \$8 million dollars and a year after the cut the bug was found past this no ash zone. I can remember when that type of treatment was being discussed in Michigan, good thing we didn’t go that route.

On infected trees from the early infected sites they conducted dendrochronology on these trees and by looking at the growth rings they were able to determine these trees were infected with EAB well before it was discovered in Michigan. The end result for Michigan at least is we need to stop thinking about eradicating EAB and start learning how to live with EAB, the only place eradication efforts are taking place in Michigan is in the UP. The only other state that is trying to eradicate EAB is Maryland.

Week of 10 March

- ❖ Following the discovery of EAB in the UP the Department of Agriculture asked for our input regarding the new EAB quarantine, our only concern is with the transportation of ash products from outside the quarantine area through the infected area and back out. Several of the major roads travel through Mackinaw County. We voiced this concern and also discussed with MDA about conducting a couple of meetings to inform our members as well as provide our members with compliance agreements so they could haul ash products out of the quarantine areas. These meetings were held and we had roughly 25 individuals attend the two meetings and all of them received their compliance agreements. Also NewPage, Verso, and Park Falls have compliance agreements and will be requiring all suppliers of wood from the quarantine area to have a compliance agreement as well.

We have also invited the reps from MDA to attend our Truck Safety meetings and convention to allow those individuals who need a compliance agreement to get one. The compliance agreement does not cost you a penny and is needed for those who transport the logs. Also please remember the only species impacted by the quarantine are ash products, all other hardwood species are not impacted by the quarantine. Hardwood chips greater than 1 inch in two dimensions and hardwood firewood are considered restricted articles. If you have any questions please call the office.

- ❖ Back in early February the Michigan Forest Products Council invited us to participate in a meeting with the Mackinaw Bridge Authority to discuss the possibility of creating a commercial commuter rate for log trucks and other commercial trucks. This past week House Resolution 303 was introduced by Representative McDowell supporting this effort and the house passed this resolution.
- ❖ Bill Gimler, Timber Program Manager/CO for the Hiawatha National Forest, contacted me asking for our assistance in getting the information out regarding Stewardship Contracts. The Michigan National Forest will be hosting a video conference discussing Stewardship Contracting. Stewardship Contracting can be a tool to each forest to accomplish their plan of work, these are also known as “goods for services” contracts. Bill wants to ensure that bidders and non-bidders of the National Forest are aware of this conference so they can learn if Stewardship Contracts could be beneficial to your

company. Bill also wants to get this information to mill managers/procurement managers, since they stand to benefit from the product side and could help/support the smaller purchaser complete service type work which is also part of the contract. The meetings for the Hiawatha are April 9th in St Ignace, district office, and Escanaba, Supervisors Office, running from 8am – 11:30am, the Ottawa meeting will be held on the 8th and 9th from 8am – 11:30am in Ironwood.

- ❖ Drafted more comments for the State Forest Management Plan regarding the impact of white-tailed deer on our forest.

Reminder

- ❖ Please submit your nominations for the Timbermen Excellence Awards the deadline is quickly approaching, also if you are interested in sitting on the Board you need to submit your letter of interest. There will be vacant positions for Regions 1, 2, and 4; this is your opportunity to get involved. The convention this year will be at Boyne Mountain Resort, home of Avalanche Bay indoor water park. If your children are like mine they are ready for some summer time activities and this year's convention can satisfy some of those needs. The second mailing regarding the Convention recently went out. Please get those registrations mailed in as soon as you can.
- ❖ The Truck Safety program will be held in Grayling on Tuesday March, 18th at the Ramada Inn, formerly Holiday Inn. You will receive your 8 hours of continuing education and lunch will be provided. We would like to thank our Grayling sponsors who will be providing lunch for the attendees. MATSIF, Weyerhaeuser, Transport Trailers and Ponsse have generously offered their sponsorship support. Please take the time during break to visit these vendors and the others that will be in attendance in Grayling.

Upcoming Events

MAT Truck & Logger Training	18 March	Grayling MI
On Spring Break With Family	28 March – 7 April	Somewhere with No Snow!
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
Ottawa Stewardship Contracting	08 & 09 April	Ironwood MI
Hiawatha Stewardship Contracting	09 April	St Ignace & Escanaba MI
MI & WI Logger Conference	18 April	Escanaba MI
MAT Convention	24 – 26 April	Boyne Falls MI