

## Facts of the Week

### Week of 16 June

- ❖ Judy Augenstein and I had a lunch meeting with Representative Sheltroun to discuss our issue with Sales/Use tax as it pertains to sawmill equipment. The Representative is willing to be the sponsor of this new bill. Our bills that were introduced by Senator McManus deal with only logging equipment. We could not fix both issues as they are different sections of law and each requires separate action. We will be planning a meeting with Representative Bieda who is the Chairman of the House Tax Committee.
- ❖ Jim Maeder and I participated in Senator McManus' annual clay shoot fundraiser. Jim and I were joined by George Berghorn of the Michigan Forest Products Council and two other gentlemen from Michigan Biomass. This is the third year that MAT has participated in this event and each year we have either had the individual high score or team high score and this year was no different. Our team was the top team. We took this opportunity to talk with the Senator about the importance of getting our Sales/Use tax bills passed through both the Senate, which has been done, and the House. We also discussed the companion bills that Rep Sheltroun will be introducing later in the summer.

### Week of 23 June

- ❖ I attended the Great Lakes Forestry Alliances forestry conference titled "Crisis or Opportunity? Sustaining and Strengthening Forest-Based Industries in the Great Lakes Region". This conference was held in Madison. The Keynote was Dr Patrick Moore, co-founder of Greenpeace. Dr. Moore delivered a powerful message about forests that run contrary to much of the protectionist movement's current thinking. Dr. Moore is no longer pushing the protectionist platform; he has come to see that managing our forest is a critical part of turning our economy around and helping to reduce our dependency on non-renewable fuel sources. His talk "Trees are the Answer" provided insight into how forests work and how they can play an influential role in solving many of our current global environmental problems. The other speakers at this conference addressed both global and regional issues that plague our industry and each state provided an overview of the current status of the forest industry in their respective state.
- ❖ I participated in bill signing ceremony with Representative Mayes, sponsor of our Crib Trailer Bill. This ceremony is a reenactment of the Governor signing our bill into law. The uses of a crib trailer without tie downs is now legal and if you should have any problems what so ever please call our office. This bill removed the Michigan Securement laws and Michigan now only enforces the Federal Code.

### **Week of 30 June**

- ❖ This week was spent working on MAT documents like the MAT Policy book which we will be publishing later this winter.

### **Week of 07 July**

- ❖ Much of this week was spent between the Newberry and Grayling office working on material for our upcoming MAT board meeting. Much time was spent working on the creation of our upcoming budget for next year.

### **Week of 14 July**

- ❖ Judy and I had a lunch meeting with Representative Bieda to discuss our package of tax bills that will be coming before his committee. He indicated to Judy and I that he would make sure these bills are on the agenda the next time his committee meets, unfortunately, we do not know when that meeting will take place as the legislation is on summer recess and many are working on their campaigns. We also followed up with the staff of Representative Sheltroun to further discuss our plan of attack for these bills.
- ❖ The MAT Board conducted its annual summer meeting in Newberry. During this meeting the Financial, Executive and Convention Committees held meetings to review items brought before them and to conduct staff reviews. The Board has developed goals for your Executive Director and they are as follows:
  - Membership Building
  - Develop Legislative Committee
  - Board Involvement
  - Larger After Tax Balance
  - Increase in Training and Convention Bottom Line
  - Look into Alternative Publishing Methods and Costs
  - Executive Director to establish a press release system
  - Increase Training Opportunities

This provides the board with tools to measure the performance of your Executive Director on whether he or she is doing what is being asked of them by either the board or members.

## Week of 21 July

- ❖ I traveled to Portland Oregon to participate in the American Logger Council's Summer Board meeting. We were able to tour both the Peterson Plant, which makes chippers and grinders, and the Blount/Oregon Cutting Systems plant which make chainsaw bars and chains. I provided an update regarding the status of our Master Logger program and conveyed the news that our program has been recognized by David Refkin, which is a very big accomplishment for our program. The following is from the ALC legislative report. *The Ninth Circuit in a landmark **en banc** unanimous decision of 11 judges in The Lands Council v. McNair, No.07-35000, has given hope to those who want to end the judicial gridlock over implementation of forest health and fuel reduction projects on western National Forest. The decision is the result of a case file by environmental groups challenging a group of timber sales in northern Idaho. The local federal district court originally denied a request for an injunction and that decision was overturned by a three judge panel at the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Defendants requested, and were granted, an "en banc" review of that decision. The unanimous en banc decision included the following landmark findings.*

*The court reversed several of its earlier opinions that second guessed the Forest Service and imposed project-specific research requirements and data collection burdens not found in any law or regulation. The court also made clear that an injunction is not automatic in an environmental case. The court held that the economic impact to intervener Boundary County and the family logging business along with the long term benefits of reducing the risks of wildfire should be considered by a court in balancing the harm and considering the public interest in evaluating whether to grant an injunction.*

I have the brief analysis and if you would like more on this topic contact our office and we will provide you with the brief analysis and highlights from the decision. This is a major win for our industry!

## Week of 28 July

- ❖ Worked in the Grayling office and attended a fundraiser for Senator Gleason who sits on the Senate Transportation Committee.

## **Week of 04 August**

- ❖ Members from the Michigan Wood Energy (MWE) met with Local and State Economic Developers to discuss our two pellet plant projects. These projects are looking to establish pellet manufacturing plants in Newberry and White Cloud. We reviewed our draft business plan with representatives from both Newberry and White Cloud. Following our meeting in White Cloud the MWE board decided to focus on only one plant. They decided to table the Newberry plant and proceed with the White Cloud facility. Some decision factors were the MASCOMA announcement and worries about raw material supply. Another major concern was being able to raise enough capital to finance both facilities. The MWE Board will reassess the Newberry plant in 2011.
- ❖ The Executive Committees of the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association and MAT met to discuss opportunities where our two organizations can work together. We will be jointly hosting a Legislative Luncheon on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in Lansing and we will again be working together to supply our State Christmas tree. We will also try and work together on training sessions for both of our members.

## **Week of 11 August**

- ❖ Attended the Forest Management Advisory Councils meeting in Lansing. We discussed the new Water Quality Guidelines and Biomass Harvesting Guidelines. We spent considerable time on how do we keep this group going.
- ❖ Vickie Hoffart, FRA, Henry Schienebeck, GLTPA and I participated in the Michigan Township Associations (MTA) Board meeting held in Quinnesec. Denny Olson who is a board member for GLTPA, MAT and MTA put together a forestry tour and asked us to help discuss forest management and how critical it is that we work with our townships not against them. We started the day touring Verso's mill and then we went to the bush. The group visited a logging job of Jim Carey's and was allowed to ride along in both his processor and forwarder. The group was able to see full utilization of our forest products. MTA then invited us to join them for dinner at Wilderness Ridge in Sagola. This provided us the opportunity to further discuss our concerns and where we as Associations can work together in improving the management of our forests.
- ❖ Attended the Governor's Luncheon where GLTPA and MAT was recognized for providing the State Christmas Tree.

## **Week of 18August**

- ❖ First half of the week was spent drowning worms in Canada and the rest of the week was spent on office work.

## **Upcoming Events**

Public Advisory Team Meeting	27 August	Higgins Lake MI
MWE/COOP Meeting	29 August	Sunfield MI
Logging Congress	4 - 6 September	Green Bay WI
Western UP Eco Regional Plan	4 September	Alberta MI
Western UP Eco Regional Plan	5 September	Marquette MI
Western UP Eco Regional Plan	8 September	Crystal Falls MI
Western UP Eco Regional Plan	9 September	Escanaba MI
NRC Meeting	11 September	Lansing MI
M-28 Pine East Timber Bid Due	12 September	Kenton MI
Bud Salvage Timber Bid Due	15 September	Iron River MI
Spotted Dog Timber Bid Due	16 September	Iron River MI
SFE Timber Cruising	18 September	Grayling/Mio MI
ALC Annual Meeting	24 – 27 September	Montgomery AL