

## Facts of the Week

### January

- ❖ The Michigan Association of Timbermen now has a finished Policy Book. The policy book documents our position on various topics that can impact your business operations. I believe this is the first policy book for the Association, one was started a number of years ago. This book will be distributed to all of our State Legislators as well as to other forestry groups.

This book will be a working document, revisited annually with either additions or deletions. Each of you will receive this book prior to convention and we will have a session at our Convention to address any concerns.

- ❖ MAT is involved in several statewide working groups. Two groups that meet this month were the Deer Advisory Team and Woody Biomass Group. The goal of these two groups is to develop management guidelines for the respective topics. The deer group is looking to help assist the Wildlife Division in developing a Deer Management Plan. This plan will be used to manage the states deer habitat and population.

The Woody Biomass group is developing harvesting guidelines as they pertain to the removal of woody biomass. Many of our neighboring states have developed such a guide; however I have not seen any documented studies that indicate a negative impact to the way we are currently harvesting biomass. Which makes me ask why try to fix a system that isn't broken. We will keep you posted on the progress of both of these groups.

- ❖ We have begun the process of planning for our Annual Convention, which will be held in the Soo at the Kewadin. Our convention committee met to discuss our thoughts on what impact the economy will have on our convention. I have included a quick question as to your participation in this year's convention. Please answer the question and fax it back to our office as soon as you can. Your responses will help the MAT staff in the convention planning.

You should have already received your first convention mailing and in that, are nomination forms for our excellence awards. Scholarship applications for your children or your employee's children are on our website at [www.timbermen.org](http://www.timbermen.org) under "Educational" on the left banner. Decision on scholarships and excellence awards will be made in a month. Please get your nomination and scholarship information to our office as soon as possible.

### Week of February 2

- ❖ Dave Wright and I met with a representative from Crystal Flash to discuss potential partnership and investment opportunity with the Michigan Wood Energy's pellet plant. The meeting went well however, Crystal Flash is not interesting investing at this time. They are interested in being a customer of pellets.
- ❖ The Public Advisory Team (PAT) met again to discuss the Biodiversity Conservation Planning Process. This process is looking to designate Biodiversity Stewardship Areas across Michigan. The next phase is to develop Core Design Teams to look at all proposed areas and determine if they should be designated. We are looking for volunteers to sit on these core design teams, I will warn you there will be a significant time commitment with begin on the core design team. I plan on being on all three.
- ❖ Attended a meeting with DNR Forestry staff and some of the NRC Commissioners to discuss various forestry topics. Minimum bid prices was one of those topics. It is good for the Commissioners to hear our concerns as well as the departments responses to our concerns. I will say that the Commissioners did not always like the answer the department provided.

### Week of February 9

- ❖ Took part in a conference call with other lake states association executive to discuss a Washington DC fly-in to discuss forest service funding and the importance of providing more funding to our region. The fly-in will be March 23.
- ❖ Warren Suchovsky, MAT President, and I participated in an MSU Extension BioEnergy meeting. This purpose of this meeting was to see what role MSU Extension could play in helping the emerging BioEnergy market.
- ❖ The rest of the week was spent getting ready for our Legislative Luncheon.

### Week of February 16

- ❖ Michigan Wood Energy and Wood Producers Cooperative held a Board meeting in Sunfield. The board has requested time at the MAT Convention to hold an open meeting for those interested in what these two groups are doing. The meeting will be conducted on Saturday following the breakfast.
- ❖ The MAT/GLTPA Legislative Luncheon was conducted on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The Luncheon was held in the Capitol Building and we had a briefing paper on our top three issues for this year. Those issues are Sales and Use Tax for sawmills, Amending the MBT and the Slasher Bill. Roughly 77 legislators attended our reception, 60 House and 17 Senators. Numerous staffer attended, the staffers are very important too as they are the ones advising our elected officials about our concerns and issues. Following the

