

GET YOUR 2009 SFE/SFI 8 HOURS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION
APRIL 7, 2009 8:00 – 4:00
QUALITY INN & SUITES, I-75 BUSINESS SPUR – SAULT STE MARIE, MI
YOU MAY REGISTER AT THE DOOR OR CALL 800-682-4979



Facts of the Week



Week of February 23

- ❖ I attended the Lake States Federal Timber Purchasers and a 2009 work plan was approved and it is: (1) Reach target volumes of timber the Forest Service allows to be sold from Lake States Forests in 2009. (2) Apply pressure on our local delegation and in Washington to secure additional funding for the 2010 timber program. This would include funding for “economic stimulus” sales. (3) Work to ensure equitable funding throughout the region. Ensure that the product mix offered by each forest is in line with commitments made in the Forest Plans. (4) Proactively address operability concerns on a Forest and Regional basis. (5) Advocate for Lake States Forests when National or Regional policies threaten their ability to efficiently offer their timber program. (6) Build local coalitions to support Forest Service efforts to combat appeals and litigation of projects in the Region.

When we met with the Forest Service the following needs were presented to allow more volume to be sold from Lake States Forests! Stimulus money must translate into Forest Service allowing more volume to be sold. An even flow of allowed volume from the Forest Service; when more volume is available in the (fiscal) fourth quarter it makes it difficult for industry planning. Product mix in balance by each National Forest Plan. Seasonal operability; plan ahead to ensure there are jobs set up throughout the year. We need economically viable sales to survive this market. Competitive appraisals, with fewer no bids. It’s important that the market dictate price. Operational trees – we need a mechanism to be able to take these trees, without costly downtime for logger. Currently there needs to be a visit (sometimes multiple visits) by FS personnel to approve such a request. This is not conducive to efficient use of time and resources in the field. This would “take an act of congress” to change.

- ❖ Met with Maureen Nelson to work on a logger model that is being developed by Auburn University. A model has been created for southern logging and they are looking for members of the North to participate to see if the current model is applicable to the Lake States. This model is very detailed and requiring more time than we had anticipated.
- ❖ The Biomass workgroup meet to edit the Woody Biomass Harvesting guidelines, we will be getting updates on all the guideline development the department is doing at our Annual Convention.

March

- ❖ Provided testimony before the House Transportation Committee regarding our Slasher Bill. Representative Ebli has taken the lead in getting this bill passed, the committee members have joking named her the “Queen of Slashers”. On another lighter note Representative Pearce commented about passing a truck with bumper sticker “If you don’t like logging try using plastic toilet paper”, we will make sure he gets some of these stickers. The bumper of our vehicles is great advertising space.
- ❖ Participated in MFRA meeting held in Grayling as well as the March NRC meeting. The main issue at the NRC meeting was the new bear hunting regulations and the crossbow issue. The NRC public comment session is a great opportunity for our citizens to express their support or concern regarding DNR issues. Passions ran high on both sides of this issue and it was very interesting to hear all the concerns from our citizens. The commission voted to modify the crossbow regulations to allow individuals over 50 to hunt with a crossbow, however, the crossbow is limited to a maximum of 350 feet per second.

- ❖ I was invited to an economic meeting in Mio. The focus of this meeting was our industry and how local counties and communities can help our industry. I spoke about the formation of our Co-op and Wood Energy, LLC as they were interested in that process. I then expressed the need for our communities to become advocates of our industry, if they want us to hang around. I explained that it would carry much weight if local communities started to contact our elected leaders expressing their concerns about our diminishing industry. I hope this will be the start of a successful partnership with our local economic development groups.

I also participated in the Luce County Economic Development Committee meeting to address some misinformation that was presented to the about our wood resources and what is going on in the wood pellet markets.

- ❖ The last full week of March I was in DC. The first part of the week I participated in a congressional briefing on U.S. Forest Service Issues in the Northeast Region. Participating groups were Allegheny Hardwood Utilization Group, Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association, Maine Pulp & Paper Association, Michigan Association of Timbermen, Michigan Forest Products Council, Minnesota Forest Industries, Minnesota Timber Producers Association, and Wisconsin Paper Council. In Coordination with the Northeast/Midwest Congressional Coalition. We had roughly 30 staffers attend our lunch as we presented the current conditions of each segment of our industry, then we spoke on the merits of Region 9 when compared to the rest of the country. We were pushing to get more funding for our region so we could accomplish as much of our forest plans as possible.

This year Brian and Maureen Nelson and I attended the American Loggers Council's (ALC) Spring Board Meeting in Washington, DC. The trips to DC lay the foundation for changes that we need to improve our industry and many years the same messages are presented. This year we presented several issues including change to the child labor laws, funding for our National Forest and the importance of harvesting woody biomass from all forest landowners. We also provided and supported positions developed by the ALC. The ALC's positions dealt with woody biomass and transportation issues. After meeting with our Michigan Delegation they recommended that we work on getting forestry acknowledged as a bona-fid agricultural practice and then we might receive all the benefits that agriculture currently receives. This would take care of our child labor issues. Like Michigan there are several biomass definitions floating around on Capitol Hill and the one getting the most attention basically excludes biomass from federal forest and also would exclude about 92% of private land. MAT and ALC supports the definition of the 2007 Farm Bill and we asked our delegation to support HR 1190 and Senate Bill 363 which utilizes the 2007 Farm Bill language. On the transportation side there is movement to increase gross weights on the Federal Highways to 97,000 lbs. This would not help but hurt our industry, if we are not grand-fathered. We asked our delegation not to support any bills looking to increase the weights. We support the rights of states to enforce state tolerances on weights for both State and Federal Highways.

Week of March 30th

- ❖ I participated in the first NLP Core Design Team meeting. This group will be making recommendations on how many and sizes of Biodiversity Stewardship Areas across the NLP. This is going to be a very interesting and I'm sure the discussions will be heated at times. There will also be design teams for the Eastern and Western UP.

I then met with City Manager of Gladstone to discuss our industry. He is very new to the area. We also discussed a possible wood chipping facility that wants to locate in Gladstone.

- ❖ We held our first truck and logger program in Baraga. We had roughly 180 participates and a full day of speakers. Primary speakers included Michigan Center for Truck Safety, Michigan Traffic Safety Division,

Susan Metcalfe of Metcalfe Forestry and me. I would like to thank our program sponsors for their generous support; Ponsse, Mauck Insurance Agency, Nortrax and Fabco CAT.

- ❖ I attended the April NRC meeting. We had a meeting with Commissioner Richardson and staff from FMFM to discuss forestry issues. There were no other forestry issues on the agenda for the day.
- ❖ An amendment to the DNR budget has been introduced that would change the way you would be able to bid on state timber sales. As you know currently you can only bid on a select few species and the rest are “No Bid”. This amendment would allow you to bid on all species and products. After thinking it over we have amended the amendment to remove “all products” as that could allow the department to solicit bids on tops and other biomass products. The amendment was not acted on and the legislation will be off for two weeks for spring break. We are supportive of this amendment; however, we will be discussing this during the legislative break. If you have comments or concerns on this please contact me.

Upcoming Events

Deer Advisory Team	06-07 April		Lansing
Truck & Logger Program	07 April	8am – 4pm	Soo
GLTPA Annual Meeting	08 April	All Day	Stevens Point WI
NIPF Meeting	09 April	10am – 3pm	Roscommon
Good Friday	10 April	OFFICE CLOSED	Newberry
EUP Eco-Management	14 April	4pm – 9pm	Newberry
FMAC Meeting	15 April	1pm – 4pm	Lansing
Treasury Meeting	16 April	10am - ?	Lansing
Logger Conference	17 April	8am – 4pm	Marquette
Truck & Logger Program	17 April	8am – 4pm	Grayling
NLP Core Meeting	20 April	9am – 4pm	TBA
Truck & Logger Program	21 April	8am – 4pm	Mt Pleasant
MAT Annual Convention	30 April – 2 May		Soo

Thank you to our Program Sponsors

