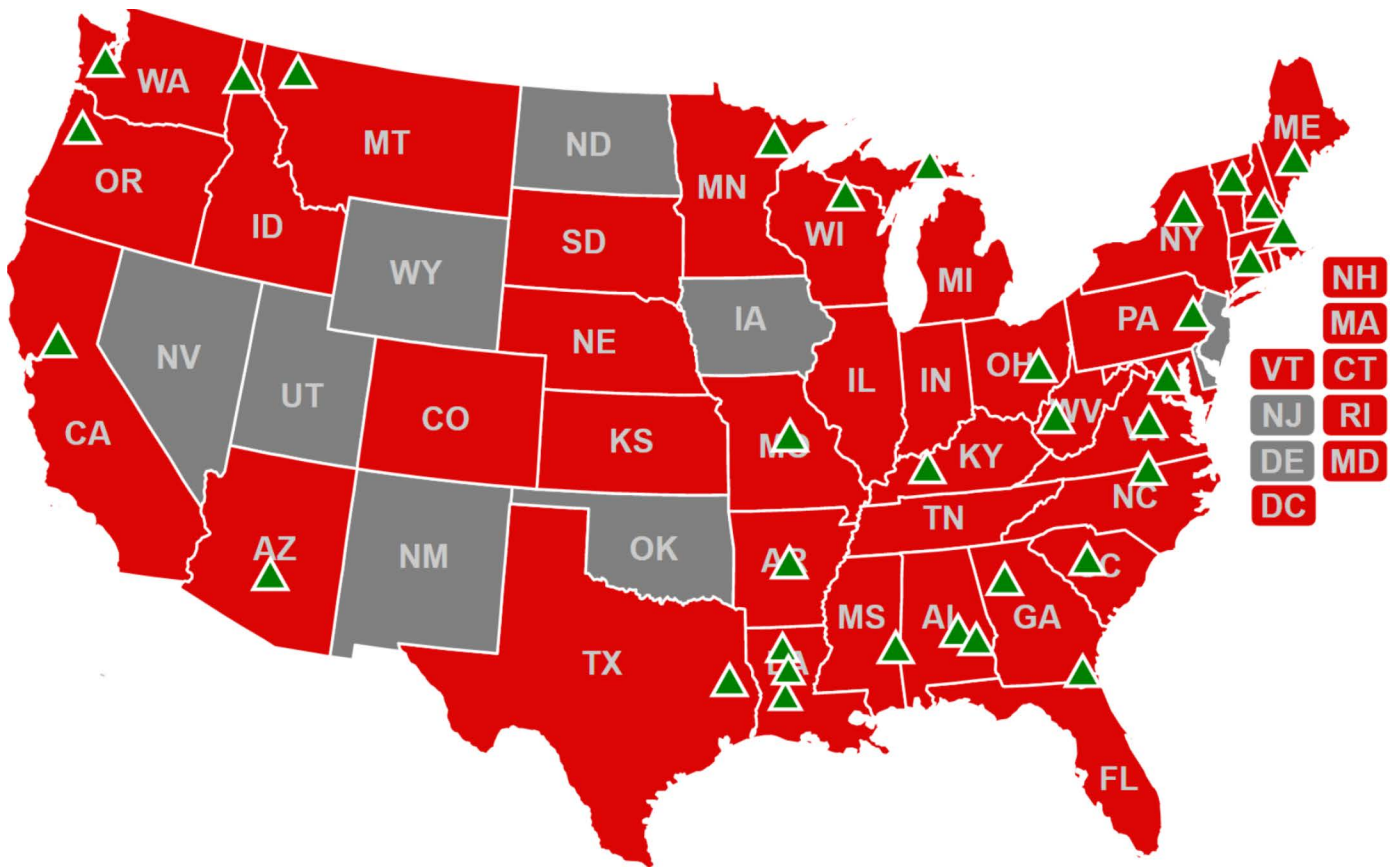


# STATE

# OF THE STATES

REPRESENTING 38 STATES

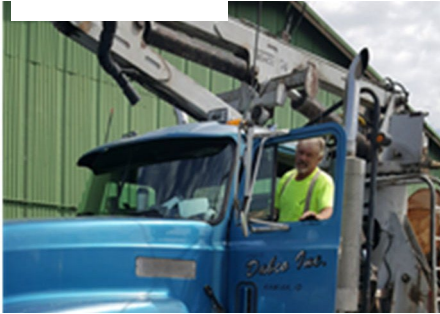


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## OF IDAHO

***The ALC-Idaho is celebrating 57 years of Service to the Logging & Hauling Businesses of Idaho!  
1966 – 2023***



***The Associated Logging Contractors - Idaho  
representatives to the  
American Loggers Council are:***

**Tim Christopherson - DABCO, Inc.**

**Past President - American Loggers Council & ALC-Idaho Board Rep to  
the Council**

**Mark Mahon - Tom Mahon Logging, Inc.**

**ALC-Idaho Board President & Alternate Rep. to the Council**



Our big news for this year is two-fold: launching a health insurance benefit plan for our members and successful lobbying for state funds to jump start and grow 'career learning' opportunities - that include logging and trucking in our junior and senior high schools.

On the health insurance side, ALC-Idaho members have repeatedly asked for the association to try to obtain better and cheaper health insurance options for themselves and their employees and their families. We started a self-insured plan in the 1980s but it went bust alongside of the timber economy at that time. This time around we are working with our affiliated agency - Associated Insurance Services - who has secured competitive plans and pricing through Pacific Source Health Plans. This is not a self funded plan as we don't know yet if we'll get the participation levels needed to sustain this effort. We'll see how members respond to this approach first. After a multi-year exploration and putting the framework in place we launched September 1st.

On the 'career learning' project we worked to support the goal of our State Supt. of Public Instruction Debbie Critchfield to obtain \$ 45 million in one time money to provide expansion or start up funding of 'career ready' learning opportunities in Idaho's junior and senior high schools. Our forest products sector worked hard on this legislation and the Supt. was successful in getting it through! The ALC-Idaho is part of a forest products sector group in Idaho that has organized to support grant applications for those schools who'd like to build upon or start programs that include forestry, logging, and natural resources career trainings. One of our schools was successful in obtaining almost \$ 1 million to start their program! We have 12 more schools lined up that are interested in launching these type of opportunities and we are doing what we can for success! We're hopeful this will help grow our workforce!

We continue our advocacy at all levels of our government and with our partners in our forest products business sector. We remain engaged with our elected officials across the board from local, to state, to national levels. We continue to have a solid open line of communication with our Governor Brad Little and his staff. We also maintain good relationships with our other statewide elected officials and many of our state legislators.

We enjoyed another successful 'Day at the State Capitol' this year with a strong showing of ALC-Idaho Board of Directors. We visited with our Governor, State Controller, and State Supt. of Public Schools (all of whom make up our Land Board which oversees management of our state lands on which sustained yield timber harvest occurs). We also met with key legislative leaders and had productive discussions with our motor carrier laws and rules enforcers at the Idaho Transportation Department as well as staff from our Dept. of Lands who oversee the state's timber sales and the enforcement of Idaho's Forest Practices Act.

As a state association, we are always focused on the services we offer to our members. We are excited that our membership is growing and at over 535 companies we are at record membership levels. Our affiliated workers comp insurance company (owned by the loggers who own the policies), insurance agency, and safety consulting company continue to provide the foundation of our value to our members and the ability to keep the doors of the association open. We are always looking for ways to provide better and more services to our members. Our partnership and involvement with the American Loggers Council continues to bring us value in this regard with access to rebates, strong representation in Washington D.C. and a strong national communications program highlighting our logging and hauling businesses, the people in them, and the role we play in forest management and providing the raw material for the products we use daily in our lives.

As we celebrate our 57th year as an organization, the ALC-Idaho is blessed by the foresight of the founders and early Board members coupled to the vision, commitment and support of today's Board members and all of our members and staff as we continue our work for Idaho's logging and hauling contractors into the future.

## **ASSOCIATED CALIFORNIA LOGGERS**

*By Eric Carleson, Executive Director, Associated California Loggers*

### **NEW PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT ELECTED: RUSS HAWKINS AND JEFF HOLLAND**

**New President and Vice President Elected for 2023-2024** At the 2023 Annual Meeting in January, a new President and Vice President were elected, both for two-year terms.

**Elected as President of ACL was Russ Hawkins of Del Logging, who lives and works in the small town of Bieber in the northeast corner of California, near Oregon to the north and Nevada to the east. Del Logging is a company with deep roots in Lassen County and the Sierra-Cascade region. The company was first run by Russ's parents; and now is run by Russ and his wife Helen, sons Kolten and Hunter, and daughter Kelsey.**

**Elected as Vice President of ACL is Jeff Holland, President of Sierra Valley Enterprises, LLC, based in Placerville, CA. Jeff has a long history of delivering on projects in the internationally cherished Lake Tahoe area and other parts of the Sierra Nevada. Jeff notes that his "love affair with his wife Mary" began when they were in high school and continues to this day.**

### **PAST PRESIDENT MIKE ALBRECHT ON TRACK TO BECOME AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL 2023-2024 PRESIDENT**

**ACL Immediate Past President Mike Albrecht is with Sierra Resource Management. Mike is from Jamestown, near Sonora, located in the Southern Sierra "Mother Lode Country" near Mark Twain's historic "jumping frog contest" region to the north and Yosemite National Park to the south. Mike is currently also the 1st Vice President of the American Loggers Council, and we proudly anticipate the election of Mike Albrecht as President of the ALC at the 2023 Annual Meeting in Maine. (At the end of Mike's expected term, in October 2024, the member states of ALC will travel to the Mother Lode country of CA for the 2024 Annual Meeting.)**

**Here are some of the achievements of Associated California Loggers in 2023 (following up on 2022 and earlier):**

**TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LOGGERS AND LOG TRUCKERS, AND FINDING THEM JOBS.** ACL is partnered with vocational programs at Shasta College in Redding, and Reedley College in Fresno, with the goal of training the next generation of loggers and log truckers and **providing our member companies with trained workers for immediate employment**, sometimes with payment to workers being made with state funds, rather than by the employer. **In 2023, the "Fresno County program" expanded inland to the Tuolumne County area and Columbia College. ACL Past President Mike Albrecht has helped coordinate the Tuolumne program along with a new "grant hire" – a former Tuolumne County supervisor – to help service the contract.**

### **PROPOSED "SHASTA COLLEGE ACL LOG TRUCK DRIVER TRAINING PROGRAM" ON TRACK TO DEBUT IN JANUARY OF 2024.**

Over a period of several years "peaking" in 2022 and 2023, ACL has been meeting with workforce officials at Shasta Community College near the timber country in Northern California, to develop a partnership on a planned "Log Truck Driver Training program" which will likely launch in early 2024 with classes given at Shasta Community College, and the involvement of experienced ACL member companies in instruction and on-the-job training (along with instructors hired directly by the college.) **"We don't have a truck shortage, we have a truck driver shortage," said ACL Board Member and Trucking Committee Co-Chair Joe Griggs; Co Chair and Board Member Dennis McFarland agrees with Joe that this is reaching crisis proportions exacerbated by a GENERAL truck driver shortage.**

As we move towards a pilot program in 2024, the insurance industry has been another partner in making this training a reality. **ACL believes these classes boil down to three questions: (1) Do we have the students? (2) Do we have the instructors? (3) Do we have the insurance?**

## **ACL HELPS AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL FILM DOCUMENTARY ON LOGGING STATES – IN CALIFORNIA FIRST.**

At the July 2023 Summer Board Meeting of the American Loggers Council, held in Mississippi, the Board of Directors voted to approve the use of a grant from the US Forest Service, among other sources, for the nationwide filming of a documentary on logging and loggers in various member states of the American Loggers Council. The Board also approved, from various candidates, the video company to handle the project.

Filming took place in August of 2023 on the “California segment,” with the assistance of Associated California Loggers **President Russ Hawkins, Executive Director Eric Carleson, and selected ACL Board members and members.**

**Filmed and interviewed at various locations, including on their logging jobs, were: ACL President Russ Hawkins, ACL Board Members Doug Stoy and Kolten Hawkins, ACL Past President Tim Bordges, and forester Niel Fischer.**

Hopes are to premiere the “California episode” of this documentary first at the American Loggers Council Annual Meeting in Maine in October of 2023, and then for Associated California Loggers to premiere this segment at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 2024 Annual Meeting of Associated California Loggers in January of 2024.

## **LOG-A-LOAD FOR KIDS CHILDREN’S CHARITY.**

As the American Loggers Council has taken on sponsorship of Log-a-Load for Kids nationally, **California Log-a-Load for Kids Chair Lisa Medici (also a former national chair of Log-a-Load for Kids) has pledged that she will support the American Loggers Council in all of its efforts for Log-a-Load for Kids.** We can count on seeing Lisa at the 2023 ALC Meeting in Maine, and then in her “home state” of California when the 2024 Annual Meeting comes here next year in October.

## **OTHER 2023 ISSUES INCLUDED:**

(1) **Internally**, the ACL Board lobbied our full regular membership to **approve new bylaws** for the Association that help modernize and streamline our operations and our Board of Directors. Obtaining the requisite number of votes was a Herculean task given how spread out our members are across the state. (2) ACL was involved in negotiations on new proposed legislation to create a **“Prevailing Wage-- Fuels Reduction”** pay classification in California. **This bill is sponsored by the International Union of Operating Engineers, among other labor groups.** As of this writing, the bill is on the desk of Governor Gavin Newsom, who will decide to sign or veto the bill. (3) **“Follow the money”**: ACL consultants continue to monitor **California state funding** for logging work, and **federal funding from the Infrastructure Act and “Inflation Reduction Act” of 2022.**

## **JANUARY 2024: THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF ASSOCIATED CALIFORNIA LOGGERS**

Our 2024 Annual Meeting will be the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of our state association. January 22-24, 2024 at the Peppermill Resort Casino Spa in Reno, Nevada. **All are welcome to come and support this landmark date in ACL history!**



Your CLA started the year out on a positive note with the Annual Meeting in March, being the most successful meeting in the history of the logging association. The 2023 meeting was held in Wilmington, NC with a record attendance of 245 attendees, and twenty-six vendors. The success of our meeting is due in a large part not only because of our loggers but because of our loyal partners and sponsors. The theme of this year's meeting was *"Good Help Is Hard To Find."* Garrett Mintz, founder of Ambition In Motion, served as the keynote speaker and joined us all the way from Texas.

The CLA held a live and silent auction at this year's event with all proceeds being donated to Log-A-Load For Kids to benefit North Carolina's Children's Hospitals. With the help of your CLA, the most generous partners and sponsors, and other logging and industry members, this year's auction raised over \$35,000 to support Log-A-Load For Kids. To be a small association in NC, we are proud to be able to contribute to such a worthy cause.

Our entire industry has seen mill closures across the nation this year and NC has been no stranger to this unfortunate circumstance either. Pactiv Evergreen, a paper mill in Canton which employed twelve hundred employees and had been in business for 115 years shut its doors. The company cited that the cost of upgrading the century-old facility, as well as unfavorable market conditions being the reasons for the closure. This has caused quite a struggle for our loggers in the western part of the state. The CLA has spent quite a bit of time out there trying to help these guys, however we have had several large logging businesses hang up their hats and call it quits. Your CLA is currently working with the US Forest Service, NC Economic Development, NC Ag, the Governor's office, and other organizations to offer some assistance for the loggers in that area. There is a recruitment package being developed to bring other industry into the mill. We are also working on a cost-share program, and a loan forgiveness program to help with equipment payments. The US Forest Service is working with the Endowment on securing funding, and we are hopeful to put these plans in motion. As you know these things take time, and our loggers needed help months ago.

The CLA has a great working relationship with both the Virginia Loggers Association and South Carolina Timber Producers Association, as well as the North Carolina Forestry Association. Having these partnerships is valuable to all of our organizations in order to work together on issues targeting our industry and rely on each other for knowledge. This year the VLA and the CLA worked together to get the word out to members about the Northern Long-Eared bat, and how that could harm our harvesting operations. The picture included was taken at the 2023 Virginia Loggers Association Annual Meeting in Roanoke, VA, of Ron Jenkins, VLA Executive Director, Virginia Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger, and Jonzi Guill, CLA Executive Director. Congresswoman Spanberger works on behalf of the industry in Virginia on many issues. With the logging industry hanging on by a thread it is important to work together whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Last year when gas prices rose the CLA held several open forum type meetings across the State to give them a platform to share their positions with the mills.

During this time the CLA developed a cost calculator to assist our loggers in calculating their logging and hauling rates. This has proven to be a valuable tool for our industry. The CLA partnered with the NC Forestry Association to do two cost analysis classes for our loggers, foresters, and industry representatives that was well received and attended. Due to that we have organized another class this fall to help our industry better know how to calculate their costs in order to better negotiate their rates. This cost calculator will also be featured in the 2024 ProLogger module.

The CLA recognizes all the work that the American Loggers Council does for this industry nationally. We appreciate so much the support that Scott Dane and the rest of the ALC offers to NC. As the CLA Executive Director, it is refreshing to know that I can pick up the phone any time and get support and guidance from the ALC and know that our industry has such a strong voice at the federal level.



## **Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association 2023 State of the State Report**

Educating new legislators, children and the public remains a priority for the GLTPA board of directors. GLTPA has held several Log A Load Events and three legislative field days at the state level and planned one congressional Western Caucus event at the request of Congressman Tom Tiffany. Congressman Tiffany chairs the House Natural Resources subcommittee on Fed Lands.

The 2023 Log A Load events will be held at four different locations with an attendance of approximately 4,000 students, chaperones, and teachers. GLTPA's Northwest Region members are implementing their 27<sup>th</sup> annual Log A Load and are anticipating 1,200 children during their two-day event. On August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, GLTPA MI VP Mike Elenz orchestrated a forestry education day for MI Rep. Laurie Pohutsky who co-sponsored energy legislation removing woody biomass from the list of renewable fuels. The tour included representatives from GLTPA, MI Association of Timbermen, Lake States Lumber, Michigan Biomass, and Michigan DNR. Rep Pohutsky was taken to two forest management sites, a manufacturing facility tour and ended at the Grayling Generating Station. After witnessing the full cycle of how wood is used, Rep. Pohutsky stated she had a "different perspective."

September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, GLTPA partnered with WI County Forest Association to host 11 Wisconsin lawmakers for a full day of forest management education. Their day will include tree planting, wildlife openings, Kirtland's Warbler habitat, harvester/forwarder demonstration, lunch on site in the forest, and plenty of photo Opps.

Also, at the request of Congressman Tiffany, GLTPA organized and will testify at a subcommittee hearing on USFS road use, or lack thereof, in Hayward WI on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023. This event will include a short field visit to help committee members better understand the issue, an approximately two-hour hearing, and a tour of a well-run state-owned tree seed collection site and nursery.

GLTPA played a key role working with the WI Farm Bureau and the Senate and Assembly Transportation Committees to secure \$150 million one-time funding for the Agricultural Road Improvement Program. (ARIP) The money is to be used exclusively for rural local roads which have weight limits or structures with weight limits on them. The grant will require a 10% local match, a simple two-page application, and have a stipulation that once the grant is accepted and the road or structure repaired, the weight limit must be removed and can only be implemented during spring thaw or a catastrophic event causing severe damage.

Poor Lake States market conditions continue to put negative pressure on logging operations. On one hand industry is seeking ways to attract and train new forest management employees, and on the other several logging companies are struggling to survive and deciding whether to stay in business. If loggers are to stay in business the public needs to place more value on their work and new markets or expansion of existing markets, or both, are imperative. It is hoped that the ALC marking plan will begin to turn the tide on public perception and the value of the industry at the national level where education, once again, plays a key role.



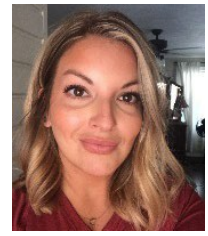
**Green River Loggers Council**  
**Chuck Courtney**  
**Green River Logger's Council President**

Green River Loggers Council is just holding their own due to the high operating cost and price cuts in the pallet and grade log markets. Pulpwood markets are fair, you can move the wood but prices per ton are low versus the cost of harvesting and transportation cost to delivery points.

Overall, the council has been pretty quiet on any county, state or federal issues concerning our industry just because there isn't much affecting our area. We are exploring expansion through collaboration with the Kentucky Forestry Industries Association

Green River was very supportive in the 2023 Kentucky Wood Expo.

With all that mentioned, Green River hopes 2024 is more promising than predicted.



**Toni McAllister**  
**Executive Director,**  
**Louisiana Loggers**

2023 has been another year, not better nor worse, Louisiana Loggers Association has continued to move the needle in our favor by navigating through the ups and downs of the industry. We have continued to work on our commercial liability crisis with the new entity formed during the 2022 session, The Louisiana Agriculture Transportation Self Insurance Fund, a self-insurance fund for ALL agricultural products in the state. This Fund was authored by Louisiana State Senator Robert Mills in 2022 and additional changes were made during the 2023 session. The \$3 million dollar start up funds were also extended during the 2023 session and the LLA was also made a seat on a Commercial Motor Vehicle Task Force. Terry Duke, of AJ Gallagher and of the Louisiana Loggers Self Insurance Fund, has made it through the actuarial studies and has moved on to working with reinsurers. We are hopeful that this will provide another option for commercial liability in our state.

As Louisiana finished up our regular session of 2023, the whole state has seemed to hit the ground running with the 2023 ELECTIONS. A new Governor will be elected, along with every seat down to our local races. Louisiana Loggers Association and the Loggers PAC work very hard to support and endorse candidates that will author and fight for pro-active legislation on our behalf! But what we are very excited about are our LOGGER candidates!! State representative, Jack McFarland, has went in unopposed (and will run for Speaker of the House), Chairman, Darrell Franks is running for police jury of Winn Parish, President Josh McAllister (2<sup>nd</sup> VP of ALC) is running for Winn Parish Sheriff, Treasurer William Adkins is running for police jury of Caldwell Parish, board member Rickey Nugent is running for police jury of LaSalle Parish, and member Roderick Mathews is running for La State Representative District 72. These loggers have taken it upon themselves to BE THE CHANGE!! For too long, Loggers have stood without a seat at the table, and we have been on the menu!! The LLA works hard to keep that seat and having LOGGERS at the table will truly make a difference!

As most of you have heard, Louisiana has also been hit with massive wildfires. In 2020, we were hit with the perfect storm, Cat 5 Hurricane Laura, that made land fall on the SW coast of La and made its way into timber country destroying nearly 880,000 acres of timber. Loggers moved onto this acreage to try to salvage some of it (even though in 2020 the pulpwood market was ZIP) and we were hit with Hurricane Delta that dropped 20" of rain onto the exact same area. WHAT does this have to do with anything? La Ag and Forestry Commissioner, Mike Strain, along with State Rep Jack McFarland foresaw what could be rich lighter pine, under the perfect circumstances, this could be a disaster. Funds were moved to hire more firefighters and equipment to prepare for such a time and in the summer of 2023 with the drought and high winds it ignited! Since August 22 fires have burned more than 60,000 acres, approximately 441 wildfires across 17 parishes (counties) with over 1500 evacuees along with numerous losses of homes and buildings. We are thankful that in some areas our Louisiana Loggers were the ones to cut the lines to help save the timber and homes.

As with us all, Louisiana Loggers have navigated new roadblocks, new crises, new issues, but through it all we are problem solvers, more efficient than any other business and our work ethic is second to none, so we will always say..... "It's a great day to be a Louisiana Logger."

(Louisiana Police Jury – Local municipalities over the parish infrastructure, water, DA office, Judge, libraries, etc.)

PS. Thank you to Maine for hosting the ALC this year, I have been waiting to get there since 1999, while in high school my parents, Tony and Liz McManus, and Allen (Cricket)Lang went without me. Unfortunately, it is Early VOTING here in Louisiana and I will not be able to make it! Please eat some lobster for me and I will see you in D.C.



## Louisiana Logging Council, State of the State 2023

**John Keith– President**  
**Kendall Puckett- Vice-President**  
**Buck Vandersteen – Executive Director**  
**Grace Texada - Administrator**

Two things' loggers need in Louisiana, affordable insurance, and markets for their timber, relief in supply chain mills with parts & equipment.

New Biofuel plants in La using wood as their feed stock are Sun Gas Renewables in Pineville, Origin Materials in South of Baton Rouge & Louisiana Green Fuels in Columbia

La has 2 new pole plants, one in Gibson and one in Rosepine, La.

Trey Maxwell from Sarepta Louisiana won Louisiana Outstanding Logger of the Year 2023 by the Louisiana Logging Council during the 76th Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Forestry Association. Huey has been in the logging business for 17 plus years.

We had a Master Logger Certification class March and August with 32 new loggers. We currently have 694 Master Loggers for the 2023 year.

John Keith of Allstate Land & Timber from Haughton, LA is the current president of the La Logging Council.

The La Logging Council is working on a Vendor Program for La loggers to get discounts for parts, tires, and equipment from Vendors who sign up for the program.

La Loggers can obtain a truck permit for truck weights up to 92,000 pounds on state highways.

Several Louisiana Master Loggers were re-certified by Smartlogging, a part of the Preferred by Nature Certification System. These loggers go through annual audits ensuring their operations meet the highest environmental business safety, and environmental standards in the industry. The group of loggers has been re-certified every year since joining the program in 2007 by a third-party auditor. The program administration managed by the La Logging Council also received re-certification through July of 2029.

Representative and former President of La Logging Council Jack McFarland was re-elected to the state legislature for another 4 years without opposition.



## Mississippi State of the State 2023

**Submitted by: David S. Livingston, MLA Executive Director**

The MLA has had a strong year with approximately 17 new members across the state. It is good to see continued growth. It was great getting to host the ALC Summer Board Meeting in Pascagoula. It enabled many of our members the ability to see all the good things ALC is working on for all loggers. It has increased the involvement in the ALC of our membership as a result. 2023 has been a challenging year for loggers in Mississippi though. Rain was a factor all the way through May but then the drought hit causing quotas across the state from then on. There have also been 7 major mill fires across the region, adding to the problem as well. The spirit of the loggers is still strong, and they continue to find ways to persevere. On a positive note, we are all looking forward to the MSFES in Starkville, Mississippi, which will be held on September 22-23, 2023, where we will see loggers from everywhere. This is the longest running live demonstration show out there, and the MLA is proud to be able to offer it to loggers everywhere!

We have had 3 major wood mill announcements across the state. Enviva announced that Bond, Mississippi, will be the next location to build a pellet plant. It will be comparable in size (approx. 1.2 million green tons) to the Lucedale and Epps locations. Claw Forestry announced it will be building a new super 250MMBF production sawmill in Gloster, Mississippi, at the old GP plywood facility location. Huber Engineered Woods announced its new OSB mill in Shuqualak, Mississippi, which will be a huge shot in the arm for east central Mississippi. The announcement of an aluminum plant isn't always what the wood industry wants to hear, but in this case, Steel Dynamics stated that they will produce 160,000 + Metric tons of biochar per year using roundwood. They will be located just east of Columbus, Mississippi, and this will help tremendously in that area as well. Another good year for the Sip for getting new mills in the State!

We have had some success with the Logger Equipment Operator Academy, but we are currently in search of a new instructor. Students don't have to look far for employment upon completion. We just received 4 desktop simulators and 3 stand-alone simulators from John Deere and are excited to be able to offer this state-of-the-art training technology to future students.

Currently there are 1009 logging companies qualified in the Professional Logger Manager Program. That is an increase of 87 companies from 2022 when we only had 922 companies in the program. 692 of those companies will expire in 2024, but most already have enough hours to be extended to 2026. Mississippi has qualified loggers in 71 of its 82 counties.

In 2022 MLA Log-A-Load for Kids had a record year raising over \$190,000.00! The program continues to grow more each year. The MLA Log-A-Load for Kids program since inception in 1994 has donated \$2,098,844.48 in cash plus many toys and in-kind gifts!



It's good to not be writing about the effects of the pandemic. Mother Nature did what she could to keep us out of the woods. Like the rest of the country, we endured horrible heat. When it wasn't the heat, the rains kept a lot of loggers out of the woods, and unfortunately for us, out of programs and meetings.

The good news is the Missouri Logging Council (MLC) continues to grow. New, and old, loggers are starting to show back up at events all across the state...whether it's a charity golf tournament or an MLC sponsored Area Meeting.

The MLC continues to have an important and active role in the Missouri Master Logger program. This includes reviewing rules, helping locate prospective Master Loggers, and supporting the efforts of the Missouri Forest Products Association (MFPA) that coordinates the program. 5 out of the 6 Executive Board members are Master Loggers.

We are closing in on 30 Missouri Master Loggers. Our numbers continue to grow. Master Loggers understand that they serve as role models within the industry, some are taking the lead in promoting higher levels of safety and professionalism...starting with PPE use.

The MLC is still assuming responsibility for promoting a joint program with the Missouri Department of Conservation that will reimburse some of the costs of PPE. Too many lives are being lost, too many accidents occurring, and something as simple as wearing the proper PPE might make a difference. This program reimburses trained loggers 50% of approved PPE costs, and Master Loggers 75%. Programs like this might just encourage loggers to buy and use PPE.

Log A Load for Kids continues to be a high priority for the MLC. This year, we held another successful golf tournament. Participation in these events continues to grow. We were able to contribute \$30,000 to the University of Missouri Women and Children's Hospital. It is always impressive to me to see the giving hearts of Missouri loggers.

Recently, a national study showed that once again logging is one of the most dangerous jobs. While we all know THAT, there was a another national survey that pointed out loggers are the happiest and most satisfied at their job. That really says something.



**MLC Board of Directors, Chairman- Shannon Jarvis**

## Montana Logging Association 2023 Highlights



Montana’s 68th Legislative Session started January 2, 2023. The MLA’s safety management consultant, Jason Todhunter, trades his hickory for a suit and tie for the 90-day biennial session to represent the MLA’s roughly 500 members. The highlights for Montana included a bill to increase the business equipment tax exemption from \$300,000 to \$1million dollars for class 8 business equipment; the fire suppression account

for fire mitigation in Montana was increased to \$15 million per year – more funding for fuels reduction; and we worked with the Montana DNRC to clarify rules on burning slash piles. Significant time was also spent working to keep workers compensation programs in place that support the logging community.

The 25th Anniversary year of MLA Log a Load for kids raised \$31,340 for Shodair Children’s Hospital in Helena MT, with the help of ALC’s donation of a Henry Rifle that was raffled. The MLA has now donated more than \$525,000 since 1997.

In early February the news of a fire at RY Timber in Livingston was a huge blow to the industry and the state. The fire was the final straw and the owners made the decision to close the stud mill. Luckily in a turn of events, the owners made repairs, and listed the mill for sale in the spring. Former American Loggers Council president, Sherm Anderson of Deer Lodge, has purchased the mill and will expand his successful Sun Mountain Lumber to include the Livingston mill by the 1st part of October.

Montana covers 145,545 square miles and here in NW Montana we had record drought while the southern parts of the state had record rainfall. Then Montana’s fire season kicked off in late July, in northwest and central MT. As of September 1, the Dept of Natural Resources has reported 28 active fires, burning 114,367 acres so far.

The pulp mill in Missoula, MT has lost its market and early this year halted taking more wood. This has caused several loggers to find other markets or create bigger slash piles. Firewood is a hot commodity around the state which keeps several companies very busy.

Finding employees continues to be a challenge for most employers in Montana. The timber industry has always struggled to find good, hard-working employees, but we are working to attract younger folks to the industry. Which makes workforce development more critical than ever and the MLA staff has spent countless hours attending high school career fairs around the state as well as taking students from 7th grade to college age to active logging jobs to help them understand career opportunities in our industry.

Working with a local PR company, a short video was created and promoted through social media that includes young men discussing why they want to be a logger. The YouTube Video has had over 300,000 views in the past 6 months. Not viral, but we are working on it.

The Montana Logging Association has concerns and struggles that most states do, we are looking forward to continuing to do good work, support our membership in doing what’s right for the forests around us.



The demand for pulpwood and chips was at an all-time high this winter in the Northeast, but those markets suddenly crashed in March, and since then, low-grade markets have been tough for timber harvesters throughout the region. According to forest economists, this seems to be an inventory management issue and there is some optimism in Q4.

The Northeastern Loggers' Association (NELA) hosted the annual Northeastern Forest Products Equipment Expo (Loggers' Expo) in late May at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor, Maine. The show drew in approximately 5,200 attendees, with 181 exhibiting companies, representing a "return to normal" turnout since 2020 and during the COVID pandemic years.

A very wet start to summer this year, due to heavy rains and flooding, halted operations for many loggers in Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and New York, with some reporting that they only worked a few days in the months of June and July. In mid-July, Vermont received more than nine inches of rain in just a few days. Flash floods also affected areas of Pennsylvania in mid-July and West Virginia in late August.

While wildfires in Canada burned in early June, smoke covered the Northeast in a smoggy haze, and the region experienced unprecedented poor air quality. Local fires also burned in several northeastern states, including large fires in New Jersey's Pine Barrens, and a fire in the Queen's River Preserve in Rhode Island, which was that state's largest fire since 1942.

The debate over whether biomass should be considered a renewable resource continues in the Northeast. Legislators in Maryland and Massachusetts considered bills that would eliminate incentives for biomass energy. Proponents of these bills cited air-quality concerns and carbon emissions associated with biomass incinerators. On the other hand, opponents noted that modern biomass systems are designed to minimize emissions, and they provide an important market for waste wood. County commissioners in Allegany County, Maryland supported biomass energy, stating "woody biomass will play a key role in our region's energy transition."

In New York, ReEnergy Black River Biomass shut down in March due to woody biomass no longer qualifying as renewable according to the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard. Lacking tax credits that would come with the Renewable Portfolio Standard, the plant was no longer financially viable for its owners. In the aftermath of the closure, local loggers have lost a market for waste wood. Two dozen trucking contracts and the jobs associated with those contracts have been lost.

A similar situation is playing out in Berlin, New Hampshire, where Governor Chris Sununu recently vetoed the continuation of rate subsidies for the Burgess biomass plant. Burgess provides an important outlet for waste wood from the forest products industry, and the potential loss of market worries many landowners and contractors in the region.

Meanwhile, in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, Clean Energy Technologies is working to build a new biomass energy plant that would produce 14,600 MWh of electricity annually, stating "This project serves as a blueprint

for numerous forthcoming biomass projects.” The company uses proprietary technology to burn wood at high temperatures, producing not only electrical power but also biochar and heating fuel.

Forest carbon and carbon offset markets have been a major topic of discussion and concern among foresters and loggers in the Northeast. As landowners in the Northeast consider carbon markets – a relatively new phenomenon – as a source of revenue, many in the industry worry that these markets will affect timber supplies. These concerns are real.

Although current acreage within these projects is still small, there has been a notable example of a large timberland owner in northern New Hampshire deciding to sell carbon instead of cutting timber. The Connecticut Lakes Headwaters property in northern New Hampshire, 146,400 acres, came under new ownership in 2022 by Bluesource Sustainable Forests Company (BSFC). Their plans to sell carbon credits instead of harvesting timber on the land is having a direct negative local economic effect; loggers are losing their long-time clients, local mills are losing timber supply, and three towns in the North Country are losing critical timber tax. BSFC has consistently said they will continue to harvest timber on the property, but at reduced levels. We will have a better idea of the extent when they submit their annual harvest plan and an updated stewardship plan, conditions of the Forest Legacy easement on the property, to the State Forester this fall. The “Bluesource carbo controversy” is not unique to NH and is currently raging in West Virginia.

In mass timber news, eastern hemlock has been tested and certified for use in cross-laminated timber, thanks to a project led by Charles Levesque, a consultant and executive director of the North East State Foresters Association, and made possible by a \$250,000 wood innovations grant from the USDA Forest Service. Eastern hemlock is an abundant and underutilized tree species in the Northeast, and certification opens up a new market.

This year has been challenging, but we remain optimistic that things will turn around and markets will pick up. Maine is seeing new products in the market: Among them, Timber HP has recently commenced production of insulation using softwood chips at its manufacturing facility in Madison, Maine, located at the site of a former pulp and paper mill, and Standard Biocarbon is finishing the construction of a biochar facility co-located at a sawmill.

We are proud to support the American Loggers Council and proud to have the annual meeting hosted in our region this year. Our thanks to ALC President Andy Irish, of Irish Family Logging, who has supported NELA over the years.

Submitted by Erin Kessler, Executive Editor, *The Northern Logger and Timber Processor*, with contributions from Alison Berry of Woodland Resources.

The Northeastern Loggers’ Association, Inc. (NELA) was founded in 1952 and is headquartered in Old Forge, New York. The organization has nearly 2,000 members in the region from Maine to Minnesota and Missouri to Maryland. NELA publishes the monthly magazine *The Northern Logger & Timber Processor* and hosts the annual Northeastern Forest Products Equipment Exposition (Loggers’ Expo).



## **New Hampshire Timber Harvesting Council**

The New Hampshire Timber Harvesting Council (NHTHC) 's Fall 2023 Professional Loggers Program and Landowner Classes are scheduled and posted on our website. In addition to the four core classes (first aid, safe felling, fundamentals of forestry, timber law), this year we are also offering classes in hardwood log grading, accounting, and Oak health. Currently, the list of offerings is here: [www.nhtoa.org/work/all-events.html](http://www.nhtoa.org/work/all-events.html). Also, we continue to offer Entry Level Driver Training (classroom portion) through our subscription to the Team Safe Trucking (TST) program. This online training program is available to our members and will assist new drivers seeking Commercial Driver's License (CDL) A or CDL B training.

In July the NHTHC, along with the NH Timberland Owners Association, and NH Sustainable Forestry Initiative state implementation committee hosted the third annual, Forests of N.H. Teacher Tour. It was held in northern New Hampshire where 16 educators from across the state saw land management, timber harvesting, and forest products processing.

In May NHTHC, along with the NH Timberland Owners Association (NHTOA) and our partners at the University of New Hampshire hosted a NH Forest Career Field Day at Bear Brook State Park in Allenstown, NH. Close to 300 high and vocational students saw timber harvesting demonstrations, arborist tree work, and met with dozens of wood processing companies and public land management agencies to learn about careers in our industry.

The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Loggers and Truckers Convention will be held on Saturday, October 21, at the Fireside Inn and Suites in West Lebanon. The program for this event is organized by the N.H. Timber Harvesting Council (THC) with support from NHTOA staff. It will begin with a social hour and dinner, followed by a speaker, recognition of our newly certified and re-certified loggers, recognition of award winners, Rocky's Raffle and Plinko, and a live auction hosted by THC member and NHTOA board member Michael Sharp. THC chair Bruce Bovill has served the council with excellence these past two years while also serving as an NHTOA director. Bruce will "pass the axe" to vice-chair Heath Bunnell at this event.

On the policy front, the NH legislature concluded their session in July. This year's session began with the NHTOA monitoring and lobbying 58 bills. Although the total bill count was lower than prior years, the intensity of advocacy work per bill was up. In addition to land management and property rights bills we were successful beating back proposals that would have harmed markets for low-grade timber (biomass power and wood chip use on playgrounds). We also successfully got legislation approved to improve the administrative process dealing with NH's timber tax.

# Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL)

AOL is the statewide trade association for logging and forest operator businesses, which provides service and voice to independent small businesses in Oregon forests. We provide numerous programs and benefits for member companies and their working families. Additionally, AOL advocates for effective policy and business success, as we advance operator professionalism.

- *'Growing service & voice for loggers and forest operators since 1969'*
- We are organized as four separate entities serving nearly 1,000 participating small businesses: association; corporation; health benefits trust; foundation
- *Mission: In 1969, Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc was created by loggers, and its purpose is to enhance the current and future success of loggers and forest operators.*

## **Accomplishment 1. Retain a 'Contract Communicator'**

- Entered into new agreement with a contractor to provide added communication services and brand positioning. Support services aim to enhance AOL communications with members, prospective members, career seekers, forest sector partners, policymakers, media, and key audiences.

## **Accomplishment 2. Begin Building a New Association Health Benefits Product**

- Scheduled to launch for January 2024 enrollment, AOL is creating a new health benefits program purpose-built for member employer access to discounted health benefits for workers, families and owners. Association-owned plan offers lower cost structure for member purchase of health insurance.

## **Accomplishment 3. 2023 Revision of Oregon Professional Logger Standard (OPL)**

- Complete a major overhaul of the 28-year-old OPL program—altering qualification from company-based, to become individual-based in 2023. Develop and deliver five new core courses; publish Standard; communicate transition 'bridge' and new requirements.

## **Accomplishment 4. Growing Capacity in Workforce and Labor Services**

- Added staff capacity is now expanding AOL services and workers compensation consulting within key labor growth areas and workforce connections needed by our industry.

### **Accomplishment 5. Bylaws Refresh Project**

- Finish an important three-year process aimed to modernize the AOL governing bylaws. Revision remodeled to achieve objectives: 1) expand involvement of all forest contract operators; 2) increase participation; 3) effective association governance; and 4) clarity and modern housekeeping.

### **Accomplishment 6. Strategic Plans – Complete 3-Year Upgrades; Begin 2-Year Plan**

- AOL staff on July 1<sup>st</sup> successfully completed AOL's three-year effort to accomplish its '12 Strategic Upgrade Actions'. At the same time, began implementing a new 2-Year Plan aiming to grow membership and increase service program value.

### **Challenge 1. 'New Economy' and 'Forever' Labor Shortage**

- Unprecedented impact of short labor, unreliable supply-chains, inflation, worse tax/regulation, capital scarcity, and insufficient contractor profit necessary for entrepreneurial investment to match demand.

#### Opportunities.

- ✓ AOL invests to build workforce and service contracting programs; expand services to enlarge membership value, reach and participation.
- ✓ AOL champion new coalitions with industry partners and policymakers about together building common solutions for sustainable working family occupations, small business, and forest careers.

### **Challenge 2. Anti-Business State Government / Regulated Obstacles to Employers, Small Business and Managed Forests**

- Single-party, majority Democratic overreach controls unfavorable policymaking on all fronts

#### Opportunities.

- ✓ Deploy full range of policy tools: coalitions, VoterVoice, social media, new relationships, litigation
- ✓ Engage non-traditional action to leverage increased managed forest business—including workforce development; wildfire reduction; forest carbon growth; environmental justice
- ✓ Redouble AOL policymaking strategy and resources committed; combine for coalition leverage
- ✓ Double AOL's state political action investment toward 2022 General Election



## 2023 State of the State Report

2022-23 continued a trend that began in 2021 where high inflation, including record high diesel prices, and a lack of consistency with respect to pulp prices continues to wear on the profitability of contractors, and many are leaving or are considering leaving the business as a result. Contractors are a very proud and generous group, and despite the hurdles, they love what they do and will do everything they can to continue their way of life despite the obstacles.

In March of 2023, the PLC published its third economic impact study, "The Economic Contribution of Logging and Trucking in Maine," in conjunction with the University of Maine. The study's findings substantiate what has happened over the last three years because of the impacts of COVID 19 and the shutdown of the digesters at the Jay mill. We are estimating that Maine has lost 30% of its harvesting capacity and the layoff of nearly 1,000 people in harvesting and hauling since 2020. In just four years, the industry has shrunk from an annual economic impact of \$620 million to \$582 million and total jobs have been reduced from 9,000 to 5,500.

Also in March of 2023, the PLC implemented its annual safety training schedule for training more than 1,000 individuals at 11 locations throughout the state. Additionally, because of a new grant from the Maine Community College, the PLC has been able to create a new training database for its membership and will provide free membership dues for any member that sent more than 50% of their staff to a training in 2023.

Safety, training, and loss control are major priorities for the PLC. The PLC's relationship with Acadia Insurance is also a key component of why the PLC is so invested in reducing risk for its membership and ensuring claims are kept at a minimum to help contractors remain profitable. The Acadia Insurance relationship is significant, and it was announced last fall that the Acadia Dividend program provided a dividend check to eligible members for the seventh straight year. \$970,000 was returned to members in 2022 and over \$13 million has been returned to PLC members since the program began in 1999.

In June of 2023, the PLC, in collaboration with the Maine Community College System, kicked off its seventh cohort of the Mechanized Logging Operations and Forest Trucking Program (MLOFT) in Summit, Maine. The program was created thanks to a partnership between three Maine community colleges, the PLC, and industry partners including Milton CAT and United Ag., Construction and Forestry/John Deere. The 2023 program expanded to 20 weeks and in addition to the traditional hands-on operations logging operations training, all students are obtaining their CDL apprentice license. In addition to CDL, MLOFT gives students a broad overview of the most common mechanical systems found in modern timber harvesting equipment, and an understanding of the variables of timber growth, tree species, and markets. It also includes a strong emphasis

on safety. The program started with 14 highly qualified students who are on track for graduation in November 2023.

The PLC completed another busy Legislative session in Augusta in July 2023. In addition to advocating for and against legislation that will hurt and help contractors, the PLC also had two priority bills sponsored on behalf of the organization to create a new logger advocate position at the Maine Forest Service (MFS) and to mandate the use of the paper Forest Operations Notification (FONS) in addition to the online system. While the advocate bill was rejected, the paper FONS must now be provided to any contractor that requests it. The PLC also supported two bills introduced by State Senate President Troy Jackson that changed the law pertaining to payments for service contractors and the relationship between state land and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). Both bills passed and became law without the Governor's signature.

At the federal level, the PLC has also had a strong impact and invested a significant amount of time and attention on federal policy in the last year. The work of our organization, the American Loggers Council and our colleagues across the country, has led to the reintroduction of Youth in Logging Careers legislation, biomass energy legislation and a bill to eliminate the federal excise tax on newly purchase trucks and trailers.

A special thanks goes to the entire Maine Congressional Delegation, especially Senator Collins and Congressman Golden, for their continued leadership on issues pertaining to loggers and truckers in Maine. Additionally, the PLC's work with the Congressional delegation also led to the appropriation of \$1 million to Northern Maine Community College for the expansion of the already successful program in 2023 and the creation of a new timber hauling Commercial Drivers License (CDL) training program for students. This new funding will double the size of the program in 2024 and 2025. This is timely recognition of all the work that PLC has done to advance this industry.

Organizational membership remains strong as the PLC now has 206 contractor members and 113 supporting members. The financial position of the organization also remains strong. In 2022, the PLC was able to retire the debt on its building in Augusta and has also increased its savings by more than 50% in the last year. The future looks bright for the organization.

The PLC has continued its leadership role as the state sponsor of the Log-A-Load for Kids Campaign. 2023 has been a monumental year for these efforts as the organization surpassed the \$2 million mark, and the campaign currently stands at \$2.15 million for the cause. At the PLC's 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in May 2023, \$127,000 was raised. The PLC's golf tournaments in August and September raised \$107,000, which was added to the total.

And lastly, at its Annual Meeting in May, the PLC membership voted to take a monumental step to expand the organization outside of Maine and allow contractors from other Northeast states to join. As a result of the membership vote, the PLC name was changed from PLC of Maine to PLC of the Northeast. Board membership was also expanded and three contractors from the state of Vermont were added to the Board. The PLC will announce the expansion publicly in October 2023 and begin allowing contractors from the state of Vermont to join. An office is expected to be opened in Vermont in 2024.

The past year has been the most challenging we have ever seen in our history, but we will get through it and look forward to sustaining one of Maine's legacy industries for the future.

Cory Martin – Chairman  
Dave Cupp – Vice-Chairman  
Todd Martin – Secretary/Treasurer

Todd H. Martin – President & CEO  
Jason Slatten – Executive V.P. & COO  
William “Bill” Jones – Asst. Executive V.P.



Although we are not a “state”, it is always an honor for me to for me to give an update or “State of the Co-op” report to the American Loggers Council as we have members in 27 states with physical locations in 7 states.



Calendar year 2022 was a stellar year for the SLC. As I stated in last year’s “State of the Co-op” report, we were headed for a record year. That statement was, in fact, exactly how 2022 ended for us with records in gallons

sold (61 million gallons sold at our stations & bulk), total sales (\$250,000,000.00), new members added (781), and total member patronage dividend of \$3.4million.

With 2022 being a record year in every benchmark that we track, it only gave us the will and desire to grow even more in 2023. As we settled in to 2023, we were met with fuel prices starting to rise again, a wetter winter than we have seen in several years throughout 95% of our footprint, and by strict quotas as the summer droughts set in. With that said, we are roughly level on fuel gallons sold when compared to the same period in 2022. However, our membership continues to grow, not at the massive number as 2022 but with constant and steady growth.

In May of this year, our board of directors came together for a strategic planning meeting in Natchitoches, Louisiana where we identified the big rocks that we wanted to tackle over the next couple years. It has always been our belief that the best time to have a strategic planning meeting is when you are on top. With the SLC coming off a record year, the timing was perfect. While we will continue to pursue station locations in many areas, our primary focus will be Georgia, Arkansas, and North Carolina. With that said, we are excited to announce that we have partnered with Forisk to assist us in the effort of strategically locating our stations in those 3 states in a way that will benefit the most loggers and truckers. Additionally, we will be making a major push to add additional services for our members.

In August of this year, we opened a new location in Urania, Louisiana at the entrances of Drax’s Pellet Mill and the LaSalle Lumber Sawmill. That station started off with a BANG and we are very excited about its early growth. Additionally, by the time this report is published, we will have broke ground on another new location in Gloster, Mississippi in the middle of where Gloster Chips, Drax Pellet Mill, and the new CLAW sawmill that is under construction is located. We are expecting this station to hit the ground running with a “projected” opening in the late 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2024.

With the openings and announcements of new mills in many of the states where we are already located, we are more excited than ever about the continued growth and success of the SLC and our mission to “Cut the Cost of Doing Business” for our members.

As I have traveled throughout a major portion of the country attending and speaking at different logger association and council meetings over the past year, it is very evident that the Southern Loggers Cooperative is needed more than ever.

It is an honor for the Southern Loggers Cooperative to be a part of the ALC and we look forward to continuing our work with and support of the American Loggers Council.



## South Carolina Timber Producers Association 2023 Annual Report

*By Crad Jaynes, President & CEO*

South Carolina's timber harvesting and wood supply sectors have been hit hard with mill closings and a mill ceasing to use raw wood fiber. WestRock, North Charleston, SC paper mill, Evergreen Pactiv's Canton, NC paper mill, and New Indy Catawba, Jonesville, SC chip mill closed along with Sonoco Products Company in Hartsville, SC going to 100 % recycled material.

These closings and raw material changes led to 3.7 million tons excess with no markets. The WestRock closing impacted the coastal plain, the Evergreen closing impacted the northwestern areas and across the upper state from Georgia to North Carolina, the Jonesville closing impacted the mid-upper state areas, and Sonoco's change impacted the Pee Dee in the mid and northeastern side of the state. The Canton, NC mill closing caused Capps Brothers chip mill in Landrum, SC to close as the chip mill provided the significant amount of clean wood chips to Canton.



*Joseph "Bo Bo" Seckinger,  
SCTPA Chairman*

However, West Fraser's Fairfax, South Carolina, oriented strand board mill began taking wood in July but is not at full capacity yet. This mill will assist in the utilization of excess pulpwood in the lower coastal plain.

Pulp and containerboard mills have been operating at reduced capacities with reduced wood inventories as mills are producing according to orders on hand. Sawmill markets have remained steady for the most part.

South Carolina's loggers have endured more extended wood order quota periods due to reduced wood inventories. With the closings and changes, other markets have not been able to absorb the excess, particularly pulpwood.

South Carolina loggers have been hit with high inflation issues, high fuel prices and increased costs for goods and services and logging operations overall. Labor in the woods and the need for truck drivers and contract haulers continue. Truck liability insurance availability and the high costs continue to hit loggers hard.

South Carolina is seeing economic attrition in the logging businesses, but the capacity to produce the needed volumes is still available. It's just the markets are not.

The 2023 SC General Assembly did not have legislation impacting timber harvesting and timber trucking. As a member of SC Tort Reform Coalition and SC Supply Chain Defense Council, SCTPA supported the tort reform SC Justice Act, which stalled in the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee. This bill changes the “search for the deep pocket” and would assign a percentage of fault to parties less than 50% liable in liability lawsuits.

SCTPA's 2023 Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach, SC was February 24 – 26, with over 300 folks attending. ALC's Scott Dane and Minnesota logger Peter Wood, host of Let the Sawdust Fly radio show, were featured speakers.

SCTPA attended the March ALC Spring Fly-In to Washington, DC, and met with our SC U.S. House and Senate members to discuss the Safe Routes Act, Youth Careers in Logging, and the reduction or elimination of the Federal Excise Tax on trucks and trailers.

The SC Bulk Agriculture Annual Permit Program through SCDOT continues to provide the opportunity for hauling roundwood and wood chips at 90,000 Pounds GVW on “SC Shielded and Secondary Roads” only, not interstates.

SCTPA continues participation on the Timber Operations Professional (TOP) Logger Training Steering Committee, SFI State Implementation Committee, SC Sustainable Forestry Teachers Tour Steering Committee, as well as partner with the Forestry Association of SC and the SC Trucking Association for forestry, timber harvesting and trucking issues. SCTPA participated in the 2023 week-long SC Sustainable Forestry Teachers Tour in June.

As South Carolina's professional timber harvesters, wood suppliers, and timber truckers continue to face challenges, SCTPA will continue to assist timber harvesting and wood supply business professionals meet and exceed the challenges for improved economic, production, and market opportunities.

SCTPA is proud to be the association representing, servicing, and advancing the professionals harvesting, supplying, and trucking South Carolina's sustainable forest resources.



## Virginia Logging Overview 2023: By Virginia Loggers Association (Ron Jenkins)

Virginia logging has been under severe stress for more than one year. Loggers feel the pain of market swings and challenges in a most unique way. We believe anyone reading this overview will understand so will not go into detail and instead give an accounting of VLA's work.

Virginia Loggers Association and those businesses involved in the biomass and energy business started the year by challenging a new law that would close phase I and II utilities which use forest biomass for the source of its electricity production. VLA sought to remove the closure of these facilities and to have biomass included as a renewable energy resource. The challenge ended with compromises between the forest products industry, environmental groups, and the utility.

The following summary matches the language passed by the General Assembly and not vetoed by Governor Youngkin.

**Renewable energy; biomass-fired facilities; Department of Forestry advisory panel; report.** *Removes the renewable energy requirement for each Phase I and Phase II Utility to retire all biomass-fired electric generating units that do not co-fire with coal by December 31, 2028. The bill provides that biomass-fired facilities may qualify as renewable energy standard eligible sources, provided that they are in operation as of January 1, 2023, and (i) supply no more than 10 percent of their annual net electrical generation to the electric grid or no more than 15 percent of their annual total useful energy to any entity other than the manufacturing facility to which the generating source is interconnected and are fueled by forest-product manufacturing materials harvested in accordance with best management practices or (ii) are owned by a Phase I or Phase II Utility, have less than 52 megawatts capacity, and are fueled by forest-product manufacturing residuals, biowastes, or biomass harvested in accordance with best management practices. The bill directs the Department of Forestry to convene an advisory panel to examine the use of forest-related materials, agricultural-related materials, and solid woody waste materials for biomass-fired electric generating units in the Commonwealth and to submit a report of the advisory panel's findings and any recommendations to the House Committee on Commerce and Energy and the Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor no later than December 1, 2024. The bill further directs the Department of Forestry to develop by December 1, 2023, best management practices for the sustainable harvesting of biomass for biomass-fired electric generating units that are subject to the provisions of the bill.*

VLA is one member of the advisory panel working on meeting demands of the VA General Assembly. The life cycle carbon analysis has been most problematic, and some believe it is just a way for the environmental community to shut down biomass as a source for electric production or even to squelch forest harvesting all together.

Despite this rocky start to 2023, VLA pushed ahead by facilitating a number of face – to – face meetings with Virginia elected members from the VA House of Delegates, Senate, and Congress. VLA is grateful to Speyside Stave Mill in Millboro for hosting meetings for Virginia delegates, Secretary of Agriculture & Forestry, State Forester, and Senator Mark Warner. Virginia Carolina Forest Products was also a gracious host for Virginia delegate and Senate candidates and VA's Secretary of Agriculture & Forestry.

VLA's annual meeting was its largest attended in history with many great speakers and chief among them Scott Dane, Greg Plumley, Rob Farrell, Matt Lohr, Ryan Brown, Nathan Arnold, Stephen Setliff, and more. Congressman Bob Good made a dinner speech for attendees at our Friday dinner and Representative Abigail Spanberger spoke at our Saturday evening event. Both evening events celebrated our members and accomplishments.

VLA President Frank Myers recognized Vance Wright for the VLA President's award, Palmer Dugger for VLA's Spotlight award, and Jim McCoy (Speyside) for Supporter of the Year award.



## Washington State Annual Report 2023

**State Director: Ed Bryant**

**WCLA President/CEO: Jerry Bonagofsky**

We currently have 841 individuals who meet the requirements for our Master Logger Program. These individuals represent about 500 different companies. In 2023, we will conduct two Master Logger training programs. Our program consists of four-days of training, along with continuing education requirements.

WCLA also offers other training programs including safety, first aid and pilot escort vehicle operator certification. We provide first aid training to about 800 workers every year. WCLA is the primary sponsor of the Washington Logging Safety Conference. The 31st annual WLSC was held in January 2023 and about 300 loggers attended.

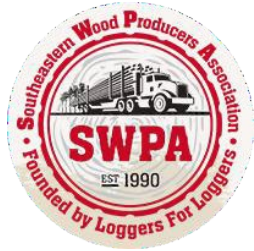
WCLA continues to be involved in the Washington Logger Safety Initiative which began in 2013. As a result, workers' comp base rates for manual logging have decreased by about 16% since 2014. Washington's workers comp program is different than most other states. In Washington, premiums are based on hours worked instead of payroll. Base rates for manual logging have dropped from \$20.18 per hour to \$17.05 per hour. In addition, participants in the Logger Safety Initiative can save an additional 20% off the base rate.

An area of concern is the timber sale program administered by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR continues to be pressured by environmental groups to reduce harvest levels on state trust lands. These groups want all older forests (described as forests that are 75 years or older) that are currently available for harvest to be preserved. Currently, nearly half of the 1.2 million acres of state trust lands in Western Washington is already unavailable for sustainable timber harvest.

DNR's timber sales program generates about \$180 million per year for schools and counties across the state, many in rural areas. The DNR timber sale program is critical to maintain the infrastructure of our industry, provide family wage jobs, support rural communities, and ensure an adequate supply of climate friendly wood products.

In 2021, the Washington Legislature passed the Climate Commitment Act which establishes a comprehensive, market-based program to reduce carbon pollution and achieve the greenhouse gas limits set in state law. The cap-and-invest program started on Jan. 1, 2023, and fuel prices have increased sharply as a result.

The 2023 WCLA Annual Meeting was held near Spokane, WA. We had speakers that addressed issues such as state and federal land management, natural resource education, and log and lumber markets. Our Log-A-Load for Kids auction raised over \$82,000. WCLA awarded 5 scholarships for the 2023-2024 school year. Since 1988, 480 students have received scholarships totaling about \$478,000.



[www.swpa.ag](http://www.swpa.ag)

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**SOUTHEASTERN WOOD PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION, INC.**

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**2023 State of the State(s)**



*Representing the loggers of Florida and Georgia*

2023 has been another exciting year for the Southeastern Wood Producers Association (SWPA). SWPA continues to engage in the legislative process on issues that advance the interests of loggers, and we continue to promote the message that **“Wood Is Good”** in Florida, Georgia, and across the nation.

SWPA’s staff and board members continue to be active with the American Loggers Council (ALC) and continue to engage our two Congressional delegations, which combined are ALC’s 2<sup>nd</sup> largest, to advance ALC’s logger focused legislative priorities.

Politically, SWPA continues to be blessed with strong conservative leadership in the governorships of Governor DeSantis in Florida and Governor Brian Kemp in Georgia. Both won their respective 2022 reelections in landslide fashion. They continue their first term work to make each state business friendly and to minimize regulatory burdens on businesses.

In Florida, Governor DeSantis has continued to make Florida a business friendly and freedom focused state. Backed by super majorities in both the Florida House and Senate, Florida had a historically successful session getting conservative reforms passed. At the top of SWPA’s legislative agenda was tort reform, and with a broad coalition of groups we were able to pass historic tort reform legislation that will benefit the people and businesses for years to come by fixing auto and premises liability regulations while moving from a “pure” comparative negligence system to a “modified” comparative negligence system (except for medical negligence cases). This is a major change which will help logging businesses well into the future.

In Georgia, the legislature got a little more logger friendly with the election of a Speaker of the House with strong logging ties. Together with Governor Kemp, they passed legislation to increase truck weights in most of the state for logging and agricultural trucks to 88,000 pounds (on 5-axels). This puts Georgia’s truck weights on par with surrounding states. SWPA worked hard on this bill with our allies in the forest products and agricultural sectors to get this legislation across the finish line. It passed on the final legislative day with a two-year sunset provision, so more work needs to be done in the next session to make the change permanent.

SWPA continues to work to establish driver and equipment operator training programs to help with workforce concerns. In addition to lobbying and workforce development efforts, the association continues to provide educational opportunities for membership through our evening chapter meetings and half-day educational workshops, which provide continuing logger education credits for Florida’s Master Loggers and Georgia’s Master Timber Harvesters, and expand sponsor relationships and member discount programs, to deliver value back to our logger members and continue the legacy of this organization built **By Loggers, For Loggers**.

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