



Job Creation or Welfare...by Steve Sherick, ALC President

Over the years, the federal timber sale program has continued to decline while

our federal government has racked up its highest debt in history. In 1986, the US Forest Service harvested 11.786 billion board feet of timber across the US, compared to 2.138 billion board feet in 2010 (USDA Forest Service, 1905-2010 National Summary Cut and sold Data).

As most are aware, when a piece of property is federally owned, it is exempt from paying county and school taxes. In lieu of paying those taxes, the government has always paid a percentage of the money generated from the timber sale program to the counties for use by the county for activities such as road maintenance and school funding.

In 2000, Congress passed the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act to continue the funding for the counties and the schools despite the downturn in the federal timber sale program. The Act was extended in 2005 and is set to expire this year. The Act itself was never intended to be a permanent welfare, or entitlement program for the counties and schools, but was to serve as a stop gap while the federal government took the necessary steps to boost the federal timber sale program or the counties made the adjustments necessary to absorb the loss in revenue.

There is currently an effort underway in Congress to once again extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act to prop up the counties and schools while these transitions are being made, and once again, it has become a needed piece of legislation because both Congress and the Counties have failed to make any adjustments. After eleven years of feeding at the government trough, there are a host of county administrators that know of no other way to increase revenues other than taking the check from the federal government, not realizing that the timber growing within their view on federal land used to generate those funds, as well as keep the unemployment rates in their communities low.

The question is, do we continue to support a government entitlement program for our counties and schools, or should we support job creation through the utilization of our forests which will lead to economic growth and prosperity across all of rural America?

A proposal has been made in Idaho and other states that have significant federal lands within their counties to start a Community Forest Trust pilot project. The project will provide a pathway to the counties to successfully transition away from federal transfer payments under the Secure Rural Schools Act. Environmental law applicable to state forest trust lands will apply to these projects and it might help to cut through some of the red tape that has hindered US Forest Service timber sale

projects. Should the program prove to be successful, it might be the model that helps us to improve revenues from federal timber sales across the country.

The American Loggers Council is working to try and help restore lost jobs in rural America, in particular in our nation's forests. By promoting the sustainable use of fiber that could be produced from the forests for solid wood, pulp chemical, and energy production, our hope is to create an environment where we can enhance the quality of life that is disappearing from so many of our rural communities.

There used to be a time when the United States could boast about the productivity of our workforce and the manufacturing capabilities that helped to create the strength and wealth of this nation. At a time when our government is looking for ways to create jobs, we should be thinking of opportunities to put people back to work on our federal lands, sustainably extracting the renewable resources that helped to build our economy over the past century.

Steve's logging operation is based in Hayden Lake, Idaho.

EDITOR'S NOTE: With all that faces our nation, it is time for us to examine these issues. If we really want "change" in our country it has to start with each individual **understanding that government can't give anything to you without taking it from someone else first...**whether corporate funding, grant, subsidy or social program. When we become slaves to the government, they take more liberty than they can ever give us in gold. This is why we opposes a federal park in Maine.

I'll have Eggs & Toast with a side of Wood...A Legislative Breakfast

What a great way for Legislators to learn about professional logging contractors. Over 50 legislators and 20 loggers met over breakfast to build new partnerships. PLC Board Members gave presentations about how logging contractors support Maine in so many ways.

From the products we provide to the employees we hire and train. PLC Members impact Maine people for the better everyday.

It allowed Members to have a one on one discussion about labor, taxes and land use. Senators and Representatives from around the state were glad to have contacts to reach out to when they have questions about the loggers perspective.

We understand this is a busy time of year to ask you to come out of the woods, but we needed to meet with them while the legislature was in session. If you haven't already

done so, pick up the phone and introduce yourself to your representatives today.

They are interested in what you have to say!

Want to email your legislator? See our website for links, the best time to email maybe Tuesday—Thursday, during the day while the legislature is in session. We have had great success from 1:00—3:00 p.m. getting responses.



LOGGER'S VOICE QUARTERLY

STANDING STRONG FOR LOGGERS



2012 Safety Training

REGISTRATION FORM ENCLOSED

These FREE Regional trainings are provided as a PLC Member benefit and sponsored by our supporting members.

This years workshops will include:

DISTRACTED DRIVING—Acadia Insurance

ACETYLENE GAS TRAINING—Maine Oxy & Lynox

BLADE ADJUSTMENT & SAFETY—US Blades

LOGGER ERGONOMICS—Andy Wood, MEMIC

BRIDGE MAT INSTALLATION—Maine Forest Service & FIELD SAFETY CHECKLIST—Frank Martin & Sons

Thanks to our hosts below...the all day workshops (8 a.m.— 4 p.m.) will be held:

April 13th Rumford—Nicols Bros.

April 20th Passadumkeag—Madden Timberlands

April 27th Macwahoc Plt.—Hanington Bros.

May 4th Athens—Linkletter & Sons

May 18th Waltham—Elliot Jordan & Sons

May 25th New Canada—Voisine Brothers



Director's Update	2
Annual Meeting & DWT Loggers	2
Safety First	3
PLC Spotlight—Job Creation	4
Legislative Breakfast Recap	4

Greetings from PLC of Maine...

PLC has been busy working on your behalf this winter. This spring will be jammed packed too. In March we will attend the ALC fly-in to DC to talk with our federal policy makers. Last year it was a fruitful time as we were able to discuss youth labor regulations, biomass, federal timber program, truck weights and highlight the value of our industry. We look forward to another opportunity to stand for logger concerns in DC.

As we roll in to April, we are excited about the **2012 Annual Meeting & Fundraiser** at Jeff's on April 6th. It will be hard to top last year's event but we know it will be a great time for all. Our workshop focus is on FUEL & INNOVATION and we are happy to have the *Southern Loggers Cooperative* speak to us about how a coop can save you money with FUEL! Join us for the Awards Lunch. We will honor the Legislator of the Year and acknowledge the newest PLC Members and Master Loggers. After lunch we will view a special address from Senator Collins. We will also be electing board members and officers (if you have an interest in serving or would like more information, please let me know or contact an Executive Board Member). MMTA will present the how's and why's of how CSA – compliance for trucking effects your business and of course our Log-A-Load benefit. Watch for your registration packets next week.

See the cover article for our next set of Safety Trainings and the registration insert for information and to sign up. Trainings are on a first come first serve basis and we cap enrollment at 80 for each location so be sure to return the sign up sheet to Leslie soon.

It's been a busy legislative session so far this year, here's a quick update:

Legislative Breakfast -- Thanks to all who attended our first PLC Legislative Breakfast in Augusta! Legislators learned about the logging segment of the forest products industry first hand from President Tom Cushman, 1st Vice-

President Bob Linkletter and 2nd Vice-President Brian Souers, their presentations made a huge impact on the legislators and commissioners who attended.

Bonded Labor – LD 1383—The original bill “An Act To Improve the Process by Which Logging Contractors Hire Legal Foreign Workers” held over from last session has been replaced with an amendment which changes the title to “Act To Promote a Qualified U.S. Logging Workforce and Ensure Adequate Wood Supply for Maine Mills” it is focused on ensuring mills have enough fiber and introduces a training component as well. The bill changes the way bonded labor is reported, increasing the reporting timeline, and eliminating the clearing house, while maintaining the maximum fine for violations and the restriction on unemployment benefits. One other item we have fought for is to maintain the leasing definitions on what is deemed to be a bona fide lease. This bill is in the legislative committee work session stage.

LURC Reform – LD 1798—The study committee formed last session (2011) is the basis of this bill in short it changes the mission and scope of LURC to more of a planning role. The name would be changed to the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC), it provides for county commissioner representation on the Board, moves forestry regulations to the MFS, large development to DEP under site law, and gives the counties the opportunity to opt-out after three years if they meet certain requirements that demonstrate they are able to take over planning functions, such as a planning board, a board of appeals, code enforcement and the adoption of a CLUP. Environmental groups are doing their best to make significant changes to the bill, their highest priority is to get rid of the opt-out provisions, there are also a number of legislators who want to be able to confirm county commissioner nominees to the LUPC, others also want to change the time before the counties can opt out to 5 years. PLC opposes most efforts to change the bill as **the bill itself is the compromise** for those who didn't want to change LURC at all in the first place and those of us who favored eliminating LURC and sending unorganized territory oversight back to the counties. I expect there will be some changes to the bill but we are insisting that the opt-out provision remain unchanged, otherwise there are no real reforms and the bill should be defeated. At the time of this writing the bill is at the legislative committee work session stage so a lot could change.

Regulatory Takings – LD 1810—This bill was also the result of a bipartisan study committee and looks to require that any state regulation that causes a diminution (decrease) in value of the land by >50% entitle a landowner to compensation or exemption from the regulation. This bill is similar to a bill in Florida that has given landowner a right of redress for having their land taken by the government by egregious regulation. PLC testified in favor of this bill as a reasoned attempt to have legislators consider the true costs to landowners of any new regulations they approve. It also precludes “speculative value” meaning that it addresses fair market value and limits relief to reasonable investment backed expectations of the owner. It also is prospective meaning that the bill would only effect new legislation or rulemaking. There is a lot of resistance to this bill from the environmental community but there is also a lot of support from landowners of all sizes. This bill is also in the legislative committee work session stage. This bill is really about landowner freedom to be able to use and enjoy their private property.

Call your legislators and let them know where you stand on these issues. We will keep you posted on these bills and others and look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting & Safety Trainings this spring,



ANNUAL MEETING, AWARDS & LOG-A-LOAD DANCING! April 6th

Are you ready for the Annual Meeting & Log-A-Load Fundraiser? Join us Friday, April 6th at Jeff's in Brewer for this all day event. We will be electing the new Board, focusing on FUEL SAVINGS & INNOVATION, enjoy the **Lunch Awards Banquet and Dancing with the Loggers Dinner** and fundraiser for Log-A-Load for Kids!

Speaking of DANCING, are you going to be the 2012 Dancing with the Loggers Champions? Please consider dancing this year, it's a BLAST!

You will receive your website links the first week in March. So start raising \$\$! Contact employees, vendors, family and friends. What a great way to help Children's Miracle Network. If you have any questions please feel free to give Leslie a call 688-8195.

AWARDS? Your company may be recognized at the Annual Meeting Award Lunch...we will also acknowledge new PLC members, Master Loggers and Legislator of the Year.

Save the date...Friday, April 6th!



Safety First!

✓ If identified and corrected, future incidents can be avoided

✓ How it provides an inexpensive way to make changes

What is your company's procedure for near miss incidents? Can you think of examples that have occurred at your workplace?

Safety is more than PPE, a first aid kit and a monthly safety meeting. We can't expect safe operations without putting time and effort into our Safety Programs.

Each month PLC tries to provide easy tips and tools to help with your safety planning. But don't use these as a life saving device! Jump in...the water is fine! Your safety plan is your teams live preserver, take it seriously.

Have you registered? PLC Safety Training allows you to offer safety instruction to your employees for FREE. These full day workshops provide a unique hands-on and interactive way to talk about safety in a neutral setting. Attendees talk safety with other company's workers while learning new techniques and ideas.

Sign up today for a training in your area.

Near Misses— We have talked near misses before, maybe you missed it! A **near miss** is an unplanned event that did not result in injury or damage – but had the potential to do so. Only a fortunate break in the chain of events prevented an injury, fatality or damage. Other terms for these is a "**close call**" or "**near collision**".

Does your company have a way of reporting and discussing near misses?

Have you thought about how tracking a near miss can:

✓ Allow you to get to the root cause of an incident

If you don't have a system in place and you can think of an example, make a suggestion today.

As owners, managers, supervisors and employees, we could all use a system, that may provide a way to prevent future incidents. Plus this is an easy fix, with little or no cost. A win / win as they say for safety!

Near miss reporting if treated with the same attention to detail as if the event actually occurred, it may provide a way to prevent future incidents and can help your workplace to take notice of an opportunity before something more severe occurs.

Quick Checks Reminders—

✓ Have all employees received training for safe performance of assigned work tasks?

✓ Do all employees understand safe use, operation and maintenance of all tools and machines they are assigned to use?

✓ Do they understand the special safety hazards associated with their tasks and how they can work to control or prevent them from occurring?

These questions along with a near miss system go a long way to providing your team the tools to remain safe.

Near Miss—Accident Skidder on Highway in Near-Miss with Car.

One morning, a logging crew member was moving a flatbed trailer across a highway from one harvest block to another.

Work was nearly finished on one harvest block, and as the skidder operator had gotten ahead of his work, he took the initiative to load a delimiting gate and a culvert onto a small flatbed trailer and move them to another harvest block.

The harvest block was located on the opposite side of a state highway. This stretch of road had good sight distance, but it was a busy travel route with a painted center line. Thinking he could move the trailer across the road before many cars came, he decided to use the skidder's grapple to pull the loaded trailer.

Fortunately, there was no accident, but one nearly occurred. A car approaching behind the skidder and trailer realized they were moving very slowly, and the driver slowed down. However, a second car following the first pulled into the left lane to pass the car, skidder and trailer. As the second car pulled into the left lane, the skidder began turning left in order to cross the highway. The driver of the second car jammed on the brakes and came to a complete stop, narrowly avoiding a collision with the skidder.

Near Miss Discussions Ideas— What ideas for teachable moments from this FRA story of a near miss accident do you have? Perhaps, never pull a trailer down a highway without a proper vehicle hook-up that includes working electrical connections to trailer tail lights. If traveling slowly, use emergency flashers. Ensure there is no traffic coming from either direction before making a turn. Running logging equipment directly down a busy, public highway is asking for trouble. Don't compromise safety in order to save time!

(Story excerpts taken from FRA Alert)