

"Voice of the Southeastern Wood Producers Association"

Volume 25

Issue 1 2015



# **SOCIAL MEDIA?**



SAVE THE DATE!

SAVE THE DATE!

SWPA ANNUAL MEETING

SWPA ANNUAL 5.6, 2015

St Augustine, Florida

St Augustine, ROOM

RESERVE YOUR ROOM

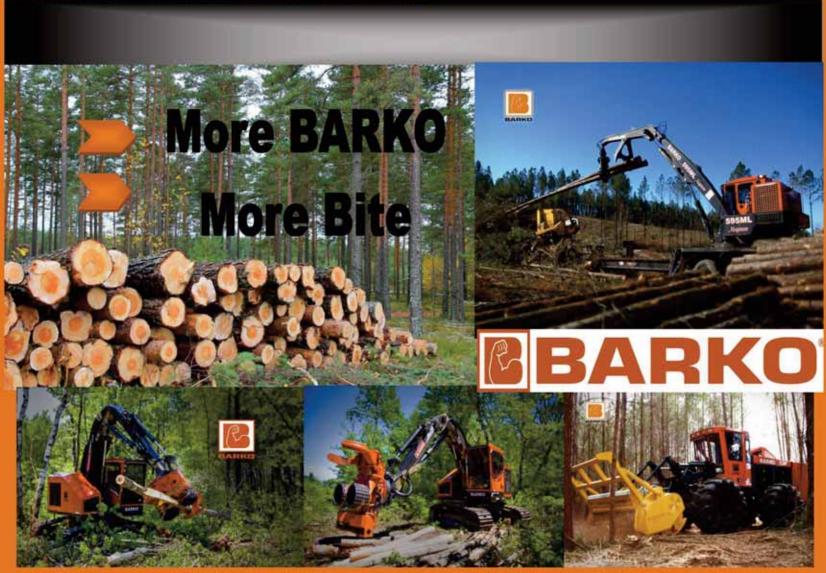
RESERVE SPACE IS LIMITED!

#### **INSIDE THIS EDITION:**

Director's Message
President's Message
Florida Forest Service Director's Desk
GFC: The Commission's Corner
ANNUAL MEETING 2015 - Join Us!



# Tough Dependable Economical Powerful Service



KNAGHT FORESTRY Whigham, Georgia 229-762-3500





1st Quarter 2015
Executive Director Tommy Carroll





#### **Pros and Cons of Social Media**

Social Media by Wikipedia definition is a "group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content."[1] Furthermore, social media depend on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content."

Now I have a four year college degree in business management with over thirty eight years of professional experience, and I'll darned if I truly understand what that means. Is this beneficial or counterproductive? Is it safe and secure? Does it have a meaningful place in the business world?

### Here are some pro and con opinions I researched and will share with you:

**Pro:** Social networking sites spread information faster than any other media. Sort of like truck drivers.

**Con:** Social media enables the spread of unreliable and false information. Definitely like truck drivers.

**Conclusion:** Is it possible that truck drivers invented social media?

**Pro:** Social networking sites facilitate face to face interaction.

**Con:** Social media causes people to spend less time interacting face to face.

**Conclusion:** This must have been submitted by the federal government since the statements are contradictory.

**Pro:** Social networking is good for the economy. **Con:** Social networking sites harm employees' productivity.

**Conclusion:** Definitely must have been interpreted by the federal government.

Maybe there is a productive existence for social media if outlined and implemented with an organized strategy. Currently, I know of three Facebook groups created by loggers. Although this is a method for loggers to share their everyday experiences, many posts are random and could use some more thought before they are released. I have noted instances of profanity being used which is completely unnecessary. Keep in mind Facebook is not a secure form of social media and posts can be observed by anyone including environmental groups or even government agencies.

Let me also remind everyone that the general public fundamentally has a less than positive opinion of timber harvesting. Log trucks are the most visible components of this opinion. Recent accident statistics imply that the first six causes of log truck accidents are the result of driver error when fault

is assigned to the log truck. Now all of us can come up with many excuses for this, but this is public information researched by reputable organizations. Bottom line: Don't risk your business or industry image over frivolous social media comments. The first amendment of the United Sates Constitution gives us the right to freedom of speech. Many Americans have died to preserve this great privilege so please do not abuse it.

Earlier I mentioned establishing outlines for organizational and strategic management for social media as a potential asset for your company and related industry. The first point to consider is the power of industry related statistics and the strength of developing multiple resources to promote them. Sharing and distributing a positive and consistent message through multiple channels on a large scale is the path to influential success. It seems all of us agree to criticize government regulation but very few are willing to make a sincere commitment to challenge it.

There are 27 logging associations in the United States. Most are members of the American Loggers Council which monitors logging and trucking issues at the national level. The ALC and many of the state associations have Facebook pages. If loggers around the country would consolidate their ideas and experience, the strength in numbers concept becomes enormous. Also consider using Linkedin which is more of a business and professional media sharing resource.

The SWPA will soon introduce its new website which is designed to allow interaction among SWPA members, sponsors and others. The site will provide a bulletin board that will allow marketing of equipment, trucking services, employee opportunities and basically any responsible subject matter. It will also be a great resource for finding regulatory information relevant to logging and transportation. The Facebook page will allow the opportunity to share important information, new ideas and technology to help businesses prosper.

If you are interested in political issues that affect your business, the website will provide current information about new legislation that will impact your company. It will allow the association to contact its members through email and text when immediate action needs to be taken on an issue. It will provide statistical information about the positive economic effect of timber harvesting that can be used in presentations to politicians at all levels of government as well as civic groups that do not understand the positive impact that forestry provides.

Continued on page 4...

#### DIRECTUR'S MESSAGE Conctinued from page 3...

In summary, Social Media is simply a tool that can be used productively with great benefits or if abused can be counterproductive. It is just like a computer, garbage in, garbage out. Please use it responsibly.

Always remember that the Southeastern Wood Producers Association was founded by loggers to serve loggers. It is governed by loggers and is your association and family. Please support the SWPA and your will be supporting your future. Do you know someone who is not a member? If so, ask them why. Pam, Mia and I are your employees and we are grateful to work for this great organization. Never hesitate to contact us with your concerns or just to chat.

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.

**Henry Ford** 

Tommy Carroll is the Executive Director of the Southeastern Wood Producers Association, Inc., which represents logging professionals in Georgia and Florida. The SWPA Inc is headquartered in Hilliard, Florida. For more information please contact us at (904) 845-7133 or you may contact Tommy directly at (478) 994-3052. website: www.swpa.ag Tommy's email: tcarroll@swpa.ag

# ESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Thoughts from the Woods by Richard Schwab, President SWPA

#### **GRATEFUL AND THANKFUL**

As I sit here thinking about what I want to say in this issue. We are getting ready this morning to receive a forecasted 3" of rain. This is in addition to the 10" that we have been blessed with since the middle of December. On top of that we are juggling quotas, trucking, forecasted mill outages, equipment servicing and breakdowns, and employees. Whew!!! No wonder I find myself wide awake at 3:00 am thinking about all of this. That is after I have self imposed a limit of Mountain Dew after 3:00 pm. "just in case it's the caffeine keeping me up." It is not hard to get over whelmed and disgusted with our plight in life.

I have been blessed in my life to have a few mentors to help keep myself on the right path and keep my thinking straight. We were meeting this week and one of my mentors apologized publically about having a wrong attitude. First of all, it is awesome to have someone who I respect and look up to admit that he had a moment of weakness and is wrong occasionally. Most importantly, was the change in attitude there. We all have been under a lot of pressure over the last few years due of what seems to be an endless set of circumstances that we cannot control. Because of these circumstances we can easily slip into an attitude of bitterness, grumpiness, whining, and complaining.

Now, we realize that is human nature to revert to these negative attitudes. Just look at the nation of Israel when they left Egypt for the Promised Land. They grumbled about everything most of the time. We find ourselves there today. Just look at our industry and nation.

Are you now asking yourself - what is the catalyst for the attitude change? Gratefulness and Thankfulness. These are the attitudes that we have to use to combat the natural bend toward being negative. I know that you may be thinking "Why didn't he focus on this around November?" Well it is easy to be grateful at that time of year. I'm talking about an attitude of thankfulness all year round. In his letter to the Thessalonians, Paul encourages us all to give thanks in all circumstances. This is an attitude of thankfulness. This is hard I know. This attitude is a dynamics changer because it takes the focus off of the negative circumstances and places the focus on our blessing and the one who provided them.

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying we should not advocate for ourselves or that we should allow ourselves to be taken advantage of. Instead, as we continue to advocate for our industry, work on our issues, and deal with the things that we cannot control we can operate with a grateful attitude. Let' keep moving forward. I truly believe all of our lives will be better if we on a daily basis operate with thanksgiving.

Southeastern Wood Producers Association Inc.



#### SWPA Southeastern Wood Producers Association Inc.

is the voice of timber harvesting professionals in Florida and Georgia since 1990. The association exists for the sole purpose of furthering the timber harvesting profession through advocacy and services provided to our membership.

#### **OUR MISSION**

- Establish a positive public image of wood producers
- Provide quality continuing logger education
- Encourage responsible harvesting practices
- Be the leading advocate for timber harvesting professionals in Georgia and Florida
- Report news and economic data
- Monitor workers compensation & other business insurance issues

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# INSERTS THIS ISSUE:

1. SAVE THE DATE! SWPA 2015 Annual Meeting, June 5-6, 2015

2015 Outstanding Logger of the Year

- 2. Safety Meeting Material
- 3. SWPA Purchase Program Information

ARE YOU PAYING THE LOWEST PRICE POSSIBLE FOR TIRES AND FILTERS?

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#### INSPIRATION

#### AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL - Guest Columnist: Mike Albrecht

you great loggers through the American

Loggers Council Newsletter. I'd like to start my comments with an abbreviated version of a speech I've written for President Obama, or Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell, or anyone in a high ranking office that can muster an audience. It goes something like this:

"America is truly a country of great achievement. Nothing underscores this more than a quick review of some facts. America leads the world in food production. Today, U.S. farmers export 45% of their wheat, 34% of their soybeans and 71% of their almonds. In 2011, U.S. farmers produced \$388 billion of goods, with approximately one third of that being exported. America truly helps feed the world.

In the 1970's, America decided it was time to shed its reliance on foreign oil. The American people said, "Enough is enough," and Washington was listening. Today America is undergoing a revolution in energy production, a revolution so dynamic that the International Energy Agency predicts that the U.S. will surpass Russia and Saudi Arabia as the world's top oil producer by the end of this year.

America's pride of achievement is showcased in so many other fields, including space exploration, medicine, and athletic prowess.

Today I'd like to issue a challenge to an industry that helped build this country, an industry that produced the railroad ties that linked our country together, and provides the raw material that builds our homes, our schools, and our offices. Today, this great industry, the timber industry, is languishing. America leads in exporting so many goods and services to the world, and yet is now the second leading importer of lumber in the world (we were number one up until 2012, when China became the leading importer). California, the Golden State, blessed with over 33 million acres of forestland imports over 75% of its wood products.

How can this be? One third of our nation is covered in forestland. We have arguably the best growing climate for timber production in the world. Our timber industry is second to none when it comes to technological know-how and work ethic.

When the American people put their heart and soul into something, they achieve it. It's time to bring homegrown timber products back to our hardware stores and lumberyards. If we all work together, America can become a leading exporter of timber-related goods and services. We should not accept anything less."

If that speech was given, could we rise to the challenge of retooling and expanding our industry? Does the

It is a distinct privilege to address all of United States have access to enough homegrown timber to feed our annual lumber appetite of 40 – 65 billion board feet a year? The answer is, "Yes we do - in spades."

> According to data from the Western Wood Products Association and the Forest Service Inventory and Analysis Group, the standing net volume in America's forests is approaching 2.25 trillion board feet. Annual growth on this inventory is approximately 150 billion board feet. This easily meets our nation's lumber demand. The truth is, the United States has 750 million acres of forestland growing enough timber to meet our own lumber needs, export billions of board feet to other countries, while continually adding inventory to our forests.

In addition to prodigious timber growth, two-thirds of our nation's drinking water comes from our forests. On average, once acre of trees annually consumes the amount of carbon dioxide equivalent to that produced by driving an average car for 26,000 miles. That same acre of trees also produces enough oxygen for 18 people to breathe for a year.

Economically, there is no better investment than forestry. Every \$1 million invested in forestry creates approximately 40 jobs. That is almost double the next highest investment sector of mass transit and freight rail construction where \$1 million invested creates approximately 22 jobs.

Unfortunately, these facts are not what I hear talked about at the landing, at coffee shops, or at conventions and meetings. Instead, it's usually acres burned, mills closed, government regulations, environmental lawsuits, and jobs lost. The Associated California Loggers just finished our annual meeting. At an evening banquet, my wife, Vicki, looked around the room of 250 plus folks and said, "Wow, there are a lot of young people here." There were indeed young loggers and their wives, many sitting with their moms and dads.

These young people are hungry for inspiration, and our association, the American Loggers Council, must remain the prime source of that inspiration. We need to talk more about acres harvested, mills reopened, new laws to support our industry, and environmental groups that support our goal of healthy forests.

For the older generation, our charge is to inspire this new generation of loggers to continue not only to work hard and smart, but to understand and promote the proud and positive facts about our forests and our industry. Let's face it, if we are going to rejuvenate America's timber industry, it will be on their watch. With their help, America can trade the stigma of being a leading lumber importer with her overgrown forests burning to the ground, for the pride of supplying lumber to the world.

Mike Albrecht is co-owner of Sierra Resource Management, Inc., located in Jamestown, California. Mike was selected as the American Loggers Council National Logger Activist of the Year in 2014. For more information, please contact the ALC office at 409-625-0206 or e-mail at americanlogger@aol.com.

#### SWPA Executive Officers 2014 - 2016

President: Richard Schwab MA Rigoni Inc.



Richard Schwab began working with the family business, M. A. Rigoni, Inc., Perry, Florida, in 1990. He worked his way up within the organization as an equipment operator in the woods, to a mechanic, to managing a crew in 1992. From 1992 to 1995 Richard worked as crew foreman. From 1995 to present Richard has been responsible for procurement and new business development for all of the company crews and contractors. MA Rigoni operates three crews, a couple of private contractors, and a land clearing crew. Richard accepted a leadership role in the SWPA in the Fall of 2008 because "he is passionate about the logging industry and wants to do as much as possible to make a difference." Richard said, "I realized that unless we speak up for ourselves as a unified industry we are allowing others to control our destiny."

Vice President: John Lane Coastal Logging Co Inc



John Lane's childhood memories stem from working in the woods on his father's logging crew. Growing up in the industry made it easy for him to begin his own business in 1981. He and his wife Donna started Coastal Logging Co from humble beginnings and today it has grown to a three crew operation. John's son, Johnny, and his wife Sarah are active in the business as well and represent the fifth generation of the Lane family in the timber industry. John also and serves in the national logging association, the American Logger's Council, as SWPA's representative, within the Georgia Forestry Association as well as the Glynn County Forestry Commission. John stated that he got involved because: "I felt it was my responsibility to become more active in issues that affect loggers and the future of the logging industry."

Secretary-Treasurer: Scott Gies Gies Timber & Land Inc.



Scott first joined the SWPA after leaving the consuming side of the industry to establish a logging business in early 2007. He was elected to serve as a Board member in 2010. Scott's harvesting operations are primarily in northeast Florida and southeast Georgia. He is married to Sheila Gies and has a daughter, Jennifer Hale (husband Clint Hale), granddaughters Ella and Anna, a son Douglas and a daughter Kelli. Scott was also a Florida Logger's Council member of the Florida Forestry Association. When asked why he serves loggers as an SWPA Board Officer he said: "I feel that it important for those of us in the timber harvesting profession to have a unified voice. We are the ultimate stewards of the forest, and unless we as group make this known there is an assumption that we are not. By serving the members of the SWPA it is my hope to help get this message out to the public at large."

Past President:Brian Henderson Midway Forest Products Inc.



Brian Henderson obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology in 1996. After college he returned to Lincoln County to join the family logging business, and extend it to a fourth generation. In order to expand purchasing/marketing operations, Midway Forest Products Inc. was incorporated in 2001. He married Paula Graves of Lincolnton in 2002. Currently, he serves as President/CEO of Midway Forest Products, Inc. and Vice President/CFO of Henderson Logging Co., Inc. When asked why he chose to serve Brian answered: "Obtaining a degree gave me choices about my future. I made the choice to be a logger. I became a member of the SWPA because I believe that to be a successful business owner I must surround myself with a network of likeminded professionals. Taking a leadership role in the SWPA puts me in a position to help shape my own future rather than just react."

Executive Director: Tommy Carroll SWPA Inc.



Tommy Carroll, Executive Director of the Southeastern Wood Producers Association (SWPA), has 37 years of experience in the timber harvesting industry. This includes 10 years with Union Camp Corporation working as crew foreman on company timber harvesting crews and later as a wood yard manager. For the next 15 years, Carroll was employed by Canal Wood Corporation as Harvesting Compliance Coordinator. The primary focus of this position placed an emphasis on safety and environmental compliance programs with Canal's timber harvesting contractors and company facilities throughout the south eastern and mid-western United States. Carroll began work for the SWPA in 2001 first as Education Director and became the Executive Director in 2007. Carroll served as chairman of the Georgia Forestry Association's Logging and Transportation Committee from 1996 to 2000 and currently sits on Georgia's SFI Statewide Implementation Committee and Logger Education Committee.



#### **AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL - LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

#### **2015 PRIMARY ISSUES - POSTION PAPER**

#### "Right To Haul Act"

Individual states have long set weight limits for their roads and highways. With the advent of the Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways (Interstate system) the Federal Government established its own weight limits for this system. Thirteen states have received various exemptions from these limits. Transit buses and fire and other disaster response vehicles have temporary exemptions pending studies of their weight and use, and many "new" sections of the federal Interstate Highway system have been "grandfathered" in to allow the existing state legal load limits prior to the roadway becoming a portion of the Federal Interstate Highway System.

Generally, Title 23, Section 127(a), U.S, Code sets Interstate System weight limits at 20,000 pounds on a single axle; 34,000 pounds on tandems and a gross weight of 80,000 pounds on a 36 foot tandem spread. A bridge formula is used to recognize different axle spreads. These maximums include enforcement tolerances.

Based on safety considerations, the American Loggers Council (ALC) is proposing an additional exemption for agricultural (including forest) commodity loads that meet state-legal requirements and tolerances. The exemption is expected to result in a shift of a substantial amount of existing trip mileage from two-lane secondary roads and highways to the Interstate System and result in nominally fewer trips – and improves safety for the motoring public, including the trucks themselves. This proposal would also "fix" the issue with the addition of "newly" designated federal interstate highways having to receive piecemeal exemptions based on existing State weight tolerances.

Language introduced in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress titled the "Right to Haul Act of 2014, H.R, 5201" included:

Amending Title 23, Chapter 1, Subchapter I, Section 127(a), United States Code, by adding the following final paragraph:

#### "(j) State Agricultural Exemptions. -

"(1) IN GENERAL. – Notwithstanding subsection (a), individual State weight limitations for an agricultural commodity that are applicable to State highways shall be applicable to the Interstate System within the State's borders for vehicles carrying an agricultural commodity.

"(2) AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY DEFINED.—The term 'agricultural commodity' means any agricultural commodity (including horticulture, aquaculture, and floriculture), food, feed, fiber, forestry products, livestock (indcluding elk, reindeer, bison, horses, or deer), or insects, and any other product thereof.".

For assistance regarding this proposal, please contact Danny Dructor, American Loggers Council, (409) 625-0206.

#### **AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL - LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**



#### **2015 PRIMARY ISSUES - POSTION PAPER**

"Youth Careers in Logging"

The American Loggers Council (ALC) is a non-profit organization representing professional timber harvesters in 30 states. It is our goal to ensure the health of the industry and in so doing support entrance of youth into this important economic sector of our country, opening up opportunity that is already afforded to farmers and ranchers to professional timber harvesters. Like farming and ranching, the timber harvesting profession is often a family run business where the practice and techniques of harvesting and transporting forest products from the forest to receiving mills is passed down from one generation to the next.

Timber harvesting operations are labor intensive, highly mechanized and technical careers that require on-the-ground training to promote efficiencies and expertise in performing those operations. Today's current mechanical logging machines are enclosed with safety cages that protect the occupant from many of the hazards previously experienced in conventional chain saw harvesting operations. The workman's comp. claims history bears this out — logging in today's enclosed machines is as safe as many other professions where sixteen to eighteen year olds are allowed to work.

In many respects, timber harvesting operations are very similar to family farms with sophisticated and expensive harvesting equipment that requires young men and women to learn how to run the business, including equipment operation and maintenance, prior to obtaining the age of eighteen.

Currently, there are no on-the-ground programs in place to facilitate that training and ensure the sustainability of the timber harvesting industry's next generation of family members who chose to enter the profession.

Other agricultural businesses, including farmers and ranchers, enjoy exemptions to existing child labor laws that permit family members between the ages of sixteen and seventeen to participate in and learn the operations of the family businesses under the direction and supervision of their parents. However, young men and women under the age of eighteen who are members of families that own and operate timber harvesting companies are denied the opportunity to work and learn the family business because of current child labor laws.

The American Loggers Council (ALC) supports extending the agricultural exemption now enjoyed by family farmers and ranchers to train their sixteen and seventeen year old sons and daughters to carry on the family business to mechanical timber harvesters as introduced in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress as HR. 4590 and S. 2335. The exemption would ensure that the next generation of mechanical timber harvesters can gain the needed on-the-ground training and experience under the close supervision of their parents who have a vested interest in their children's safety and in passing down the profession to the next generation of timber harvesters. For more information, please contact the American Loggers Council at 409-625-0206.



### The Director's Corner **Georgia Forestry Commission**

Robert Farris, Director

On behalf of everyone at the Georgia Forestry Commission, Happy New Year!

With "healthy habits" on all of our minds right now, we're pleased to offer you some tangible support in keeping the forests in which we work sustainable for the years ahead.

The GFC has received approval from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA EPD) for a Clean Water Act 319(h) grant to provide cost-share funds toward the purchase of portable logging bridges for loan to loggers. The 60% (federal funds) - 40% (in-kind match funds) cost-share grant is available for the construction of either steel or wooden bridges and is open to wood mills, yards, and wood dealers working with multiple logging producers. Federal cost-share amount maximums are \$10,000 for each steel bridge and up to \$4,000 for each wooden bridge. It's important to note that match funds counted toward this grant cannot be from any other federal fund source.

The program has some specific guidelines, of course, including minimum specs for steel and wood bridge widths and lengths in newly manufactured structures. Because this is a Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) partnership grant, the bridges must be built by a SFI member, member-contracted company, or dealer who delivers to SFI receiving facilities. The GFC will inspect each bridge for program compliance, and the bridges must be owned, housed and loaned out by each member company, with no rental fees charged for bridge use.

You may remember that just about a year ago, when results of the 2013 Forestry BMP Implementation Survey were released, a slight downtick was observed in the overall BMP implementation rate - from 95 percent to 89.9 percent. Moderate declines were recorded in three of ten measurement categories, including Streamside Management Zones (SMZs) and Stream Crossings. As a result, GFC pledged to increase education opportunities for members of the forestry community and numerous live and online sessions throughout the past year have supported that goal.

The 2015 BMP survey is now underway, and I am confident that the efforts we've all put forward to protect the environment while handling our forestry resource will show positive results. Yet, it is our responsibility to keep pushing ahead and never settle on "good enough," which is why the opportunity to invest in the portable bridge grant program is so important. The old saying goes, "You have to spend money to make money," and this moderate investment is no exception. Loggers, wood dealers and anyone involved in this segment of our industry can take meaningful steps to improve Georgia's BMP record with this program, results of which will have an impact in so many contiguous arenas -

name just a few.

Specifics about the cost-share can be found on GFC's website at GaTrees.org, or you may contact GFC's Water Quality Manager, John Colberg at jcolberg@gfc.state.ga.us for more information. Don't let this opportunity pass you by!

Sincerely,

**Robert Farris** 



#### The Florida Forest Service

#### **Director's Desk**





January 30, 2015

Media Contact: Chelsea Ealum(850) 681-5941

Twitter: @FLForestService

#### **Operation Outdoor Freedom Provides Healing** and Adventure for Florida's Wounded Veterans

More than 1,000 wounded veterans have enjoyed unique opportunities to hunt, fish and boat in Florida's forests, ranches and waterways through the Florida Forest Service's Operation Outdoor Freedom program. Operation Outdoor Freedom, launched by Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam and led by the Florida Forest Service, offers wounded veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces recreational opportunities on state forests and private lands, including guided hunting events and fishing trips.

"It is an honor to help these men and women enjoy outdoor activities across our beautiful state," Commissioner Putnam said. "We can never repay the sacrifices they made to help protect our country but we can try to give back in small ways that make a difference in their lives."



Since Operation Outdoor Freedom was established in 2011, the Florida Forest Service has hosted more than 1,000 veterans on more than a dozen state forests, private ranches and timber lands, as well as the state's coast. Acres of Florida state forests dedicated to this effort are fully equipped to accommodate the needs of wounded veterans, providing a unique opportunity for recreation and rehabilitation.

"It was healing to be in nature, around other vets, and around the great people who were our guides," said Joseph Campagna, Florida wounded veteran. "The Florida Forest Service put on a top notch event and I really had a great time."

All funding for Operation Outdoor Freedom events is generated through private donations. Veterans participate at no charge. To donate or host an Operation Outdoor Freedom event on your private forest or ranch, contact Ned Waters, program coordinator at Ned.Waters@FreshFromFlorida.com or

(863) 297-3979. For more information about Operation Outdoor Freedom, go to www.OperationOutdoorFreedom.com.



#### SWPA NEWS AND EVENTS



#### **GEORGIA**

Rural Caucus Discusses GATE: Georgia Farm Bureau and the UGA Center for Agribusiness & Economic Development (CAED) teamed up to provide information to the Rural Caucus about the Georgia Agriculture Tax Exemption (GATE) program on Wednesday, February 11. The study can be seen here: http://www.caes.uga.edu/center/caed/docuents/LocalSalesTaxDistributionsinGeorgia2011-2014\_AtlantaFeb112015.pdf.

GATE provides a sales tax exemption for farm input costs, including seed, feed, fertilizer, chemicals, and other inputs. Although the GATE program was implemented in 2013, most farm sales tax exemptions have been in effect for decades. GATE is administered by the Georgia Department of Agriculture, and the program set additional guidelines for farmers before exemptions could be used.

As soon as GATE was enacted, it came under fire because of statewide reductions in county sales tax revenues. Many people speculated the state underestimated the fiscal impact of the GATE program, and that failure was the cause of the revenue decline. One widely circulated study inferred GATE was the likely culprit.

At the request of GFB, the UGA CAED began a study in October of historical sales tax revenues to try to spot trends in the reduction in local sales tax revenues. UGA CAED's Dr. Kent Wolfe and Sharon Kane compared sales tax distributions from 2011-2012 (two years before GATE) to 2013-2014 (two years after GATE's implementation).

Their findings show the only segment of the economy with a significant difference in sales tax revenue was the automotive sector. That decrease was due to the fact that the state no longer collects sales tax on automobile purchases.

Automobiles now generate tax revenue through a new "Title Ad Valorem Tax" (TAVT) that is collected when automobile titles are transferred. The UGA CAED study found that when the TAVT was added back to local revenues, only 33 of Georgia's counties lost revenue for the period. The remaining 126 counties experienced an increase in revenue collections.

The takeaway from the meeting was that when the TAVT was enacted, it essentially eliminated all sales tax revenues from automobiles. It should come as no surprise that sales tax revenues dropped as a result. When the TAVT is added back to county revenue, the average county in Georgia increased revenue by almost 6 percent.

In other words, GATE is not harming Georgia county revenue. To the contrary, when farmers purchase farm inputs, that money is put to work helping generate Georgia's eonomy.

We appreciate Chairman Jason Shaw (R-Lakeland) allowing GFB to host the Rural Caucus to discuss this important issue. The caucus is an informal group of state representatives and senators who represent rural areas of the state. They meet regularly to discuss issues affecting their districts.



We are also grateful for the work done by Dr. Kent Wolfe and Sharon Kane at the UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development. CAED has a long history of studying economic issues to bring clarity to complex issues.

#### **FLORIDA**

The Florida legislature has been in pre-session committee meetings and there are at least two bills that directly affect logging business owners: HB 145/SB "Commercial Transportation Board" and HB /SB Ag Tax Exemptions. These Bills can be viewed at www.flhouse.gov or www.flsenate.gov. Stay informed through SWPA and look for "Alerts" concerning these and other issues.

On February 5, 2015 SWPA staff attended a town hall meeting with Florida State Representative Keith Perry in Cross City, Florida. Representative Perry is now working with SWPA and Loggers in his district on the issue of over zealous commercial vehicle enforcement. Stay tuned to SWPA for future details.

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Florida: PO Box 9 Hilliard, Florida 32046 Georgia: Post Office Box 326 Forsyth, Georgia 31029 (904) 845-7133 Fax: (904) 845-7345 (478) 994-4449 Fax: (208) 361-9810

#### 2015 OUTSTANDING LOGGER OF THE YEAR AWARD

**NOMINATION DEADLINE – 3/20/2015** 

Join SWPA in searching for Georgia and Florida's outstanding loggers of the year! Whether you are a forest landowner or industry professional, use this opportunity to nominate a professional timber harvesting business that has exceeded your expectations and is deserving of recognition.

Businesses nominated should be a credit to their profession and consistently demonstrate the *qualities of an exceptional timber harvesting operation*. These include, but are not limited to: compliance with all applicable laws, evidence of safety and loss control programs, equipment maintenance practices, personnel management, environmental considerations, wood security practices, business management, sustainable harvesting and good standing within the community including community activism. Finally, the business must be a participant in Master Logger (in Florida) or Master Timber Harvester (in Georgia) programs and a resident of the state for which they are nominated. The selection process will place significant emphasis upon evidence of sustainable harvesting and business practices.

All potential qualified harvesting businesses should be considered, regardless of operation size. Nominations will be reviewed and award recipients selected by the SWPA Joint Logger of Year Committees based on the highest point value attained during the evaluation process. The SWPA Joint Committees include SWPA, industry, associated industry and merchants, and state SFI committee representatives.

Nominations must contain the following information: business name and business owner's name(s), address, best contact phone numbers, area of operation and a *brief* summary detailing why the nominee should be the 2015 Outstanding Logger of the Year. Anonymous nominations will be accepted provided the nomination package is complete and the nominee has agreed to participate. The deadline for nominations is March 20, 2015.

Initial consideration of nominees and site visits will be based on the information provided in the nomination. Prior winners of this award must wait 10 years before becoming eligible for consideration in a current year. SWPA will present the "Outstanding Logger of the Year" award at our Annual Meeting at the St. Johns Convention Center, World Golf Village, St. Augustine, Florida on June 5-6, 2015. The Georgia and Florida forestry associations may also choose to recognize recipients at their annual meeting events. For more information, please contact Tommy Carroll at (478) 994-3052 (Georgia nominations) or Mia Wade at 904-845-7133 (Florida nominations).

#### Mail or email nominations to:

Florida: PO Box 9 Hilliard, Florida 32046

(904) 845-7133 Fax: (904) 845-7345

Email: mwade@swpa.ag

Georgia: Post Office Box 326 Forsyth, Georgia 31029

(478) 994-4449 Fax: (208) 361-9810

Email: tcarroll@swpa.ag



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Email: mwade@swpa.ag

Georgia: Post Office Box 326 Forsyth, Georgia 31029 (478) 994-4449 Fax: (208) 361-9810

Email: tcarroll@swpa.ag

# 2015 Outstanding Logger of the Year Nomination Florida -or- Georgia

Owner(s):	Area(s) of (	)peration:
Address:		City/ST/Zip
Phone:	Mobile:	
Email:		
Naminas Cianaturs, /		hambarana tanan tahun tahun 1945 tahun 2045 tahun
Nominee signature: /		hereby agree to participate in the 2015 Logge
the Year program. (Agreement to p		
-	participate by phone or fa.	r is acceptable)
the Year program. (Agreement to p	participate by phone or fai	r is acceptable)
the Year program. (Agreement to possible Year program)  Nominator:Address:	participate by phone or fa	r is acceptable)
the Year program. (Agreement to p	participate by phone or fa	r is acceptable)

Please Note: Nomination must be accompanied by a *brief* summary detailing why the nominee should be the Florida or Georgia 2015 "Outstanding Logger of the Year". The summary should explain how your nominee demonstrates the following qualities of an exceptional logger in areas listed below along with any other information you would like to present for consideration:

- 1. Regulatory Compliance Programs and Recordkeeping
- 2. Business Management

(planning, personnel, resource and asset management, recordkeeping, character, innovation)

- 3. Harvesting Practices
  - (environmental, utilization, wood security and aesthetic considerations)
- 4. Community activism and industry advocacy
- 5. A track record of sustainable harvesting and business practices



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PETER OPOLKA

Brent Carter, Interfor

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Jim Westcott, Westcott & Associate
Amber Hand, Flint Forest Product
Jim Joyce, Schaeffer Mfg. Co.
David Swan, Freightliner of Augusta
Clark Lane, Lane and Company

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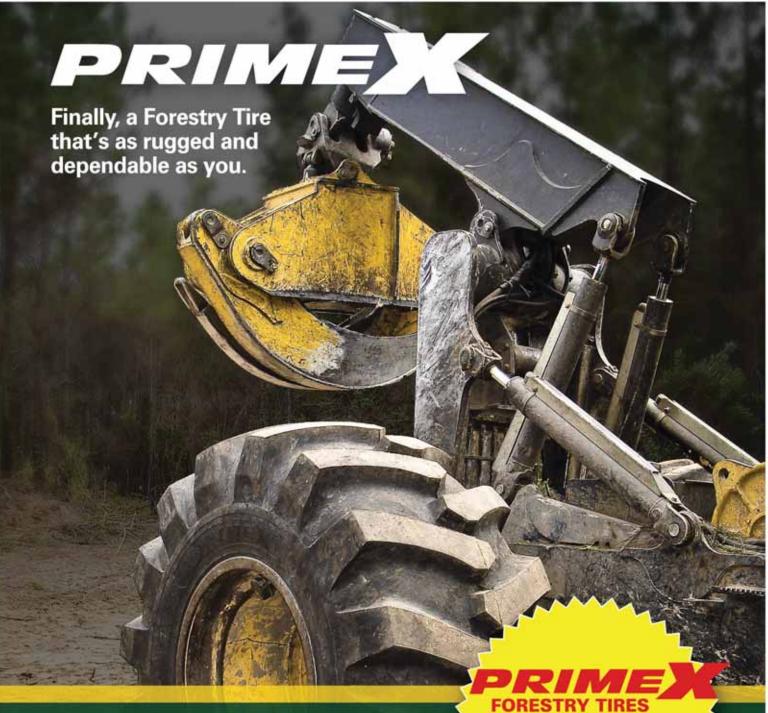
JOSEPH A BURNS, BURNS FORESTRY, INC.

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## SWPA TIRE PRIIGRAM PARTNERS **DEALER LIST UPDATE**





#### PRIMEX DEALER LIST:

#### **Giant Tire sales**

3523 US Hwy 67 Whigham, GA 39897 Office: 229-762-3230 Rudy's Mobile: 229-873-1806 Attn: Rudy Harrelson

#### Columbus Tire

1133 4th Street Columbus, GA 31901 706-321-8133 Attn: Dan Snavely

#### **Dorsey Tire**

1476 US Highway 80 E Pooler, GA 31322 Attn: BruceChamblee 912-964-6798 And 13061 GA 251 Darien, GA 31305 912-437-2390

#### **Duncan Tire**

301 Telfair Street Dublin, GA 31021 478-272-5404 Attn: Scott Beasly

#### **Andy Smart Tire**

2738 Secret Harbor Dr. Orange Park, FL 32065 904-545-5238 Attn: Andy

#### Coleman Store

7521 Hwy 15 South White Plains, GA 30678 706-467-2068 Attn: Kenny Stewart

#### **Garrett Tire**

4720 Weiss Lake Rd Leesburg, AL 256-526-8172 Attn: Steve or Chris

#### COOPER ROADMASTER DEALER LIST: **GA DEALERS**

#### **Atlanta Tire Specialists**

5045 Bakers Ferry Rd SW Atlanta, GA 30336 404-835-1374

75 Pinyon Rd Covington, GA 30016 770-787-5133

6371 Corley Rd. Norcross, GA 30071 770-962-4882

#### **Collins and Sons**

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#### **Dalton Commercial**

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#### **Dorsey Tire**

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#### **Duncan Tire**

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#### **Giant Tire**

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#### **Griffin Commercial**

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#### J&R Tire

350 Bohannon Rd Fairburn, GA 30213 770-964-7016

#### **Macon Commercial**

2790 Broadway Macon, GA 31206 866-742-4375

#### North Georgia Tire

161 Criss Black Rd. Cartersville, GA 30120 770-387-1400

#### Porterfield Tire

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#### **FL DEALERS**

#### Giant Tire \*\*TOP DEALER 2014\*\*

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6815 Adamo Dr. Tampa, FL 33619 813-621-5445

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#### Southeastern Wood Producers Association Program

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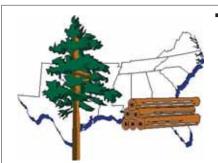
							Price Without FET	Price Including FET
SKU	Item No.	Tire Size	P.R.	T.D.	Wgt	F.E.T.		
L119201134	92034	11R22.5	14	18.5	119	\$25.23	\$290.12	\$315.3
L119201136	92036	11R22.5	16	18.5	119	\$29.39	\$307.57	\$336.96
L119201154	92054	11R24.5	14	18.5	130	\$29.39	\$329.87	\$359.20
L119201156	92056	11R24.5	16	18.5	130	\$34.59	\$345.89	\$380.4
L11920E454	92045	285/75R24.5	14	18.5	120	\$25.23	\$330.78	\$356.0
RM185A								
L11978E534	97853	295/75R22.5	14	18.5	110	\$25.23	\$297.67	\$322.90



							Price Without FET	Price Including FET
SKU	Item No.	Tire Size	P.R.	T.D.	Wgt	F.E.T.		
L119211134	92134	11R22.5	14	27.5	129	\$25.23	\$327.02	\$352.25
L119211136	92136	11R22.5	16	27.5	130	\$29.39	\$347.55	\$376.94
L119211154	92154	11R24.5	14	27.5	140	\$29.39	\$347.63	\$377.02
L119211156	92156	11R24.5	16	27.5	141	\$34.59	\$366.76	\$401.35
L11921E454	92145	285/75R24.5	14	27.5	132	\$25.23	\$350.37	7 \$375.60
RM275A								
L11979E534	97953	295/75R22.5	14	27.5	120	\$25.23	\$328.20	\$353,43

This is a partial price list only.

For more information and a complete price list please go online to www.swpa.ag for links to the Cooper-Roadmaster Tire Program or call (904) 845-7133 and request the information.



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#### ALC Washington Report – January 30, 2015

Members of the newly elected 114th Congress have wasted no time in picking up where they left off following the adjournment of the 113th Congress in December. Already, we are seeing the reintroduction of legislation that stalled during the last session, as well as legislation that will prove to be controversial with the threat of a Presidential veto such as the Keystone Pipeline debate.

#### Committees taking shape

Several House and Senate committees and subcommittees have selected those members that will serve during the first session of the 114th Congress. With the majority switching from Democrat to Republican in the Senate, and the significant gains the Republican Party picked up in the House of Representatives, there have been several changes made on both sides of the Hill.

Of special significance is that Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) will be the Chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, as well as Cahir of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, where much of the pro-forestry legislation introduced during the 113th Congress faded into the sunset.

Congressman Glenn Thompson (R-PA) will Chair the Agriculture Committee Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry while Congressman Ken Calvert (R-CA) will Chair the House Interior Appropriation Subcommittee. Representative Tom McClintock (R-CA) will serve as the Chair of the Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee.

#### **Secure Rural Schools**

Committee sources indicate that the House will focus initially on Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization, since the program expired last year and counties just learned that they will divvy up only \$50 million in revenue sharing, a drastic drop from the over \$300 million they received from the guaranteed payment program of SRS.

#### Wyden O&C Bill reemerges

In early January, Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) introduced the Oregon and California Land Grant Act of 2015, S. 132, a carbon copy of legislation introduced in the waning days of the 113th session. The American Loggers Council, working with the Associated Oregon Loggers, The American Forest Resource Council and Douglas Timber Operators sent a letter opposing the legislation which passed in the Senate Committee yet died trying to work its way attached to a Defense Appropriations Bill passed in late December.

#### **Wildfire Funding**

Both the House and The Senate have once again introduced the Wildfire Funding Disaster Act to serve as a way to fund wildfire suppression costs from a "FEMA-like" fund without continuing the "fire-borrowing" still currently practiced that oftentimes uses funds from other Forest Service line items such as forest products and hazardous fuels reduction projects. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) will be reintroducing his FLAME Act Amendment as an alternative to the Wildfire Funding Disaster Act.

#### **Youth Careers in Logging**

Staff of the American Loggers Council met with Congressman Larbrador (R ID) in mid-December and were assured that the Youth Careers in Logging Act would be reintroduced in 2015. Members of the American Loggers Council will be working with Congressman Labrador's staff on both support for and timing of the reintroduction.

#### **Right to Haul Act**

The Right to Haul Act of 2014 died in Committee at the end of 2014. Congressman Steve Southerland (R-FL) who introduced the Bill in July of 2014, was unsuccessful in his re-election bid in November to retain his seat in the House. Members of the ALC are currently seeking help on the hill to reintroduce the Bill in 2015.



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