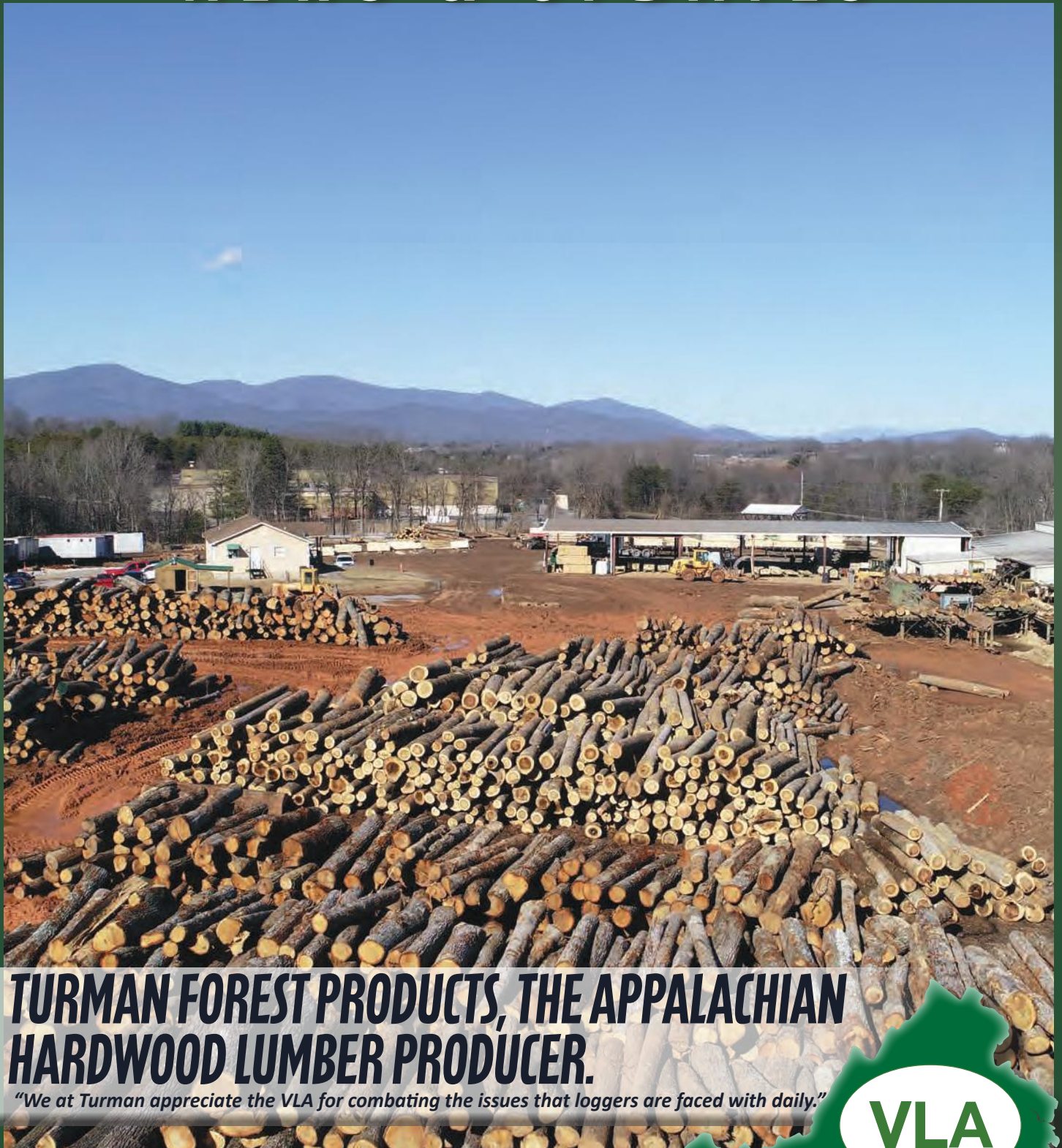


VIRGINIA LOGGERS ASSOCIATION NEWS & UPDATES



**TURMAN FOREST PRODUCTS, THE APPALACHIAN
HARDWOOD LUMBER PRODUCER.**

"We at Turman appreciate the VLA for combating the issues that loggers are faced with daily."

VLA

SUMMER 2022 ISSUE



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Thank you for recently joining

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<i>D Brookman Logging, LLC</i>	<i>Dennis Brookman</i>	<i>Troy, VA</i>
<i>Dan McPherson & Sons Logging</i>	<i>Danny McPherson</i>	<i>Callaway, VA</i>
<i>James River Timber, Inc.</i>	<i>Vincent Nicely</i>	<i>Big Island, VA</i>
<i>JES Forestry</i>	<i>Eddie Jewell</i>	<i>Rocky Mount, VA</i>
<i>L. P. Dugger Trucking, LLC</i>	<i>Palmer Dugger</i>	<i>Brodnax, VA</i>
<i>Pittsylvania Forest Product</i>	<i>Nathan Harker</i>	<i>Hurt, VA</i>
<i>WD Byrum Logging, Inc.</i>	<i>Glenn Byrum</i>	<i>Merry Hill, NC</i>

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR VLA MEMBERS AND FORESTRY MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY FOR BRINGING OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Recruitment supports the heart & soul of our future!
Bring a new member today!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**May 3-6 VA Forestry Summit
VA Tech, Blacksburg VA**

**May 6-7, 2022
Northeastern Forest Products Equipment Expo
Esses Junction, Vermont**

**May 21 - 22, 2022
Richmond Logging & Sawmill Expo, Richmond, VA**

**June 1-3, 2022
Swedish Forestry Expo
Stockholm, Sweden**

**August 11-14, 2022
VLA Annual Meeting, Williamsburg, VA**

**September 22-24, 2022
ALC Annual meeting, Branson, Missouri**

**October 7-9, 2022
Paul Bunyan Show
Lore City, Ohio**

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The Virginia Loggers Association proudly endorses Forestry Mutual Insurance as the preferred provider of Virginia worker's compensation insurance.
Chris Huff: 919-810-9485
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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



FRANK MYERS
PRESIDENT

VIRGINIA LOGGERS
ASSOCIATION

You may recall in one of my last columns, I said that elections have consequences. The comment was directed, of course, at the election of Governor Glenn Youngkin, the rest of the Republican statewide ticket, and a new Republican majority in the House of Delegates after years of Democratic rule. My musings in that case were forward-looking and I have hope that our new Governor is successful in his endeavors to the benefit of all Virginians.

But, I would like to take a look back at the last Presidential election and say again: elections have consequences.

The consequences I am referring to today are very real and financially painful and they are born out of the choices enough Americans made to elect our current President.

It's very interesting to me when I reflect back on the Trump/Biden contest. Trump's personality and his tweets were the biggest strikes against him. So many folks voted against him, or worse, didn't exercise their privilege to vote at all, because they found those aspects of the man offensive. Never mind his business acumen, the strong economy, the energy independence, and the stable geo-political climate he created for our nation on his watch and handed over to his successor.

One year into Biden's term, those hallmarks are but a distant memory. We are facing a 40-year high in inflation, gas at \$4.00 per gallon, fuel at \$5.00 per gallon, war in Ukraine with China and North Korea watching, perhaps waiting for their opportunity to capitalize on a weakened America and invade lands they wish to reclaim. Our standing in the world has been diminished, as evidenced by the aggression of Russia and other world leaders.

Some of you may think I am being too political in this column, and you are entitled to your opinions. When I see the effects of the current administration's policies on our industry, I have to speak out. I want all of you to compare your business today to where you were last year and even two years ago. Compare your trucking costs, fuel costs, labor costs, or the availability of just about any part. Are any of you better off? Do any of you think you can sustain your business in this environment?

So, back to the consequences; if you know someone who voted for this current administration, ask him or her if they are happy with their choice. Ask if he or she truly believes in the Green New Deal that this administration is so wedded to. Ask them, in hindsight, if he or she now understands that peace through strength did, in fact, stabilize our world politically.

If not, explain to them the left wants to take away your gas powered cars and trucks and replace them with electric vehicles. Remind them that Russia and North Korea have intercontinental ballistic (nuclear) missiles trained on our soil, a push of a button away. Ask them if they would rather pay \$4.00 plus per gallon for gas derived from the Middle East or fuel produced here in America. Inquire if they enjoy paying higher prices for groceries. Don't give them a pass. Those that voted for this current state of affairs must own it.

We are living the consequences of the last national election. If voters can't or won't connect the dots on their own, it's incumbent on us to make those connections for them at every opportunity. Because it has NEVER been so true, elections have consequences!!

Safe Logging,
Frank



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We are beginning a series of articles spot lighting some of the companies who have been great partners with VLA along its 20-year journey. We are now fortunate to report many businesses and individuals are part of the VLA family. This first article is about the beginning formation of VLA.

Everyone knows a team is only as good as its members. The same goes with trade associations! According to Cause IQ, 2091 trade associations operate in Virginia representing every industry imaginable. Virginia Loggers Association is one of just a few groups representing the interests of forest products in Virginia.

VIRGINIA LOGGERS ASSOCIATION OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES WITH FORESTRY MUTUAL INSURANCE

Originally, business owners of logging or forest harvesting wanted to ensure that their business interests were heard in the local, state, and federal government levels. The businesses are unique and different from other parts of industry and that makes it difficult to find its place in larger associations.

Although the original founders persevered during those early years, it was the support provided by Forestry Mutual Insurance that helped VLA to make a giant step forward to their next level. Keith Biggs, President of Forestry Mutual Insurance has known VLA members since its creation and shared his reflections.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST KNOWLEDGE ABOUT VLA?

Keith said, "I learned about VLA through the loggers I was meeting when we first entered Virginia. I also had a relationship with then the Appalachian Forestry Management Group. I believe at the time Danny Goodbar was the President and shortly after that Judd Smith."

WHAT WERE THE STRUGGLES VLA FACED AS A NEW TRADE ASSOCIATION?

"The struggle with all the loggers Associations starting up is to have enough members to sustain it financially. We believed that the loggers needed a voice outside of the State Associations, which were primarily industry-supported. Pretty much, that has not changed. Loggers want benefits that come with association advocacy but hesitate to join as a member to help their cause. I think

going into the future we need to have some brainstorming sessions on how each of us can build a better partnership"

WHAT WAS FORESTRY MUTUAL INSURANCE RELATIONSHIP WITH VLA IN THE BEGINNING?

"Our relationship with the VLA loggers was great, however, our relationship with Jim Mooney was difficult. Even after the endorsement was completed Jim did very little if any to promote Forestry Mutual. With that said he was wearing two hats, VLA Executive Director, and a Loss Control rep for Manry Rawls who was writing with our competitor BITCO."

HOW DID THE IDEA OF FORESTRY MUTUAL HELPING VLA COME ABOUT?

"Forestry Mutual only writes the Forest Products Industry and anything that we can do to help the industry (loggers) we have always been all in. To put it another way, without loggers there is no Forestry Mutual."

HOW HAS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO WORKED OUT IN YOUR OPINION?

"I think we have seen some success and a lot of this has to do with markets for Forestry Mutual. We do see some light at the end of the tunnel. But, as with your Association not all see the benefits that Forestry Mutual brings to the table."

Keith summed up his comments this way. "As far as quotes, I am not very good at that. But if I had to say one thing is that Forestry Mutual Insurance is going to treat you fairly and honest and help you in any way we can because this is all we do."

VLA is proud to have a partner like Forestry Mutual Insurance who helped VLA in the beginning and still standing beside us now. Most of our members are associated with Forestry Mutual Insurance for their worker's compensation policy. You can learn more about them by contacting Chris Huff at chuff@forestrymutual.com or .

VLA has multiple members in banking, business services, equipment, insurance, legal, logging, pulp/paper, sawmills, transportation, and more. Please check our website for a complete listing of Supporting members.



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2021

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TURMAN FOREST PRODUCTS, INC.

Bedford, VA

Turman Forest Products is a hardwood sawmill that specializes in the manufacturing of green Appalachian hardwood lumber. These include poplar, white oak, red oak, hickory, and assorted other hardwood species found in the region. Turman Forest Products is the newest acquisition of The Turman Group which includes Turman Lumber, Turman Sawmill, Turman Tye River, Turman Hardwood Flooring, and other subsidiaries. The Turman Group is a vertically integrated group of wood product companies located in Southwestern and Central Virginia.

The Turman Group was founded in 1967 with the startup of Turman Sawmill that specialized in Appalachian hardwood and white pine lumber. In addition to lumber, The Turman Group manufactures 12 million sq. ft. of hardwood flooring and 30,000 tons of hardwood fuel pellets per year. The Turman Group is a premier manufacturer of all grades of green and kiln dried hardwood lumber, and pallet stock, as well as a domestic and export log reseller, and natural and dyed mulch producer.

Turman Forest Products was formerly Hilltop Lumber and was started by the Allen family in 1981.

The Turman Group acquired Hilltop in February of 2018. Turman Forest Products produces 4/4 to 16/4 lumber as well as pallet cants, cross ties, boiler fuel, bark, and clean wood chips. To date the sawmill has approximately 30 full-time employees. Turman Forest Products buys gate logs and standing timber, purchasing more than 6 million board feet of logs and standing timber per year.

Logs and Procurement
Most of Turman Forest Products' logs are sourced from the Appalachian Mountains of Bedford, Botetourt, Rockbridge, Amherst, and Roanoke counties. Logs are sourced by our foresters and log buyer from area consulting foresters, landowners, and loggers. As purchasers of standing timber, the company contracts with loggers in the area to fulfill some of its supply need. Logs are also supplied by "gate" loggers or loggers that haul logs independently for landowners or themselves. Those are scaled at the Bedford log yard and then sorted by species. The prevalent species in the area is poplar which is used at large in the furniture market due to its easy workability, color, and ability to take stain.

Making Lumber

After being purchased the logs are stored in the log yard until they are sawed. They are sent through a metal detector to determine if they have nails, fence, or other metal in them to prevent damage to saws and mill equipment. After logs travel through the metal detector, they are put onto the log deck of one of two rosser head debarkers. Once the log makes it to the debarker, an operator debarks the log and sends it to one either 48inch 150 hp carriage or a 42 inch 100hp carriage, both of which saw logs against one of two vertical bandsaw headrigs. Sawyers use a combination of scanning lidar eyes, experience, electronic networks to maximize yield and grade when sawing logs. Once a log is loaded onto the carriage the round sides or "slabs" are sawn off and the log is sawed into a combination of lumber, two sided cants, cross/switch ties, or pallet cants. Lumber is sawn to the preferred thickness with the sawyers turning and sawing the log to best maximize the grade of the lumber. Once the log has been manufactured into lumber or a two-sided cant, individual pieces are sent down a roll case to either an edger or gang saw. The edger is used to remove wane, which is the bark on the side of the boards, and other defects when practical. The gang saw processes the two-sided cants into a combination of boards and pallet cants.



When the lumber exits the edger or gang saw it is then sent through a descrambler. This prepares the boards to go through the end trimmer. The end trimmer is a combination of saws that can cut off defects and standardize lengths by cutting the ends off boards. Once the lumber is trimmed to length it exits the end trimmer and proceeds down the green chain. Once on the green chain the lumber is graded to NHLA standards by a lumber grader, sorted by length and grade, volume tallied, and packaged.

Once the lumber is tallied and packaged it is then ready to be dipped. Dipping is a chemical treatment that is only done during the heat of the year to prevent bacterial and enzymatic stain in the lumber between cutting and kiln drying. Lumber is chemically treated in a large vat called a dip tank to prevent any bacterial stain. After dipping, lumber is then shipped by company road tractors to Turman customers.

The Biproducts
Essentially every ounce of raw material or logs that comes through the Bedford sawmill is utilized. Turman Forest Products has a multitude of biproducts including bark, sawdust, and chips. The bark that is removed by the debarker drops into a conveyor that piles it outside of the mill where it will be shipped to hardwood mulch producers. The sawdust slabs and other waste from the logs that is produced in the mill is collected in vibrating conveyors that take it to a 66" 300 hp chipper. Prior to reaching the chipper the sawdust is deposited by a screen into a dust conveyor that deposits the sawdust into an open top trailer to be used as waste wood boiler fuel. Meanwhile the slabs, end trimmer and edger cutoffs are sent through the chipper and then into a blower that deposits the chips in the back of a chip trailer to be sold as fiber to pulp and paper manufacturers.





About The Lumber We Produce

The Appalachian hardwood lumber produced at Turman Forest Products is sorted and sold by thickness and grade. Lumber is produced in varying thicknesses between 4/4 and 16/4 for the domestic and export markets. It is graded using the National Hardwood Lumber Association rules. It is then generally sold to one of The Turman Group's three dry kiln facilities or flooring plant to be dried and further sorted for various domestic and export markets. Much of the Appalachian hardwood lumber that is produced at the mill in Bedford is exported to Asia, Europe, Mexico, and the Middle East to be utilized in the international furniture and flooring markets. The remainder is sold domestically to furniture,

flooring, millwork, casework, and various other markets.

Turman Forest Products, The VLA, and Loggers

As a relatively new member of the Virginia Loggers Association, Turman Forest Products has been overwhelmed by the support received from Ron Jenkins and the VLA. They offer great resources and rebates to help Virginia loggers and forest product producers remain profitable and succeed. VLA continues to be a voice for the industry in Virginia. Turman Forest Products looks forward to continuing this relationship into the future.

Turman officials also thanked the loggers that keep the company in business. Turman Forest Products utilize contract and gate loggers to supply logs. Simply put without the loggers the company would not be able to operate. "We at Turman appreciate the VLA for combating the issues that loggers are faced with daily."



For information regarding procurement, please email tfp@theturmangroup.com or call (540)-586-5412

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International conflicts and an on-going pandemic continue to be two key issues impacting supply chains in the World. The forest products industry is not immune to these global issues and we continue to see that the industry struggles to meet customer demand. It is not just the cost of fuel impacting overall supply chain cost but also the lack of access to timely information and extreme difficulties to hire talented people. The latter has been a recurrent issue for many decades but it was worsened over the last three years because of COVID. How can you meet customer demand if you don't have the resources to deliver on time? Everything seems to be on backlog today: raw materials, new equipment, and parts for repairs. As our industry tries to move forward, it is important to understand more than ever how we can improve our supply chain to mitigate these current issues.

The lack of consistent supply of raw materials has been a common denominator for all type of manufacturing activities around the World, including forest products industries. Loggers continue to struggle to supply timber and pulpwood logs at a consistent rate because of the same issues: labor, fuel costs, backlogs in new equipment and repair parts. A way to alleviate this problem is to increase raw material inventories but the inventory carrying costs could be too high to handle. However; a better action plan is to implement a more holistic approach. There are several action items you could undertake to reduce the impact of the supply chain issues in your business: map your supply chain, identify supply chain management costs and metrics, and investigate how information technology and data analytics can be incorporated to support your decision-making process.

A supply chain can be divided in the following processes: supplier relationships, inbound transportation, warehouse and yard management, procurement, outbound transportation, and customer relationships. A good mapping of your supply chain will include these processes and the resources required to perform each one of them. Tools like value-stream mapping are a great option to visualize how information and materials flow in your supply chain. In addition, metrics are added into your mapping to understand and validate performance.

Supply chain costs are impacted not only by inbound and outbound transportation but also by inventory carrying costs, procurement decisions, inventory control, and warehouse management. If you are thinking in improving your supply chain, the second step is to breakdown the cost by supply chain activity in order to understand how supply chain cost is being generated. Without this knowledge, it would be almost impossible to try to find ways to decrease your supply chain costs.

Information technology plays also a critical role in meeting customer demand. We live in a business environment where data is now collected through many different means. However, we still lack the capacity and skills to visualize and analyze data for our own benefit. Our industry needs more engagement with data analytics methods and tools to support its decision process. Even if just a simple spreadsheet, data can really help us to understand better what happened and what we would need to do to perform better. Recognizing the critical role of information technology and data is the third step in moving forward with our supply chain strategy.

The last part of the puzzle is to expect the unexpected. Change is inevitable and industry leaders do not really know what is around the corner. But if your business has a good understanding of how your supply chain operates and proper information technologies are already in place, you would have a better change to overcome the unexpected.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Henry Quesada at quesada@purdue.edu

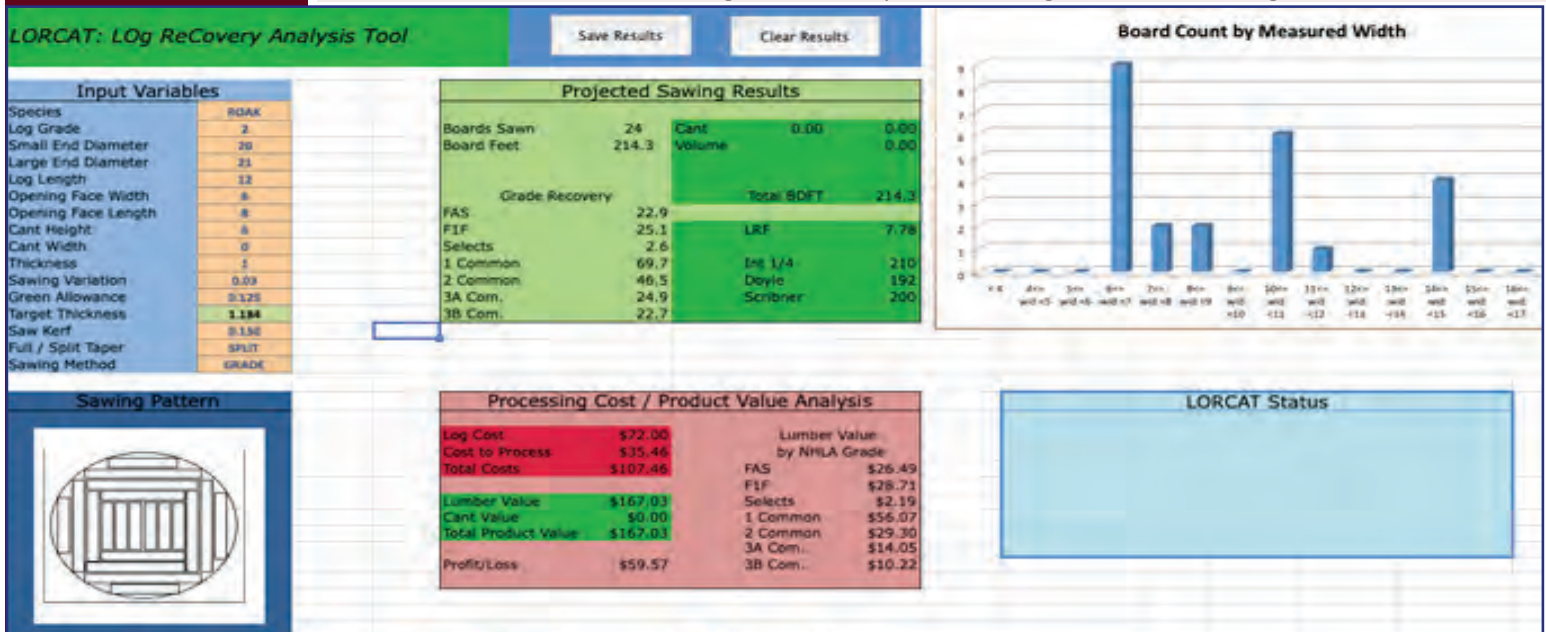
LORCAT: AN EASY-TO-USE HARDWOOD LOG RECOVERY ANALYSIS TOOL

By
URS BUEHLMANN,
Virginia Tech
and
R. EDWARD THOMAS,
US Forest Service

Have you ever wondered which sawing strategy would be the most profitable for processing a hardwood log? Or, what yield in terms of lumber and grades is possible from a given load or sample of logs? Ed Thomas of the US Forest Service and Urs Buehlmann with Virginia Tech have developed an easy-to-use tool- LORCAT – designed to examine hardwood log recovery. Numerous factors influence product recovery and efficiency in hardwood sawmills. Some factors relate to the size, shape, and quality characteristics of the logs processed; others to processing details such as kerf size, sawing variation, or sawing strategy. Examining and developing an understanding of the inter-relationships among these numerous interdependent factors is a complex task. But, it is the key to maximizing yield and profit for every forestry operation.

Given the importance of all these factors and their interrelated interaction on log prices and mill profitability, numerous sawmill simulation tools have been created to help forest products managers explore the impact of these settings on log cutting operations. However, these existing analysis tools typically require extensive mill data and possibly specialized training to accomplish even minor analyses. The newly developed Log Recovery Analysis Tool (LORCAT) was designed to avoid the complexities of past tools by being straightforward to set-up and use with easily understood results.

LORCAT is an easy-to-use, spreadsheet-based analysis tool that requires minimal data input from the user. The main user interface of LORCAT is shown in Figure 1. The light blue box in the upper left corner of the screen controls the analysis. Here one enters the specifics of the log being sawn as well as the lumber, cant and sawing parameters. The cells shaded light orange indicate cells where one enters/changes data. The generic sawing pattern displayed in the lower left corner labeled “Sawing Pattern” shows a symbolic representation of the sawing pattern used given the current setup specified in the “Input Variables” section above. Sawing results are displayed in the green box in the upper right corner labeled “Projected Sawing Results.” It reports the expected volumes of the resulting lumber and cant, and the expected grade mix of the lumber produced according to NHLA lumber grading rules. The graph in the upper right corner shows the width distribution of the lumber sawn. The red box in the lower right corner labeled “Processing Cost / Product Value Analysis,” reports the profitability of the sawing operation. The lumber values, log and processing costs are all based on user-entered costs in the “Costs” and “Operation Costs” worksheets accessible from the tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet. If users want to analyze the results from sawing multiple logs, they can do so on the “Batch Sawing” worksheet which allows users to generate samples consisting of hundreds of logs.



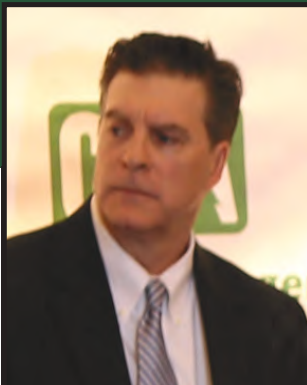
LORCAT main window for sawing an individual log

LORCAT runs on two widely used platforms, on LibreOffice Calc, a free, open-source spreadsheet and on Microsoft Excel. LORCAT can be downloaded for free on either of the web sites below, on the first you will also find tutorials and other additional resources.

<https://www.woodproducts.sbio.vt.edu/lorcat/> • <https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/tools/lorcat/>

Please contact Ed Thomas (304.431.2324, ralph.thomas@usda.gov) or Urs Buehlmann (540.231.9759, buehlmann@gmail.com) for free support or to discuss improvements of the program.

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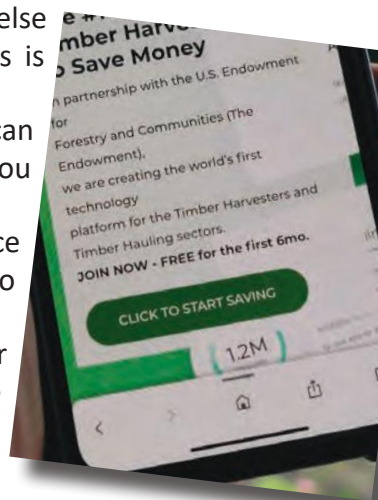
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CHANGING PERCEPTIONS, FIGHTING WINDMILLS

Last October, ahead of the American Loggers Council meeting in Idaho, I had the opportunity to spend a few days with some Montana loggers who work in high elevation steep slopes, using yarders and tethered systems. This is a very different style of logging than what I am used to in my part of the country down in the Deep South. I grew up around chain saws and cable skidders, and later feller-bunchers and grapples, on mostly flat ground, either in pine plantations or hardwood swamps. The Montana loggers were surprised that I was unfamiliar with their methods and unaccustomed to getting around on their terrain.

It was a reminder that logging can mean very different things depending on your location. There are loggers all over the world, in all kinds of conditions; anywhere timber grows, there are people who make a living by logging it. Case in point: one of the loggers I saw in Montana, Jared Fitchett, once spent three months on a logging job in Russia. In 2014, Fitchett was in the cast for a short-lived Discovery Channel reality show called *Siberia Cut*. The show was a flop, but it turned the young logger's career around; it introduced him to the good folks at Ponsse North America (and at the company's Finland headquarters) and the experience persuaded him to adopt the cut-to-length method. It also broadened his horizons by forcing him to work with people from a very different culture. He brought those lessons home and it benefitted his company.

(By the way, my article on Fitchett will be in the May/June issue of *Timber Harvesting* magazine from Hatton-Brown Publishers, my employer. Also, you can find episodes of *Siberia Cut* on YouTube and Hulu.)

Jared was working in Siberia from January-April 2014; that was just about when Russia last invaded the Ukraine, annexing the Crimean Peninsula into the Russian Federation. Now, during the time when I was working on the article about Jared, Russia attacked Ukraine again, this time invading the mainland in an apparent attempt to take control of the entire country.

I have a little bit of a personal connection. I've spent a fair amount of time in both Russia and the Ukraine. In fact, after multiple international trips to multiple countries over the last 25+ years, I've probably spent more time in the Ukraine than in any other single country outside the U.S. One of my most cherished friends, Tom Benz, who officiated my wedding, has worked with orphans in Ukraine since the mid-'90s. His ministry, *Bridges of Faith*, is based not far from my home, and I have accompanied him to Ukraine a few times. In fact, most of the places where I spent the most time were in Crimea, on land that Russia stole eight years ago. Tom was recently in Poland and Romania working to get some of his Ukrainian orphans out of the country. And some of our friends who worked with us in Ukraine opted to stay in Kyiv and fight for their homeland.

As we know, a lot of multinational companies and governments have enacted sanctions against Russia in an

attempt to pressure Putin and his cronies into backing down. This includes forestry companies like Tigercat, John Deere and Ponsse, among others; International Paper is heavily invested in Russia, which is a major exporter of wood products to Europe, China and elsewhere. Bear in mind that there are no privately owned forests in Russia; it all goes back to Putin's government, and funds his war chest.

It doesn't get as much attention in the media as the oil and natural gas, or the wheat, fertilizers and other agricultural products that are being impacted by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but global timber markets are also being affected. According to a report from Wood Resources International in late March, the global trade in forest products will be "permanently" altered. The three countries in the war zone—Ukraine, Russia and Belarus—exported a combined total of 34 million cubic meters of lumber in 2021 (not to mention every other major wood product—pulp, paper, plywood, pellets). Those exports have now been disrupted. Both FSC and PEFC have designated all timber from Russia and Belarus as conflict timber, meaning it cannot be certified or sold in many markets. In all, analysts expect at least a 10 million cubic meter shortfall of softwood lumber exports to global markets. And according to an April 9 newsletter from the Decorative Hardwoods Assn., the United Kingdom has imposed additional import tariffs on Russian Wood Products; the war has caused confusion and chaos in the international wood supply chain; and there will be a dramatic decline in European wood production as a result.

European nations are dependent on oil and natural gas from Russia; if they find a way to stop buying from Russia, they will need to replace that supply from elsewhere. Likewise, if Europe needs to find new sources of wood products since their timber supply in the conflict zone has been cut off, I'd be curious if this doesn't present an opportunity for U.S. timber companies to help fill that gap. After all, global exports have already been a pretty important piece of the pie for a lot of U.S. loggers, lumber/pulp/plywood mills and wood pellet producers.

Lastly: I will once again be representing Hatton-Brown Publishers (*Southern Loggin' Times*, *Timber Harvesting*, *Timber Processing*, *Wood Bioenergy*, *Panel World*) at Expo Richmond on May 20-21, and I will be planning to visit some loggers along the way there. I look forward to seeing some of you there.



DAVID ABBOTT
MANAGING EDITION

**SOUTHERN
LOGGIN'
TIMES**

HOW TO CALCULATE A FUEL COST ADJUSTMENT



Dr. Joseph Conrad

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I have received several urgent emails recently from loggers, suppliers, and procurement foresters trying to calculate fuel cost adjustments. This is a good sign in that mills and suppliers want to work with loggers to address skyrocketing fuel costs. On the other hand, it suggests that the previous cut-and-haul rates may have been negotiated without careful consideration of the underlying costs involved in harvesting and transportation. Forgive me if I am too cynical. Fortunately, calculating a reasonable fuel cost adjustment is simple math. However, it does require data, or without solid data, reasonable estimates. Loggers should have data while foresters may have to rely on estimates.

Measuring Fuel Consumption

To calculate a fuel cost adjustment, a logger will need to know how much fuel is consumed per ton of wood harvested. Fuel consumption data should include in-woods equipment, support vehicles (i.e., company pickups, fuel trucks, parts trucks, etc.), and log trucks. Fuel consumption by in-woods equipment can be collected easily. Many machines collect fuel consumption data using onboard computers. If machines do not measure fuel consumption, a fuel meter can be purchased for less than \$100. Every time a machine is refueled, the operator should record the date, number of gallons pumped, and machine engine hours.

Finally, fuel consumed by log trucks should be measured. It is important to determine the fuel economy of the log trucks. Record miles driven from odometers and gallons of fuel consumed. Log truck fuel consumption per ton will obviously vary by haul distance and so it should be calculated on a tract-by-tract basis. Fuel consumption per ton can be calculated using the formula below. Accurate values for tons per load, miles per gallon, and percent-loaded miles are obviously important. Do not assume 50% loaded miles unless there is data to support this value. Log trucks often average 40–45% loaded miles once trips home and moves between sites are counted.

Divide gallons of fuel consumed by the number of tons produced to calculate gallons per ton. Make sure that fuel consumption data and production data cover the same period. Estimates based on a week or a month's data will be more accurate than estimates based on daily records.

Several studies have measured fuel consumption by logging equipment (Greene et al. 2014, Kenney et al. 2014). While this data is several years old, it can get a company in the ballpark if they do not have their own data. These studies estimated that logging equipment consumed between 0.4 and 1.0 gallon per ton to cut, skid, and load. Loggers have shared log truck fuel economy data with me in the past several years and they averaged 4.5–5.5 miles per gallon. This included a mix of loaded miles, unloaded miles, and idling (i.e., real-world conditions).

Calculating Per-Ton Fuel Costs

Let's look at an example using data from one month's production. During this month the logging crew produced 8,500 tons of timber and consumed 9,909 gallons of diesel (Table 1). Logging equipment consumed 0.38 gal/ton, support vehicles burned 0.05 gal/ton, and log trucks consumed 0.74 gal/ton. All these values will vary from one harvest to another. I would expect in-woods fuel consumption to be most consistent, although it would vary based on skidding distance and site conditions. Log truck fuel consumption per ton will vary considerably based on haul distance.

At \$2.60/gal for off-road diesel and \$3.00/gal for on-highway diesel, fuel costs accounted for \$3.35/ton of delivered wood (Table 2). When fuel prices increase to \$4.60/gal for off-road diesel and \$5.00/gal for on-road diesel, fuel costs increased to \$5.69/ton of delivered wood. For this logger, a \$1.00 per gallon increase in fuel prices increased onboard truck costs by approximately \$0.43 per ton. A \$1.00 per gallon increase in fuel prices would raise cut-and-haul costs by approximately \$1.15 per ton. Cut-and-haul costs would increase even more if haul distances exceeded the 50 miles used in this example.

For this logger, a fuel cost adjustment should add at least \$0.43 per ton to the base cut-and-load rate for every \$1.00 per gallon increase in the fuel price, or approximately 4 cents per ton for every 10-cent per gallon increase in the fuel price. The cut-and-haul rate should be increased by approximately \$1.17 per ton for every \$1.00 per gallon increase in the fuel price, or 12 cents per ton for every 10-cent per gallon increase in the fuel price.

The impact of rising fuel prices on hauling costs varies substantially by haul distance. At a 30-mile haul distance, a \$1.00 per gallon increase in the fuel price increased hauling costs by approximately \$0.45 per ton, whereas at a haul distance of 70 miles the same increase in the fuel price increased hauling costs by approximately \$1.04 per ton (Table 3). If haul distances are highly variable, the fuel cost adjustment should be structured accordingly. A one-size-fits-all fuel cost adjustment may be lucrative at short haul distances and insufficient at long haul distances.

Conclusion

The first step to negotiating a fuel cost adjustment is to prepare for the negotiation. Having accurate and up-to-date data is essential to calculating a fair fuel cost adjustment. As my father used to tell me, the devil is in the details. Measuring the fuel consumption of each machine and truck is worth the trouble to make sure that the business owner understands his costs. Tracking fuel consumption can

also help a business owner detect mechanical issues or even theft.

Machine	Fuel Consumption (gal)	Fuel economy
Feller-buncher	1,275	0.15 gal/ton
Skidder	1,190	0.14 gal/ton
Loader	765	0.09 gal/ton
Support vehicles	383	0.05 gal/ton
Onboard truck fuel consumption	3,613	0.43 gal/ton
Log trucks	6,296	5.0 mpg & 0.74 gal/ton
Total	9,909	1.17 gal/ton

Table 2: Fuel cost per ton for in-woods equipment, support vehicles, and log trucks at three fuel prices. This analysis assumes a \$0.40/gal difference between off-road diesel and on-highway diesel. This will vary by state – be sure to use local values.

Machine	Fuel Cost @ \$2.60/gal off-road & \$3.00/gal on-highway	Fuel Cost @ \$3.60/gal off-road & \$4.00/gal on-highway	Fuel Cost @ \$4.60/gal off-road & \$5.00/gal on-highway
Feller-buncher	\$0.39/ton	\$0.54/ton	\$0.69/ton
Skidder	\$0.36/ton	\$0.50/ton	\$0.64/ton
Loader	\$0.23/ton	\$0.32/ton	\$0.41/ton
Support vehicles	\$0.15/ton	\$0.20/ton	\$0.25/ton
Onboard truck total	\$1.13/ton	\$1.56/ton	\$1.99/ton
Log trucks	\$2.22/ton	\$2.96/ton	\$3.70/ton
Cut-and-haul total	\$3.35/ton	\$4.52/ton	\$5.69/ton

Table 3: Fuel costs per ton at one-way haul distances from 10–100 miles, assuming 45% loaded miles, 5.0 miles per gallon, and 30 tons per load.

Formulas

Cut-and-Load Fuel Consumption Per Ton = (Gal.fuel used by equipment & support (per week or month))/(Tons produced (per week or month))

Log Truck Miles Per Gallon = (Miles Driven)/(Fuel Consumed (gal.))

Trucking Fuel Consumption Per Ton = (One-way haul distance (miles))/(Tons per load x miles per gallon x % loaded miles)

Distance (one-way, miles)	Roundtrip miles (45% loaded)	Fuel consumed (gal)	Fuel cost per ton @ \$3.00/gal	Fuel cost per ton @ \$4.00/gal	Fuel cost per ton @ \$5.00/gal
10	22	4.4	\$0.44	\$0.59	\$0.73
20	44	8.8	\$0.88	\$1.17	\$1.47
30	67	13.4	\$1.34	\$1.79	\$2.23
40	89	17.8	\$1.78	\$2.37	\$2.97
50	111	22.2	\$2.22	\$2.96	\$3.70
60	133	26.6	\$2.66	\$3.55	\$4.43
70	156	31.2	\$3.12	\$4.16	\$5.20
80	178	35.6	\$3.56	\$4.75	\$5.93
90	200	40.0	\$4.00	\$5.33	\$6.67
100	222	44.4	\$4.44	\$5.92	\$7.40

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PLANTING DENSITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR LOBLOLLY PINE



Planting density for loblolly pine is probably one of the most important – and debated – decisions affecting the long-term sustainability, productivity and value of a loblolly pine plantation. It affects both individual tree diameter growth and the rate of stand-level fiber production. Lower densities produce larger individual tree diameters while higher densities increase the rate of total per-acre fiber yield. Balancing the two has never been simple.

Historically, planting densities have ranged from 400 to more than 1,000 trees per acre (tpa), with recent decades favoring the lower end of that range. In the 1990s, relatively strong markets for larger diameter trees, combined with concerns over the future demand for smaller trees that are removed in thinning operations led to an interest in planting lower densities. In more recent years, better survival of planted seedlings (due to improved early competition control) and the emphasis on genetically improved (more expensive) seedlings have tended to continue the interest in lower-density plantings.

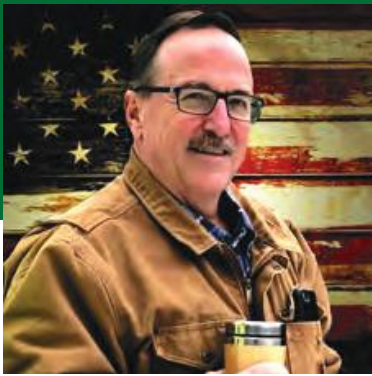
The Virginia Department of Forestry's Applied Research Program has installed or collaborated on several long-term studies of planting density to provide data to help with this choice.

In the oldest, a set of replicated loblolly pine spacing trials was established at four sites in Virginia and North Carolina in the spring of 1983 in collaboration with the Forest Modeling Research Cooperative (FMRC) at Virginia Tech. Seedlings were planted as densities ranging from 300 to over 2700 tpa and the plots were never thinned. The results through age 25 were summarized in a report published in 2012 (https://dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/SJAF-Rotation-Age-Results-from-a-Loblolly-Pine-Spacing-Trial_2012.pdf).

The summary statement for that report concluded "No single planting density is optimal for the wide array of product objectives for which loblolly pine is managed in the South. Rather, managers must select an appropriate planting density in view of the products anticipated at harvest." The results showed that (1) high-density plantations can be managed on short rotations for woody biomass production;



(2) pulpwood yields can be maximized at a planting density in the neighborhood of 680 trees/ac; (3) the production of solid wood products, without imposing thinning, requires lower establishment densities, with as few as 300 trees/ac planted resulting in a substantial proportion of the total yield recovered as large sawtimber; and (4) a ratio of between-row to within-row planting distances of at least 3:1 does not substantially affect yield production. Figure 1 shows the volume production of several of the densities over time and demonstrates how they differ; the higher densities produce more volume early but without thinning they will decline by age 12-16 while the lower density stands continue to show vigorous growth and good productivity to age 25 and (likely) beyond.



AS WE SEE IT



THE NEXT GENERATION

BY: SCOTT DANE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL

The American Loggers Council recently completed the 2021 Loggers Survey. One of the glaring findings, although not a surprise, that was identified was the fact that 50% of the companies that responded were 25 years old or older (the survey did not break-down the age of companies beyond the 25 years). This, along with the average age of the logging and trucking workforce being in the upper 50's, is an issue that must be acknowledged. What does it mean? It means that the half of the logging and trucking infrastructure and workforce will potentially exit the industry in the next 10-15 years. How does the U.S. forest products industry survive with a major loss of infrastructure and workforce?

If a company does not have a succession plan in place, someone to take over the company, (which is less and less the case in what has historically been a generation transfer), then the common "retirement plan" is to sell-off the equipment and shut-down the business.

There are some young guns that have come into the industry, that are carrying on the family business and taking a seat at the table of organizations representing the timber industry. But the numbers are disproportionate, there are far greater number of old loggers and truckers compared to young loggers and truckers.

Look around the industry, it is these "old" loggers and truckers that have built today's timber industry upon the foundation that generations before them laid.

It is said that: "The one who plants trees, knowing that he will never sit in their shade, has at least started to understand the meaning of life. A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they shall not sit."

Today young loggers and truckers are enjoying the shade because of the trees their fathers, grandfathers, and others planted over the generations before them. Their jobs are easier today because of the hard work and heavy lifting done by the previous men and women.



America's "Conservation" President and founder of the U.S. Forest Service, Teddy Roosevelt gave a speech "The Man In The Arena" where he said;

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who

is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is

no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasm, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

The "old" loggers and truckers are the men that have been in the arena, whose faces are marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strived valiantly; who came up short but continued daring greatly; who spent themselves in a worthy cause.



Ronald Reagan gave his famous Freedom speech which stated:

Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free.

I say –

The logging industry is never more than one generation away from extinction. There may be sawdust in your bloodstream, passed on from generation to generation, but if you don't fight for it, protect it, and hand it on to them as the generation before you did, you will spend your sunset years telling your children and your children's children what it was once like in the woods where men worked hard and proud to keep the forest healthy.

These "old men" planted the trees in whose shade you sit and whose trees you will harvest. Who fought for it, protected it, and handed it on to you, as the generation before them did. But it would not have happened had they not come out of the woods, attended meetings, formed organizations, lobbied, and fought to protect and defend the timber industry.

The 20, 30, and 40 year old's today must replant so the generation after them can also enjoy the shade and trees.

I want to challenge the next generation to step up. To be the man in the arena. To quell the storm and ride the thunder that challenges the timber industry. To be the strong man that stumbles and not the cold and timid soul who neither knows victory or defeat.

So you don't have to tell your children and children's children what it was once like to work in the woods...



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"STRENGTHENING SUPPLY CHAINS THROUGH TRUCK DRIVER INCENTIVES ACT OF 2022"

Representative Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) and Mike Gallagher (R-WI) Submit a Bipartisan Bill to Address Truck Driver Shortage

The truck driver shortage impacts all Americans through delayed and more expensive shipping costs, leading to higher prices of consumer goods. Trucks move more than 72 percent of US freight, and truck driver shortages have significantly contributed to persistent supply chain issues. In 2021, US trucking companies experienced a record deficit of 80,000 drivers. Additionally, a 2019 BLS report found that the average turnover rate was 94% across large freight carriers and 79.2% across smaller ones. The median age of truck drivers is 51-52 years old, and the industry will need to add even more new drivers in the coming years as thousands of drivers retire. To address this, the Department of Labor is working with trucking companies to expand trucking registered apprenticeship programs to recruit and train younger drivers. Trucking companies have also offered drivers incentives to stay in the industry and to attract new drivers.

While there are several factors impacting why prospective drivers are choosing to pursue other fields, and drivers are leaving the profession, this bill will provide a short-term, fast, and straightforward incentive to attract and retain drivers.

What the bill does:

- Create a new refundable tax credit of up to \$7,500 for truck drivers holding a valid Class A commercial driver's license (CDL) who drive at least 1,900 hours in the year.
- Create a new refundable tax credit of up to \$10,000 for new truck drivers or individuals enrolled in a registered trucking apprenticeship.
- New truck drivers would be eligible for the credit if they did not drive a commercial truck in the previous year, drive for at least 1,420 hours in the current year, or may receive a proportion of the credit if they drive less than 1,420 hours in the year, but drove at least an average of 40 hours a week upon starting to drive.
- The tax credit will last for two years (2022 and 2023).
- To be eligible, a driver's income may not exceed the following levels:
 - Individual: \$90,000
 - Head of household: \$112,500
 - Joint filer: \$135,000

Contact Info:

For additional information or if you would like to endorse the legislation, please email Isabel Coughlin (Rep. Spanberger) at Isabel.Coughlin@mail.house.gov. Thank you for your consideration.

H. R. 7348 117TH CONGRESS 2D SESSION

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a refundable tax credit for commercial truck drivers.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES **MARCH 31, 2022**

Ms. SPANBERGER (for herself and Mr. GALLAGHER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

A BILL

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a refundable tax credit for commercial truck drivers.
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Strengthening Supply Chains Through Truck Driver Incentives Act of 2022".

SEC. 2. CREDIT FOR COMMERCIAL TRUCK DRIVERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after section 36B the following new section:

SEC. 36C. CREDIT FOR COMMERCIAL TRUCK DRIVERS.

(a) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—In the case of an eligible individual, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this subtitle an amount equal to \$7,500 for the taxable year.

(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—For the purposes of this section, the term 'eligible taxpayer' means, with respect to a taxable year, an individual—

(1) who holds a valid Class A commercial driver's license (except as provided in subsection (c)) who operates a tractor-trailer combination that qualifies as a Group A vehicle under section 383.91(a)(1) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations,

(2) whose adjusted gross income for the taxable year does not exceed—

"(A) in the case of a joint return or surviving spouse, \$135,000,

"(B) in the case of an individual who is a head of household, \$112,500, or"

"(C) in the case of any other individual, \$90,000, and

(3) who drove such a vehicle in the course of a trade or business—

"(A) not less than 1900 hours during such taxable year, or

"(B) in the case of an individual who did not drive a

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commercial truck in the preceding taxable year, not less than an average of 40 hours per week with respect to weeks during the taxable year in which such individual drove such a vehicle in the course of a trade or business.

(c) SPECIAL RULE FOR APPRENTICES.—With respect to an individual enrolled in an apprenticeship program registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the ‘National Apprenticeship Act’), who upon completion or in the course of such apprenticeship program will receive a Class A commercial driver’s license—

(1) the requirements of subsection (b)(1) shall not apply, and

(2) such individual may count training hours in such program as hours driving a vehicle described in subsection (b)(1) for the purposes of this section.

(d) SPECIAL RULE FOR NEW TRUCK DRIVERS.—

Except as provided in subsection (e), in the case of an eligible taxpayer who did not drive a commercial truck in the course of a trade or business during the preceding taxable year, subsection (a) shall be applied by substituting ‘\$10,000’ for ‘\$7,500’.

(e) SPECIAL RULE FOR DRIVERS WITH LESS THAN 1420 HOURS.—In the case of an eligible taxpayer who did not drive a commercial truck in the preceding taxable year who drives a commercial truck for less than 1420 hours in the course of a trade or business during the taxable year, the amount of the credit allowed by subsection (a) shall be the amount that bears the same proportion to the dollar amount (determined without regard to this subsection) with respect to the individual under subsection (a) as the number of hours such individual drove a commercial truck in the course of a trade or business during such taxable years bears to 1420 hours.

(f) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—In the case of any taxable year beginning after 2022, the dollar amounts in this section shall be increased by an amount equal to—

(1) such dollar amount, multiplied by

(2) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)

(3) for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins, determined by substituting ‘calendar year 2021’ for ‘calendar year 2016’ in subparagraph (A)(ii).

(g) TERMINATION DATE.—This section shall not apply to any taxable year beginning after December 31, 2023.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 6211(b)(4)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting “; 36C” after “36B”.

(2) Section 1324(b)(2) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting “; 36C” after “; 36B”.

(3) The table of sections for subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 36B the following new item:

“Sec. 36C. Credit for commercial truck drivers.”

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years ending on or after December 31, 2022.

Æ

VerDate Sep 11 2014 22:06 Apr 04, 2022 Jkt 029200 PO 00000 Frm 00005 Fmt 6652

SCC REGARDING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TOWING AND CLEAN UP FOLLOWING ACCIDENTS.

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STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION
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August 19, 2020

Administrative Letter 2020-06

TO: All Property & Casualty Insurers Licensed to Write Motor Vehicle Insurance on Motor Vehicles

RE: Property Damage Liability Claims Involving Clean-Up, Removal of Vehicles and Debris from Roadways and Property Adjacent to Roadways

The purpose of this administrative letter is to remind insurers licensed to write motor vehicle policies on vehicles principally garaged or used or are issued or delivered in the Commonwealth of their duties with respect to at-fault accidents. The at-fault insurer is responsible for payment of the reasonable costs of clean-up, recovery, and certain towing expenses under the terms of the property damage liability coverage of the motor vehicle policy that requires coverage for "all damages the insured is legally obligated to pay."

If the investigation of the claim indicates that the insured is responsible for the accident, then the insurer of the at-fault vehicle is required to pay under the vehicle's property damage liability coverage the reasonable costs of: (1) removing debris from the roadway, including liquids and other material, (2) removing the at-fault and not-at-fault vehicles from a roadway or from property adjacent to a roadway, and (3) towing not-at-fault vehicles away from the scene of the accident. The cost of removing vehicle accident debris and the cost of removing the at-fault or not-at-fault vehicles from a roadway or from property adjacent to a roadway after an accident are sometimes referred to as "clean up and recovery costs." The at-fault driver is responsible for the clean-up of the roadway and the recovery of vehicles involved in the accident on the roadway and adjacent to the roadway.

These clean-up and recovery costs must also be paid in any claim involving a single-vehicle accident if the driver of the vehicle is at-fault for the accident.

The Bureau of Insurance has received complaints from towing companies that have made claims with the at-fault insurers seeking payment for clean-up and recovery costs. Insurers have denied these third-party claims for many reasons. For example, insurers have refused to pay these costs because (i) the insured's policy does not have towing coverage; (ii) the towing and recovery company does not have a contract with the state or local government; and (iii) they do not have to pay claims from towing and recovery operators. None of these reasons are adequate justification for denial of these claims.

This administrative letter does not require an insurer to pay for the cost of towing the at-fault vehicle away from the scene of the accident unless that vehicle's policy includes the relevant physical damage coverage.

The Bureau also reminds insurers that if the insurer declines to pay all or any part of a claim for clean-up, recovery, and towing, the insurer is required to issue to the claimant (the insured or a third-party claimant) a written denial letter that includes a reasonable explanation for the denial of all or part of the claim, as required by 14 VAC 5-400-70 A of the Administrative Code. The Rules Governing Unfair Claims Settlement Practices defines "third party claimant as "any person asserting a claim against an insured or a provider filing a claim on behalf of an insured under an insurance policy." See 14 VAC 5-400-20 of the Virginia Administrative Code. This definition includes towing companies that respond to an accident at the request of state or local authorities for clean-up, recovery, and towing services.

The Bureau notes that each claim must be reviewed and evaluated on its merits.

Please direct any questions regarding this administrative letter to:

Joy Morton
BOI Manager
P&C Market Conduct Section
Bureau of Insurance
(804) 371-9540
(804) 396-8380 (cell)
Joy.Morton@scc.virginia.gov

Sincerely,

Scott A. White
Commissioner of Insurance

If you need to file a complaint on a Virginia policy, use the link below:

[https://scc.virginia.gov/pages/File-an-Insurance-Complaint-\(1\)](https://scc.virginia.gov/pages/File-an-Insurance-Complaint-(1))



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We plan to hold lots of social networking events during the meeting.

Dabney S Lancaster Community College Celebrated Forestry Alumni

Dabney S Lancaster Community College celebrated forestry alumni for 50 + 2 Years on April 1 & 2, 2022 years. Attendees enjoyed lots of activities, networking, and fun. Virginia Loggers Association was honored to participate in Saturday activities. VLA set up its trailer across from the Forestry Club and Dooley Logging's trailer load of logs and networked with students and alumni. Please enjoy some of the pictures from the events.



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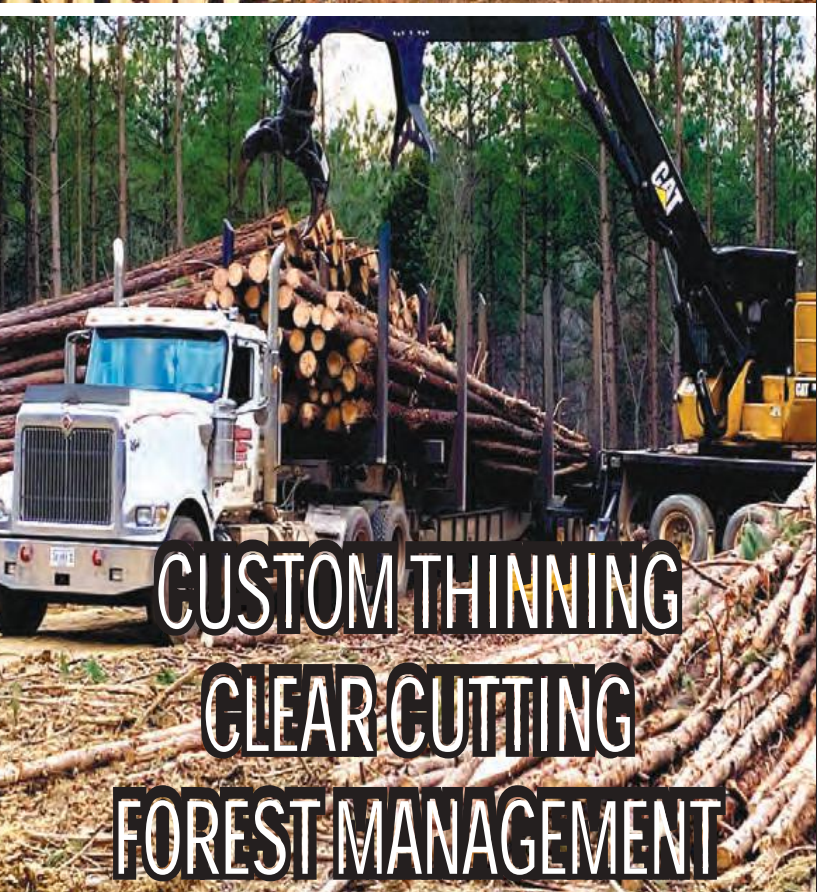
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NEW RESEARCH ON BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING TRUCK FLEET SAFETY



Scott Barrett, PhD,
Extension Specialist,
Forest Operations

*Coordinator for the VA
SHARP Logger Program*

VA Tech Department of
Forest Resources &
Environmental
Conservation

NEWS AND
UPDATES FROM
VIRGINIA TECH
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OPERATIONS
EXTENSION

If you've ever travelled to Virginia Tech on 460 West, just before you get to the main campus you have likely seen the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI) "Smart Road" research center. This state-of-the-art Smart Road research facility is just one of the many facilities operated by VTTI as they conduct research on a variety of transportation issues. The VTTI also has a Crash Sled Lab (think of the old commercials with the crash test dummies), test facilities for outdoor lighting, and is also involved in other research and case studies which analyze existing data sources to help improve transportation safety.

One recent study just published from VTTI was intended to identify strategies that trucking fleets used to reduce crashes. They utilized existing federal data to identify trucking fleets that had significantly reduced the number of violations, crashes, claims, and/or improved their FMCSA Compliance, Safety, and Accountability (CSA) scores. After identifying these fleets, the researchers analyzed the past 10 years of data from the fleets and then conducted interviews with key personnel in the fleet. The purpose of the interviews was to identify factors within the fleet that led to improvements in safety for their fleets. The fleets interviewed in this study were primarily larger fleets with over 50 trucks, but their findings would generally be applicable to fleets of any size.

One of the primary strategies identified with these fleets related to driver hiring criteria and a safety focus when it comes to hiring new drivers. Successful strategies also involved leadership that was committed to improving safety and that adhered to the new safety and training protocols. Additional common themes among these fleets related to training for new and existing drivers as well as adopting

company policies focused on an improved safety culture and programs to reward safety. One of the fleets noted that they dealt with hiring and retention challenges by changing from pay by mileage to an hourly pay system. Additionally, they offered retention bonuses, annual raises and other strategies to improve retention of their existing drivers. Six out of the nine firms interviewed for this study reported that improving their safety culture was critical to their improved safety results.

Another common strategy used by these trucking fleets included the use of advanced safety technologies. These technologies included automatic emergency braking (AEB) and lane departure warning (LDW) systems. Many fleets also reported the use of video-based driver monitoring systems (VDMS) as well. After implementing these safety technologies, the fleets reported reductions in preventable crashes that ranged anywhere from 32% to 75%. For these firms, the investments in safety technologies had a positive return on their investment. If you are interested in finding out more details on the findings of this study, you can find it for free on the open access journal "Safety". Or you can contact me and I can get you a copy of the article.





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PROPER BODY POSITION – IT'S NOT ROCKET SCIENCE!

As a Logging Safety Trainer, my goal is to focus on lowering risk levels and exposure on our logging jobs. Timber harvesting systems differ according to the terrain, timber type, size, markets, and specs. Logging systems range from totally mechanized, with no one on the ground, to a manual operation using chainsaws and cable skidders, much of the time on steep terrain. What is common to all is risk. We must deal with the specific risks present on the particular logging operation. Looking at the "Big Picture," I feel proper body position is the common denominator of any harvesting system. If the body or body part isn't in a bad place, it isn't injured there.

The manual felling process of a logging job is saturated with risk. To avoid risk and exposure, we use the five-part felling plan. The felling plan deals with the specific risk associated with every part of the manual felling process. Do you remember the five-part felling plan?

- Check for overhead hazards! What is up there that could hurt me?

- Determine the side-lean of the tree. The weighted side of the tree is the "bad side"; limit your exposure to the heavy side of the tree. If something unplanned happens during the felling process, the tree will fall to the weighted side. If my body isn't on the "bad side," I'm not injured there!

- Escape! Your escape route shall be at a 45-degree angle away from the fall of the tree. Get as far away from the falling stem as you can; keep your eyes to the sky!

- Determine your hinge and its thickness. The basic rule for hinge thickness is 1/10th the diameter at breast height. The hinge is the "steering wheel" in the directional felling process; the hinge also helps to reduce the chance of being "struck" in a rebound situation. Proper hinge wood shall be continuous across the stump, or the timber-cutter may elect to remove fiber from the center of the tree, leaving 2 (TWO) outside corners to control the tree's fall to the ground.

- Decide what type of back-cut you will use. The controlled release back-cut is preferred; the tree isn't moving while being cut!

After reviewing the felling plan, did you notice that most of the plan dealt with the body's position? If the timber-cutter wasn't under the dead limb or on the "bad-side" of the tree, he wasn't injured there! The limbing and topping plan works in the same manner. If the toppler isn't on the "tension-side" of the limb, his leg isn't broken there! By abiding by these step-by-step plans, significant risk is avoided. My ultimate goal in teaching is to get my timber-cutters to use the plans as second nature; it's not rocket science! Utilizing a plan makes the brain synthesize information fed to it; the result should be a good decision being made.

Proper working distances are to be observed on ANY logging job. Yes, this is a body position subject. If the body isn't there, it's not injured there!!

- No one is allowed within two-tree lengths of any felling operation.

- Proper distance is to be observed around skidding operations.

- Skidders shall not enter a "safe zone" designed to protect the topplers.

- High visibility clothing shall be worn. Be Seen!!

- Be aware of "blind spots" on equipment.

- Be aware of "sun-glare," equipment operators may be temporarily blinded from the sun coming through their safety glass.

- Ground personnel must ensure the equipment operator can see you before approaching the machine. Equipment operators shall place their machines in a zero energy state; hand signals or other communication shall occur before workers can approach the machine.

Landing or Deck Safety issues are present on all logging operations, no matter how mechanized a job is. The deck is a

bustling place! There are a lot of activities happening in a small area.

- Never walk under anything that could fall on you; this includes equipment and processed timber.

- Avoid walking on log piles. Don't place yourself near something that could roll on you.

- Drivers should exit the truck before loading. Drivers shall remain in a "safe area" until the truck is loaded.

- Avoid the trap of a "pinch point." A major pinch point is between the truck and the loader. Pull away from the loader before strapping down.

- Never stand "in-line" with the buck-saw. The buck-saw shall be set up facing away from people and other equipment.

- Constantly be aware of blind spots in equipment. Sun-glare should also be included. Can he see me?

- Wear high visibility clothing. Be Seen!

Maintenance issues on logging equipment are never-ending; it will break or leak!! Several areas must be addressed while doing maintenance on equipment. Good body and body-part placement are crucial to preventing an injury or worse. Modern logging equipment operates with increased pressures, fuel, and hydraulic systems. A "machine-specific" Lock-Out-Tag-Out program helps to reduce risk and exposure during the maintenance procedure. The Lock and Tag Out program isolates energy sources present on the machine we are working on. A zero-energy state has been established if the energies have been disabled; maintenance can be started. Keep in mind the Lock and Tag system is two-part. To LOCK is to DISABLE!! To Tag is to warn. Make certain the machine is disabled!

There are certain times when a machine must be running to diagnose a problem. Proper body position is critical if you must have the machine running. An observer commonly finds hydraulic leaks. The observer must be located safely to avoid contact with anything that could cause injury.

- Use machine-specific Lock and Tag procedures.

- No one (observers) shall be in front of or in between the tires of the running machine.

- No one (observers) shall be under any suspended equipment of the running machine.

- Accurate, precise communication is to be used.

- Under no circumstance search for hydraulic or fuel leaks with the hands.

- Never expose hands or fingers to "pinch-points"; use locking pliers when possible.

- Make sure your position is secure if you are required to be off the ground. Use fall protection if needed.

As has been noted, many different harvesting systems are being used in our logging woods. Exposure and risk levels differ from the systems that are being used. Proper body position is the key to avoiding injury on any type of job. It's not Rocket Science!! If my body isn't in a bad place, I'm not hurt there!! Be safe out there!



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James River Equipment Teams Up with *Dream On 3* for Worthy Cause



Charlotte, NC – On January 29th, Dream On 3, a charity dedicated to creating sports-related experiences for children and young adults with life-altering conditions, held its 3rd Annual Gala. The event was packed with over 700 attendees at Founders Hall in Charlotte, NC. The evening ended with smiles all around after revealing the total of \$1,111,879 in donations this year, the most they've ever made.

Dream On 3 was founded in 2012 by Brandon and Elizabeth Lindsey. At the time, Brandon was employed by Martin Marietta Aggregates and now works for Hoopaugh Grading Company, one of the largest and fastest-growing licensed grading contractors in the Charlotte Metro Area. After having an idea while in a weekly production meeting, he shared his thoughts with Elizabeth and they were both inspired to make a difference in families' lives. Through his contacts within the construction industry, he was able to gain support and make kids' dreams come true. Since the first

three dreams granted in 2013, the organization has made over 70 dreams come true and expanded into the Atlanta, DC, and Denver area.

Dream On 3 creates a unique, multi-day experience tailored for each Dream Kid and their favorite athlete, team, or sporting event. In addition, the Dream Kids' favorite foods and activities are included during the experience for some added fun. Each Dream Experience begins with a V.I.P. send-off before they are whisked away to kickoff their multi-day experience.

James River Equipment (JRE) was introduced to Dream On 3 five years ago when Hoopaugh Grading Company shared the wonderful things they were doing for all children with life-altering challenges. Through fundraising efforts such as a clay shoot and a 5K walk/run/bike, silent auction, and partner donations, JRE raised over \$400,000 to create experiences of joy, hope, and encouragement for children with life-altering conditions through the world of sports.

Because of all the great sponsors, James River Equipment won the "Queen City Business of the Year Award", an award given to the business that raised the most significant amount. Terry Thomas, Executive Vice President at JRE, accepted the award on behalf of JRE and was passionately involved in the fundraising process.

"They understand how kids look up to their sports heroes and how getting VIP treatment and being able to spend time with these heroes can make them forget about their troubles for just a couple of days," Thomas said.

Special thanks to our partners and sponsors: Steve Fleming, Yarbrough Transfer Company (Brent Jacques), Morbark, LLC (Jeanne Maddox), Todd Bowman, Diamond Mowers (Cindy Newman), Concrete Supply, HGC and Supporters, DR Horton, Ecoverse, Epiroc, Rockland Manufacturing Co, Tag Manufacturing Inc., Wirtgen America Inc., Bergmann Americas, Storm Karlsen (FSG), Hoopaugh Grading, Company LLC, Data Directions Inc, Windstream, Felco, Adkins Truck Equipment Company, and Blair Construction.

A big thank you to those who helped spread the word: Joey Logano, Kyle Seager, and Cory Seager.



More on Dream On 3:



Getting involved and bringing dreams to life for a child with a life-altering condition can change your life. Join the family by donating, hosting a fundraiser, or sponsoring a Dream Experience! If you are the parent or guardian of a child that meets our medical criteria, please get in touch with your healthcare team or child life specialist to assist you with the next steps.

Dream On 3: <https://dreamon3.org> **Dream Kids:** <https://dreamon3.org/dream-kids/>



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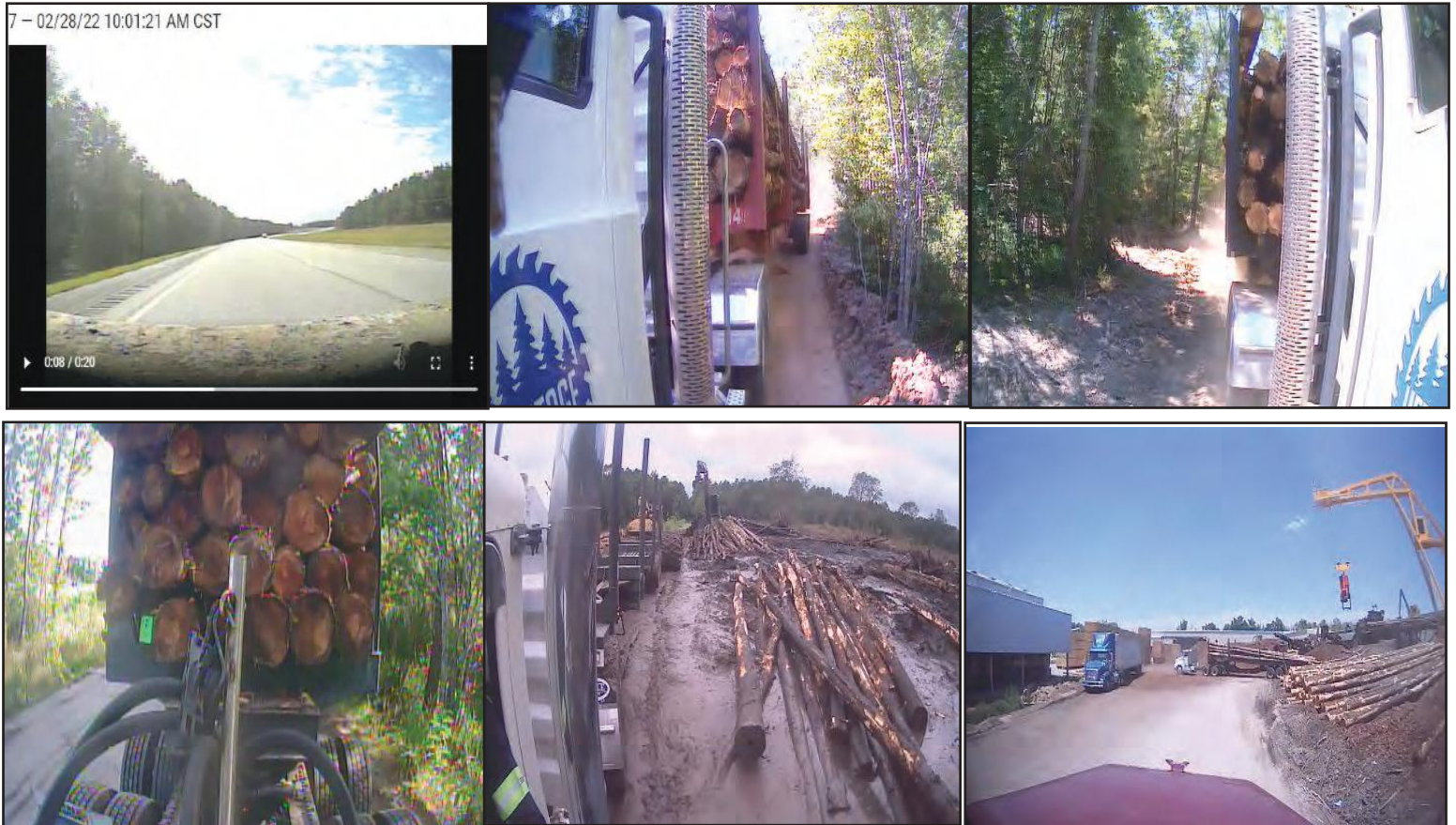


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FROM ANDREA'S KITCHEN

STRAWBERRY JELL-O POKE CAKE

by Andrea Woodson

Apple Sweet and Sour Brats

INGREDIENTS

32 ounces sauerkraut, rinsed and well drained
1 cup applesauce
½ cup apple juice
1 tablespoon butter
1 onion, sliced
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 large apple, cored and cubed
1 teaspoon cinnamon
salt and black pepper to taste
12 bratwursts

DIRECTIONS

In a large saucepan, simmer sauerkraut with applesauce and apple juice for 20 minutes.

In a large, deep skillet, heat butter over medium heat. Add onions and sauté, stirring frequently, until very soft, about 10 minutes. Add brown sugar, and cook for 5 more minutes until the onions are caramelized. Add the apple pieces, and sauté for 5 more minutes until the apples are just tender. Add to the sauerkraut along with cinnamon, salt and pepper. Keep warm until ready to serve.

Prepare a medium-hot fire in a grill. Grill bratwurst directly over the fire, turning, until evenly browned, about 5 to 7 minutes, or until internal temperature reaches 160°. Remove bratwurst from the grill, and serve with the sauerkraut.

-Recipe adapted from the National Pork Board

Roasted Zucchini with Parmesan



Serves: 4 / Prep Time: 5 min/
Cook Time: 10 min

INGREDIENTS

Parmesan cheese
Garlic powder
Olive oil

DIRECTIONS

Oven to 450°F.

Dress your sliced zucchini rounds with olive oil, salt, pepper and garlic powder. Arrange the rounds

on a baking sheet, taking care not to overlap them. Grate parmesan cheese generously over the rounds. Roast! About five minutes, and then finish the rounds off with a quick broil to ensure the cheese gets nice and crisp-bubbly.

Dive in! Enjoy these as a side dish, snack, pasta stand-in—the possibilities are endless.



I think most of us would agree that we are over winter and longing for warmer weather. This recipe is delicious and a perfect budget-friendly cake to get us in the mood for spring. It's light, sweet, fruity, and made using a white cake mix, strawberry Jell-O and Cool Whip. What's not to love? It is perfect for all your spring and summertime celebrations. It's also fun to make, so get the kids in the kitchen and involve them in the poking process! I started making this simple recipe when I was very young and it quickly became a family favorite. Now and again, I still get a craving for its moist refreshing sweetness. Not a fan of strawberries? Feel free to explore using your favorite flavor Jell-O. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS

1 box white cake mix (prepare as directed)
2 cups boiling water
2 boxes Jell-O strawberry flavored gelatin
1 8 oz Whipped Topping (Cool Whip)
12 fresh strawberries

PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray bottom of 13x9 inch pan with cooking spray. Prepare cake as directed on box. Bake 28 to 32 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Allow the cake to cool on cooling rack 20 minutes. In a medium bowl, combine boiling water and gelatin and stir until dissolved. Using a wooden spoon or fork poke holes in the cake. Carefully pour strawberry gelatin evenly over the top of the cake. Refrigerate until the cake is completely cool and gelatin is set. Spread whipped topping over the top and layer with strawberry slices. Chill until ready to serve.

**"AS THE SUN RISES, SO DO MOST OF US TO LIVE
A NEW DAY, AND A NEW CHANCE TO GET IT
RIGHT."**





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Time Is of the Essence – A True Story

We have all heard the expression before that “time is of the essence.” This expression is often used our hope of not missing a great deal or some opportunity. Everyone likes to decide at the right time that brought great things just because of the timing of their decision. This applies in business and generally in life.

Just a few days before I began drafting this article, a member of our family had a sudden stroke causing disastrous emotional and stresses in our family. The young lady is young – only 49 – and healthy for all we knew. She worked full – time and led an active life. No one ever imagined she would have a stroke. She had not been sick or never even got COVID. We need your prayers! But here we were all puzzled this weekend and asking the same question about how this could happen to her. We searched our souls, talked a lot, asked Siri, and searched Google for information, but nothing really helped answer the deeper questions.

I really do not think we will ever be able to answer the deeper questions. And it is not the first time that I have asked this type of question about something or someone. I bet you have found yourself in this situation too. If not, you are a lucky human being. If we cannot answer these deeper questions or foresee what is going to happen in the future, we can begin doing something that we frequently do not make time to do now.

Spending quality time on a regular basis with our loved ones is a good way to build deeper relationships with family and close friends. We know there are many benefits, but the other duties of our lives leave little time.

The next step could be to remember that tomorrow is promised to no one. We cannot predict the event of the next day or even the next second of our lives. The next breath is a gift and if we love life, then we must to do the most we can with every moment. Our family now finds itself dealing with the sadness of the loss of our daughter - in - law, who fought hard for her life. We will continue to prepare ourselves, console each other, and pray for healing.

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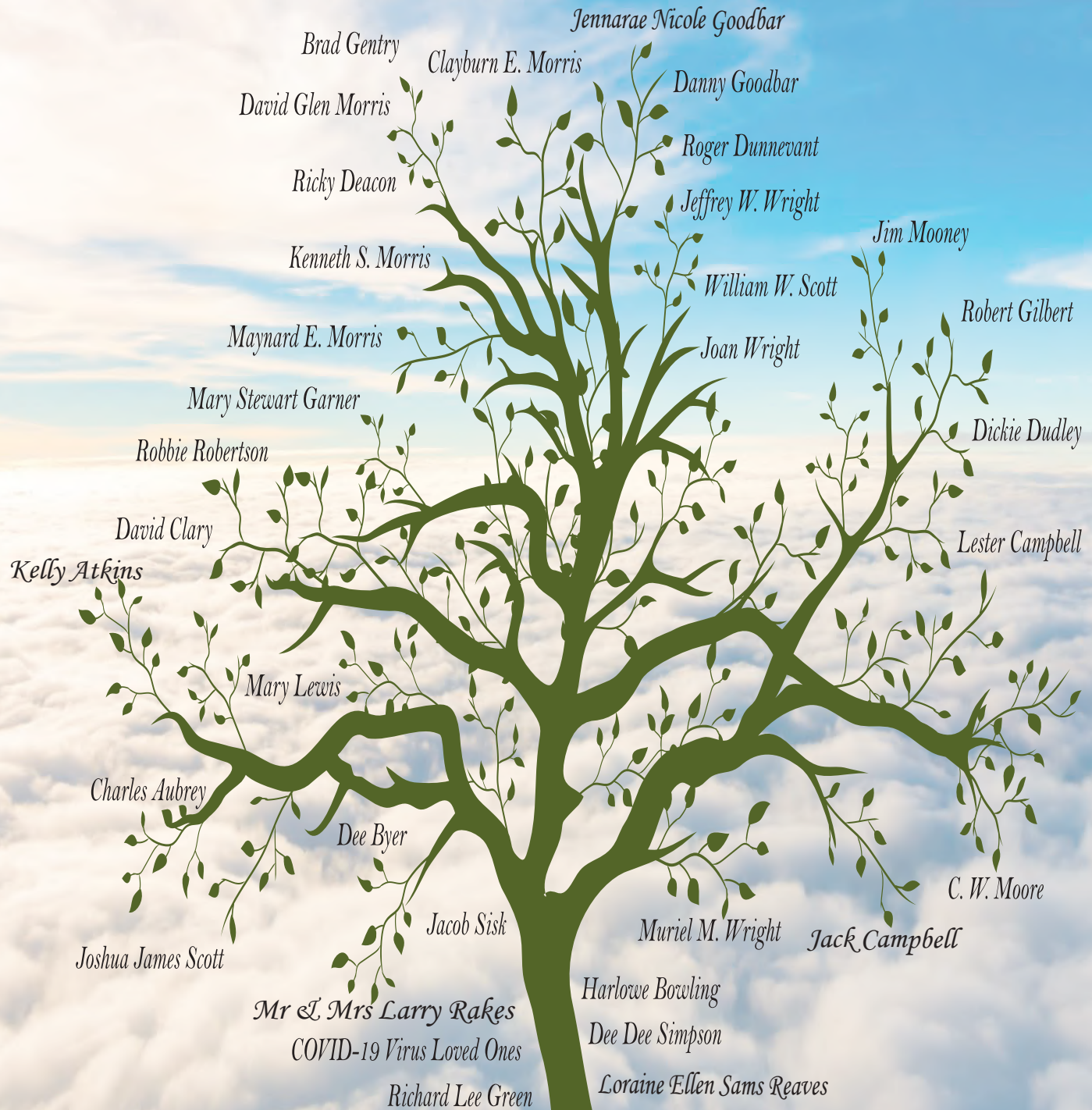


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38VLA News

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SETLIFF'S LAW

South Carolina Appellate Court Limits Use of Drug Charges as Evidence in Negligent Hiring Claim

As the transportation industry continues to struggle with hiring drivers, evolving state laws on illegal drugs and the role they play in the hiring process present another layer of uncertainty employers must confront in their attempts to augment a dwindling workforce. The presence of prior, drug-related charges and/or convictions on an applicant's background check creates a tension: the desperate need for drivers, on the one hand, balanced against the potential legal repercussions an employer could face if the applicant is hired and later involved in an accident.

In addition to the driver's negligence being imputed to the employer under respondeat superior principles, the company could also face direct liability under a negligent hiring claim. Negligent hiring is a distinct cause of action premised on the idea that an employer who conducts its business through employees is subject to liability for harm caused to others by the employee where the employer knew or had reason to know that the employee posed an unreasonable risk of harm to others within a particular line of work. A South Carolina appellate court opinion issued on February 9 of this year provides some guidance on the evidence a plaintiff may introduce in support of such claims at trial.

The case—*Isabelle MacKenzie v. C&B Logging and Charles Brandon Barr*, Appellate Case No. 2018-001016—involved a plaintiff who was injured after she fell from her motorcycle while avoiding a trucking accident. The driver-defendant, Charles Barr, was attempting to re-enter the highway after stopping at a friend's home for the alleged purpose of repairing a flat tire. Before Barr could align his truck in the correct travel lane, another motorist coming in the opposite direction collided with Barr. MacKenzie came upon the accident and was forced to slalom her motorcycle between the two vehicles to avoid collision. MacKenzie fell to the ground and was injured. MacKenzie filed suit against Barr and his employer, C&B, alleging inter alia that C&B was directly negligent in its hiring and retention of Barr.

At trial, MacKenzie's counsel attempted to introduce a "laundry list" of prior illegal drug charges, including possession of cocaine with intent to distribute, criminal conspiracy regarding same, and other drug possession charges dating back to 2011. A jury awarded \$180,000 in compensatory damages to MacKenzie but no punitive damages. MacKenzie appealed—arguing that the trial court erred by refusing to admit evidence of the prior charges which, according to MacKenzie, were relevant to the issue of whether C&B was negligent in hiring Barr and culpable for purposes of punitive damages. MacKenzie contended that the evidence demonstrated "a breach of duty to society as a whole" and a "history of bad decision-making" that should have alerted C&B to the risk Barr posed. MacKenzie also argued that evidence of the prior charges supported her theory that Barr had stopped not to repair a flat tire, but to buy narcotics.

The appellate court disagreed. In finding that the evidence was properly excluded, the court held that it was not relevant to the ultimate issue: "The issue was not why Barr pulled over to the side of the road, but his conduct as and after he did so—and whether C&B was negligent for purposes of actual damages . . . in employing him based on the risk that he would not operate his truck properly." The court distinguished between prior charges of moving violations and the drug charges MacKenzie sought to introduce. In the court's view, the former may have been relevant to C&B's negligence in hiring Barr. Not so with the drug charges—none of which involved Barr's operation of a motor vehicle. Because there was no evidence that Barr was impaired at the time of the incident, there was no "nexus" or similarity between the prior bad acts evidenced by the drug charges and Barr's failure to follow safety procedures when re-entering the highway that caused MacKenzie's injuries. Since the evidence was not relevant to show C&B's negligent hiring, it "held no probative value" as to punitive damages on that claim. To be sure, the MacKenzie decision does not speak to the wisdom of hiring drivers with checkered backgrounds. It does, however, provide some useful precedent for companies contesting liability on negligent hiring grounds.

If you have any questions about this article, or about moving violations in general, please contact Josh Howell (jhowell@setlifflaw.com) at 804-377-1263 or Steve Setliff (ssetliff@setlifflaw.com) at 804-377-1261.



Stephen Setliff



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