

THE LOG

December 2021 / January 2022

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Letter from the President

“What a long strange trip its been” – Grateful Dead

A typical conversation at the end of every year is, “what do you think next year will be like”. This forecast combines current market conditions with an educated guess, but that is just it, it is mainly a guess. These conversations have popped up lately like Christmas lights on houses and everyone takes a look at their crystal ball and makes their guess. With people busy, everyone I have talked to expects at least the start of the year to be good. I would like to go back a year and see what everyone thought at this time last year. While there was an uptick late in 2020 showing signs the start of 2021 could be busy, I don't think anyone would have predicted the 1st half of 2021 to go like it did. Labor shortages, supply shortages, price increases, it was a market I am not sure anyone had experienced prior. While most anticipate a good year in 2022, I am not sure the start of 2021 will be repeated.

After having to cancel the 2021 winter meeting, the 2022 meeting is back in session in Green Bay. I am hoping to see a lot of members there where everyone can share their forecasts on the lumber markets of 2022. Two things I am almost certain of at the meeting, the weather outside will be cold while the auction inside is hot. See you in Green Bay!

Rob Paradise
Devereaux Sawmill
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**LAKE STATES LUMBER ASSOCIATION, INC. . .
PROVIDING LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATION TO ASSURE
THE SUSTAINABILITY OF OUR FOREST RESOURCES**



**LSLA CALENDAR
OF EVENTS**

Winter Meeting January 19-21, 2022
Tundra Lodge Resort
Green Bay, WI

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“RISING COSTS AND LOWER LEVELS OF SERVICE, ATTEND OUR JANUARY MEETING”

There is a very rare opportunity coming this January 19th and 20th at our LSLA Winter meeting, in Green Bay. Transportation costs are a huge component of doing business in the forest products industry. We haul logs into our sawmills. We ship our lumber, wood chips, and bark out. A few years ago we used to ship our raw railroad ties by train out of the rail siding in Collins, Wisconsin. We also brought in logs by train. The rail siding in Collins closed as being unsafe, so we started to use the siding in Valders. That rail siding was also closed. Then we switched to the rail in Hilbert. That was closed. With no close rail options available, we now ship virtually everything by truck.

Over the years I have participated in many different meetings with industry, railroad representatives, state and local government officials. The hope goal was to improve the level of rail service. Rail shipping, when it is available, can offer a lot of benefits. One train of cars can move huge volumes of product. It can do it very efficiently and it takes that much burden off our highways and our overwhelmed trucking system.

While I learned a few things at these meetings with industry, railroad, state and local officials, I never saw any improvement in our rail shipping. Just the opposite. Rail sidings continue to be empty; more items are forced to be shipped by truck. Transportation costs continue to rise, making us less and less competitive.

This January 19th and 20th at our annual LSLA Winter meeting we have an opportunity to tell our rail shipping experiences to someone else. There is a federal agency who oversees the railroad industry. They are called the Surface Transportation Board (STB). The STB has the authority to actually make changes in the railroad industry. The STB is sending a representative to our LSLA Winter meeting in Green Bay. They will do a short presentation on who they are and what they do, followed by a listening session. If you are or someone you know ships, or used to ship by railroad, this is a chance to tell your story to the STB, and hope for improvement. Please attend this meeting. Thank you.

Larry Krueger

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Red and Eastern White: A Tale of Two Pines in the Upper Midwest

**By Alex Anderson and Scott Lyon, Forest Products Specialists,
WI Dept of Natural Resources**

Historically, eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*) was used by Native Americans to construct dugout canoes, for medicinal purposes and, in a bind, as a food source. In the early 1600s, New England settlers began using white pine logs as ship masts. As demand grew—due to the lightness, softness and strength that white pine provides—many of these masts were exported across the globe. The lightness of the wood also made it a relatively easy species to log, allowing it to be skidded and floated down waterways with less trouble than heavier species. In addition to ship masts, eastern white pine lumber began to grow in popularity among the settlers, who utilized white pine to build homes, furniture and millwork. The Lake States region was also a significant producer of white pine shingles used on roofs across the United States.

Today, eastern white pine is sawed into boards, kiln dried, planed and sold to markets ranging from cabinetry, flooring and furniture to millwork (including window, doors, paneling and moldings) and toys. Since eastern white pine is lightweight, machines well, has good strength relative to its weight and paints nicely, it is a common softwood used in furniture making. Furthermore, some paper mills use eastern white pine pulpwood and chips for paper production.

In Wisconsin, eastern white pine is now primarily used in log home and timber frame construction, wall paneling and pulp and paper production. With recent price increases for lumber across the U.S., eastern white pine has gained the attention of the pallet and container manufacturers, who typically purchase southern yellow pine lumber for use in pallet components. White pine has also seen an increased demand in export markets, specifically in Pakistan where it is growing in demand, due to its popularity among end users. Consumers perceive eastern white pine's grain pattern as similar to a popular native softwood species commonly found in Pakistan.

At the end of what is now known as the cutover—where eastern white pine was harvested at unsustainable rates during the mid-to-late 19th century—the re-

source was significantly depleted. In lieu of eastern white pine, red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) has become the most widely utilized softwood species in Wisconsin. In the early 20th century (in particular, during the height of the tree-planting efforts of the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s), red pine plantations became abundant. Today, red pine plantations account for more than 75% of red pine volume in Wisconsin.

Though red pine and eastern white pine each account for about 8% of the volume of Wisconsin's total forest resource, red pine is used more frequently in the Great Lakes region at this point. Red pine is primarily used to create dimension lumber, along with timber bridge construction, fencing, treated utility and fence poles, pallet components, house logs and pulpwood.



Pine River Bridge, Richland Center, WI. Made from locally manufactured red pine glued laminated timbers.

In most of the upper Midwest, the Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association (NELMA) is the rule-writing agency for eastern white pine lumber and the grading authority for the spruce-pine-fir grouping of species, which includes red pine and other commercially utilized softwood lumber species grown in the northeast and Great Lakes regions. In addition, eastern white pine and red pine fit nicely within the parameters of Wisconsin's Local-use Lumber Grading

Continued on page 10

Winter Meeting 2022

January 19-21; Green Bay, WI

The 2022 Winter Meeting is just a few weeks away! The dates are Wednesday, January 19—Friday, January 21, 2022. Send in your registrations now! (Registration form is available on our website at www.lsla.com)

A Wednesday night Welcome Reception on January 19th sponsored by Granite Valley Forest Products and featuring Hors d'oeuvres and Open Bar will kick off the Winter Meeting. This will be a great opportunity to meet and network with colleagues, suppliers and customers, as well as any special guest that may attend. You will not want to miss out on this opportunity!

Thursday will offer informative and helpful sessions, as well as an opportunity to meet and interact with the speakers. Thursday evening will lead into dinner, awards and our annual live auction and bucket raffle to help fund our membership in the Hardwood Federation. Friday morning will continue with the Board of Directors meeting. You won't want to miss any part of the meeting!

EARLY REGISTRATION (deadline January 2)

Members: \$175/person attending all or any portion of the event; \$100 for spouse/family member.

Non-Members: \$225/person attending all or any portion of the event.

REGISTRATION AFTER JANUARY 2 AND AT THE EVENT

Members: \$185/person attending all or any portion of the event; \$110 for spouse/family member.

Non-Members: \$275/person attending all or any portion of the event.

Registration Area open Wednesday, Jan. 19, 5 pm—7 pm and Thursday, Jan. 20, 6:30 am—5 pm.

HOTEL INFORMATION

Tundra Lodge Resort & Conference Center
865 Lombardi Ave
Green Bay, WI 54304
1-920-405-8700

- Contact the hotel for lodging reservations and ask for the **Lake States Lumber Association** block of rooms.
- Room rates: Single/double—\$119.95. (All room rates subject to state and local taxes.)
- **Block of rooms on hold until January 3, 2022.**
- For those who are flying into Austin Straubel International Airport, a courtesy hotel shuttle from the airport to the hotel is available by contacting the hotel front desk. Call 920-405-8700 and give your flight information to schedule the shuttle beforehand, or call when you land!
- Parking is free at the hotel parking lot
- **The water park will not be open for use during the week.**

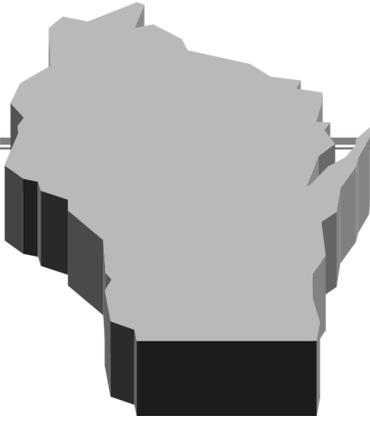
EIGHTH ANNUAL LIVE AUCTION

Our eighth annual live auction will take place Thursday evening after the dinner. The past years have been fun, and this year will be even more so! We are looking for donated items to auction off — such as Packer tickets, fishing trips, dinner certificates, resort certificates, specialty wood items, wood flooring, etc. You are only limited by your imagination! The last Winter Meeting's auction was a tremendous success, and we'd like to see this auction top it! If you have any items to donate please contact Dave Schroeder (gmc@jefnet.com), Jim Maltese (jmaltese@stellajones.com) or the LSLA office (lsla@lsla.com).

FOR THE COMPLETE SCHEDULE, REGISTRATON FORM AND OTHER INFORMATION, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.LSLA.COM.

Wisconsin Legislative Report

By Amy Boyer, WI Legislative Consultant



Michigan Configured Trucks Senate Bill 625 and Assembly Bill 642, sponsored by Sen. Jerry Petrowski (R-Marathon) and Rep. Calvin Callahan (R-Tomahawk) modify the permit for certain

oversize or overweight vehicles transporting forest products. These companion bills have had public hearings in both houses. LSLA as well as the Great Lakes Timber Producers Association and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation testified in support of the bills. If the bill is enacted the following routes will be allowed to run the Michigan configured trucks:

- STH 64, from USH 45 in the city of Antigo to

USH 141 in Marinette County.

- STH 64, from USH 141 in Marinette County to USH 41 in the city of Marinette.
- USH 141, from the village of Crivitz to CTH S in Oconto County.
- USH 41, from the town of Abrams to the city of Marinette.
- USH 8, from USH 45 in Oneida County to a point four-tenths of a mile west.
- USH 2 into Douglas County to North 5th Street in the City of Superior.
- STH 54 in the City of New London to the junction of STH 54 and CTH S in Outagamie County.

We anticipate this legislation to be addressed by the Assembly and Senate in early 2022.

MI DNR Utilization & Marketing Program Update

This fall, Michigan DNR U&M staff collaborated with Michigan State University and other partners to host a one-day dry kiln workshop, a biochar webinar series, and provided on-going support for MSU's mass timber outreach and education program and webinar series. The DNR and MSU Forestry Department hosted a Small Dry Kiln Business Workshop on MSU's campus on October 26th, 2021, with 38 participants. The one-day workshop focused on dry kiln operation and business management for small- to medium-sized companies, and included a tour of a local urban wood sawmill and dry kiln operation – Cross Cut Lumber in Portland, Michigan. Our thanks to Harry Watt, Extension Specialist from North Carolina State University for teaching the session, to MSU for hosting, and to Aaron Cross for hosting our tour of his facility!

The MI DNR U&M program also provided a subgrant to MSU Department of Horticulture to support the launch of the Great Lakes Biochar Network and the Network's biochar webinar series this fall, led by Drs. Brooke Comer and Jessica Miesel. Biochar is essentially charcoal created from biomass feedstocks that can be used as a soil amendment, in activated form for water filtration systems, and other uses. It can be produced from timber harvest and sawmill res-

idues, as well as agricultural crop residues. The Network aims to serve as a clearing house for information on biochar use and production, and hosted three webinars on biochar in October, November and December 2021. The webinars topics were an Introduction to the Great Lakes Biochar Network and Biochar Basics; Production of Biochar; and Economics of Biochar and Feedstock Availability. Recordings of the presentations are available at www.canr.msu.edu/biochar. Be sure to check the GLBN website for up-dates on additional webinars scheduled for this spring!

MI DNR is also planning to host a pair of log grading workshops this spring at dates to be determined, and will support a one-day wood science workshop for forest products industry professionals that will be taught and hosted by Michigan Technological University at Kirtland Community College's Grayling campus, dates to be determined. U&M staff are, as always, interested in supporting and facilitating training sessions or workshops that are of interest to the forest products industry in Michigan – if you have a suggestion for a workshop that you'd like to see in Michigan, please send us a note! Happy Holidays – Dave Neumann, neumannd@michigan.gov and Brenda Haskill, haskillb@michigan.gov.

Michigan Legislative Report

By Scott Everett, MI Legislative Consultant



Lawmakers Hoping To Get To \$1B In Economic Development Fund

As of this writing, Legislative leaders are expected to reach a final deal before year end on an economic development fund that's in the neighborhood of \$1 billion. The bill is expected to be tied in with a beefy year-end supplemental spending bill that Republicans and Democrats have stuffed in. House and Senate leaders believe they need to throw a big, bold, round number on the table to show corporations that they are serious about doing what it takes to land the next big fish in the electric vehicle space. At this point, \$1 billion is the goal.

Effective 1/11/22:

- Michigan's minimum wage will increase to \$9.87/hour.
- The 85% rate for minors aged 16 and 17 increases to \$8.39/hour.
- Tipped employees rates of pay increases to \$3.75/hour.
- The training wage of \$4.25/hour for newly hired employees ages 16 to 19 for their first 90 days of employment remains unchanged.

Auto Insurance Refunds, \$400 Per Vehicle

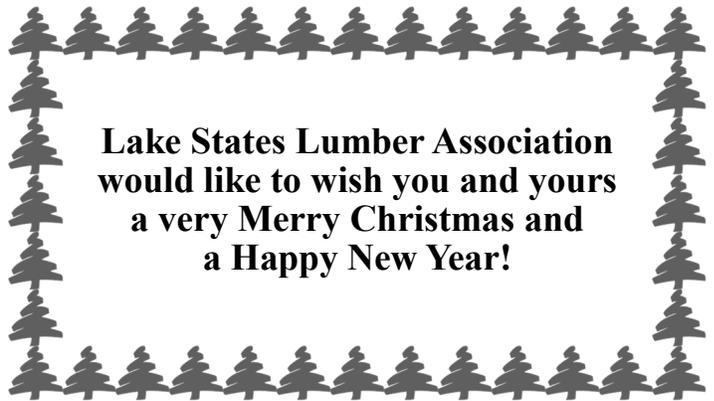
The Michigan Catastrophic Claims Association will refund \$3 billion of its \$5 billion projected surplus, resulting in refunds of \$400 per vehicle. The Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services (DIFS) launched a consumer FAQ page to inform insurers and consumers of the timeline and other requirements for the refund. According to the FAQ:

All vehicles that were insured as of 11:59 p.m. on Oct. 31, 2021 are eligible to receive a refund if the vehicle was covered by a policy that meets the minimum insurance requirements for operating a vehicle on Michigan roads. DIFS will be sending the funds to insurers by March 9, 2022 and all insurers will be responsible for issuing checks or deposits to eligible policyholders within 60 days.

Michigan Topping Country In COVID Deaths

Michigan averaged more than 100 COVID-19 deaths this past week for the second straight week, putting it

top in the country in this category, according to The New York Times. The Times has Michigan's average daily death toll at 1.15 per 100,000 people. Michigan is tops in the country with 47 people per 100,000 people in the hospital with COVID-19 over the last 14 days, according to The Times.



**Lake States Lumber Association
would like to wish you and yours
a very Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year!**

2022 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership renewals for 2022 were mailed out in November to the primary contact person listed for each member company (unless we were notified to send it elsewhere). **Dues must be paid before the Winter Meeting**, so please be sure to return your membership renewal and dues payment before January 12. If you can't locate the renewal form that was mailed to your company, contact the LSLA office (lsla@lsla.com) to request a replacement copy.

You won't want to miss the important information that is sent out in *The Log* and in periodic emails. Not to mention the members' discount to our annual Golf Outing, Winter Meeting, and educational courses. And of course, there's the networking that gives each member an opportunity to grow their business.

If you would like to nominate a company for membership in LSLA, contact our office and we will send them a membership invitation packet. (LSLA@LSLA.COM)

HARDWOOD FEDERATION UPDATE

BY RICK DEGEN

The Hardwood Federation has been closely following the progress of two major pieces of legislation that have been tagged as top priorities for the Biden Administration; one signed into law, one still being debated. Below are summaries of both.

Infrastructure Crosses the Finish Line

On Monday, November 15, President Biden signed his signature infrastructure package, the “Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.” The legislation was approved by the U.S. Senate on a bipartisan vote in August and passed the House on a vote of 228-206 late the previous Friday night. Thirteen (13) Republicans voted for the bill; six (6) Democrats voted against. The bill includes over a half trillion dollars in new spending on roads, ports, bridges, and rail, among other priorities. Total spending over five (5) years is estimated to be around \$1.2 trillion.

Although the Infrastructure deal has been signed into law, there is still much work to be done to write and promulgate the rules to implement the approved program funding. The Hardwood Federation will look for opportunities to engage with lawmakers, their staff and department officials to participate in this process.

“Build Back Better” Clears Partisan House Vote, Faces Uncertain Future in Senate

On the heels of having passed the infrastructure legislation, on November 19 House Democrats finally adopted the Build Back Better legislation (also known as the Reconciliation Bill). This massive bill, more than 2,000 pages long, carries a price tag of nearly \$2 trillion dollars, although long term cost estimates are much higher. The bill covers everything from childcare and early childhood education to electric vehicles to forest management.

As expected, the reconciliation bill passed the House along party lines, with a single Democrat, Jared Golden of Maine, casting a vote against the bill along with all House Republicans. Although the bill has cleared a major hurdle with the House vote, the largest challenges for congressional Democrats remain in the Senate where passage is uncertain, even after major revisions. Some Senate leaders have expressed hope

that a deal can be struck by early December, although negotiations could drag on past that deadline.

The Hardwood Federation is closely tracking provisions in this legislation directly related to the Hardwood industry including:

- Research funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture related to sustainable forestry methods, maximizing carbon sequestration on federal lands and life cycle analysis of wood products.
- Funding for initiatives through the U.S. Department of Agriculture that protect older and more mature forests in the National Forest System.
- Grant programs that support private landowners entering voluntary carbon market programs.

As with any legislation of this size and scope, there are positives and negatives. For the hardwood industry, the potential of additional dollars to research and document the carbon storage benefits of wood products is a positive. However, there are concerns that many of the forestry provisions are focused on the growing and maintenance of trees with little reference or attention to the value of harvesting or the benefits of the forest products markets to forest health or carbon sequestration goals.

In order to fund this multi-trillion-dollar proposal, authors have identified a number of tax increases that will impact hardwood businesses. The bill’s so-called “book tax,” for example, poses a major challenge to many small, medium, and family-owned businesses by imposing a tax based on “financial statement income.” This accounting gimmick would undermine long-standing accounting flexibility that the hardwood industry relies on, including accelerated depreciation of equipment and net operating losses.

We also remain concerned with other revenue raisers in the package and have communicated opposition to them with Members of Congress. Our focus has been on provisions raising tax rates on small and medium sized business that are organized as S-Corporations or other pass-through structures. The current tax rate for these businesses under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is 29.6 percent. The House’s version of the Build Back

Continued on page 10

The Real American Hardwood Coalition Update (RAHC) Get Real with us!



The Real American Hardwood Coalition share updated news and information with everyone in person.

has some exciting news to share going into the New Year, we have recently partnered with **Canvas Research** to collaborate on our consumer-based [website](#).

Canvas will help us identify and develop ways to drive users to our site and create a consumer-based portal to promote real American hardwoods. Canvas has significant experience with commodity groups including the U.S. milk industry. We are eager to work with them into the New Year.

Additionally, the RAHC Board of directors are exploring how to improve real American hardwoods' presence in "big box" retail stores. Research shows, this is where most consumers begin their purchasing journey. The board has found that this is a multi-year, multi-level process. The board will also continue to research options with smaller regional chains where our industry already has existing relationships.

What Can You Do?

Download *and* use the Real American Hardwood Logo on your company material. It is **FREE** to use and only takes a few minutes to [download](#). All LSLA members have free access to the logo. There are already a handful of hardwood industry companies throughout the nation using the logo on their products such as lumber, trucks, and marketing tools.

RAHC Facts

- 26 Associations are actively engaged in the Coalition
- Over 50 hardwood companies, suppliers and trade publications have contributed financially, including some from LSLA (*Thank you!*)
- Ohio has raised over \$100,000 with Superior Hardwoods issuing a fundraising match challenge to the entire industry in the state (other states are following suit)

Executive members from the RAHC will be presenting at the LSLA Winter meeting and are eager to

Have a Happy New Year!

Real American Hardwood Executive Member

Jim Maltese

HARDWOOD FEDERATION UPDATE

(Cont'd)

Better Act would add a 3.8 percent Net Investment Income Tax (NIIT) to S-Corporation and partnership income earned by active owners of the business. Currently, active owners of these businesses do not pay the NIIT on their business' profits. This expanded tax applies to owners with incomes exceeding \$400,000 (single) and \$500,000 (joint), but for business shares held in trust, the expanded tax applies to income over just \$13,000.

In addition to the NIIT, the bill includes a new surtax on all forms of adjusted gross income of 5 percent on income over \$10 million and 8 percent on income over \$25 million. For family businesses with taxable trusts, those thresholds are \$200,000 and \$500,000, respectively.

WI DNR

(Cont'd)

Certification program. The purpose of this certification is to support the use of locally-milled dimension lumber in one-and two-family residential construction.

Red pine and eastern white pine can grow on similar sites, but red pine is significantly more forgiving in sites that have a heavy sand component. Red pine also sheds its lower limbs (i.e. self-prunes) more effectively than eastern white pine in a plantation setting, so the trees often produce cleaner lumber with fewer knots, especially near the outside of the log.

There are differences in the wood from the trees, too. Eastern white pine, as its name implies, is generally a very pale, whitish hue, while red pine—also as its name implies—is typically more much reddish in color, though it also appears to have orange and pink hues at times, too. Furthermore, red pine is more than 30% heavier than eastern white pine, which helps explain the popularity of red pine as a building material over eastern white pine, given red pine's superior design values; however, clear white pine lumber utilized in secondary applications can fetch higher prices than white used in dimension lumber, anyway. The upper Midwest is fortunate to have a vibrant forest resource with significant volumes of both red and eastern white

Adding all of these components up, the tax rate for small and medium sized businesses jumps up to 41.4 percent—a sizable increase for businesses across the country that employ over half of all the private sector workforce.

The Hardwood Federation continues to work closely with its business allies to prevent these measures from becoming law.

It is sure to be a busy holiday season in Washington, D.C. and unfortunately, not the kind of busy we usually hope for during the month of December. The Hardwood Federation team will keep you apprised of developments related to the Build Back Better legislation...and will let you know when it is time to make your voice heard!

pine. Both species play an important role in lumber production for both structural and decorative elements.

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