

THE LOG

April / May 2022

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Letter from the President

There has been a great deal of speculation and anticipation as to what the lumber markets will look like as we move deeper into 2022.

First, in speaking with many of you, the long winter season resulted in favorable log inventories to sustain production through spring break up.

Second, the lumber markets remain strong at this time. While labor and materials costs are high (and in short supply) and interest rates begin to creep up, the demand for housing continues. People want to take advantage of the low interest rate environment and contractors are busier than ever with many booking out for a year and beyond for new home construction.

Third, the Governor of Wisconsin signed in to law extended routes for Michigan configured trucks. With the cost of fuel and limited labor, we will now be able to haul more weight and gain efficiencies. This is a tremendous benefit to our industry and we must continue to advocate for additional routes as it helps us all.

Fourth, the war in the Ukraine has resulted in a significant disruption to the industry. With Russia being the largest exporter of lumber in the world, the sanctions imposed have resulted in wood products not being available at this time. This disruption may work in our favor by increasing demand for US products. However, the lack of Russian wood products could also cause consumers and other industries to seek alternative products, e.g., composite decking, luxury vinyl, etc. It is imperative that we continue to promote the benefits of wood products derived from sustainable forestry practices.

Fifth, with the purchase of Verso by the Swedish company BillerudKorsnas as of March 31, it will be interesting to see what the strategic direction of the company will be and how that direction will impact the forest products industry.

Continued on page 8



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

**LSLA CALENDAR
 OF EVENTS**

Risk Management Workshop
 May 6
 Antigo, WI

2022 Annual Golf Outing
 July 20-21
 Spring Green, WI

*Watch for details on the Golf Outing and other
 upcoming events*



Back Row (left to right): Pete Johnson (Granite Valley Forest Products), Col-
 ten Heagle (Choice Insurance), Steve Peters (Rockland Flooring), Kirby
 Kendrick (Kendrick Forest Products), Kyle Jeske (Richardson Hardwoods)

Front Row (left to right): Nikki Loehr, (LSLA Administrative Coordinator),
 James Maltese (Stella-Jones Corp.), Rob Paradise (Devereaux Sawmill), Rick
 Luokkala (Performance Pallet Corp.)

Not Pictured: Fred “Butch” Fisher (AJD Forest Products), Jennifer Lu (WI
 DATCP), Peter Connor (WD Flooring)

Photo courtesy of Zach Miller, Miller Publications.

The Log is published bi-monthly by the Lake States Lumber Association, Inc. For address corrections or to contribute news articles, opinion pages, or advertising, contact us at:

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Hardwood Federation Update

By: Dana Lee Cole, Executive Director Hardwood Federation

In Washington, Springtime is for Appropriations

The power of the purse is the one major responsibility that the Constitution delegates to Congress. All too often, it seems like about the only legislation that voters can count on to make it across the finish line during the year. Although appropriations – the process through which Congress funds the federal government – becomes more complex as the debate moves forward, annual congressional spending begins in a relatively straight-forward manner. Historically, the President kicks things off by releasing a proposed, annual budget in late January or early February. That said, the President’s budget is not a formal legislative proposal and merely serves as a benchmark to outline the Administration’s priorities, from which Congress may, or may not, take its cues.

In March, through the powerful appropriations committees, Congress will typically begin to draft 12 different appropriations bills to fund all federal agencies for the upcoming fiscal year. For example, most USDA funding begins with the “Agriculture, Rural Development, and Federal Drug Administration (FDA) Appropriations” bill. Over the next few months, each lawmaker may submit specific requests to the appropriations committees to fund or even clarify the parameters of specific programs important to their constituents. Any member of Congress can submit these requests, for which the appropriations committees develop specific forms to expedite the process.

As the committees finalize their bills and the congressional calendar approaches the August recess, and the end of the federal government’s fiscal year on September 30, chaos often ensues. At this time Congress may combine various packages from the appropriations committees into so-called “omnibus” bills. The legislative logjam, which is rarely sorted out by Labor Day, predictably runs up against the September 30 deadline when funding for the current fiscal year lapses. This could leave many federal agencies effectively “shut down.”

To avoid a “shut down,” Congress inevitably passes a “continuing resolution” to buy more time to hammer out a final spending package for the upcoming fiscal year. All throughout this process, the Federation

meets with members of Congress, often leadership and appropriations committee members, to urge them to focus on priorities that will create an optimal business climate for the hardwood industry.

The Hardwood Federation consistently has several items in the appropriations process on which we advocate. As part of the process that just concluded on the FY 2022 omnibus appropriations measure, we were able to secure reauthorization of our long-supported policy directive in existing law that promotes federal recognition of the carbon neutral nature of forest-based biomass energy that we use in our mills. This will once again be on the table for consideration in the upcoming appropriations bill for 2023.

Another area where we have been active is in funding for the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program. FIA is a tool used by the U.S. Forest Service to maintain an accurate picture of our country’s private and federal forest lands. Specifically, FIA data provide critical status and trend information to resource managers, policy makers, investors and the public through an annual inventory report that is quite comprehensive. FIA reports on acres of forest cover and location, as well as species-specific tree stand analysis and tree size and health. In addition, these reports assess total tree growth, mortality and removals by harvest as well as wood production utilization in various products and forest land ownership. As the federal government continues to sharpen its focus on climate policy and green house gas mitigation, FIA data will be increasingly relied upon to inform policy about the health of our nation’s forests and their potential as a climate solution. The Hardwood Federation team has partnered with our forestry and forest product association allies here in D.C. on robust funding for FIA so that it can continue to provide this critical analysis. We will be doing so again in this upcoming appropriations effort.

Another area of funding in which we have been active is on Lacey Act implementation. The Hardwood Federation was one of the leading organizations securing enactment of the Lacey Act amendments to the Farm Bill back in 2008 that added wood products to the purview of this law.

Continued on page 7

New Forest Products Specialist in Dodgeville

By Collin Buntrock, WI DNR Forest Products Team Leader



I am very pleased to announce that Brian Zweifel has accepted the statewide Forest Products Specialist position in Dodgeville. Brian's first day was Feb. 14.

Brian brings a diverse background in forestry and partnership development and will play a key role in forest products training, business and market development regionally

and across Wisconsin. He has worked as a DNR forester and consulting forester and has experience with international marketing and forest products extension.

He is excited to bring his experience as a field forester and forest products extension to the Wisconsin DNR's Forest Products Services team to support, promote and grow Wisconsin's forest industry.

Brian can be reached by phone at (715) 605-2615 or email Brian.Zweifel@wisconsin.gov.

Submit a Log Article

LSLA members are welcome to submit articles that are of interest to our membership. Contact our office at LSLA@LSLA.COM if you are interested in

submitting an article or if you have member news of general interest to our industry.

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



RAH Board Gets Consumer Site Preview

We all know that hardwoods give a home style, class and an air of affluence. We know they provide enduring

beauty and a reflection of the owner's personal taste. And we know they add warmth. But is that enough to sway a consumer from substitute products that seek to provide the same look?

That's the million-dollar question on which the future of hardwood product sales hinges. And when we are talking promotion to a world-wide audience, it literally takes a million-dollar answer.

Fundraising for the RAH campaign is underway, and over two dozen hardwood-related trade associations have exceeded their goals for contributing to the program. The bills have been paid for the research phases, and almost completely paid to the world-class marketing firm Canvas United for the development of the all-important consumer-facing website.

This site will be the cornerstone of the Real American Hardwood campaign's foundation. It will need to inspire imagination, evoke emotion, provide education and spark consumers to choose hardwoods for their projects.

To do this, Canvas is looking to reach consumers via two powerful new angles. First, they want to make hardwoods cool, especially to the younger generations of buyers with purchasing power and a modern sense of environmental responsibility.

Secondly, they want to touch the hearts and consciousness of all consumers, by portraying hardwoods as the healthiest choice. They want consumers to understand that the choices they make MATTER, to those who matter the most to them.

Using powerful visual imagery peppered with few words, they want to augment the natural look and feel of hardwoods with a message that your family, your children, and even your pets are better off walking, playing or resting on a floor made of hardwoods than any other material.

The site will slowly peel back the layers to tell the story, just like the rings of a tree tell the story of its life. They will be as subtle as the "b" in subtle in how they promote the environmental advantages of hardwoods while pointing out the shortcomings of competitive materials. They'll make the consumers understand that they are choosing the most stylish and healthiest product for their families, while making them feel good about their choices for the planet's future.

In short, they are going to deliver what we have asked for. Now, the question is whether or not the industry's businesses, at all levels, will like what they see and step up to give the campaign "staying power."

The associations who have collaborated to take on the project have pushed all their chips in to get this right. It's the hardwood version of "Field of Dreams." They have built it, but will the members come?

RAH Executive Team

Need more issues of *The Log*? Send extra copies to other people or divisions within your company for only \$50/year. It's the best way to ensure everyone is up on LSLA news. Contact us at 920-884-0409 or email at lsla@lsla.com.

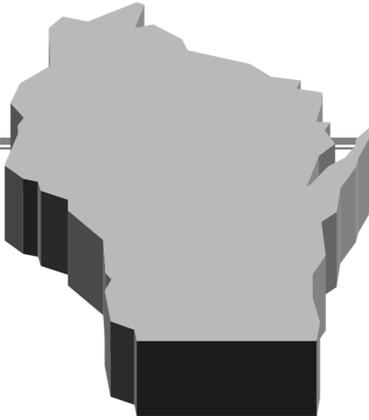


LSLA Facebook Page

LSLA has is now on social media! Connect with us on Facebook [@lakestateslumberassociation](https://www.facebook.com/lakestateslumberassociation). Have something to share? Share your posts with our page or email us information to post.

Wisconsin Legislative Report

By Amy Boyer, WI Legislative Consultant



Wisconsin Supreme Court sides with Republicans on new maps

Legislative Republicans scored a major victory when the Wisconsin Supreme Court reversed its

earlier decision and adopted new maps drawn by Republicans. States must draw new election maps once a decade after each census to ensure that legislative districts have equal populations. The decision on Friday, April 15 comes three weeks after the US Supreme Court struck down legislative maps drawn by Democrat Governor Tony Evers, which the Wisconsin Supreme Court chose in early March. In the latest decision, Supreme Court Justice Brian Hagedorn reversed his earlier position and sided with the court's conservatives on the adoption of the new maps. Under the new maps, Republicans are heavily favored in both houses and could be within reach of supermajorities in each house. In the State Senate, Republicans

currently hold a 21-12 majority and, in the Assembly, a 61-38 majority. Under the new maps, 23 of the 33 Senate seats lean Republican and 63 of the 99 Assembly seats lean Republican. Even if challenged, the new maps are all but certain as nomination papers began circulating on April 15 and Wisconsin's primary election will be held on August 9.

Overweight Vehicles

Governor Tony Evers has signed Senate Bill 625 into law as 2021 Wisconsin Act 171. This bill, authored by Sen. Jerry Petrowski (R-Marathon) and co-authored by Rep. Calvin Callahan (R-Tomahawk) allows for increased truck weight limits for vehicles transporting forest products in Wisconsin. These proposed routes will add to the current network of roads in Northern Wisconsin that will allow for the use of "Michigan Configured" log trucks.



Upcoming LSLA Education Training Courses

Risk Management Workshop for the Lumber Industry

May 6, 2022 9:00am—2:30pm
North Central Technical College Wood Technology Center of Excellence
312 Forrest Avenue
Antigo, WI

Lumber Grading Class

August 2-4, 2022
North Central Technical College Wood Technology Center of Excellence
312 Forrest Avenue
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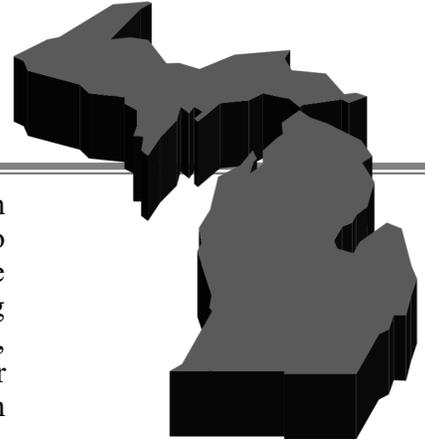
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Michigan Legislative Report

By Scott Everett, MI Legislative Consultant



Local Roads Getting \$750M More

County and local roads would see a new \$750 million injection under a House budget plan that cleared subcommittee in April. The influx of \$481.5 million for counties and \$268.5 million for cities and villages comes as the state continues to see record budget surpluses amid the federal government's post-COVID spending plans.

MDOT To Repair, Replace 73 Bridges

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) announced a list of 59 bridges that could be next up to get fixed in 2023 as part of the second phase of the bridge bundling program, along with 14 more bridges this year.

Whitmer Vetoes Election Bills

Gov. Gretchen WHITMER vetoed her 9th and 10th election-related bills during the 2021-22 legislative session. Under HB 4127 registered voters with un-

known dates of birth would have needed to provide proof of age and identity, including a birth certificate, driver's license or state identification card to the local clerk.

HB 4128 would have required clerks to verify the registration of citizens who haven't voted since the November 2000 general election.

LSLA Board Meeting/Fish Fry – ALL MEMBERS INVITED

The LSLA Board of Directors will be meeting in Lansing on May 18th. Following the board meeting, starting at 12 Noon-- (EST) will be a fish fry with all legislators and staff invited. All LSLA Members are also invited to the board meeting, fish fry or both. Wednesday May 18, 10 AM EST (LSLA Board Meeting) Noon – 3 PM EST (Fish Fry). 322 West Ottawa Street, Lansing.

Hardwood Federation Update (cont'd)

We did so then out of concern about illegally harvested wood around the world being dumped into the U.S. market and harming domestic hardwood producers. That concern persists today, which is why we continue to advocate that APHIS—the U.S. enforcement arm for Lacey—receive ample funds in the appropriations process so that it can continue to perform its critical enforcement role.

Speaking of trade, we also keep our eyes on funding for the Market Access and Foreign Market Development programs as part of the appropriations process. These two programs—which form the backbone of our industry's market promotion efforts overseas—received mandatory funding as part of the last Farm Bill. This was a big win for our sector. What this means is that funding for these two is not generally subjected to the whims of the annual appropriations process. We say “generally” because, while they do bear the mandatory funding tag, that does not inoculate them completely from efforts to withdraw funding during the appropriations process. Unfortunately,

these two highly effective programs do have their detractors in Congress that typically try to strip funding from them on spurious claims that they represent “corporate welfare.” That is why we remain close to the process and kick into action whenever amendments surface to defund export promotion programs. Our success rate in defending funding for MAP and FMD is 100 percent and we hope to keep that record unblemished this year.

And finally, we remain very close to the appropriations process annually to both defend against and promote policy riders that impact our sector. Depending on the popular issues of the day, these riders can range from environmental policy, including the ever-controversial Waters of the U.S. rule, to provisions opposing various Endangered Species Act listings. No matter the year or the appropriations cycle, there is always the need to stay close to the action in the appropriations committees as much of the public policy development at the federal level is made within the confines of these panels.

Recruiting and Retaining Employees – How Does Your Benefits Program Help or Hurt?

By Shay Sherfinski R & R Insurance

Did you know it costs an organization nearly 20% of an employee's annual salary to replace a current employee? The costs of reviewing applications, processing candidates, conducting interviews, training and purchasing equipment for new hires aren't only monetary—it also costs time and lost productivity.

Per the 2021 Wisconsin Center for Manufacturing & Productivity report, 69% of manufacturing companies who provide health insurance expect those costs to rise. In addition, organizations with over 50 employees indicate their #1 and #2 concerns are finding and attracting employees and keeping qualified employees respectively.

So how does this apply to your employer sponsored benefits program? Below are a few of my recommendations:

- Evaluate cost control measures and options within your health plan offerings
- Educate employees to become smarter consumers of their health insurance

Letter From the President (cont'd)

Sixth, will the efforts of the federal government to release oil from reserves result in lower fuel costs. We will have to wait and see what impact this will have. Let's remain optimistic.

And finally, seventh, despite the calendar telling us that spring has arrived, there is significant speculation by the robins as to whether or not this true. The old saying is that once the robins arrive it will only snow three more times. By my count we are well beyond three snowfalls. What might you ask does the humble robin have to do with lumber industry? Despite being snowed on more than they should be this year, the robins are resilient. Just like our industry.

Pete Johnson
LSLA President
Granite Valley Forest Products
pjohnson@aaa-hardwoods.com

- Promote engagement and growth in your culture

Some of the most common reasons employees leave their job include stagnation, pay and workplace culture. If an employee does leave, conducting an exit interview can be very helpful. The information from an exit interview can provide what are the areas of focus to improve overall retention. Consider completing the Employee Retention Scorecard to get a pulse on your organization's turn over risk.

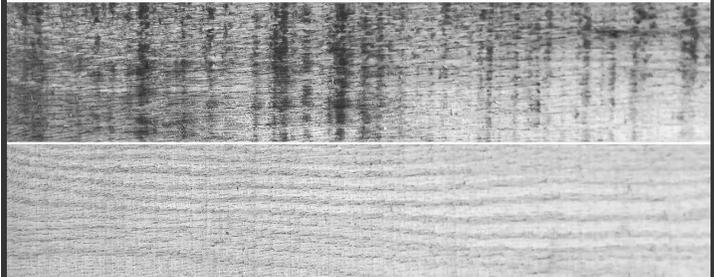
As the demand for lumber and the costs associated continue to dip and spike, it is important for organizations to ensure the culture is rewarding and the benefit offerings are competitive. Having both in place strengthens an organization across all facets.

If you would like a copy of the 2021 Wisconsin Manufacturing Report or a sample Employee Retention Scorecard that I referenced above, please feel free to contact me at shay.sherfinski@rrins.com.



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Educating the Next Generation of Stewards

by Cheryl Todea, Trees For Tomorrow



On February 22, 1944, nine paper mills organized Trees For Tomorrow (TFT) to help provide a local self-sustaining wood supply and encourage landowners to plant trees and

practice sustainable management techniques. Over the next 20 years, Trees For Tomorrow distributed and machine planted 23 million trees, prepared management plans for 370,000 acres of private woodlands, marked and supervised the sale of 400,000 cords of wood, and began providing education programs to landowners, teachers, and students.

While gone are the days of land management and landowner assistance, TFT now offers a variety of programming for community groups, schools, families, adults and just about anyone interested in spending time in nature and learning more about sustainable management.

“With the support today of groups such as the Lake States Lumber Association, the priority continues to be programming for school-aged students. Participating schools can choose from a variety of program themes and experiences including day or multi-day long programs,” Trees For Tomorrow’s Executive Director, Cheryl Todea explained. “Students become scientists at Trees For Tomorrow – making predictions, collecting data, and answering questions all while exploring our Northern lakes, wetlands, forests, and fields. Our ultimate goal is to provide the information and experience, so our students leave with a better understanding of what it takes to manage our natural resources. We are inspiring students to take an active role in managing natural resources.”

“We are proud to carry on the legacy of our founders, operate on the historic



campus that supports multi-day educational experiences, and continue to receive support from the forest, utility, and other natural resource management industries to help us educate the next generation of stewards of our natural world.”

To learn more about Trees For Tomorrow, contact Cheryl at ctodea@treesfortomorrow.com, 715-479-6456 or visit TreesForTomorrow.com.



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Email Addresses

LSLA frequently sends out to its members important announcements and information about meetings, educational opportunities, legislative matters or events of interest to the forest products industry. Email is the most effective method of communicating this information fast and efficiently, and ensures members’ ability to respond to time-sensitive matters.

If your current email address is listed in the Buyer’s Guide and you haven’t been receiving emails from Lake States Lumber Association, please make sure that your email is not blocking emails from lsla@lsla.com or that emails from us aren’t being tossed into the junk mail folder.

If your current email address isn’t listed in the Buyer’s Guide and you would like to receive update information from us, please contact us, and we’ll put you in our email address book. If your email address has changed, please notify us so that you don’t miss out on any important news.

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- R & R Insurance
- Rockland Flooring
- Stella-Jones
- U-C Coatings
- Walter Brothers Lumber Manufacturing, Inc.
- Wolverine Hardwoods

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The 2022 LSLA Buyer's Guides have been printed and one shipped to each member, unless you ordered more with your membership. If you did not receive one and would like to, we have plenty more available for purchase.

The Buyer's Guide is a full directory of LSLA members including contacts and product information.

Each copy is \$10 for members and \$25 for non-members. Just contact the LSLA office to order your copy today!



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David Bradley at its current home in Rockland, Wisconsin at the Rockland Flooring Plant



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