

# MLEP TREELINE

Volume 6, Issue 2

www.mlep.org

Summer 2008



## Enjoying the outdoors in Minnesota:

- There were 477,040 resident individual angling licenses sold in 2007.
- There are 3.8 million acres of fishing waters.
- There are 3,353 miles of canoeing routes.



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*The Newsletter of the Minnesota Logger Education Program*

## Scott Pittack – Pittack Logging 2008 SFI® Logger of the Year

The Minnesota Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Program Implementation Committee awarded Scott Pittack, as the 2008 Logger of the Year. This achievement recognizes exemplary work in timber harvest and management in Minnesota's forests. By receiving this award, Pittack Logging is recognized for its adherence to safe and professional logging operation in addition to its commitment to ethical, environmentally sensitive, and aesthetically appropriate harvesting practices.

"Scott has shown leadership in this state, and is a very valuable asset to the forest products industry in Minnesota", said SFI® Implementation Committee Chair and Boise Forester Terry Worthman. Congratulations Pittack Logging!



Scott Pittack receives the SFI® Logger of the Year award from Terry Worthman, Committee Chair.

## OSHA Adjusts PPE Rule

A new requirement in the general Occupational Safety & Health Administration's rule governing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), took effect on February 13 and must be implemented by May 15. Under the rule, all Personal Protective Equipment, with the exception of safety shoes and prescription safety glasses which can be worn by employees outside the job site, must be provided at no cost to the employee. (Under the previous rule, the employer was obligated to ensure stipulated PPE was used; whether the employer actually provided it was left open, although in practice, many logging employers did provide it).



## Over 300 Receive Training on Biomass Harvesting Guidelines



This year's Logger Conferences included training on Minnesota's New Biomass Harvesting Guidelines (BHGs). The presentation included a background and overview of the guidelines and three separate breakout sessions on wildlife and biodiversity, soil productivity, and water quality and riparian management zones. The final presentation addressed biomass harvest planning, design, and operational considerations. Additional Biomass Harvesting Guidelines workshops are scheduled for later this year and an online version of the training should be available this fall.

LEFT: Rick Horton, Minnesota DNR Wildlife, outlines wildlife considerations of the new Biomass Harvesting Guidelines during the MLEP Logger Conference in Tower, MN.

## Executive Director's Column – David Chura

With markets down and diesel prices up, it is nice when there is some good news to report. MLEP and our members have been involved in a rewarding partnership with Habitat for Humanity and the Minnesota SFI Implementation Committee to build a home using products from well-managed Minnesota forests. What began as an idea, is now fast becoming a new home for Kelli Ritz of Hibbing. Six months ago, Cliff and Jim Shermer of Shermer Logging harvested trees donated by Senator Tom Bakk from his Tree Farm near Cook. Those trees were then made into OSB for the home. Since that time, there have been more contributions of products and resources. In June, Girls Scouts helped replant the harvest site and then had a chance to see donated ash and pine sawed into interior trim and framing lumber. Just last week, volunteers started framing up the house.

The news coverage – including radio, newsprint and TV – has been fantastic. We can all be proud of the well-managed forests and harvesting practices in our state. This partnership with Habitat for Humanity really emphasizes the role sustainable forests play in ensuring sustainable families and communities. Thank you for your role in managing our resources, providing recreational opportunities in our forests and jobs for our communities.

Whether you are working or relaxing this summer – be safe!

PHOTO: Volunteers take a break to celebrate the progress.



## Annual Report CY 2007



*"Setting the Standard in Logging Professionalism"*

## MLEP CY 2007 Annual Report

The MLEP CY 2007 Annual Report includes a detailed summary of the MLEP's operational activities and program services.

A copy of the full report is available online or by contacting the MLEP office.

### Membership Summary

MLEP membership is comprised of logging business owners (large and small), wood dealers and associate members. 2007 membership totaled 530 reflecting: 105 small logging business owners, 296 large logging business owners, 6 wood dealers, 63 associates, and 63 new logger applicants.

### Workshop Attendance

There were over 45 workshops available to members to complete their day of MLEP credit (in addition to Log Safe classes). The total attendance at these workshops was 1,248 logging business owners, logging business employees, natural resource professionals, landowners, and others.

## MLEP Training Spotlight – *Timber Stand Improvement*

This full-day, classroom and field workshop presented key principles of successful Minnesota TSI operations in a practical, straightforward format. Participants learned to quickly evaluate a new stand's potential for a TSI treatment, including silvicultural, operational, and economic considerations.

At the end of the workshop, participants were:

1. Familiar with common terminology and concepts related to timber stand improvement
2. Experienced designing a hypothetical TSI treatment in two different stands (ideally one conifer, one hardwood, but dependent on site conditions)
3. Discussed tradeoffs inherent in TSI planning and implementation
4. Considered and discussed ways that their particular companies might be able to integrate TSI into their operations.
5. More confident communicating with landowners, foresters, and other loggers about TSI.

More TSI workshops are planned for 2009. A full list of MLEP training opportunities for 2008 is available on our website, where you can also register online.



ABOVE: TSI participants visit a maple and basswood stand near Grand Rapids.

BELOW: The group discusses a hypothetical TSI treatment on this 22 year old aspen site.



## North Shore Students Get Lesson in Forest Management

MLEP logger Tom McCabe (McCabe Forest Products, Duluth) and DNR Forester Fran Casey recently spent a day discussing forest management with kindergarten and fifth grade students at the North Shore Community School in Duluth Township. The students learned about the importance of managing our forests and the many products that local mills make from trees. The following day, McCabe and his logging crew were on site at the school to harvest trees from the school's forest.

Casey set up the sale with the goal of improving wildlife habitat, increasing biodiversity, providing educational opportunities and increasing marketable timber. The objective was to selective cut of 8 acres of diseased aspen to release the bur oak understory and replant to increase diversity.

The DNR will help students plant hundreds of white pine and spruce trees in the forest and along the road to replace the diseased red pine windbreak. A deer exclosure fence will be built to protect new plantings of white pine, cedar, yellow birch and tamarack, adding to the diversity of the forest and allowing students to compare factors in forest succession.

Tom McCabe donated his services, as well as the proceeds, to the school.



ABOVE: Students gather around a pile of chips as McCabe talks about the various products they will be used to make.

LOWER LEFT: DNR Forester, Fran Casey, answers student's questions about forest management.

LOWER RIGHT: Before watching the chipper make quick work of limbs and tops, school kids get an up close look at the operation.





## MMLC Auditor and Calibration Training

Fourteen foresters and seven members of the Minnesota Master Logger Certification (MMLC) program certifying board recently completed auditor/calibration training at the Cloquet Forestry Center. The training was designed to clarify appropriate protocols for measuring, rating and interpreting compliance to the MMLC standard.



Day One of this two-day training included a review of the MMLC program & application process, basics of third party auditing and case study exercises designed to simulate actual audit situations.

The majority of Day Two was spent out in the woods, but a portion of the day include an important presentation by Michael Ferrucci regarding auditor protocol, time management and following the audit trail. (Mr. Ferrucci lives in Connecticut and conducts audits for both the FSC and SFI programs and has served a wide range of clients in the private, nonprofit, and government sectors including several in Minnesota).

Out in the woods, participants visited a recent timber harvest where they were split into teams. Each team included an experienced auditor, a member of the MMLC certifying board and a new auditor. The teams spent time completing a field audit of the site. Next, the teams visited several areas on the site to discuss cultural resources, rutting, visual quality, RMZs and landings. At each of these areas, Michael Ferrucci and Dick Rossman (DNR) facilitated a rich discussion about the site characteristic, applicable elements of the MMLC standard and interpreting compliance to the standard. It was a great training experience for all and we are appreciative of the support the Blandin Foundation provided to make this training possible.

## MMLC CY 2007 Annual Report

A copy of the MMLC CY 2007 Annual Report is now accessible by visiting our website or requesting one by contacting us. Highlights from the report include the following:

### 2007 Accomplishments

- Certified 22 logging businesses as "Minnesota Certified Master Logger" (current total is 47)
- Initiated review of 4 new MMLC applicants
- Conducted 72 field audits and 21 business management audits

### Future MMLC Goals/Objectives

- Conduct focus groups with Master Loggers and MMLC program stakeholders - April & May 2008 (completed)
- Facilitate calibration training for field auditors and certifying board members - June 2008 (June 4 & 5, 2008)
- Implement electronic auditing forms - June 2008
- Adopt a revised recertification model - June 2008
- Grow the program to 65 Minnesota Certified Master Loggers - December 2008
- Address focus group findings - December 2009
- Revise program standard - 2009



## Loggers and Forests – Improving the Atmosphere

During a recent visit to Thunder Bay, Ontario as a part of the Blandin Foundation's "Seeing the Forest AND the Trees" project, participants heard from Stephen Colombo (Science and Information Resources Division, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources) regarding the role of managed forests as it relates to climate change and carbon. Research he discussed indicates that harvesting and reforestation results in a lot more carbon being stored than when a forest is left unmanaged. In fact, "Not harvesting the forest would cumulatively increase the carbon emission over what would otherwise be possible if the forest stand were harvested and used over a regular rotation period." (Eriksson, Gillespie, Gustavsson, Langvall, Olsson, Sathre & Stendahl. Canadian Journal of Forest Research Vol 37, 2007). Further, "over the long term, an active and sustainable management of forests, including their use as a source of wood products and biofuels, allows the greatest potential for reducing net carbon emissions. (Sathre 2007 Life-cycle energy and carbon implications of wood-based products and construction). Thank a logger for the role he/she plays in reducing the carbon in our atmosphere!

Additional resources on the MFI website at [www.minntrees.com](http://www.minntrees.com) (viewed under "Advertisements" link):

### "Carbon Man"

30 second video clip about how forests remove carbon from the air in a manner similar to how sponges soak up spills. Then, when trees are turned into various forest products, those products continue to store the carbon for decades and even centuries. Watch this one with your kids!

### Climate Change: How Forests Reduce Carbon in the Air

A new brochure to learn more about Minnesota's forests and climate change.

## Girl Scouts Reforest Habitat for Humanity Harvest Site - Donated Timber Processed into Building Materials

On June 3, Girl Scouts and MN State Senator Tom Bakk joined with the Minnesota SFI® Implementation Committee to replant a portion of Senator Bakk's Tree Farm where timber donated by the Senator was harvested earlier this year. The harvest was conducted by MLEP Member Shermer Logging.

Following the replanting, the Girl Scouts toured Mountain Iron's East Dhu River Sawmill, which donated its processing facilities to saw lumber and trim for the Habitat home. During the tour, donated ash was sawed into interior trim.

Later that week, MLEP and other volunteers built a one-story, 1,100-square-foot Habitat for Humanity home in Hibbing using these materials. Later this year, Hibbing's Kelli Ritz and her daughter will move into the home.

PHOTO: Senator Tom Bakk demonstrates the proper way to plant a seedling as a member of the Girl Scout troop looks on.



## Legislative Update for Landowners

Article Written By Bruce ZumBahlen, Minnesota Forestry Association/MLEP Board Member



During the 2007 MN legislative session, the Governor vetoed an Omnibus Tax Bill that included a property tax break for woodland owners who have a forest management plan. The veto was for reasons unrelated to the woodland tax provisions. *So close* was the forestry community to having a law that would help in achieving the goal of having another 1 million acres under forest management plans.

But, you can't keep good legislation down. That 2007 Omnibus Tax Bill was resurrected during the 2008 legislative session. It passed this time minus the provisions that the Governor opposed. The Governor signed it in early March. For the first time, MN has a law that provides the opportunity for woodland owners who are managing their property under a forest stewardship plan to receive a reduction in their property taxes payable in 2009 and thereafter.

The new law allows forest owners to apply to their county assessor to have their lands assessed at 0.65% rather than 1%. The management plan must meet the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) standards but the land cannot be enrolled under the SFIA (to avoid the perception of double dipping). The Tax Bill also changed the SFIA law. With the strong support of Senate Tax Committee Chair Tom Bakk, the SFIA minimum annual payment was raised from \$1.50 per acre to \$7.00 per acre.

Building on what had already been enacted, another bill sponsored by Representative Hosch was introduced this past session to aid in administering the new property tax break. An attempt to lower the class rate to 0.55% failed, but the other provisions to improve what is now titled in statutes as "*2c managed forest lands*" made it into another Omnibus Tax Bill. It was a nail biter, but the Tax Bill passed in the closing hours of the legislature.

This second Tax Bill raised the minimum acreage eligible for the tax break to 20 acres from 10 acres enacted earlier keeping the maximum acreage to not more than 1,920 acres. It eliminated the annual application requirement that will save time for county assessors and the landowners alike. Another provision allows split classifications of parcels with a structure so that woodlands could be separated from being subject to a higher assessed classification. The bill also exempted the *2c managed forest lands* from being classified as to their highest and best use.

The MN Department of Revenue will be preparing guidance to county assessors on how to implement the new law in the new future. So, give it a little time before approaching your county assessor to take advantage of the new law.

The following organizations partnered with the MN Forestry Association in support of the legislation: the Audubon Society, Avon Hills Initiative, MN Center for Environmental Advocacy, MN Deer Hunters Association, MN Forest Industries, MN Seasonal Recreation Property Owners Coalition, MN State Tree Farm Committee, MN SWCD Forestry Association, Ruffed Grouse Society, and the Nature Conservancy. Thanks to all for your support in encouraging retention and sustainable management of family forest lands.





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## Upcoming Training Events

### July

15- Timber Cruising for Loggers – Grand Marais  
18- GPS for Loggers/Foresters – I Falls

### August

14- Timber Cruising for Loggers- Grand Rapids  
15- Using Landview - Duluth  
19- Timber Marking – Bemidji/Hackensack  
19- Timber Marking – Aitkin/Hill City

### September

8 & 9- Forest Management/Protecting Site Quality - Cloquet  
11- Hydraulic/Hydrostatic Service – Grand Rapids

### Fall LogSafe Classes:

Sept. 30 – I Falls  
Oct. 1 - Bemidji  
Oct. 2 - Cloquet  
Dec. 9 - Chisholm

## - 2008 MLEP Board of Directors -

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