

# Annual Report CY 2008



*“Setting the Standard in Logging Professionalism”*

Minnesota Logger Education Program  
301 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street ▪ Suite 510 ▪ Duluth, MN 55802 ▪ (218) 722-5442

---

May 2009

## **Preface**

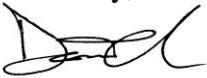
Despite tough economic times, 2008 was a successful year for MLEP. This annual report summarizes the program services and activities of the Minnesota Logger Education Program (MLEP) for calendar year 2008.

The Minnesota Logger Education Program is a logger-initiated program that was established in 1995 to provide assistance to Minnesota's logging community through educational programming. This objective is accomplished by partnering with numerous groups to identify needs and facilitating the development, design, delivery and evaluation of programs which focus on sustainable forest management, transportation, safety and business management. MLEP, which is based in Duluth, MN, is a 501(c)(3) organization. It is governed by a thirteen-member board of directors and employs an Executive Director and a part-time Executive Assistant.

To date, MLEP has sponsored 489 workshops focused on sustainable forest resource management, business management, professional operations and safety. Participation within the training and education programs exemplifies MLEP's overall support and success with a total combined attendance of 12,588 including 10,344 loggers and 2,244 public and private sector natural resource managers.

MLEP's program services and success would not be possible if not for the support of our members and the dedication and commitment of our partners. We greatly appreciate their continued support and contribution to MLEP's success.

Sincerely,



David T. Chura  
Executive Director

## **Minnesota Logger Education Program 2008 Board of Directors**

*Don Wagner, President*  
*Wagner Forest Products*

*Rod Enberg*  
*Enberg Logging*

*Craig Turnboom*  
*Turnboom Logging*

*Ron Beckman, Jr., Vice President*  
*Ron Beckman Timber Harvesting, LLC*

*Seth Johnson*  
*Johnson Logging, Inc.*

*Bruce ZumBahlen*  
*Minnesota Forestry Association*

*Kit Hasbargen, Secretary*  
*Hasbargen Logging, Inc.*

*Kelly Kimball*  
*Kimball Logging, Inc.*

*Bill Fleischman, Treasurer*  
*Izaak Walton League*

*Jim Marshall*  
*UPM – Blandin Forestry*

*Charlie Blinn*  
*University of Minnesota*

*Tom McCabe, Jr.*  
*McCabe Forest Products*

*Gordy Dobbs*  
*Dobbs Logging, Inc.*

*Bob Tomlinson*  
*DNR Division of Forestry*

## Membership

MLEP membership is comprised of logging business owners (large and small), wood dealers and associate members. 2008 membership totaled 562 reflecting: 146 small logging business owners, 305 large logging business owners, 5 wood dealers, 69 associates, and 37 new logger applicants.

## Program Services / Activities

In 2008, the Minnesota Logger Education Program delivered a variety of workshops and training formats to logging and natural resource professionals and landowners.

## Professional Training and Continuing Education Classes (CY 2008)

| Date | Workshop Title                                       | Location   | Participation #s |
|------|--|------------|------------------|
|      | Aerial Photos/Topo Maps- Brainerd                    | 3/18/2008  | 4                |
|      | Nortrax University- Risley Training/Safety           | 4/1/2008   | 43               |
|      | Aerial Photos/Topo Maps- Grand Rapids                | 4/5/2008   | 12               |
|      | Tower Logger Conference- Day One                     | 4/8/2008   | 153              |
|      | USFS Contractor Training- Superior NF                | 4/9/2008   | 1                |
|      | Bemidji Logger Conference- Day One                   | 4/16/2008  | 153              |
|      | GPS for Loggers/Foresters - Brainerd                 | 4/21/2008  | 19               |
|      | Truck Weight Compliance- Duluth                      | 4/22/2008  | 6                |
|      | GPS for Loggers/Foresters - Pine County              | 4/24/2008  | 12               |
|      | Truck Weight Compliance- Rochester                   | 4/29/2008/ | 3                |
|      | Master Logger Focus Group – Stakeholders Bemidji     | 4/30/2008  | 2                |
|      | Master Logger Focus Group- Loggers Bemidji           | 4/30/2008  | 4                |
|      | Master Logger Focus Group- Loggers Grand Rapids      | 5/1/2008   | 14               |
|      | Master Logger Focus Group- Stakeholders Grand Rapids | 5/1/2008   | 7                |
|      | Timber Stand Improvement- Cloquet                    | 5/6/2008   | 13               |
|      | Hydraulic/Hydrostatic Service- Grand Rapids          | 5/7/2008   | 26               |
|      | At The Water's Edge-Riparian Forest Mgmt.            | 5/20/2008  | 8                |
|      | At The Water's Edge-Riparian Forest Mgmt.            | 5/21/2008  | 0                |
|      | At The Water's Edge- Riparian Forest Mgmt.           | 5/22/2008  | 6                |
|      | Silviculture-Even/Uneven Aged Mgmt - Cloquet         | 5/28/2008  | 9                |
|      | Timber Stand Improvement- Grand Rapids               | 6/3/2008   | 18               |
|      | Biomass Harvesting Guidelines- Cloquet               | 6/3/2008   | 19               |
|      | MMLC Auditor Training - New Auditors                 | 6/4/2008   | 8                |
|      | MMLC Auditor Training - All Auditors                 | 6/5/2008   | 19               |
|      | DOT Audit Training- Bemidji                          | 6/10/2008  | 23               |
|      | Biomass Harvesting Guidelines- Grand Rapids          | 6/10/2008  | 11               |
|      | Biomass Harvesting Guidelines- Bemidji               | 6/12/2008  | 23               |
|      | Timber Cruising- Grand Marais                        | 7/15/2008  | 14               |
|      | GPS for Loggers/Foresters/Landowners- I Falls        | 7/18/2008  | 25               |
|      | Landview Workshop                                    | 7/31/2008  | 11               |
|      | Biomass Harvesting Planning/Design/Implementation    | 8/12/08    | 24               |
|      | Timber Cruising- Grand Rapids                        | 8/14/08    | 15               |
|      | Small Scale Logging Demo/Field Day                   | 8/16/08    | 5                |
|      | Timber Marking- Bemidji/Hackensack                   | 8/19/08    | 14               |
|      | Timber Marking- Aitkin/Hill City                     | 8/20/08    | 12               |
|      | Biomass Harvesting-Planning/Design/Implementation    | 8/26/2008  | 38               |

|   |           |                |
|---|-----------|----------------|
| Forest Mgmt Guideline/Protecting Site Quality | 9/9-10/08 | 89- FMG 95-PSQ |
| Hydraulic/Hydrostatic Service- Bemidji        | 9/11/2008 | 39             |
| Biomass Harvesting Guidelines-Baxter          | 9/17/08   | 2              |
| Truck Weight Compliance-Bemidji               | 10/1/08   | 1              |
| Biomass Harvesting Guidelines-Northfield      | 10/15/08  | 4              |
| DOT Audit Training-Grand Rapids               | 12/4/08   | 21             |
| Online Biomass Guideline Training             | Various   | 80             |

**Total 2008 Attendance** **1,105**

### **Program Activity Highlights**

- Certified eight logging businesses as Minnesota Certified Master Loggers.
- Conducted a series of four focus groups with Master Loggers and stakeholders aimed at identifying ways to improve the program and add value to members.
- Led the development and delivery of training on Minnesota’s new Biomass Harvesting Guidelines – more than 300 loggers have been trained on the new guidelines to date.
- Assisted in the development of an online/computer-based Biomass Harvesting Guidelines training package.
- Assisted in the coordination of a national Logger and Training Education (LT&E) conference in Minneapolis in September 2008.
- Distributed member training record reports quarterly to public land managers, mills and others as appropriate.
- Administered temporarily restricted grant funds in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles – obtained Blandin Foundation grant extension thru August 2009.
- Secured \$40,000 grant from the DNR for MMLC.
- Authored and secured \$10,000 grant from the USFS to provide in the woods implementation training on Minnesota’s Biomass Harvesting Guidelines.
- Secured \$15,000 from VersoPaper for MMLC.
- Authored comprehensive business management training proposal for SBDC and DEED. Facilitated the establishment of the “Forest and Natural Resource Continuing Education Capacity Building Project” sponsored by the Blandin Foundation. Serve on the project’s task force with the goal of improving the delivery and coordination of LogSafe and MLEP training.
- Presented and participated in a variety of activities (October 2007-August 2008):
  - MLEP/MMLC Pilot Project presentation and LT&E meetings at the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Annual Conference, September 2007.
  - Minnesota Forest Resources Partnership Timber Productivity Conference, October 16 & 17, 2007.
  - Legislative/Administration Meetings in St. Paul, October 22, 2007.
  - Certification labeling workshop, October 23, 2007.
  - LCCMR Meeting re: potential future project, December 10, 2007.
  - MLEP board meeting with Commissioner Sviggum, December 18, 2007.
  - Habitat for Humanity Media events, various dates in 2008.

- Logging business management meeting with DEED, IRR and SBDC, February 12, 2008.
- Blandin Foundation’s Forest Productivity conference in Ontario, May 14-16, 2008.
- Forest and Natural Resource Continuing Education Task Force meetings.
- LogSafe Advisory Committee – ongoing (approx. 2 meetings per year).
- TPA Expo Committee – ongoing (4- 6 meetings per year).
- Minnesota SFI Implementation Committee - ongoing (6-8 meetings per year).
- Authored and distributed articles, newsletters, press releases, advertisements, and provide comment to the media.
  - Silviculture Training Notes
  - Uniform Carrier Registration Training Notes
  - DOT Audit Training Notes
  - Timber Cruising Training Notes
  - MLEP eUpdate – monthly
  - MLEP Treeline Newsletters (Fall 2007, Winter/Spring 2008 and Summer 2008)
  - MLEP and MMLC Advertisements: BetterForests magazine (Winter/Spring 07-08, Summer 08) Northern Wilds newspaper (Quarterly)

### 2008 Workshop Participant Evaluation Overall Summaries

Participants evaluated the training using the following scale (this summary includes all the dates that were offered for :

*Overall, at this training, I learned:*

| -2                               | -1                          | 0                                  | 1                                 | 2                                |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Much less than I expected</b> | <b>Less than I expected</b> | <b>About as much as I expected</b> | <b>A bit more than I expected</b> | <b>Much more than I expected</b> |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Accessing Aerial Photos, Topo Maps, and Other Planning Tools | 1.5 |
| Logger Conferences   | 0.4 |
| Timber Stand Improvement                                     | 0.9 |
| Silviculture- Even & Uneven Aged Management                  | 1.9 |
| Timber Cruising for Loggers                                  | 1.2 |
| Landview for Loggers, Foresters, and Landowners              | 1.5 |
| Timber Marking   | 1.1 |
| Biomass Harvesting & Equipment Demo                          | 0.9 |
| Hydraulic and Hydrostatic Service                            | 1.1 |
| Skilled Driver/DOT Audit                                     | 1.0 |
| Biomass Harvesting Guidelines                                | 0.3 |
| Forest Management Guidelines                                 | 0.5 |
| Protecting Site Quality                                      | 0.4 |

## **Minnesota Master Logger Certification**

Often, the only forest management advice a family forest owner receives is from a logger who approaches the landowner to procure wood. While many loggers are very experienced and have a professional approach to wood procurement, the Minnesota Logger Education Program (MLEP) believes that a well-trained and experienced logger with a broader vision of forestry can provide family forest landowners with sustainable forest management information. MLEP developed the Minnesota Master Logger Certification (MMLC) program to address the challenge of providing certified fiber from family forestlands to the marketplace.

Minnesota Master Logger Certification, administered through the MLEP, is a performance-based program for loggers that recognizes training, experience, and the application of sound business and sustainable logging practices. Logger certification has been recognized as a way to independently verify the harvest, safety and business practices of participant loggers against specific standards designed to ensure forest are managed and harvested responsibly. MMLC has been endorsed by Time Inc. as meeting the requirements of their Certified Sustainable Forestry program.

Many Minnesota loggers already meet the standards and criteria required for certification, but they do not have a way to authenticate that their customers. Loggers who become certified are able to provide certified wood to the market place. This means loggers and mills in Minnesota will be in a strong position to provide certified wood from family forestlands to customers like Time Inc. that require certified wood in the products they purchase.

A working group representing the broad forestry community was established in early 2005 to develop the MMLC program and its policies, as well as set-up the certifying board. The program is comprised of eight areas of responsibility such as “Protection of Water Quality and Soils”, “Adherence to Site Specific Harvest and Management Plans” and “Compliance with Regulations Applicable to Logging Operations.” Each responsibility area includes measurable performance standards and practices.

A logger participating in the program undergoes a third-party audit of his or her business practices and harvest sites. Independent auditors who have been trained on the MMLC standard conduct field audits on a sample of sites the applicant has harvested within the last 12 months. The logging business and harvest practices are evaluated against 138 practices in eight major areas of responsibility. Based on their findings, the auditors provide the certifying board a recommendation for or against certification. An eight member certifying board, which represents a broad range of forestry interests, reviews the audits and recommendations and makes the final determination on whether the applicant’s business can be certified. To be certified, a logging business must pass all eight areas of the MMLC standard on all audited sites.

Once a logging business is certified, the certification status is good until the next recertification audit which will occur within five years. During any given year, the certified business may be randomly selected for recertification. As each year passes, the probability that the business will be selected for recertification increases. No Minnesota Certified Master Logger will go longer than five years without being recertified.

### **Why is Certification Needed?**

Several mills in Minnesota and across the country have been asked to meet a target that more than 80% of the resource going into their product be certified. Minnesota has 15 million acres of timberland. Of that 15 million, 37% is controlled by family forest landowners and these family forests provide 45% of the timber harvested each year. Logger certification addresses this challenge by providing certified wood from family forestland to the market place. This means loggers and mills in Minnesota will be in a strong position to provide certified wood from family forestlands to customers like Time Inc.

A detailed annual report for the Minnesota Master Logger Certification program is available.

### **MLEP Budget**

MLEP's activities are funded by membership fees, training fees and grants.

#### **Support**

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Membership fees         | \$163,828 |
| Training / Program fees | \$23,785  |
| Misc.                   | \$24,991  |

#### **Expenses**

|                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Management and General | \$32,874  |
| Program Services       | \$193,302 |

### **Staffing**

David Chura, Executive Director  
Chris DeRosier, Executive Assistant