


THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

# TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

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VOLUME 66



**Fire in BWCA Burns  
More than 90,000 Acres  
Northern Stars  
Peterson Logging**

**58th Annual North Star Expo**



**H**ow much wood could a woodchuck chuck wood if a woodchuck could chuck wood? Have you seen that commercial on TV? It's hilarious! In answering the question: unfortunately woodchucks do not chuck wood. But if they could, some answers might be: the woodchucks desire, need and ability to chuck the aforementioned wood. Or it depends on how many female woodchucks were present. Or it could depend on whether the woodchuck's mother-in-law was around or not. If she was, he'd be chucking all day. If not, he'd be watching the football game. Or depends on how good his dentures are!

## President's Column



As the weather is cooling down and we are preparing for the busy winter season, I am always wondering will I have or can I chuck enough wood? I am getting calls from people wanting firewood, land cleared for building and road right of ways and

power lines. Maybe this means the economy is starting to turn around. The winter seems so long, but so much to do in that time. Can we get it all done? Time and weather will tell.

It was a great time at the North Star Expo. It was great to see kids of all ages excited about the new machinery and a lot of guys kicking tires and getting information from the vendors. I would like to thank the members of the expo committee, volunteers, vendors, and sponsors who make this all possible. Remember log safe and profitable.

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## Epperly to Take on New DNR Duties

**M**innesota DNR Division of Forestry Director Dave Epperly will be taking on new duties within the department.



Epperly will work on strategic projects within the DNR, such as taking a new look at our SFRMP process and timber statutes, according to DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr. Landwehr termed these and other projects Epperly will be working on as "critical to the agency."

Epperly will remain acting division director while a search for a new director is conducted. He has been with the DNR since 2005. Prior to that Epperly served as land commissioner in both St. Louis County and in Douglas County, Wis.

Landwehr also announced that Division of Forestry Deputy Director Bob Tomlinson is moving to a new role leading the DNR's Land Asset Management efforts, through the Division of Lands and Minerals.

**O**n Monday, Oct. 17, DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr informed us of sweeping changes that were being made to the Division of Forestry. Director Dave Epperly will be out, Assistant Director Bob Tomlinson is being moved to the Division of Lands and Minerals and the management team is being revamped.

During Dave Epperly's time as Division Director we saw the highest sustained levels of timber sales by the DNR in modern times. Dave was very open to us and strongly committed to the forest based economy. This may or may not have sat well with some.

Bob Tomlinson has been a rock for the Division for many years.

## Executive Vice President's Column



Well respected by the field organization and at the Capitol, he is the glue that has

helped hold the Division together through several administrations.

One story we hear about these changes is low morale among Division staff, particularly at the field level. Well, it's tough to have good morale when foresters are continuously attacked by the anti-harvesting folks in Eco Services and some in Wildlife. Some of these folks continuously argue against active forest management. Their solution to every issue is to have more old forests and old timber.

It's also tough for the Division of Forestry to move forward on policy changes when every issue becomes a prolonged negotiation with the other Divisions.

So the question becomes where does the DNR go from here?

The Commissioner will have a very difficult time filling the Forestry Director position. There don't appear to be candidates from within the Division of Forestry so it seems most likely that a new director will again be an outsider. There are several other state forestry director positions open around the country and

Minnesota's is probably not the most attractive.

This ball is now squarely in Commissioner Landwehr's and his management team's court. We accept at face value their statements recognizing the importance of active forest management and the forest based economy. We accept the need to improve morale and resolve issues inside the Department.

But, we are keeping a close eye on what some are viewing as a purge of the Division of Forestry. It's no secret that the backgrounds of the people in the Commissioner's office are oriented towards wildlife and conservation.

They have a tall order in finding a new Forestry Director. And they have an even taller order in getting control of the anti-forestry elements in the Department. If they don't get control, whoever is hired as Forestry Director will have a very difficult time.



A task force has been working for nearly a year on a potential exchange of Permanent School Trust Fund lands inside the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) for U.S. Forest Service lands outside the wilderness. Currently around 40,000 potential acres outside the BWCAW have been identified. There are over 80,000 acres of school trust lands inside the wilderness. Any significant change will take a number of years to complete and would likely include some of the school trust fund lands being sold to the federal government.

This issue has been festering for many years. No significant exchanges have occurred since the 1978 BWCAW expansion legislation was passed. I do think that the current effort has the potential to

result in significant exchanges. Stay tuned.



The DNR has been busy offering wood for sale from the blowdown areas in the St. Croix River area on the east side of the state. Some 17,000 acres were damaged there in summer wind storms. While this wood needs to be cleaned up, TPA has written to the DNR urging that planned sales in the rest of the state must be continued. Everyone needs wood but not everyone is in a position to go to the blowdown areas.



The North Star Expo was up this year in exhibitors which was great to see. Thank you to each of the exhibitors for making the event a success. We appreciate your continued commitment to our industry and our show. Our thanks also go to the Expo Committee and Jane and Ray from our staff for all of their hard work. You can't have a show without the exhibitors and the committee and staff that put it together.



As we move deeper into fall, and a fine fall it's been, it's a little bit like the calm before the storm of the winter logging season. As you plan your winter operations make sure you include safety in your plans. Spend the extra time with your crew to make sure that they are working safely. You won't regret it.

*Tom Landwehr*

# More than 90,000 Acres Burn in BWCA



Photo by Cody Nelson

**A** lightning strike on Aug. 18 roughly 13 miles east of Ely started what would become known as the Pagami Creek fire. Following US Forest Service protocol, the fire was initially allowed to burn. But in mid-September, following periods of high winds and low rain, the fire made what the Forest Service termed “an unprecedented 16-mile run to the east,” reaching the edge of Polly Lake. Ultimately, the fire grew to nearly 93,000 acres, making it the largest forest fire in Minnesota since the Cloquet fire of 1918.

The fire was battled by several agencies on a variety of fronts, including crews from the USFS and Minnesota DNR. They received assistance from Minnesota National Guard Black Hawk helicopters and Air National Guard aviation support teams. Roughly 1,000 firefighters descended on the area to fight the blaze. The Lake County and Cook





County Sheriff's Departments also assisted in the management of the fire.

Smoke and ash from the fire drifted across Lake Superior and Wisconsin to the Milwaukee and Chicago areas where the haze and odor were noticeable.

Large portions of the BWCA were

closed to visitor use, and public safety crews moved visitors out of areas where they were at risk. Residents were evacuated from 36 addresses along a portion of the Cramer Road/Lake. No lives and just one structure – a remote cabin used by state conservation officers –

were lost due to the fire.

By mid-October fire officials said the costs of fighting the fire had reached \$21 million.

*Photos of the Pagami Creek fire are courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service and the Minnesota Incident Command System ([www.mnics.org](http://www.mnics.org)).*





Jon Peterson

# Northern Stars

**Loman's Jon Peterson of Peterson Logging is a fixture at the North Star Expo, just as the company he owns with his brother and nephew is a fixture in Minnesota's logging community.**

by Ray Higgins

It's 9 a.m. on the opening morning of the 58th Annual North Star Expo, and Jon Peterson is going to work, as he always does on the Expo's opening day, setting

up for the annual Loader Contest. Along with Rob Wendt, Peterson is a fixture at the loader, signing in contestants, handling the stopwatch, and recording times at one of the Expo's annual competitions. He and Wendt also take turns storing the checkerboard

and the wooden Paul Bunyan that's used by the loader contestants.

It's a job he enjoys, interacting with the loggers who come to show their skill, as well as with the Expo attendees that stop and watch. But ironically, Peterson has never



Jon Peterson (R) is a fixture at the North Star Expo, organizing the annual Loader Contest along with Rob Wendt (M). Here at the 2009 Expo, Peterson and Wendt discuss the competition with Kit Hasbargen.



Jon Peterson operates Peterson Logging's Timbco 425D feller buncher in an aspen stand north of Williams.

competed in the contest himself.

"I was on the Expo committee," Peterson says. "I was there, they needed help, so I started helping."

It's not that different from how he started in the family's logging business, which was started around 1950 by Jon's grandfather and his father, Clayton, in the family's hometown of Loman, located on the Rainy River, which also serves as the border between the U.S. and

Canada. Through the years, Clayton and his wife Bette had five kids – two boys and three girls – seven grandchildren, and five great grandkids, with three more on the way. And now, some 60 years later, Clayton's sons Jon and Jimmy, and Jimmy's son Eric, own and operate Peterson Logging.

"My grandpa and dad would farm in the summer," Jon says, "and then they needed something

to do in the winter. So they started logging a little bit with a bobtail truck and tractor. There was a lot of hand work, but it was a way to help pay for the gas in the summer, and the seed."

The farm included growing hay and raising cows and chickens. Jon came along in 1954, Jimmy in 1956, and their earliest memories include the farm and the logging business.

"I must have been five years old and remember taking groceries to the piece cutters," Peterson recalls. "I'd also just kind of go along with my Dad. I guess I was somewhere between ten and twelve when I started helping them run a Cat in the winter."

The boys would help with the business here and there before graduating from Indus High School. Jon actually briefly thought about becoming a social worker, but in the end made working in the woods his life's work.

"I think it was always in the back of my mind to stay around here and log," Peterson says.

It's turned into a true family business with Jon, Jimmy, and their sister Susan's husband, Dennis Bannert, representing the third generation of Petersons, and Eric, with Susan's and Dennis' son, Jake, representing the fourth. The 3-4 others who work for the Petersons – some seasonally – are friends and longtime employees. That reduces the amount of time spent managing the workforce.

"We've had the same crew for 15 years, some of them longer than that," Jon says. "Everybody knows what to do. We don't have to show anyone. Everybody knows their role."

It works like this: During the summertime, Jon runs the Timbco 425D feller buncher, Jimmy operates the Prentice 384 loader/slasher and does some hauling, Eric handles the skidding with a John Deere 748 G3, and Jake is in the Komatsu delimeter with a Pro Pac. When the ground is frozen, the Petersons ramp up production, adding three or four additional employees – including Dennis Bannert – and utilize another 748 G3 skidder, as well as another delimeter, this one a John Deere with a Lim-mit. In addition, Jimmy and Jon focus on slashing

and loading. The buncher is usually able to work far enough ahead so that the two skidders and two delimiters have plenty to do. On top of all of that, Jimmy handles 98 percent of all of the road building in a John Deere 650G bulldozer. In addition, Jimmy's wife, Vickie, handles the bookkeeping.

The Petersons also own four trucks and seven trailers for their hauling, and contract out some of their deliveries, too. The majority of the production goes to the Boise mill in International Falls – where the family has had a contract since the beginning – with Verso's Sartell mill and NewPage's mill in Duluth serving as other destinations.

Their current job site is a summer sale on state land just north of Williams about an hour from home. That's about as far away as the Petersons ever get – they'll be working closer to home, just south of Loman, once winter comes – and they're a little more than halfway done with the harvest of 5000 cords of aspen mostly, with a little bit of



Peterson Logging's Komatsu delimitter is run by Jake Bannert. The company also utilizes a John Deere with a Lim-mit in the winter time.

balsam.

"This is actually the second year we've cut on it," Peterson says, "but actually the third year we've hauled on it because we had some

stuff piled up a year ago that was cut during the previous winter. But it was too wet last summer to do any cutting. We'll probably work here until it rains too much. Then

we'll move back home."

Home is where Peterson loves to be. Jon still lives on the same piece of property his grandfather owned and he acknowledges that he never really considered settling down anywhere else. That isn't surprising when you consider the family nature of the business. Jon's father never really did retire, although he'd cut back to working only in the winter months running the Cat nearly right up until his death in 2006 at the age of 78. And his influence lives on in the way the Petersons have continued running the business.

"His philosophy was be honest," Jon says. And get along with the foresters. You can't get all mad, but you have to be able to argue, or make a suggestion here or there. State your case. But don't let your emotions get the best of you. You have to stay level headed. He also believed you shouldn't get very far in debt. Shop around for fuel, tires, oil, everything."

That attention to expenses has served the company well through the economic downturn of the past several years. Adapting to changing market conditions, making adjustments on the fly, not being critical in your ways, have all been critical to Peterson Logging's survival.

"You have to be able to make a few changes here and there, and hope they're the right ones," Jon says. "Take buying fuel. We don't buy a full tanker load any more. Just a little at a time, and it's not as bad of a hit. But like everything else, when you need parts, you need parts. Oil, grease, tires, when you need that stuff you just have to buy it."

Maintenance has also been a key to success, allowing the machines to last longer, helping them avoid taking on more debt.

"That's the best loader there is," Jon says, pointing to the Prentice 384 that's nearby. "The only thing that's been changed on that loader is the bucket hoses and the bucket. It has a different bucket than it originally came with. Every now and again we might need to change a bucket hose, but other than that, every hose on this machine has never been changed. It's a real good machine, and my



Eric Peterson skids with one of the company's two John Deere 748 G3 skidders.

brother Jimmy runs it – he's the only one that's run it a lot, probably 95% of the time. And he's careful and he's good with his maintenance.

"And the buncher, it gets greased every day in the winter," Peterson says.

And so the work continues for another year until the next Expo rolls around. After this year's Expo Loader Contest, his partner

Wendt brought home the checkerboard for safe keeping, and Peterson took possession of Paul Bunyan. Both will be ready for next year, but true to Peterson's history of adapting to changing conditions, he'll make one slight change in the routine.

"Next year I'm going to have to get somebody to help get Paul into the pick-up," he says. "He's getting a little heavy."



Harvested aspen waits to be loaded and hauled to the Boise mill in International Falls.

# Annual North Star Expo Returns to Rapids

**B**ack in Grand Rapids for a third consecutive year, the 58th Annual North Star Expo was again the place to be to see the latest and greatest in logging, trucking, and sawmill equipment.

This year's event at the Itasca County Fairgrounds was not only a chance for those inside the logging and forest products industry to meet, greet, and compare notes, but also gave the general public the opportunity to see firsthand the importance of logging to Minnesota's economy.

Turnout for the two-day event was strong, particularly on a Friday that featured blue skies and beautiful fall conditions. Nearly 2000 folks visited the Expo and its over 100 exhibitors. All told, this year's displays featured more than \$20 million in equipment, as the community of Grand Rapids and Itasca County embraced the Expo once again.

Filled with various contests, good food, great vendors, and the chance to compare notes on the industry with folks from throughout Minnesota, the 2011 Expo was again an action packed two days.



Dean Franks of Pomp's Tire receives the **Best Outdoor Display** award from Expo Committee Chair Joan Pomp (L). L-R: Geno Hanson, Pomp, Eric Heimer, Jon Hanson, Dean Franks, Rick Johnson, Michelin Rob, Brian Shaver, Bob Hadesback, and Nathan Heibel of the North Star Expo committee. Receiving second place honors was Nortrax. Titan Equipment was awarded third place.



Former state Sen. Bob Lessard of International Falls is now a senior adviser to DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr. Here, Lessard pages through the latest edition of SFI's Landowner's Manual while at the Expo.



TPA Expo Committee Chair Joan Pomp (L) presents Road Equipment Parts Center the blue ribbon in the **Best Indoor Booth** competition. L-R: Pomp, Scott Hammon and Joe Johnson of Road Equipment, and Nathan Heibel of the Expo Committee. A. M. Ludwig Saw Shop Ltd. received the second place award, and W. P. & R. S. Mars Co. placed third.



Participants in the 2011 **Celebrity Loader** competition were (L-R): Joe Chandler of the Grand Rapids City Council, state Sen. Tom Saxhaug (DFL-Grand Rapids), UPM Blandin Mill General Manager Joe Maher, Minnesota DNR Northwest Region Director Lori Dowling, and state Rep. Carolyn McElfatrick (R-Deer River). Maher won the competition with what is believed to be competition's fastest time ever! Rep. McElfatrick was second, followed by Dowling in third place.



Folks at the Expo enjoyed watching the talents of Cindy Servis of International Falls who displayed her chainsaw carving abilities again this year. Cindy provided the carving for this year's vendor drawing, which was won by Alan Weijo of Ely.



Winning this year's **Best Load Competition** was Pittack Logging of Bovey. L-R: Expo Committee Chair Joan Pomp, Lowell Pittack, Scott Pittack, Joe Pittack, Jason Gilhausen, and Blake Kessler, all of Pittack Logging. The entry was sponsored by UPM Blandin. The truck from Hasbargen Logging, sponsored by Boise, finished second and Big H Logging, sponsored by Boise, was third. Thanks go to Skubic Brothers, Boise, Potlatch, and Felling Trailer for donating prizes for the winning entries.



For the third year in a row, Matt Lundberg (R) of Lundberg Forest Products in Solway posted the fastest time in the **Loader Contest**, with a time of 3:43.27. Finishing second was Jason Roach of Greg Cook Logging at 3:51.80, while Matt's father Dan (L), also of Lundberg Forest Products, completed the checkerboard in 3:57.80, good enough for third place. Ramon Killmer of Big Falls won the Master Loader competition for the sixth consecutive year with a time of 4:38.6.



Jazlynn Svaleson of Nashwauk shows off the blue ribbon and her winning entry in the Age 7-9 division of the annual **Expo Coloring Contest**. Along with the ribbon, Svaleson also received an art kit. Second place went to Hallie Rootkie of Brook Park, while Sienna Boelke of Starbuck received third prize. For kids aged 6 and under, the city of Cohasset swept the top three places: Seth Burton earned the blue ribbon, with Kendra Frandsen finishing second and Ella Gunnerson receiving third prize. Coincidentally, in the category for kids aged 10 to 12, the city of Park Rapids also completed a clean sweep: Zoe Flath received top honors, followed by Hailey Smith, and Abby Eystad. The top three in each category received ribbons, while each winner was awarded an art kit. And receiving Honorable Mention in the "Over 40 Division": Cheryl and Sherry Rootkie!

We ended up with several masterpieces that displayed the talent and hard work of our youngsters. Congratulations to all of the winners, and to everyone who showed off their skills by entering the coloring contest!



TPA board member Ed Hedstrom of Hedstrom Lumber in Grand Marais, brought this old dray to the Expo. Ed says the dray was used for skidding during the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century.



This year's Expo featured a Load Securement and Woodyard Safety Workshop, cosponsored by MLEP and TPA. Here, Greg Lind of the Minnesota State Patrol's Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division leads the roughly 30 workshop attendees on a walk-around of a logging truck to show the proper way to secure a load. Lt. Chip Lemon, stationed at the Saginaw Scales as the new Northeast Region head of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, also participated in the workshop.



Tom Lobnitz, parts manager at the Grand Rapids Nortrax location, serves the Bergstrom family with pancakes, sausage, orange juice, coffee, and milk at the annual Logger's Breakfast. The John Deere dealer once again sponsored the free breakfast, with more than 300 folks starting their day courtesy of the great folks at Nortrax.



The Minnesota Timber Producers Association would like to thank

**NORTRAX**

for again sponsoring the  
**Pancake Breakfast**  
 at the  
 58th Annual North Star Expo

*Great Job!*



This year's **Big Cookie** was truly a Big Cookie: a white spruce from Roseau County provided by L-R: Cameron Erickson of Erickson Timber, and Brady Hasbargen and Brent Hasbargen of Whitefish Creek Enterprises, all of Birchdale.



The Expo again featured a horse logging demonstration, always a popular attraction. Here, Duane Barrow, of the Northstar Draft Horse Association, is behind Bud and Duke, showing how logs were skidded in days gone by. Ed Nelson, of the Forest History Center in Grand Rapids, also coordinated the demonstration.

In the **Guess the Weight Competition**, Cory Kimball of Park Rapids guess of 89,350 pounds was the closest to the actual weight of 89,925 to capture the \$50 prize.

In other competitions, the Wood Identification Contest was won on Friday by Jason Frank of Milaca and by R. E. Morris of Duluth on Saturday. Each won \$25.

### Next Year

In 2012, the Expo will return to the Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids. The TPA Expo committee is already working on plans for next year, and we look forward to seeing you there!



As is Expo tradition, Friday was capped off with a delicious dinner, featuring the Famous Duke Skorich Barbecue. More than 250 tickets were sold for the delicious pork and beef with all the fixins'. The Grand Rapids Curling Club staffed the Beer Garden, making it an evening of great food, cold beverages, and lively conversation, the fitting end to day one of the North Star Expo.



After a busy day at the Expo, it's sometimes necessary to find a place to lay down for a quick rest.

# Thank You!

The Minnesota Timber Producers Association would like to thank the following companies and organizations for their donations toward making the 58th Annual North Star Expo a huge success:

## North Star Expo Sponsors

Boise, Inc.  
Forest Capital Partners  
Hedstrom Lumber Company  
Minnesota Forest Industries  
MN SFI® Implementation Committee  
Norbord Minnesota  
Potlatch Corporation  
Sappi Fine Paper  
UPM Blandin  
Verso Paper

Loader courtesy of Northern Timberline  
Equipment  
Forklifts courtesy of Nortrax Equipment  
and M & R Chips, Inc.  
Two-Way Radios courtesy of Northern 2-Way  
Fire pit and firewood courtesy of Adam  
Sutherland  
and Itasca Outdoors  
Signage Courtesy of Dick Distributing,  
Grand Rapids

## Barbecue Door Prizes were provided by:

AgStar Financial Services  
Ainsworth  
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Nortrax Equipment  
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Schaeffer Specialty Lubrication  
Skubic Bros. Int'l  
Two Harbors Machine  
Ultima Bank  
UPM Blandin  
Vermeer  
W. P. & R. S. Mars Co.

TPA would also like to thank Dave Chura for taking the Expo photos you see in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

# Verso's Sartell Mill to Shutdown Two Paper Machines

**V**erso Paper Corp. announced in October that it will permanently shutdown two supercalendered paper machines at its mill in Sartell, Minnesota, effective Dec. 14. In addition, Verso is also permanently shutting down the No. 2 coated groundwood paper machine at its mill in Bucksport, Maine.

The shutdown of the paper machines will reduce Verso's annual production capacity by 193,000 tons.

The shutdown of the No. 1 and No. 2 paper machines at the Sartell Mill will eliminate approximately

103,000 tons annually of SCA and SCB paper capacity. The Sartell Mill's workforce will be reduced by approximately

## Timber Talk

175 employees.

The shutdown of the No. 2 paper machine at the Bucksport Mill will reduce Verso's annual coated groundwood capacity by 90,000 tons, or approximately 10 percent. With an annual capacity after the shutdown of 925,000 tons, Verso will remain the second largest producer of coated groundwood paper in North America. The Bucksport Mill's workforce will be reduced by approximately 125 employees.

"While improved from the recent lows of 2009, demand for coated groundwood papers continues to face headwinds," said Verso President and CEO Mike Jackson. "The cost structure of the No. 2 paper machine at Bucksport, continuously rising input costs and these headwinds resulted in this decision to permanently reduce our coated groundwood capacity. This is consistent with our continuing commitment to match supply with customer demand. The demand for supercalendered papers remains fairly stable in the marketplace; however, despite our employees' diligent efforts, the cost structure of the two SC machines to be shut down at the Sartell Mill remains unfavorable.

"The decision to permanently

reduce production at Bucksport and Sartell was difficult and we are mindful of the impact it will have on the affected employees and their families," Jackson added. "I want to express my sincere gratitude to the affected employees for their years of service to Verso, and to recognize all Bucksport and Sartell employees for their hard work and continued focus on safety in the workplace."

## Lemon to Lead Northeast Commercial Vehicle Enforcement

**L**t. Charles "Chip" Lemon has been named to lead the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division of the Minnesota State Patrol in the Northeast region. Lt. Lemon is headquartered at the Saginaw Scales.

He replaces Lt. Ron Silcox, who has taken a job in the patrol's district headquarters in Virginia.

Lt. Lemon has been with the state patrol since 1994, most recently at the

patrol's district headquarters in Duluth. Before joining the patrol, Lemon worked in his family's restaurant businesses in Duluth.

## Michigan Renewafuel Biomass Plant will Cease Operations

**C**liffs Natural Resources is idling its Renewafuel biomass production facility in Marquette, Michigan.

Cliffs acquired Renewafuel in 2007 and previously operated a pilot plant in Battle Creek, Mich. Construction was completed on the Marquette facility in early 2011 and the plant went through its commissioning phase during the first half of 2011. The plant delivered its first commercial supply of biofuel cubes to the Marquette Board of Light and Power in mid-July.

Cliffs had announced its intention to build a similar facility near Cusson, Minn., in 2008.

The facility, located at the Telkite Technology Park near Sawyer International Airport in Marquette, Mich., was constructed to produce high-energy, low-emission biofuel



cubes from sustainably collected wood and agricultural feed stocks. Since initial production the plant has not performed to design capacity, nor at a production level that justifies continued operation.

The Renewafuel plant employed approximately 30 full-time individuals.

## **USFS Report Shows Environmental Benefits of Wood as a Green Building Material**

**T**he findings of a new U.S. Forest Service study indicate that wood should factor as a primary building material in green building, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said.

The authors of *Science Supporting the Economic and Environmental Benefits of Using Wood and Wood Products in Green Building Construction* reviewed the scientific literature and found that using wood in building products yields fewer greenhouse gases than using other common materials.

"This study confirms what many environmental scientists have been saying for years," said Vilsack. "Wood should be a major component of American building and energy design. The use of wood provides substantial environmental benefits, provides incentives for private landowners to maintain forest land, and provides a critical source of jobs in rural America."

The Forest Service report also points out that greater use of life cycle analysis in building codes and standards would improve the scientific underpinning of building codes and standards and thereby benefit the environment. A combination of scientific advancement in the areas of life cycle analysis and the development of new technologies for improved and extended wood utilization are needed to continue to advance wood as a green construction material.

Sustainability of forest products can be verified using any credible third-party rating system, such as Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Forest Stewardship Council or American Tree Farm System certification.

"The argument that somehow non-wood construction materials are ultimately better for carbon emissions

than wood products is not supported by our research," said David Cleaves, the U.S. Forest Service climate change adviser. "Trees removed in an environmentally responsible way allow forests to continue to sequester carbon through new forest growth. Wood products continue to benefit the environment by storing carbon long after the building has been constructed."

The use of forest products in the United States currently supports more than one million direct jobs, particularly in rural areas, and contributes more than \$100 billion to the country's gross domestic product.

The U.S. Forest Service report identifies several areas where peer-reviewed science can contribute to sustainable green building design and decisions. These recommendations address the following needs for use of wood as a green building material:

- Information on environmental impacts across the lifecycle of wood and alternative construction materials needs to be updated and revised;
- Green buildings codes and standards should include adequate

provisions to recognize the benefit of a lifecycle environmental analysis to guide selection of building materials; and

- A lack of educational, technology transfer, and demonstration projects hinder the acceptance of wood as a green building material.

Research recently initiated by the wood products industry in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory will enable greater use and valuation of smaller diameter trees and insect- and disease-killed trees. Research on new products and technologies has been initiated including improved cross-lamination techniques and the increased use of nanotechnology.

These developments are especially important amidst a changing climate because forest managers will need to increasingly thin densely forested areas in the coming years to reduce the impacts from longer and more severe wildfire seasons. Continued research of wood-based products and technologies will contribute to more environmentally responsible building materials and increased energy efficiency.

# On the Markets

The *Timber Bulletin* publishes information regarding results of a sampling of recent timber sales and other market indicators, as well as other market-related news items.

## Recent Timber Sales Average prices, as reported by each agency

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Intermediate</u>
<b>DNR–Sandstone Area Salvage</b>		
<i>August 22 – Oral Auction</i>		
Norway Pine (WMP)	\$29.72	NA
Aspen Species (WC)	\$12.17	NA
Red Oak (PW)	\$ 6.09	NA
White Spruce (WC)	\$ 7.54	NA

*This was a salvage auction as a result of the July blowdowns. The sale was regular auction only. 14 of the 16 tracts offered auction were purchased.*

## Cass County

*August 25 – Sealed Bid*

Aspen	\$34.84	\$34.89
Birch	\$22.97	\$20.20
Red Oak	\$23.71	\$30.41

## DNR – Sandstone Area Salvage

*September 6 – Oral Auction*

Aspen Species (WC)	\$14.57	NA
Aspen Species (WMP)	\$12.15	NA
Trembling Aspen (WC)	\$16.68	NA
Norway Pine (WMP)	\$29.50	NA
Jackpine (WMP)	\$21.49	NA
Mixed Conifers (WMP)	\$14.36	NA

*This was a salvage auction as a result of the July blowdowns. The sale was regular auction only. All 14 Tracts offered were sold.*

## Crow Wing County

*September 16 – Oral Auction*

Aspen	\$31.75	NA
Oak	\$27.01	NA
Birch	\$19.98	NA
Maple	\$14.11	NA

*17 of the 20 tracts offered on this auction were purchased.*

## DNR Sandstone Area Salvage

*September 19 – Oral Auction*

Aspen Species (WC)	\$14.17	NA
Norway Pine (WMP)	\$10.74	NA

Jackpine (WMP)	\$14.82	NA
Mixed Hardwoods	\$ 6.75	NA

*This was a salvage auction as a result of the July blowdowns. The sale was regular auction only. All 5 tracts offered were purchased.*

**DNR – Park Rapids Area**

*September 19 – Sealed Bids*

Trembling Aspen (WC)	\$38.32	NA
Trembling Aspen (PW)	\$45.55	NA
Trembling Aspen (WMP)	\$32.59	NA
Paper Birch (WC)	\$ 8.50	NA
Oak Species (WMP)	\$26.71	NA

*All 10 tracts offered on this auction were purchased.*

**DNR – Park Rapids Area**

*September 20 – Oral Auction*

Trembling Aspen (WC)	NA	\$31.43
Pine Species (WMP)	NA	\$31.47
Norway Pine (WMP)	NA	\$27.48
Paper Birch (WC)	NA	\$ 8.50

*All 35 tracts offered on this auction were purchased.*

**Cass County**

*September 29 – Sealed Bid*

Red Pine Bolts and Pulp	\$30.99	NA
Aspen	\$27.25	NA
Birch	\$21.49	NA

**DNR Sandstone Area Salvage**

*October 4 – Oral Auction*

Jack Pine (WMP)	\$12.91	NA
Aspen Species (WC)	\$14.56	NA
Aspen Species (WMP)	\$14.13	NA
Norway Pine (WC)	\$49.39	NA
Oak Species (WC)	\$ 7.00	NA

*This was a salvage auction as a result of the July blowdowns. The sale was regular auction only. All 5 tracts offered were sold.*

**Hubbard County**

*October 11 – Oral Auction*

Aspen Mixed	NA	\$37.44
Birch Pulp	NA	\$12.96
Jack Pine Mixed	NA	\$40.02

**Products:**

PB= Pulp and Bolts  
WMP= Woodsrun Mixed Products  
WC= Woodsrun Cordwood  
ST=Sawtimber  
WST=Woodsrun Sawtimber  
PW=Pulpwood

LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

# "Reign of the Logging Railroads I"

by J. C. Ryan

This story is reprinted from an earlier *Timber Bulletin*—one of the first of "Buzz" Ryan's ever-popular contributions to these pages. The *Bulletin* will continue to reprint selected stories from the memories he recorded for us.—*Editor*



In September of 1941, a Chicago firm started dismantling the last logging railroad in Minnesota—the Duluth and Northeastern Railroad, that ran from Cloquet to Horby, a distance of 67 miles. (Although the Duluth and Northeastern still operates a short line from Saginaw to Cloquet, about 10 miles, this is used mainly for switching around the mills at Cloquet.)

With the removal of the rails of the Duluth and Northeastern, there vanished one of the enterprises that played a major part in the logging of our vast virgin timber stands.

Prior to 1900, most all the logging in Minnesota was carried on by draying, skidding and sleigh hauling the logs to our rivers and lakes, and then driving and rafting them to the mills.

Even under the best conditions, the sleigh hauling reached back only about 10 miles from the shores of our lakes and streams, and as this timber near the water was logged off, a new method had to be found to move the remaining timber to the mills. The answer was the logging railroad.

Some of the larger companies built railroads north into the timbered areas for the sole purpose of hauling out logs and moving in men and supplies to the lumber camps and small lumbering towns.

Railroads of this type were extended every few years to help create some new camp or community, and eventually they became railroads of considerable

length.

Some of these roads were made "common carriers"—and some of them are still in existence today, doing business as freight hauling railroads. The Minnesota and International, running from Brainerd to International Falls, is an example. Other roads were built as common carriers, but when the logging came to an end, so did the railroads.

One of the common carriers that did not last long after logging ceased was the Minneapolis and Rainy River Railroad (also known as the Gut and Liver Line) which ran from Deer River to Wirt. It was one of the longer lines in miles of main line and spurs and was as colorful as its nickname suggests.

Another common carrier was the Duluth and Northern Minnesota Railroad (also known as the Alger Line) running between Knife River and Cascade, which, with all its spur lines, probably had the greatest total miles of track.

Some of the railroads were built by logging companies and later taken over by railroad companies. In some cases the larger logging companies became heavy stockholders in the railroad companies. These lines became, more or less, the main line railroads of the logging industry.

Probably second only to the Duluth and Northern Minnesota in total miles of track was the Duluth and Northeastern and General Logging Company system, combining all the lines of the Weyerhaeuser companies operating out of

Cloquet.

The Virginia and Rainy Lake Lumber Company, operating out of headquarters at Casson, had an extensive system of main line spurs, and during the life of the company operated nearly a thousand miles of tracks—though much only temporary spurs.

The Minnesota and Northern Wisconsin (Brooks Scanlon Line) did a flourishing business in southern St. Louis County, but had less than a hundred miles of tracks—including main line and spurs.

The Crookston Lumber Company of Bemidji, while operating many miles of spurs in the Kelliher, Misgab, Northumb, Funkley, Blackduck and Hines area, never had a main line railroad.

Some of the companies and contractors that operated with logging railroads in the eastern part of the state included:

Virginia & Rainy Lake Co. and Cooke & O'Brien in the area north of Virginia to the Canadian border.

The Northern, Cloquet and Johnson Wentworth Companies, Campbell and Williamson, Brooks Scanlon Lumber Co. and Scott Graff Co. in the area south of the Range and north of Duluth and Cloquet.

The Alger Smith Co., Radcliff Lumber Co., Merrill & Ring, Nolan Brothers & Laird, and the Drummond Lumber Co. in Lake County and the area adjacent to Two Harbors and the North Shore.

Swallow and Hopkins, the Trout Lake Lumber Co., St. Croix Lumber Co. and William O'Brien in the area around Ely and Winton.

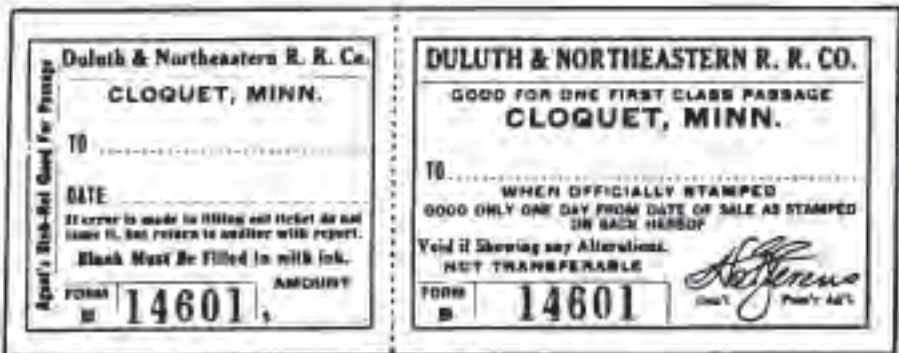
The International Lumber Co. (Backus & Brooks) in most of Koochiching County and the Red Lake Indian Reservation.

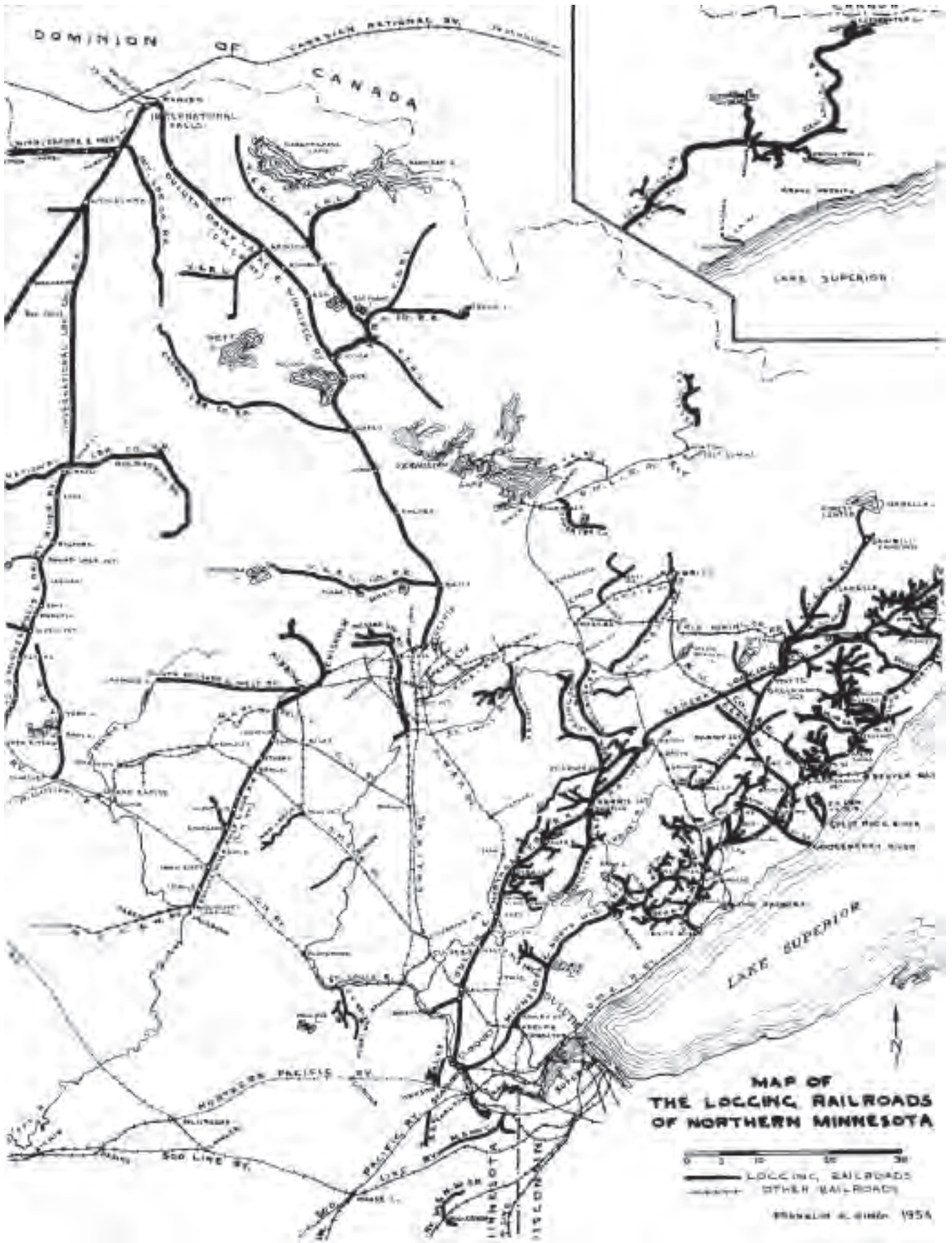
The Crookston Lumber Co., Bemidji Lumber Co., and J. Niels Lumber Co. in the Bemidji and Cass Lake area.

The Walker and Akley Co. around Walker.

The Nichols & Chisholm Co. and the Red River Lumber Co. west of Itasca Park.

The Pine Tree Lumber Co. and the Northland Pine Lumber Co. between Walker and Brainerd.





By no means a complete list, these names tell us the size and extent of railroad logging at its height of activity. Most of these railroads were short-lived and by the 1920s all were out of the picture.

However, one which started a little later than the rest and which continued to operate a bit longer was the Minnesota Dakota and Western (Backus Line). Just how they arrived at the name I don't know, unless it was from their only western spur—the Loman Line—that ran from Nakota on the Big Fork and International west to Loman. However, the main line of this railroad ran almost straight south from the Big Fork and International and Little Fork to Craigville, or Camp 29.

Camp B, about a quarter mile south of Little Fork, was the headquarters camp for this railroad, where trains were made

up and dispatched. Their trains moved over the Big Fork and International Railroad to International Falls, however. A spur of the Minnesota Dakota and Western, known as the Bear River Branch, ran straight west from Camp B to Bear River, and another spur ran south from Camp B for many miles and crossed quite a swampy area.

Much of the logging here was done in the area east of Northome along what is known as the Park Avenue Road, where Camp 53 was the headquarters camp, along with Camps 56, 48 and more. Most men working these camps traveled to Northome on the M.D.W. southwest spur. This spur was intended to extend into the Chippewa National Forest, but due to a misunderstanding with the people in Kinghurst Township, an injunction against the company ended this branch at the Popple River and logs were hoisted

out of Round Lake.

An eastern branch, known as the Holmstrom spur, ran south and east from Camp 29 and was the last spur to be taken up. Another spur, known as the Nett Lake Branch, ran southeast from Nakota to the Nett Lake Indian Reservation.

While the Minnesota Dakota and Western was known as the Backus Line, most of the logging was done in the name of the International Lumber Company.

Though not part of the Minnesota Dakota and Western Railroad, the International Lumber Company built a logging spur off the Minneapolis, Red Lake and Manitoba south of Redby and running west on the south side of Red Lake. Logs cut from this area were hauled south to Bemidji, then north over the Minnesota and International to International Falls for sawing.

For years all log traffic on the Minnesota and International had been south, and it was odd to see train loads of logs going north.

During the winter of 1919, my father and I were cruising Rock Island Railroad lands in Koochiching County and rode many a day over the M.D.W. We would leave International Falls at 6:00 a.m. and the conductor would drop us wherever we chose along the tracks and pick us up again on the return trip at night.

One night we were late getting back to the tracks and it got dark on us, but the train stopped, blew its whistle and waited for us. All the trainmen on these logging railroads were very good in offering whatever help they could to travelers.

As logging companies moved their camps through the woods, there were miles and miles of spurs built right in to the logging operations, and these miles of spurs greatly exceeded the miles of main lines. In most cases the spurs were well graded and graveled and used the year around.

In rough country, these spurs often wound in and out among the hills in order to make use of the minimum grade.

Other spurs were laid and used only during the winter months. These consisted of only the ties and rails laid on frozen ground and were known as "skeleton tracks."

Almost all of northern Minnesota was covered with a network of these spurs, and after they were abandoned many were used as secondary roads. Most all of our early wagon roads followed old spurs and a number are still being used. Others have been maintained as Forest Service roads. However, on many of these spurs, pine trees 15 inches in diameter are now found growing in the middle of the grades.

Railroad logging was done by a great many companies and contractors, but as a whole, the equipment used throughout the state was quite similar. Standard



Blasting up a steep grade, a Duluth and Northeastern engine moves one flat of logs at a time, as steam jammer at the end of the spur taster another car. Uninsulated track and fill work in the deep cut were typical on these temporary spurs.

gauge track was used by most rail companies.

Locomotives were small, ranging from 50 to 75 tons, and were mostly the "rod" type. In hilly country and over crooked, winding spurs, the "Lima" was popular. However, I know of one company that used the "Hysler" type.

While the locomotives were similar, log cars and "jammers" were different. In the hilly area of the eastern part of the state, the short, one-tier car known as the Russell car was used. It maneuvered around short bends much more easily than the longer cars that held two tiers of logs. The Russell Car was also known as the "skeleton car," as it had no deck—only log bunks.

Prior to 1910, most log cars were equipped with chains known as "corner buds" on the outside logs near the bunks, as well as two sets of chains to hold the logs in place when the train was in motion. One was known as the "center

spur" and the other the "wrapper." Even with these chains, great care had to be used in placing logs on the cars. The top loader—the man who worked on top of the load—had to be thoroughly experienced, and he was the highest paid man in the loading crew.

By about 1912, a new type of "stake pocket" was placed on all cars, and with stakes, only a single chain was needed across the top of the load.

This made the job of the top loader less important and lessened the danger of injuries when logs were railed off the cars by cant hooks, because these "new patented pockets" were tripped from the side of the car opposite the side where the logs railed off.

When logs were loaded directly from the water to cars, chain or endless chain hoists were used.

On smaller jobs, logs were loaded by horse jammers, and on larger jobs steam-powered jammers were used. The Clyde

Jammer, which could move along the track on its own power as it passed over the cars, was used almost entirely in the eastern part of Minnesota. In the western part of the state a jammer that slid along the top of the cars was used.

A loading crew consisted of two "hookers"—men who hooked the logs—two men with cant hooks rolling logs to the hookers (calling down), a top loader and an engineer who operated the jammer.

All members of the loading crew were usually the highest paid in the operating end of railroad logging. It was always a treat to watch a well-trained loading crew at work.

Many companies had special cars for hauling pulpwood, known as "rack flats," with stakes at each end of the cars. Cedar poles were loaded on flatcars; ties and cedar posts in boxcars. Most of the log cars were 40 feet long and some of the pulp cars only 36 feet in length.



Sometime before 1900, Mitchell & McClure's Lima engine no. 4 and a train of Russell cars.

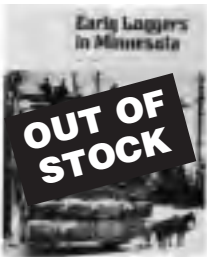


Steam jammer pulled flatcars through as it loaded them. A good crew loaded 18 cars a day.

# Early Loggers in Minnesota

by J. C. Ryan

VOL. I



VOL. II

VOL. II



VOL. IV



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