

SPRING 2020

TIMBER TALK

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REPORT FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT



As I end my two-year term as President of the Michigan Association of Timbermen, I am proud to be a part of this great organization. I have enjoyed the challenges that our industry puts in front of us and hope that we have been a service to our members.

I would like to thank Michelle and Amy for their support as well as the entire board. They have helped our Association continue to grow and are an integral part of our success.

This Spring has had its challenges with businesses shutting down and our markets changing on a daily basis. I am hopeful that the worst is behind us and that we can keep things going in a positive direction.

Our industry has been through many crises but has always prevailed. Our members are some of the hardest working and resilient group of individuals and we always find a way to come out on top.

I want to thank all of our members for the privilege to work for you and hope that we can continue to do great things in our industry. 🌲

Wes Windover
President



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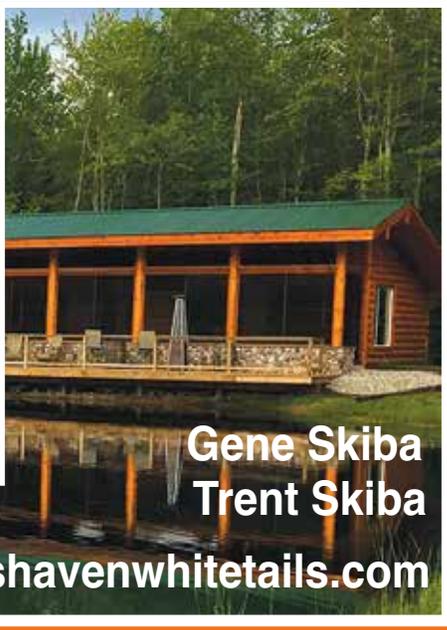
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TIMBERTALK LEGISLATIVE UPDATE ●●●●●●●●

The Michigan Association of Timbermen (MAT) leadership and lobbyists have remained in close communication with Governor Whitmer's office, legislative leaders, and staff from various state departments on behalf of its membership during these unprecedented times.

While Michigan looks to be "flattening the curve" for the time being on the COVID-19 pandemic, Michigan's economy has begun to re-open with restrictions on construction and manufacturing loosened starting in May.

Executive Orders Ease Restrictions on Construction, Manufacturing

On May 1, 2020, Governor Whitmer signed Executive Order 2020-70 to allow the construction industry, including workers in the building trades, to return to work as of **12:01 AM on Thursday, May 7, 2020**. The order did require that social distancing guidelines in the order be followed.

On May 7, 2020, the Governor signed Executive Order 2020-77 to allow manufacturing workers, including those at Michigan's Big 3 auto companies, to resume work on **Monday, May 11, 2020** as part of her MI Safe Start Plan.

MAT is optimistic that with these industries beginning to open-up there will be a steady increase in demand from the timber industry in our state.

State Expecting a \$1-\$1.4 Billion deficit in the General Fund for FY 2019-20, \$1.2 Billion for School Aid Fund

The Senate Fiscal Agency (SFA) and House Fiscal Agency (HFA) met on May 15th for a Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference (CREC) and as expected, the news isn't good. The nearly closing of the Michigan economy due to the COVID-19 pandemic is leading to some serious budget deficits this year and for years to come.

The SFA and HFA are predicating somewhere between a \$1 billion to \$1.4 billion deficit for the General Fund (GF) and \$1.2 billion deficit in the School Aid Fund (SAF) in the 2019-20 Fiscal Year (FY) budgets. This means we are likely to see deep cuts in discretionary spending and education funding as early as July. The news is not much better for the coming years either. The SFA and HFA are predicting deficits of over \$2 billion combined between the GF and SAF in FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22.

There are a few reasons to be optimistic about the budget. It's more difficult to make predictions this year because the tax filing deadline in Michigan was pushed back to July 15, thus not truly knowing what funds the state will receive prior to that day. Michigan also has \$1.2 billion in the Budget Stabilization Fund, or "Rainy Day Fund" however the legislature is limited as to how much of that money can be used annually to fill budget holes.

Finally, the federal government has discussed an additional stimulus package to assist states with budget deficits related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Regardless, assume that the budgets in Michigan will see cuts for years to come.

Legislation Moving Through the Legislature to Extend Renewal Dates for Certain Licenses

Governor Whitmer and the legislature have worked to ensure that deadlines and regulations are loosened for many state requirements in recent months, including renewal dates for licenses through the Secretary of State. In late April, Sen. Wayne Schmidt introduced Senate Bill 876 that would codify



Governor Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-78 to do the following:

- Specify that a registration issued to a motor vehicle, recreational vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer, when driven or moved on a street or highway, that expired between February 1, 2020, and May 31, 2020, would be valid until June 30, 2020.
- Specify that a registration issued to any vehicle described above that was used for commercial purposes and expired between March 1, 2020, and June 29, 2020, to be valid until June 30, 2020.
- Specify that a commercial vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer registration issued a registration under an international registration plan that expired between March 1, 2020, and June 29, 2020, would be valid until June 30, 2020.
- Provide that a driver license that expired between February 1, 2020, and May 31, 2020, would be valid until June 30, 2020.
- Specify that certain provisions of the bill would not affect the Secretary of State's authority to revoke or suspend a driver license or a group designation or endorsement under the Code.
- Prohibit the SOS from assessing late fees on registered vehicles whose registrations expired between February 1, 2020, and May 31, 2020, and whose registrations were renewed before June 30, 2020.

The legislation has since passed the Senate Transportation Committee and is expected to be taken up by the full Senate soon.

House Bill 5333 Slowed, MAT Remains Optimistic

MAT legislation to protect the Forest Development Fund that was introduced by Rep. Greg Markkanen and passed two committees and the full House of Representatives has been slowed down along with all non COVID-19 related legislative items.

The legislation had been sailing through the process without a single no vote and was placed in the Senate Appropriations Committee in April. MAT had been hopeful that the legislation would be through the legislature and on the Governor's desk by this summer but that looks highly unlikely at this point.

MAT lobbyists have been in contact with the Chairman of Appropriations, Sen. Jim Stamas, and we remain optimistic that the bill will be signed into prior to the end of this legislative session.

FEDS to Overhaul Hours of Service

A federal rule to overhaul hours of service limits on truck drivers' schedules will soon be published in the Federal Register, the U.S. DOT's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration announced Thursday. Of note, the rule expands split-sleeper berth options afforded to drivers to allow them to split their 10-hour off-duty period into windows of seven hours and three hours, in addition to the existing eight-hour, two-hour option. Unlike current regs, the shorter window in any split of off-duty time will not count against drivers' 14-hour on-duty clock.

The final decision will likely be coming the week of May 18th and will take effect 120 days after its publication. 🌲



MAT AWARDS

2019 AWARD WINNERS

With the unprecedented start of 2020, Timbermen hopes this (delayed) spring Timber Talk finds all our members, their businesses and families doing well. With the COVID-19 pandemic preventing us from celebrating Timbermen's 46th Annual Convention, we have included a parting note from former MAT president Wes Windover, a legislative update and recognition of our 2019 award recipients in this issue.

Please take the time to read about and celebrate the following 2019 recipients:

- Logger of the Year, Kevin Johnson of Cutting Edge Forest Products, L.L.C
- Excellence in Trucking recipient Jerry McGill of J. McGill Trucking
- Excellence in Manufacturing recipient Asher Tourison of Acme Pallet, Inc.
- Friend of the Timbermen went to the late, Al Rush of Rush's Forest Products

We congratulate all the award recipients and appreciate their dedication to and promotion of our industry, be sure to celebrate them and their accomplishments on our Facebook page (@MichiganAssociationofTimbermen) until we can present their awards at a future date.

Senator Curt VanderWall of the 35th District is the recipient of the 2019 legislator of the year. Be sure to let him know how important his continued support of the forest products industry is in Michigan.

Wes Windover was honored with the Distinguished Service Award. We want to thank him for all the time and effort he has put into promoting the industry and the association while serving as president.

With government mandates preventing us from gathering for the 46th Annual Convention and our 1st Timbermen Expo, we are looking forward to seeing members at our first Golf Outing Fundraiser on August 22, 2020 in Nahma, MI. Watch for emails and information on our Facebook page for all the details. We are also busy making plans for next year's Annual Convention planned for April 22-23, 2021 at the Bavarian Inn Lodge in Frankenmuth, MI. 🌲





MAT AWARDS

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD – WES WINDOVER



“ I am proud to be apart of this great organization. I have enjoyed the challenges that our industry puts in front of us and hope that we have been a service to our members.”

— Wes Windover

Michigan Association of Timberman’s distinguished service award honoring individuals that go above and beyond for Timberman’s and the industry, is proudly awarded to Wes Windover of Manton, MI. Wes earned an AAS in Forest Technology and a Bachelors Degree in Forestry from Michigan Technological University in 1994. He has been the Procurement Manger for Biewer Lumber for the last 15 years, where his strong leadership and prominent roll on the strategic team has resulted in steady growth for their mills.

Serving as a Timberman board member since 2013 and as it’s president from 2018-2020, he has tirelessly served our members with a passion that has promoted the timber industry through service and education. Also active on the Forest Products Council board, he continues to be an active industry leader for Michigan working closely with legislators, Forest Service, DNR, local govt, and the public to ensure the health and sustainability of our forests and the ability to manage them.

A father of two (Elise & Caden) and an avid hunter and fisherman, Wes also enjoys the recreational benefits of our state’s natural resources. Michigan Association of Timberman Board of Directors is honored to award Wes the Distinguished Service Award. 🌲

EXCELLENCE IN MANUFACTURING AWARD – ACME PALLET INC.

The Michigan Association of Timbermen would like to announce Acme Pallet Inc. as our 2019 Excellence in Manufacturing award recipient.

Asher Tourison began working for Acme Pallet in 1977, soon becoming the Plant Manager. Asher later bought the company. The Pallet manufacturing facility in Holland, MI is an 125,000 square foot building which houses 3 Viking automated nailers as well as a cut-up shop that processes 10.5 million board feet of cants annually. These manufacturing capabilities enable Acme to produce 2.3 million pallets per year.

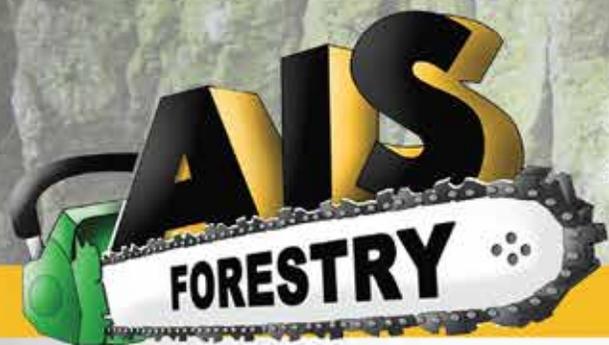
Acme Pallet is ISO 9001:2015 and ISPM-15 certified, this allows them to do business with a variety of different companies and ensure that they are able to meet all of their customers' needs. With a standard inventory of over 25,000 pallets on hand and over 200 different footprints, Acme is able to make daily deliveries to many different businesses throughout West Michigan. This type of inventory managed system as well as the daily deliveries of quality pallets has allowed Acme to grow into one of the leaders in new pallet manufacturing.

Acme Pallet is the parent company of Acme Sawmill in Walkerville, MI and SL Sawmill, an FSC certified mill, in LeRoy, MI. Acme Sawmill produces 4.1 million board feet of lumber annually, comprised of grade lumber, railroad ties and cants. SL Sawmill is a small log/bolt mill that was built with the latest technology which allows them to saw 5,500 logs per day, on average. With an annual output of 11.7 million board feet of finished pallet stock, SL has given Acme Pallet the opportunity to reach other markets within the pallet industry.

The success of the company could not exist without the efforts of the 96 employees at the 3 locations. Key to the procurement side of the business is the relationships they have developed both with sawmills throughout the state and the loggers that support their sawmills. 



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LOGGER OF THE YEAR AWARD – KEVIN JOHNSON

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The Michigan Association of Timberman is pleased to announce Kevin Johnson and Cutting Edge Forest Products LLC, as the 2019 Logger of the Year.

Kevin is a fifth-Generation logger with roots going back to Sweden in 1895. His love for the woods started as early as 2 years old. He often rode with his Dad in his wood's equipment and logging truck.

Kevin started working for his parent's company, after school, at the age of 12. This first job was running an iron mule forwarder. Around 15 years old he learned to run processor, a PC 90 Komatsu. By the age of 20, he found himself driving log truck. Two years later he would buy this truck and start a business of his own. Long hours and hard work brought him success and he wanted to expand into a full logging business.

In the year 1999, at the age of 23, he bought his first processor, and from there he has now grown into having two full time woods operations and one part time crew, along with four trucks transporting wood products. Cutting Edge Forest Products employs 12 workers. His efficient and hardworking team members are the reason for his success.

Kevin is proud of them and the legacy they are leaving for generations to come. Cutting Edge Forest Products LLC produces around 31,000 cords annually, mostly delivering their products to PotlatchDeltic, Biewer Lumber, Verso Corp, LP and Arauco. Their relationships with these businesses are important and are an essential part of having a successful logging business. They enjoy working with every one of them.

Kevin is honored to work with his dad, brother, mother, wife and sons and hopes to turn the reigns over to his sons someday. Kevin and Becky have seen their fair share of challenges in the 22 years of working together but working in the woods has always been their way of life and will continue to be for years to come! 🌲

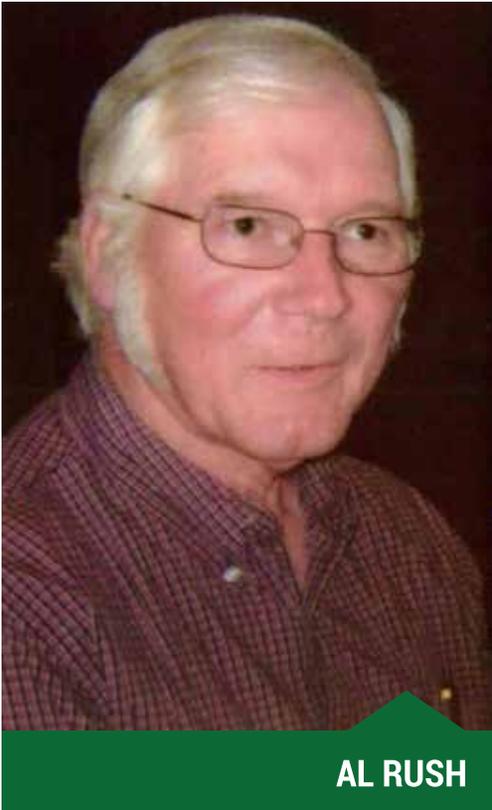


KEVIN JOHNSON - CUTTING EDGE FOREST PRODUCTS LLC



MAT AWARDS

FRIEND OF THE TIMBERMEN AWARD – AL RUSH



AL RUSH

Al was born at home and raised on his family’s farm where he learned and developed his strong work ethic. As a high school senior, Al took a job at Gibson’s Refrigerator. In 1967 Al started Rush’s Forest Products which he owned and operated for nearly 50 years. During that same time, Al also owned and operated A&E Sawmill.

Al held memberships in Montcalm County Farm Bureau, Michigan Association of Timberman, Heritage Village and the Entrican Arbor of Gleaner Life Insurance Society. He served on the Douglass Township Planning Commission, Montcalm County Farm Bureau Board, the Forestry Advisory Committee for the State of Michigan and the Michigan Association of Timberman Board. Al was just honored by the Timberman Association to receive their annual Friend of Timberman award.

Al was fiercely proud of sawing and providing lumber for the Rush Dairy on the Heritage Village campus where he reconstructed, as much as possible, the pasteurization equipment used by the Rush family to process and bottle milk.

Al had the privilege of cutting the state Christmas tree one year during Gov. Snyder’s time. It came out of Jackson, MI.

Al was the quiet kind of guy, but when he spoke, it was with much wisdom. 

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EXCELLENCE IN TRUCKING AWARD – J. MCGILL TRUCKING

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J. MCGILL TRUCKING

The Michigan Association is pleased to introduce J. McGill Trucking as the recipient of the 2019 Excellence in Trucking award.

Jerry McGill purchased his first semi-truck in 1995, back then he hauled milk, cattle, farm animal feed, and food produce. He took after his father, Vic McGill who in 1962 started driving truck. In 1973 Vic bought his first truck and trailer and started McGill Transportation. Jerry grew up washing and working on his dad's truck. Vic taught Jerry everything about the truck and the trucking business and inspired who he is today. Vic believed in operating with integrity and honesty and Jerry is proud to continue those truck driving traditions with the McGill name backing him.

In 2013 Jerry purchased his first set of B trains and begin hauling logs. Today J. McGill Trucking, travels 20-25 thousand miles weekly to haul 25 million board feet of logs yearly to customers, such as Devereaux Sawmill, Maeder Brothers Sawmill, Outback Forestry and many others. He employs 20 workers, maintains 10 log trucks and 3 sets of gravel trains. The first self-loader was purchased at Midwest Tractor from Larry and Jeff Cade, he continues to purchase his equipment from the Cade family because of their customer service. His trucks are a mix of brands with the most recent being a Wester Star, however he likes his Peterbilt truck too. His team helps to keep the trucks clean and in great running condition.

Jerry's son Jacob, and Son-in-law Alex help to fill the trucking schedule along with an employee who is like a son, Ryan Lewis. Ryan has been with him from the beginning. Jerry still drives truck every day. He knows that his team is how he has maintained a very high score with the Department of Federal Motor Carriers.

With the efficiency and support of his wife Carol, the company grew stronger and more successful. Carol and daughter-in-law, Ashley manage the office affairs. With everyone doing their part in this family business it creates a true family atmosphere that keeps them running logs every day. Please join the Michigan Association of Timbersmen in congratulating J. McGill Trucking as the 2019 Excellence in Trucking Award. 🌲



COLLIN LEONARDUZZI

My name is **Collin Leonarduzzi**. I am 24 years old and attend Michigan Technological University as a forestry major. I was born and raised in the Upper Peninsula, so the outdoors has always been an important part of my life. My hobbies include hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, kayaking, and snowmobiling. When spring comes, I also enjoy making homemade maple syrup from the trees in my back yard.

Upon graduation I would like to remain living in the Upper Peninsula working for an industrial forestry company. I am very excited to start my career sustainably managing important resources such as water, wildlife, and timber. 🌲

Hunter Pendergraft, *Brighton, Michigan*

I Graduated from Novi High School and will be attending Canisius College in Buffalo New York where I will be double majoring in Biology and Environmental Science and minoring in Ecology & Conservation. My career goal is to become an Environmental Lawyer. I will also be playing lacrosse at Canisius and look forward to the competitiveness of D1 sports.

During high school I was a member of DECA, played football and lacrosse, and volunteered in my community. 🌲



HUNTER PENDERGRAFF

LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD – CURT VANDERWALL

In November 2018, residents of Michigan’s 35th Senate District elected Sen. Curt VanderWall, R-Ludington, to the state Senate, representing the counties of Benzie, Crawford, Kalkaska, Lake, Leelanau, Manistee, Mason, Missaukee, Ogemaw, Osceola, Roscommon and Wexford.

VanderWall chairs the Health Policy and Human Services Committee and serves as vice chair of the Economic and Small Business Development Committee and the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee. In addition, he is a member of the following four committees: Elections, Environmental Quality, Finance, and Regulatory Reform.

Prior to joining the Senate, VanderWall served two years in the Michigan House of Representatives, representing the 101st District.

VanderWall is the owner of Turf Care Mole Man of Ludington. Before that, he worked with Eberhard foods and Prevo’s Family Market for much of his adult life. He also served on the board of Old Kent Bank as well as the Mason County Growth Alliance Board, Northern Michigan Counties Association and the Mason County Housing Board.

Before being elected to the Michigan House, VanderWall served as commissioner and chairman for the Mason County Board of Commissioners. He also served on the Western Michigan Fair Association for six years, was district chair for MSU Extension and served on boards for the United Way of Mason County. Curt is currently chair of the Women’s Jericho House Board.

Curt and his wife, Diane, have been married for 34 years and have three children, a daughter-in-law, and a granddaughter. They are involved with Covenant Christian School in Ludington and are active members of Mason County Reformed Church. 



SENATOR CURT VANDERWALL



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SFI'S NEW ONLINE LOGGER TRAINING

by Mike Smalligan

Covid-19 has disrupted many parts of our lives both personally and professionally. Many meetings, conferences and training events have been cancelled, including most of the spring logger training workshops offered by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. Training and education are required by SFI's core Principles and the Fiber Sourcing Standard. Michigan SFI requires loggers and truckers delivering wood to SFI-certified mills (Louisiana Pacific, Packaging Corporation of America, Potlatch-Deltic, Verso, Weyerhaeuser) to obtain 16 hours of core training and 4 hours of annual continuing education.

Michigan SFI quickly responded to this problem by offering free online training. Michigan SFI is partnering with Michigan State University Extension to use MSU's Desire2Learn (D2L) software to host more than 20 modules and 12 hours of online training. Loggers and truckers can now complete all 4 hours of continuing education online. The system is compatible with smartphones so loggers and truckers can take training where and when it is convenient for them. No shirt, no shoes, no problem for online training.

There are three basic steps to access the free training.

First: Create a guest account or "community ID" with MSU at community.idm.msu.edu.

Second: Register for the free "SFI Logger Training" course in D2L at d2l.msu.edu.

Third: Enter the SFI Logger Training course and click on "content" to select a training module. Instructions and video tutorials on how to access the training are at www.SFI-mi.org.

There are a variety of topics in the training modules and most videos are 15 to 20 minutes long. There is an easy two-question quiz after each module. Participants must view 240 minutes of training to get the 4 hours of annual Sustainable Forestry Education (SFE) credits. The system does not allow fast-forwarding through the videos to the quizzes so plan to watch the entire video (with your beverage of choice handy).

So far 70 loggers and truckers have registered for the online training.

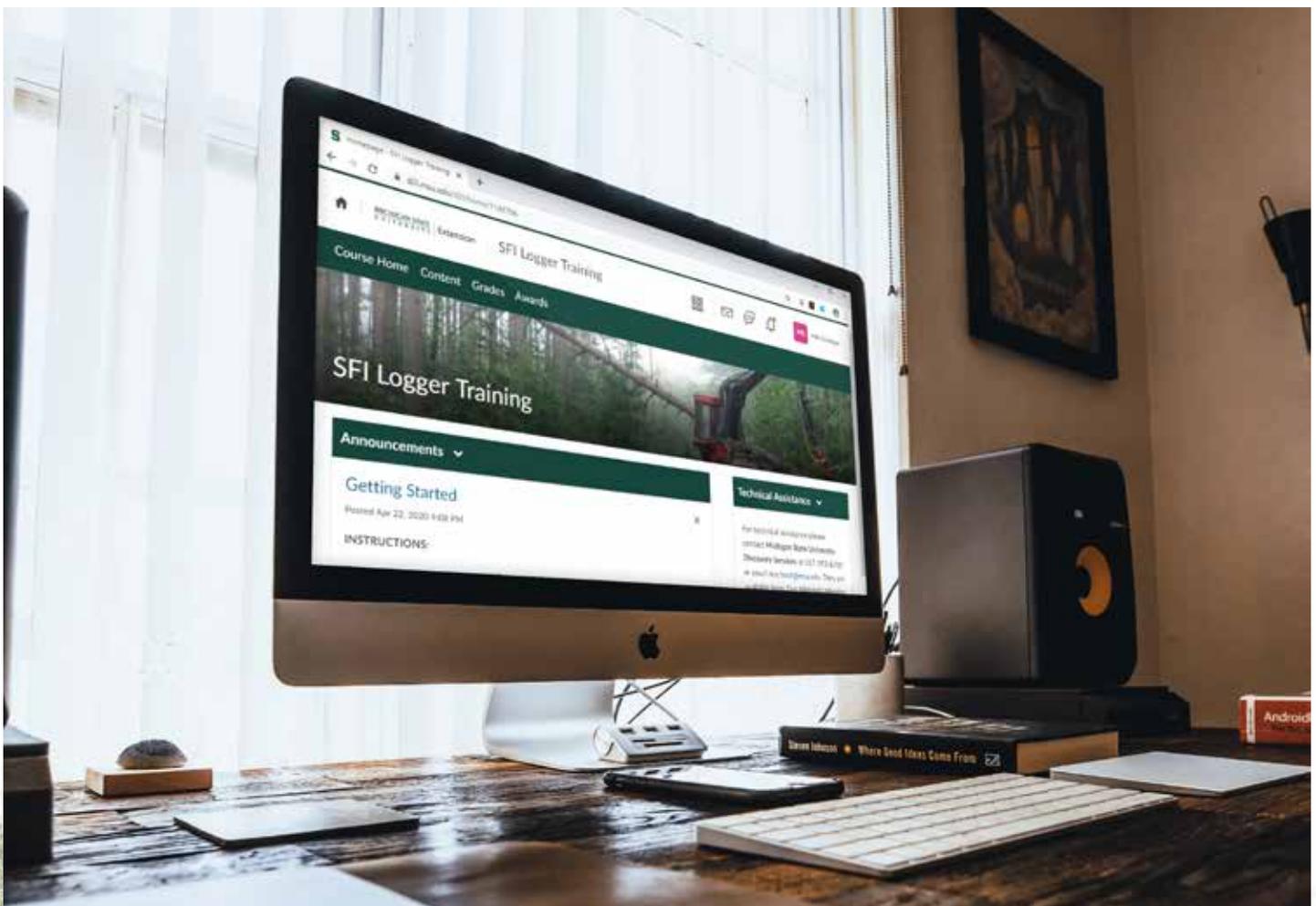
Please send comments about the online system to Jesse Randall at randal35@msu.edu or 906-241-5730.

Send ideas for new training modules to Scott Robbins at srobbins@michiganforest.com or 906-250-5027.

The DNR Forest Stewardship Program is partnering with SFI, MSU and MAT to apply for funding from the US Forest Service to improve and expand online logger training in 2021.

The two-day SFI Core training is not offered online so look for in-person classes this fall. The SFI training schedule is at www.sfimi.org/education. SFI's Principle #13 is "Continual Improvement" and these trainings are an opportunity for all of us to learn new things and get better at our jobs.

Thank-you for taking great care of Michigan's forests! The toilet paper hoarders are also thankful for your hard work in the woods during the pandemic. 🌲





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