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# DROP BACK 20 YARDS AND PUNT

*GLEN TOLKSDORF, FORESTER/BROKER/APPRaiser, MAT BOARD MEMBER*



**Glen Tolksdorf**

I thought I would write about dealing with stress on timber sales. Our work in the forest deals with so many variables that we deal with on a daily basis. Here are a few examples that I experienced during my 37 years on timber sales. I am not using actual names in these examples, however I am using tree names.

I pull up to a timber sale about 7am on a Tuesday, warm July morning. Logging contractor, Mr. Maple, comes out of the woods carrying a chain saw, yelling and screaming, and flinging his chain saw at the log truck. The truck came off the feller buncher, as soon as he started that day.

Similar situation, different timber sale. The owner of the logging company comes walking out of the woods, Mr. Pine, with a smile on his face, asks me how I am doing, and offers me a cup of coffee. After a little discussion, I ask him how is your day going? He replies, just another day on the job, and further stated that a bearing went on a grapple skidder, and has to be fixed. That's too bad I stated, and Mr. Pine stated, no not really, just what we have to deal with.

How we deal with stress is up to us. Sometimes we have to drop back 20 yards, take the penalty, and punt, and leave with a smile on our face. It will be hard to do, but maybe we might need some SFI training, to place smiles on our faces during difficult times. It is much cheaper than counseling after a nervous breakdown from a flat tire, or busted chain. Take care everyone, and remember, it is not that bad to accept the penalty. 🌲



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# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

by Jason Wadaga, MAT Lobbyist

## Government Affairs Update May 2021

As the weather warms, the legislature has begun to turn up the heat on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 budget and another COVID-19 supplemental bill. With large sums of money coming from the federal government and much of it being “one-time” dollars, it is anticipated that we’ll see increased spending this year and next.

## COVID-19 Relief Spending Bill Begins Moving Through the Legislative Process

In early March, House Bill 4420 was introduced that would spend \$3.6 billion on various programs within state government. The legislation is very early in the process and will most likely change however, some of the proposed spending items are:

- A \$1,000 grant for residents to leave the unemployment system and return to work.
- \$100 million to provide Medicaid increases to nursing homes.
- \$215 million to create a grant program to increase the number of long-term pediatric psychiatric inpatient hospitals and to build a new center for children and adolescents.
- \$17.5 million for frontline workers.

## House, Senate Start Movement on Respective Budgets

The Michigan House of Representatives and Michigan Senate have begun the months-long-process of coming to an agreement on an FY 2022 budget.

The original School Aid Fund (SAF) spending bill proposed \$16.3 billion for Michigan schools including an increase from \$8,111 to \$8,211 of foundation allowance per student. While some of the other budgets have begun to be passed in the committee process, final numbers will not be available until they are negotiated by both legislative chambers and signed off on by Governor Whitmer.

## MIOSHA Proposes Long Term COVID-19 Workplace Rules

Last month, the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) filed with the state’s Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules to create new

administrative rules that permanently extend the COVID-19 regulations on businesses.

The COVID-19 Emergency Rules were just extended but are set to permanently expire in October. In its filing, MIOSHA stated that these rules “intend to establish requirements for employers to control, prevent, and mitigate the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) among employees” and that the rationale for the new rules is that “the current emergency rules will expire.”

If approved, the rules will NOT automatically expire when the pandemic is over. They only require the state to “examine the continued need for these COVID-19 rules” after Michigan’s other emergency measures are lifted. They also keep the mask mandate and do not address changes in policy if certain vaccination levels are reached.

MIOSHA will be hosting a public hearing on May 26th to take public comment on the requested new rules.

## Michigan to Again Lose Congressional Seat

As anticipated, Michigan joined several other Midwest states in losing a Congressional seat in the upcoming redistricting process. Michigan, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Ohio will all be losing one seat in the United States Congress and thus, an electoral vote in Presidential elections.

It’s unknown at this time which Congressional seat will be eliminated until Michigan’s Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission draws the new maps. 🌳



**Jason Wadaga**  
MAT Lobbyist

# WRIST INJURY PREVENTION FOR LOG HAULERS



By: Dr. Phil Finemore, PT, DPT

Owner of WorkFitME Mobile Physical Therapy - (207) 465-6078



There are many ways a log hauler can find themselves with pain or injury in their wrists that can interfere with their ability to work. Conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome, arthritis, and tennis elbow can all arise from repetitive use of the hands and wrists causing pain that interferes with the ability to earn a living and enjoy that living they have earned outside of work. But there is great news ... pain or dysfunction from these injuries is INCREDIBLY AVOIDABLE. Here are a few tips to ensure the repetitive tasks of the job won't turn into avoidable injury and pain.

## #1 Variety is the Spice of Life

The first tip is to keep the wrists moving during driving time. Keeping the wrists and hands in one single position or leaning your elbow, wrists or hands repetitively on different parts of the truck (wheel, shifter, door, etc.) can cause irritation and inflammation in certain areas that can lead to pain or numbness/tingling in the wrist and hand. Try to avoid keeping your hands in the exact same position all the time to avoid this repetitive stress on the elbow, wrist, and carpal tunnel.

## #2 Motion is Lotion

Keeping the wrists and forearms moving is very important. Here are two stretches, pictured above, that can be used to improve wrist motion and prevent tennis elbow and golfers elbow (tendonitis at the elbow from the muscles of the wrist) along with carpal tunnel. The big key here is to avoid cranking on these positions. Stop when you start to feel the stretch.

### Wrist Flexor Stretch (picture #1):

Palm is up, hand is open, gently use the other hand to pull down until the start of a stretch is felt.

From HEP2Go



### Wrist Extensor Stretch (picture #2):

Palm is down, make a fist, gently use the other hand to pull down until the start of a stretch is felt.

From HEP2Go



Both of these can be held for 3 rounds of 30 seconds on each arm 3 times per day, They can also be done as a micro-stretch holding each for 10 seconds on each arm every 1-2 hours.

Combining the longer stretches with the micro-stretches helps improve flexibility and ensures you are getting out of repetitive or sustained positions that can cause pain during the day.



### #3 Increase Your Grip Size

This is key if you are already having some elbow, wrist or hand pain or numbness and tingling in the hand from carpal tunnel syndrome. Using foam, rags, or any material that can increase the grip size of the tools you use repetitively throughout the day can help ensure these areas aren't under load and increased stress. To

find your individual grip size, put the tip of your thumb to the tip of your middle finger and that is the optimal grip width for you. Use that as your guide to decrease grip stress with repetitive activities.

So many "overuse" injuries that continue to be the leading cause of pain, lost time at work, and worker

compensation claims can be avoided with the right combination of ergonomics AND body mechanics in that ergonomic work space. If we only address ergonomics (like tip #3) and don't address individual injury risk factors in the driver (tips #1 and #2) we are missing the boat. I hope you use these tips to help you live a happier, healthier and wealthier life! 🌲

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# LEGISLATIVE SPOTLIGHT — SEN. WAYNE SCHMIDT

by Jason Wadaga, MAT Lobbyist



Before serving in the state Legislature, he was elected five times to the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners and served terms as both vice-chair and chair.

Prior to his election to the Senate, Schmidt served from 2008-2014 in the Michigan House of Representatives. In that time, he served as chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the House Commerce Committee.

In 2014, Schmidt was elected to represent the 37th Senate District, which includes the Lower Peninsula counties of Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, and Grand Traverse, as well as Chippewa, Mackinac and Luce counties in the Upper Peninsula.

Schmidt currently serves as chair of the K-12 and Michigan Department of Education Appropriations and Transportation subcommittees.

The senator is also very active in the district. He hosts monthly coffee hours at several locations throughout Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula and has been involved with Grand Traverse Area Right to Life and Big Brother/ Big Sisters of Northwestern Michigan.

As an avid sportsman, he is a member of the National Rifle Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ruffed Grouse Society and Trout Unlimited.

Schmidt currently lives in Traverse City with his wife, Kathleen, and their two boys, Ryan and Danny.

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**“The logging industry and the secondary businesses that support the profession are key to the economy in northern Michigan, the Upper Peninsula and across this great state. I will continue to work hard to support this renewable resource and the jobs associated with it.”**

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Sen. Wayne Schmidt is a native of Traverse City. He graduated from Traverse City Central High School in 1985, and attended the University of Chicago where he majored in economics and public policy. Schmidt is also a graduate of the Michigan Political Leadership Program at Michigan State University.

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## STATE SENATOR WAYNE SCHMIDT

### What's your number one legislative priority?

“As the Chairman of the K-12 and Michigan Department of Education Appropriations Committee in the Senate, my goal is that ALL students in our state, not just in Northern Michigan, are properly funded.”

### What's the best part of your job?

“Representing the best parts of Michigan and its people – the counties of Grand Traverse, Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, Cheboygan, Mackinac, Chippewa and Luce. The 37th Senate District! “

### What's the biggest hidden gem in your district?

“The headlands International Dark Sky Park in Northern Emmet County.”

### Who's your modern day hero?

“The families, residents and businesses who toughed it out and stayed following our Great Recession to help Michigan in its comeback!” 🌱



# HONORING — AL RUSH

Al Rush was a quiet man who made a huge impact on the forest products industry. Al wasn't a person who just rambled on; he thought things through and only spoke when he thought it was necessary. Al was a hard worker who started out with a chainsaw and at the peak of his production; he had 11 trucks on the road and 2 wood crews.

Before Al worked full time in the woods, he worked the second shift at Gibson Refrigerator. Al had a great work ethic and he spent many mornings working in the woods, going home to change out his work clothes, and head to Gibson's for his scheduled shift. Al also spent some time on the family farm and started a small farm of his own before making a career change to the forest products industry.

Al loved working in the woods and found great joy in the different species of trees. His grandchildren have learned a lot from him about identifying trees, different kinds of wood and different species. His grandson spent a lot of time with his grandpa in the woods running the timber equipment. Al was always very conscious about using sustainable forestry when harvesting timber. He was a long time board member of the Michigan Association of Timbermen. He was honored to receive the 2019 Friend of the Timbermen award as well as the 2005 Distinguished Service award. He also served on MI Farm Bureau's Forestry Advisory Committee for many years.

For several years, Al provided the specialty wood required for wooden shoe production for the Holland Shoe Factory and looked for the whitest aspen for the project. Al found great joy in being a part of any project that had to do with trees or being in the woods. He loved the woods.

Al always took the opportunity to learn something new as well. A homeowner once asked Al to cut the wood for their house using quarter-sawn lumber. He learned all he could so that he could

build this home for them. Al learned that the wood is beautiful when sawn correctly! He also learned how to split stone from a local friend so he could rebuild part of his daughter's old natural stone foundation, using stones from his field. When Al's logging equipment was recently sold after his passing, the buyer found that Al used a different angle to sharpen the chipper knives than what is commonly used, and even discovered that it was more beneficial.

Al was a hard worker that always put aside time for his family and close friends. Al made time for his family to go on vacation to Hawaii and Alaska. On one particular Hawaii trip, Al brought along Bob Sly and his wife to thank him for his 40 years that he worked with Al. That is the heart side of Al that many people didn't know. Al's wife,

Margaret said, "Bob still talks about Al being his brother." He always stated that his employees were working with him, not for him.

Al's family knew that he would always be there for the important stuff. If he couldn't be there in person, he found ways to show support in it. Al took his family moose hunting every spring, so this time of year makes them miss him even more. Margaret said through opportunities like this, Al's memory will live on. 🌲



# FINDING FORESTER?

By Bill Cook



You might have recently acquired forestland or, perhaps, have owned a parcel for quite a while. At some point, the question may pop-up about what potential the forest has to offer.

People own forests, or woodlands, for a variety of reasons. Researchers have teased-out a number of outstanding reasons, and some reasons of lesser importance, but it all basically comes down to the idea that the owners simply like forests and have done financially well-enough to own a chunk.

Many people have an attraction to forests and trees. They're pretty. Wildlife is fun to watch, or hunt and eat. Privacy is nice, as too many people can be annoying. But few forestowners have the breadth of knowledge to fully appreciate the marvels under their care.

A consulting forester typically has a four-year forestry degree from an accredited university, plus at least several years of field experience. Other credentials include a Certified Forester™ (through the Society of American Foresters), membership in the Association of Consulting Foresters, and Michigan Registered Forester. In Michigan, foresters are not required to be licensed or certified in order to practice forestry. Some excellent consultants don't maintain any of the credentials just mentioned. So, it's up to the forestowner to be savvy enough to hire the right person, similar to any other professional.





**“Forestowners have a ridiculously cool set of resources at their fingertips. They have good reasons for ownership. Yet, nearly always, there is so much more.” — Bill Cook**

Finding a forester to help write a management plan is important to both the owner, by getting ideas down on paper, and for the woodland, by developing some checks and balances to keep the forest condition moving in a desirable direction. It’s not rocket science, but forest management is, indeed, a mix of many sciences.

Keep in mind that there are many forestry areas of expertise. Every forester has knowledge gaps. Find the forester that has the knowledge that you’re looking for.

Hiring a professional to help make good decisions and implement sound practices is important. A forester is not the right person to pull your infected tooth and, by the same token, a dentist isn’t the person you want helping you to make decisions about a forest.

### **How to find a professional consulting forester?**

There are two routes to discover a long list of possibilities in Michigan, although the best way might be word-of-mouth. Both routes involve quick Internet queries. The DNR Forest Stewardship Program maintains a list of consultants by region. Second, contact the Conservation District within which your woodland resides. Many districts employ a service forester under the Forestry Assistance Program. These foresters are not consultants but they can coach a forestowner through the process and help explain the maze of programs and deadlines.

### **How to choose a consulting forester from a list?**

This will take more work than obtaining the list. Talk to several of them about your woodland and their services, fee structure, and availability. Many consulting foresters have websites and references. Keep in mind that consultants have schedules, workloads, and busy seasons. Most will tell you when they might be able to accept new clients. The cheapest consultant might not be the best. Find one that meets your needs.

MSU Extension has a bulletin about selecting a consulting forester. One thing not mentioned in the bulletin, is to ask a prospective forester for a sample forest management plan. Read it. If you understand it, then maybe that's the forester for you.

Not all plans are written equally well, although most hit the important topics. Terms should be defined and interpreted. Basal area? What is that? Is twenty cords per acre a lot? Or a little? That recommended thinning might be good for the trees, but what about the warblers? Will I see more deer in that clearcut? What the heck is a vernal pool? Why are those soil type lines important?

Some plans are filled with photocopied images and soil

survey tables that don't particularly benefit the forestowner. A good management plan will be concise and directly address your concerns, as well as directly address some topics that you might not have previously thought about. A plan should help open-up possibilities.

Working with a forester is a two-way street. A forestowner probably should not expect a forester to unilaterally do "what is best" for the forest. Forest management often involves many choices about preferences, rather than a straight-forward, single-track application of sciences. A forester can explain available options and alternatives, or even make some recommendations. However, it's the forestowner that should be making the management decisions. 



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# WHAT'S IN A WORD?



For close to a year now, the American Loggers Council has worked to obtain funding for those timber harvesting and hauling businesses throughout the United States that have been adversely impacted by curtailments in markets and production as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.

We were successful in getting language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 (CFAP 2) that became law in late December that included the following language:

**“Provided further, that from the amounts provided in this section, the Secretary of Agriculture may use not more than \$200,000,000 to provide relief to timber harvesting and timber hauling businesses that have, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, experienced a loss of not less than 10 percent in gross revenue during the period beginning on January 1, 2020, and ending on December 1, 2020, as compared to the gross revenue of that timber harvesting or hauling business during the same period in 2019.”**





We have highlighted the word “may” in the text for good reason. **The original text that we thought was included in the bill used the word “shall.”** What happens when you change the word from shall to may? The appropriation becomes discretionary rather than mandatory, so now we are once again at the mercy of the agency who is tasked to imple-

ment a program, as they see fit. It has now been three months since the passage of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. On March 24, 2021, the administration announced in a press release that they have identified gaps in previous aid to producers, which **both timber harvesting and timber hauling businesses are included.** That is

the good news. The bad news is that after three months of back-and-forth discussions after the bill has passed, and the previous 6-7 months of communicating our needs to members of Congress in order to get the language into the Appropriations Act, we are now faced with a rulemaking process as required by the Administrative Procedures Act. This could

add, at a minimum, another 120 days to the wait before timber harvesting and timber hauling businesses could see a penny of the funds distributed to those in need.

Let's just hope that may not be too late for many of you who have suffered from loss of markets, quotas, downtime and the uncertainty of being able to have the capital to pay your fixed costs such as insurance and equipment notes. We will continue to engage a bureaucracy that truly does not understand what it like to run a capital intensive, low-margin business and look for ways to expedite the funding to your businesses. A good starting point would be to have a Congressional Oversight hearing as to why the agencies are not meeting the intent of Congress.

**Who changed the language from "shall" to "may"?** We may never know, but in a society where interpretation means everything, this has placed another barrier in our efforts.

*The American Loggers Council is a 501(c) (6) trade association representing the interests of timber harvesting and timber hauling businesses across the United States. For more information visit our website at [www.amloggers.com](http://www.amloggers.com).* 




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