

THE MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF TIMBERMEN

WINTER 2022

TIMBER TALK

Dedicated to Representing the Needs of Small Businesses in the Forest Product Industry

ESCANABA
PAPERMILL'S
BILLION-DOLLAR
TRANSFORMATION

MAT MISSION

The Michigan Association of Timbermen are dedicated to the practice of sustainable forestry which provides the goods and services we demand without compromising the opportunity to provide the same goods and services for future generations.

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STAFF

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jknepper@timbermen.org

Michelle Sears, Office Administrator,
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Joe Doyle,
President
Michigan Association of Timbermen

Thank you to all MAT members and supporters, this has been my first year as President of the board of directors and it has been exciting to say the least.

Much like the Detroit Lions, I feel that the roar is back in MAT. There is a new

energy with the board. Our board includes a wide array of individuals that represent all aspects of our industry. Your board members are just like you, most can cruise timber, drive a truck, operate sawmills and equipment. These people pay bills, make payroll, and negotiate pricing and are involved daily with the demands of their work all while keeping an eye on the future for their employees and respective families who rely on good decisions. These things are also brought to the table while working on concerns of the Association. Because, like you, they have a vested interest in the future of our great industry.

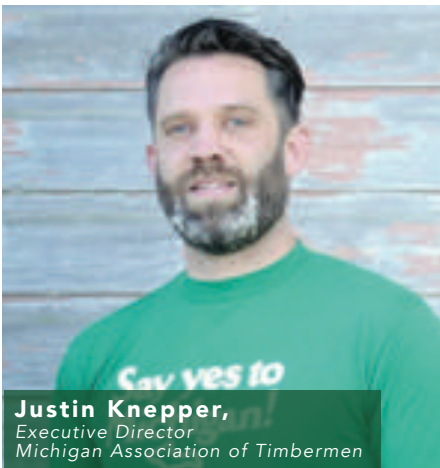
One of the most important goals of the board over this last year was to hire a new Executive Director. To that end, the board has been diligent in the process of hiring Mr. Justin Knepper to be our new Executive Director. Justin will bring

even more value to our association by his dedication to the goals and issues of it's members. While at the same time, keeping our association in the forefront of policy discussions with industry leaders. Our goal as a board is to help guide him through the issues and industry concerns while at the same time helping him to promote all aspects of our great timber heritage in Michigan.

Be sure to take a minute to talk with Justin at our 2023 convention! And be prepared to see MAT play a much larger role in your future. Your board and MAT staff are eager to help our industry succeed. I've always said, "If there are as many changes in the next 5 years as there have been in the last 5, then it's gonna be quite a ride!".

Let us help guide you through it. 🍀

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Justin Knepper,
Executive Director
Michigan Association of Timbermen

It's been a busy beginning to 2023 at the Michigan Association of Timbermen office! I started as the executive director just under a month ago, and have been hard at work getting to know the people and organizations making things happen for Michigan's forest products industry.

Over the past few weeks, I've spent time

speaking with other organizational leadership across the State, and learning more acronyms than I can keep track of! Organizations that we are working to collaborate with include the Michigan Department of Natural Resources; the American Loggers Council; the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association; The Michigan Forest Products Council; the Sustainable Forestry Initiative; the Michigan State University Extension Office; the Sustainable Resources Institute; the Michigan Forest Association; and others!

I've also been speaking to many of our annual sponsors, members, and supporters. I'm working to ensure that issues brought to MAT's attention are responded to quickly.

The Michigan Association of Timbermen is actively working on our member's behalf every day; but most of it has been done by our hard-working staff person, Michelle Sears. I'm very thankful for Mi-

chelle, who has been working for six years here at the MAT office. She's also been enthusiastically filling my head with everything you can imagine regarding MAT's history, services, events, benefits, and various stories and anecdotes.

I'm also thankful for our active board president Joe Doyle, and our wonderful board of directors. Each of them volunteers regularly in different ways to make sure our organization is healthy and successful.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments, ideas or concerns. You can reach me at the office at (906) 293-3236, or on my cell phone at (906) 630-0579. 🍀

48th Annual Timbermen Convention

April 20-21, 2023

Boyne Mountain Resort – Boyne Falls, Michigan



**FOREST INSURANCE CENTER
LOGGERS INSURANCE AGENCY
MAUCK INSURANCE AGENCY**



Wednesday, April 19

8:00 am to 10:00 pm Heavy Machinery Parking –Lawn at Circle Drive

Thursday, April 20

8:00 am to 5:00 pm Vendor Setup: Matterhorn Room, Civic Center Upper Level

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm **MATSIF Seminar: Reporting Worker's Compensation Injuries:** "Learn valuable information on the reporting and management process of a worker's compensation claim." *Arlberg Room, Civic Center*

Noon to 4:30 pm **Registration/Check-in:** *Civic Center West Lobby*

4:00 pm to 6:00 pm **Timbermen's Welcome Reception:** Join MAT President Joe Doyle to kick off the convention!
Matterhorn Room

6:00 pm **MATSIF Annual Award Banquet:** open to all attendees – *Matterhorn Room*

Friday, April 21

8:00 am to 9:00 am **Full Breakfast Buffet:** *Matterhorn Room*

8:00 am to 6:00 pm **Vendor Exhibits:** *Matterhorn Room and outdoors around Circle Drive*

8:00 am to Noon **Forest/Loggers/Mauck Insurance Board of Directors Meeting and TIMSER, Inc. Board of Directors Meeting:** *Geneva Room, Mountain Grand Lodge*

8:30 am to 4:30 pm **Registration/Check-in:** *Civic Center West Lobby*

9:00 am to 10:00 am **Seminar: Trucking Safety with Jimmie Locklear from Forest Insurance**–*Arlberg Room, Civic Center*

10:00 am to 11:00 am **Seminar: Log Truck Maintenance with Larry Cade** - *Arlberg Room, Civic Center*

10:00 am to 5:00 pm **Complimentary Women's Event sponsored by Ponsse:** *Mountain Grand Spa*
11:00 am to 8:30 pm **Silent Auction:** *Matterhorn Room*

11:00 am to 11:30 am	Michigan Association of Timbermen All Member Business Meeting: <i>Matterhorn Room</i>
11:30 am to Noon	Advocacy Update and Elected Official Introductions with MAT Lobbyist Jason Wadaga: <i>Matterhorn Room</i>
12:15 pm to 1:30 pm	Lunch: <i>Matterhorn Room</i>
2:00 pm to 3:00 pm	Master Logger Program Update: “Learn about MAT’s partnership with the Sustainable Resource Institute and VanOss Forestry to grow the Master Logger Program in Michigan. Current members and those interested in becoming a Master Logger are welcome.” <i>Arlberg Room, Civic Center</i>
3:00 pm to 5:00 pm	New Technology: Visit with Vendors– <i>Matterhorn Room and outdoors around Circle Drive</i>
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Networking Social: <i>Matterhorn Room</i>
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm	Dinner Buffet and MAT Annual Awards Ceremony. <i>Matterhorn Room</i>
8:00 pm	Live Auction and Silent Auction Results
8:30 pm to 9:30 pm	Ice Cream Social and One Hour Open Bar, Sponsored by AIS Forestry Division: <i>Matterhorn Room</i>

Saturday, April 23

8:00 am to Noon	Vendor Teardown
9:00 am to Noon	Michigan Association of Timbermen Board of Directors Meeting: <i>Vienna Ballroom, Mountain Grand Lodge</i>

Thank You to our 2023 Annual Sponsors!



SFI Log Truck Safety Continuing Education

Date: April 11, 2023

Time: 8am-12pm

Location: Baraga Lakeside Inn

900 US Highway 41 S, Baraga, MI 49908

Date: May 9, 2023

Time : 8am-12pm

Location: LMAS

14150 Hamilton Lake Road, Newberry, MI 49868

Date: May 10, 2023

Time: 8am-12pm

Location: Lyme Great Lakes Timberlands

7467 Co. 426 M.5 Road, Gladstone, MI 49837

Date: June 13, 2023

Time: 8am-12pm

Location: Lutke Rental Hall

9290 E 14 1/4 Rd, Manton MI, 49663

Date: Aug. 16, 2023

Time: 8am-12pm

Location: Runnin Gears Inc.

2500 Major Mountain Road, Harrison, MI 48625

Date: Aug. 23, 2023

Time: 8am-12pm

Location: Roger Bazuin & Sons, Inc.

240 Cherry Drive, McBain, MI 49657





WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!



Jim Wright
J & D Logging, Charlotte



Ross Shaum
Rocky Ridge Lumber LLC.,
Black River



Patrick C. Patterson
The Orion Group, LLC.,
Mackinaw City



Mathew B. Jacobson
Haul-Wood, LLC., Pelkie



Josee Miller
Miller Logging, Inc., Harrison



Josee Mille
Cant Knot Pallet, Inc., Harrison

MAT was established in 1972 for the purpose of reducing costs and increasing profits of small forest industry businesses while ensuring a continued supply of timber. As a member you should enjoy all the benefits we have to offer.

Becoming a member of the Michigan Association of Timbermen guarantees the following opportunities:

- Automatic enrollment as a member of the American Loggers Council (www.amloggers.com) and the Small Business Association of Michigan (www.sbam.org).
- Multiple opportunities to earn Sustainable Forestry Initiative (www.forests.org) credits
- Representation on issues with local, state and federal departments such as MDOT, MDNR, county road commissions and townships as well as federal motor carrier issues.
- Opportunities for rebates thru Western Star, Peterbilt, International Truck, and Clark Tracks as well as other discounts (available through our members only webpage)
- Unmatched workers compensation insurance opportunities through the Michigan
- Association of Timbermen Self-insurers Fund (www.matsif.com).
- Quality home, auto, life, and other insurance opportunities through MAT's own subsidiary companies Forest Insurance Center (www.forestinsurancecenter.com), as well as Loggers Insurance Agency, and Mauck Insurance Agency.
- Health insurance opportunities through Superior Insurance Agency of Sault Ste Marie, Michigan.

To join, simply fill out the membership form at www.michigantimbermen.com/join and return to the MAT office.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at: **(906) 293-3236**



LEGISLATIVE SPOTLIGHT SENATOR SEAN MCCANN



Sen. Sean McCann

WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER ONE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY?

Most of the bills I work on are driven by the voices in my district and what stakeholders in the district tell me is most needed. One area I do have great personal interest in, is good government reforms that shape the way we elect representatives and the way we conduct ourselves, that informs how all other policies are shaped. Things like independent redistricting reform and improvements to voting access were some re-

cent examples. I would like to continue improving our democratic systems through campaign finance reform, ethics and transparency measures, and other steps that strengthen "little d" democratic representation for the people of Michigan.

WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

It is a privilege to do this amazing work and I try not to take that for granted. I enjoy being one of the many people who are doing great work to build up the commu-

nities I represent as well as the State of Michigan. Public service and representation is ultimately about serving the people and working together to build the best future possible.

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST HIDDEN GEM IN YOUR DISTRICT?

While it's not necessarily hidden, The Kalamazoo Promise is an immense gem in our district. The landmark scholarship program for graduates of the Kalamazoo Public School system is an

ONE AREA I HAVE GREAT PERSONAL INTEREST IN, IS GOOD GOVERNMENT REFORMS THAT SHAPE THE WAY WE ELECT REPRESENTATIVES AND THE WAY WE CONDUCT OURSELVES, THAT INFORMS HOW ALL OTHER POLICIES ARE SHAPED.



SEN. MCCANN BIOGRAPHY

Sen. Sean McCann has called Kalamazoo County home for 31 years. McCann was drawn to public service as a student at Western Michigan University and spent his first years out of college working to build his community from the ground up as executive director of the Vine Neighborhood Association.

While working for Vine, McCann was elected to the Kalamazoo City Commission and served five two-year terms. As a commissioner, he worked on the clean-up of the Kalamazoo River, revitalization of Downtown Kalamazoo, fostering the community's economic development and strengthening its public safety. McCann was proud to help enact Kalamazoo's Human Rights Ordinance and received the commission's 2009 Dedication & Service Award. During this time, he worked for the American Red Cross of Southwest Michigan, where he supported families affected by disasters, provided service to members of the armed forces and assisted with blood collection drives.

In 2010, McCann was elected to serve the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Township, City of Parchment and Cooper Township as the 60th District State Representative. During this time, he was a member of

the Appropriations Committee. McCann proudly voted to expand health insurance to over 600,000 Michiganians and raise Michigan's minimum wage. He also voted against stripping collective bargaining rights from working families and fought for high quality public education from early childhood and K-12 to higher education and trade schools. Additionally, McCann proposed legislation to end the practice of "gerrymandering" by establishing an independent citizen redistricting committee.

Since taking office as Senator for the 20th District in January 2019, McCann has introduced legislation that would safeguard our water, reform our elections, and protect workers' wages and health. He serves on the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senate Committee on Energy & Technology, and Senate Committee on Natural Resources.

He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Western Michigan University. He also is a graduate of the Michigan Political Leadership Program.

McCann lives in Kalamazoo with his wife, Priscilla Lambert, and their two children, Alex and Lauren.

often-copied program and set the standard for creating affordable higher education for students of a core urban community school district. The program makes impacts well beyond the boundaries of the school district and it has become critical to the continued growth and success of our greater community.

WHO'S YOUR MODERN DAY HERO?

The late US senator Carl Levin is one of many figures I admire greatly. Known as "the conscience of the senate," his ability to remain true to his values while being politically pragmatic, and, most importantly, a role model for civility in politics, are critically needed traits in the world of public servants. 🌲





ESCANABA PAPERMILL'S BILLION-DOLLAR TRANSFORMATION

A billion-dollar “transformation” could be coming to a paper mill that’s been operating in the Upper Peninsula for more than 112 years, thanks in part to nearly \$230 million in funding and tax credits set aside by the state.

Swedish paper producer Billerud took over the Escanaba mill — which employs 1,240 people — in 2022 and set forward to explore shifting production there to cartonboard, which is used as packaging for pharmaceuticals, healthcare products, cosmetics, and drinks, among others.

According to a report from The Iron Mountain Daily News, Billerud is also considering two of its other

locations for the investment into cartonboard production, including a paper mill in Quinnesec, Mich., and a roll-to-sheet converting facility in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin.

All three plants were formerly owned by Verso Paper which restructured in 2016 following a Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Billerud purchased the three plants in March 2022 for approximately \$798 million, according to the company’s year-end financial report.

While Billerud said the Escanaba mill is planned to be the cornerstone of its expansion into North America, considered one of the largest and growing markets for cartonboard, the company also noted, “A pre-feasibil-

“THIS IS THE STATE FULFILLING ITS OBLIGATION TO THE PAPER, CARDBOARD AND TIMBER INDUSTRIES, AND TO THE HARD-WORKING FOLKS IN THE U.P.”

ity study is planned to be completed in the first half of 2023, after which the Board of Directors can make an investment decision.”

If Billerud approves the Escanaba location, the upgrades would mark a major turnaround for the mill that Rep. Greg Markkanen (R-Hancock) said was recently facing closure.

“It’s expected that some of the most advanced technology and sustainability will be introduced to the U.P., and frankly to the U.S. with this investment,” Markkanen wrote in a statement celebrating approval of \$200 million earmarked for the project in a recent state supplemental spending bill.

The state’s \$200 million in



financial support assumes investments from Billerud of approximately \$1 billion, according to the company, which noted that the final amount of the funding will be relative to the company's actual investment and is subject to "execution of the necessary agreements" between the Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) and Billerud U.S. Production Holdings LLC.

In December 2022, The Michigan Strategic Fund also approved a 15-year Forest Products Processing Renaissance Zone estimated to be worth \$29.4 million in tax incentive supporting the project. The renaissance zone "exempts Billerud from paying almost all state and local property taxes at the Escanaba Mill," according to a press release from the company.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) estimates the investment would lead to nearly 2,000 jobs — with wages estimated at more than \$43 an hour — for construction

workers given the need for new buildings, renovations, infrastructure improvements and electrical upgrades.

"We thank Governor Whitmer, the legislature, and the MEDC for their investment support for Billerud's planned transformation of our Escanaba Mill into a world-class paperboard production facility," said Billerud Americas Corporation President Rob Kreizenbeck.

"We look forward to continuing to collaborate with our partners in government to facilitate our investments for the benefit of the Escanaba community, Upper Peninsula and the State of Michigan."

Billerud is the largest consumer of pulpwood in the Upper Peninsula and operates the two largest mills there, according to Charlie Becker, who has more than 35 years of experience managing forestry land in the Upper Peninsula and is a member of the Michigan Farm

Bureau Forestry committee and the Michigan Timber and Forest Products Advisory Council.

"In general, pulpwood accounts for about 60 to 70% of the volume of wood that is harvested annually across the state," Becker said, noting that the investment in the mill ensures there will be a market for pulpwood in the state moving forward.

"If those mills went away, one or both of them, all of a sudden you really reduce your demand for the biggest product you have in forest products volume-wise."

The investment would stabilize and solidify the forestry industry and its infrastructure, noted Craig Knudson, Michigan Farm Bureau industry relations specialist and advanced regional manager for the Upper Peninsula.

"The investment in this mill not only benefits the employees working there, but also those landowners who have invested in forest plans to maintain a credible renewable resource to ensure they continue to have a market for it," Knudson added.

Beyond the benefits for business and employment, having a vibrant forest products industry is important for healthy forests, according to Becker.

"If you don't have a vibrant industry, eventually you're not going to have healthy forests because they're going to start to fall down or do what happens out West where they burn up," he added.

"Our forests are being utilized. We want to keep it that way so we can have healthy forests for people to recreate it, and to utilize." 🌲

Condensed by Michigan Association of Timbermen Staff

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For the full article, visit: (www.michigan-farmnews.com/state-looks-to-lure-1b-investment-into-escanaba-paper-mill-)



AS WE SEE IT: JAN 2023

PASSING ON THE REINS/REIGN



Scott Dane
Executive Director,
American Loggers Council

In my travels over the past 18 months, I have met with loggers in 30 states to hear and listen to their issues, opinions, and challenges. For the most part, the challenges are all common, regardless of the region – profitability, workforce, and markets. But recently, I was approached by some younger loggers that expressed a concern that the American Loggers Council was not hearing the “next generation.”

These guys aren’t looking at the exit but are prepared to invest in the future of the American logging industry. So, we held an impromptu side meeting with about twelve loggers to get their insights and opinions. Aside from the universally common issues, I was surprised by one new concern that was shared amongst nearly all of them – frustration with the unwillingness of their family business to “Pass on the Reins.”

It is critical that multi-generational companies continue to be passed on from one generation to the next. After all, this has been the most successful succession plan for maintaining the logging infrastructure. At the Associated California Loggers conference, one presenter asked the group how many are second, third, fourth, and fifth-generation companies. Many hands were raised, including a fifth-generation family logging business.

Unfortunately, due to the many challenges within the logging industry, it cannot be assumed that the next generation will continue the family business. In fact, I have heard many across the country state that they do not want their children to enter the business. So, those family businesses in which the next generation is willing to commit to the long hours, difficult environment, challenging markets, and uncertainty, are fortunate that they have the opportunity to hand over the reins and ensure that their lifetime of investment and sacrifice will be a living legacy carried on by the next generation.

However, the risk in not recognizing the readiness of younger loggers is that they will become frustrated and discontent and either take the next step on their own or leave the timber industry. In this case, the succession of a company will be too often occurring, selling off the equipment and “retiring.” Because of this, it is important for the senior member of the family to be willing to take the lead and start the conversation. Acknowledge that your son/daughter is just like you: raised in the business, proud of what they have learned, and eager to follow in their father’s and grandfather’s footsteps. Don’t wait until you are sure they are ready. None of us are ever as ready as we would like, but we have the foundation of experience, as well as the skills and ability to handle the uncertain challenges that are inherent in the logging industry. Besides, you’ll be there to fall back on for advice if necessary.

There are two types of rein/reign. One refers to reins that guide and direct. After you have successfully navigated the route,

steered your logging business on its successful course, and brought it to the point it is, the time will come to hand over the reins for someone else to continue the journey. Reins can also stop forward progress if the trip is over or the direction is unknown.

The other reign refers to exercising authority in the manner of a monarch (i.e., as a king) over a period. The reign of a good leader is vital to governance and order. However, the reigning period is fixed and will always require the coronation of a new leader to continue the orderly progress of the endeavor, your logging business.

So, as your reign ends, be willing and prepared to pass on the reins to the next leader of your company. You’ve prepared them well to continue what you have built. Allow them to build upon that foundation.

This concept applies to the American Loggers Council and state associations as well. When these young loggers approached me about not hearing their voices, I confessed that they are right because my input comes primarily from the Board of Directors. Men with considerable experience and knowledge who have built the American Loggers Council into the leading timber industry association in the country. The same can be said for the leadership of the state associations.

Likewise, we need to begin developing the next generation of association leaders to ensure the ongoing growth and success of the associations. That is why the American Loggers Council will establish the Next Generation Logging Leadership program for tomorrow’s leaders in the timber industry. 🌲

“WE MUST ENSURE THAT THE YOUNG TREES HAVE WHAT THEY NEED TO GROW.”

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Michigan Forest Association



Warren Suchovsky

Michigan Association of Timbersmen Grows Scholarship Fund With Support from Michigan Forest Association

The Michigan Association of Timbersmen is pleased to announce the Warren Suchovsky Scholarship of \$1,000, available by application on www.timbermen.org. The Warren Suchovsky Scholarship offers funding to students pursuing a higher education in a forest management field or attaining certifications leading to careers working in and supporting the forest industry.

The Michigan Association of Timbersmen is also pleased to announce that The Michigan Forest Association has pledged additional funding of \$500.00 in partnership with the Warren Suchovsky Scholarship. This allows for the winning applicant to receive

a total of \$1,500.00 in scholarship funding jointly from the Michigan Association of Timbersmen and the Michigan Forest Association.

The Scholarship is named for Warren Suchovsky of Stephenson, Michigan, who has spent his 60+ year career dedicated to the advancement of the timber industry, which has grown in many ways due to the hard work and knowledge of industry supporters like himself. Warren Suchovsky's accomplishments include the launch of the Michigan Master Logger certification program, and numerous leadership and advisory positions with various organizations within the local, state, and national levels. 🌲

PLEASE SUBMIT APPLICATION TO

The Michigan Association of Timbersmen

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Newberry, MI 49868

Email: timbermen1972@gmail.com

Fax: (906) 293-5444

Deadline – March 3, 2023

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484-422-1000

MAT PARTNERS WITH SRI TO GROW THE MICHIGAN MASTER LOGGER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Michigan Association of Timbermen is partnering with the Sustainable Resources Institute (SRI) to implement the Michigan Master Logger Certification Program. SRI administered the program for several years before turning it over to MAT in 2020. As of January 1, 2023, SRI resumed administration of the program in partnership with Brock VanOss and VanOss Forestry Services, LLC. SRI is a non-profit organization based out of Crystal Falls, Michigan that specializes in forest industry education, workforce development and certification programs. Kari Divine, SRI's Executive Director, enjoys working to ensure Michigan's forests are well managed so that the indus-

try, our local economies and our forests are sustained for generations to come. Brock VanOss is the president and owner of VanOss Forestry Services, LLC, also based out of Crystal Falls. Brock has a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry and an Associate of Applied Science in Forest Technology from Michigan Technological University and has been working in the forestry field since 1996.

MAT, SRI and VanOss Forestry are working together to build a robust Master Logger Certification Program that recognizes loggers who go above and beyond to meet the sustainable forest management standards set by the American Loggers Council.

The Master Logger program assesses and documents the harvest practices that loggers use in the forest, and ensures that professional loggers are rewarded for the good work that they do. With support from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, we are working to better market Certified Master Loggers to private landowners and the forestry professionals that work with them, build the program by adding new members and to recertify all of our current members over the next three years.

Brock will be working with other verifiers to accomplish this year's recertification goals, and VanOss Forestry staff or one of our other verifiers will be reaching out to many members over the next several weeks to schedule audit appointments for the upcoming round of renewal certifications. We are looking forward to an efficient recertification round and will do our best to accommodate sched-

ules.

SRI and VanOss Forestry will host a Master Logger break-out session at the MAT Annual Convention on April 21st. Both current and potential members are welcome. Come meet us in person, learn more about the program, and let us know how we can better serve you.

If you have any questions about the program or suggestions, please reach out to VanOss Forestry at 906.874.0777 or office@vanossforestry.com or SRI at 906.875.3720 or kari@sustainableinc.org.





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HISTORY FROM ACROSS MICHIGAN'S REGIONS

Region One: Western Upper Peninsula

The Michigan Association of Timbermen coordinates efforts regionally throughout the State, and will begin featuring historical articles by region in the following order in each quarterly edition of Timber Talk:

Region 1

Western Upper Peninsula

Region 2

Eastern Upper Peninsula

Region 3

Northern Lower Peninsula

Region 4

Southern Lower Peninsula



The following excerpt was provided by the Menominee Range Historical Foundation's (menomineemuseum.com) historian William J. Cummings's "Dickinson County History – Logging," and offers a detailed glimpse into the state of the lumber industry in the Western Upper Peninsula as early as the mid 1800s.



"An early record of timber cruising near Iron Mountain, 25 years before the city was established, is reported in the diary of Alanson Forman Lyon, published by the Michigan Historical Commission, Vol. 47, No. 4, December, 1963.

Mr. Lyon, greatgrandfather of Putnam and Sumner Robbins[,] was born at Saw Pits (now Port Chester), New York[,] on July 5, 1798. He was a lumberman from the Tioga River country of New York, and came to Menominee in June, 1853, with Mrs. Lyon, four daughters, three sons and for sawyers, to manage the water-powered sawmill of Elsworth, Shepard and Douglas.

On Monday, September 4, 1854, with his son Gaius, he started up the Menominee River in a special boat he had built for the trip to look for and cruise timber lands opened for sale by the Federal Government. During the next 27 days they met many Indians, but only one party of white men consisting of William Burt, government



surveyor[,] and his crew, who were on their way back to Menominee. The Lyons spent eight days looking for timber in the present Iron Mountain and Quinnesec area working out of their base camp near the Big Quinnesec Falls before returning to Menominee on September 30, 1854.

In 1866-67 following his return from serving in the Civil War, James Lyon, son of Alanson Lyon, was employed in a timber cruising party who [sic – which] hauled their boat and equipment from Marquette to Lake Michigamme and spent the summer cruising timber lands adjacent to the Michigamme and

upper Menominee Rivers. This crew met only Indians until they reached the area near the present Iron Mountain.

Logging operations progressed rapidly up the Menominee after 1867 and George F. Seibert reported in his Journal of George Frederick Seibert, 1879, that the cut-over timber lands were badly burned over all the 24 miles north of Menominee when he walked the area on May 4, 1879.

The pine in the Iron Mountain area was well cut-over by 1879 by the Stephensions, Fowlers, Hosmers, Wells, Kirby-Carpenter Co., Van Schank [sic – Schiak] Co., WhiteFriant Co., John Finan, Thomas Farrell, J.F. Underwood and by jobbers logging for sawmills at Menominee. Thus most of the best pine timber had been harvested before the mining boom in Iron Mountain started in the 1880's." 🌲

Read the full article here:

www.uproc.lib.mi.us/dclpdf/LH%20File%20/LOGGING%20-%20Cummings.pdf



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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - FEBRUARY 2023



The 102nd legislature is now off and running in 2023.

In late 2022, Sen. Winnie Brinks (D-Grand Rapids) was unanimously elected as the next Senate Majority Leader. In the House of Representatives, Rep. Joe Tate (D-Detroit) was elected to be the next Speaker of the House. The House and Senate Democrats announced their legislative priorities and assigned committee posts in January.

Of most interest to the Michigan Association of Timbermen (MAT) in the first part of 2023 is the supplemental spending bill that was passed by the legislature and signed into law by the Governor. The legislation included a \$200 million appropriation for the paper mill in Escanaba. This spending project was of high priority for MAT and its membership.

Governor Whitmer has since announced her "Lowering MI Costs" plan and presented her Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24 state budget plan.

LEGISLATURE APPROVES FUNDING FOR ESCANABA PAPER MILL

Senate Bill 7 was the first major spending bill of 2023 that totaled over \$1 billion. The appropriation included \$200 million for the paper plant in Escanaba owned by Billerud and is part of an overall \$1.2 investment. Without the investment, the plant would have likely been closed and had a devastating impact on the economy in the Upper Peninsula.

MAT worked quickly in January to activate our membership in support of the project in Escanaba. MAT staff coordinated efforts with Invest UP out of Marquette as well as with the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association (GLTPA), ensuring that all members were informed of the legislative effort.



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MAT's Executive Director contacted key legislators to advocate for their approval of the appropriation to support the largest paper mill expansion in the history of the Upper Peninsula! MAT staff also praised key lawmakers after the vote, thanking them for their support.

DEM LEADERSHIP INTRODUCES TOP PRIORITIES FOR 2023-24

In January, the newly elected Democrat majorities in the Michigan Senate and Michigan House of Representatives announced a handful of their legislative priorities for the 2023-24 session. They include:

- **Repeal of "Right to Work"** This law was passed in 2012. The 2012 legislation barred labor contracts from requiring workers to become union members or pay union dues. The Democrats would like this law repealed.
- **Reinstating Prevailing Wage.** The prevailing wage law previously required contractors to pay union wages and benefits on state-funded projects. This was repealed in 2018 and the Democrats would like to reinstate that requirement.
- **Repeal the "Pension Tax".** One of the first major pieces of legislation that former Governor Snyder was able to pass in 2011 was a tax on pensions. The legislation introduced would repeal that tax.
- **Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).** The proposed legislation is to provide an income tax credit for lower and moderate income workers moving it from 6% to 30%.
- **Expand the Elliot-Larson Civil Rights Act.** Codify into law a court decision that makes protections based on sex and gender identity.
- **Repeal Michigan's Abortion Ban.** Despite the passage of Proposal 3 which was on the ballot in 2022, the legislation would repeal Michigan's 1931 ban on Abortion.

LEGISLATURE APPROVES FIRST SPENDING PLAN OF 23'

After an abbreviated lame duck session following the 2022 election, the Michigan Legislature passed a "close of books" supplemental budget last month. The final figure for the supplemental totaled over \$1 billion.

Some of the highlights of the plan included:

- **\$200 million for a paper mill in Escanaba owned by Billerud.**
- \$150 million for Michigan's Strategic Outreach and Attraction Reserve Fund (SOAR).
- \$150 million for an affordable housing tax credit.
- \$100 million for community revitalization grants.
- \$75 million for a blight elimination program.
- \$75 million for small business smart zones.

GOVERNOR, LEGISLATURE EYE TAX CUT

At her State-of-the-State address in January, Governor Whitmer announced her "Lowering MI Costs" plan which was a combination of tax cuts and tax credits.

At a press conference this month, Governor Whitmer, Senate Majority Leader Brinks and Speaker Tate unveiled the details of the plan which includes:

- **Phasing out the Pension Tax.** The plan phases out the pension tax over four years. It will equalize the exemption on both public and private pensions.
- **Increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit.** Increasing the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) from 6% to 30%. It figures to provide a tax refund of \$3,150 to 700,000 families. The plan is retroactive for tax year 2022.
- **Checks to Michiganders.** \$180 checks to every Michigan tax filer.

GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES FISCAL YEAR 2023-24 BUDGET PROPOSAL

As is customary for Michigan Governors every February, Governor Whitmer presented her budget proposal for the FY 23-24 state budget to the Michigan Legislature. The roughly \$79 billion

dollar budget spends most of the \$9 billion surplus the state had on the books. The highlights of her budget proposal included:

- \$18.6 billion for the School Aid Fund.
- \$900 million to create a "Rainy Day Fund" for schools.
- \$210 million to increase wages for nursing home employees.
- \$500 million annually for the Strategic Outreach and Attraction Reserve (SOAR).
- \$500 million for school infrastructure.
- \$200 Million for the "Michigan Regional Empowerment Program."
- Free lunch for all public-school students.
- \$150 million to purchase electric school buses.
- \$100 million for drinking water infrastructure
- \$100 million to maintain state buildings.
- \$89 million for revenue sharing.

The budget proposal is the first step in the long process of creating a budget for this fiscal year. The House and Senate chambers will now begin to negotiate their spending priorities. 🌲

You can view her full budget proposal at:

www.Michigan.gov/budget



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