

FOREST PRODUCTS NEWS

MAINE FOREST PRODUCTS COUNCIL

APRIL - MAY 2007

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 4

Forest Products Community Must Show the Way

By Patrick Strauch
MFPC Executive Director



As members of the Maine Forest Products Council know better than anyone, there has probably been no more frequently discussed facet of Maine life, for the last several years, than the Maine Woods. From clearcutting and pesticides, to the rise of forest certification systems, to concerns about sales of large swaths of forestland to purchasers who may or may not keep their land primarily covered with trees, there seems to be no shortage of attention paid to the forests of Maine and their future.

Despite this attention, it is probably safe to say that relatively few

Mainers understand the breadth of the role that the Maine Woods play in the life of Maine's economy and communities. Indeed, the forests of Maine have played many roles for generations, and they continue to play those roles today. The home of Maine's largest industry, the traditional playground for generations of visitors, the foundation of many Maine communities and of much of Maine's rural culture; clearly, the Maine Woods constitute a multi-layered, multi-faceted community.

At issue, however, is how few Mainers understand this. To many,

perhaps to the majority of Maine citizens, the Maine Woods constitute a pristine wilderness, the last refuge from an increasingly fast-paced, technology-based society. Indeed, given that, at least when it comes to the unorganized territories, the debate revolves around 10 million acres of essentially open forestland, it is not hard to see how people can form those perceptions. Moreover, it doesn't hurt that special interest groups bang the "wilderness" drum loud and clear in the name of pursuing their own goals.

(Continued on page 4)

New Financing Program Open to Landowners and Loggers

The Maine Forest Service (MFS) has announced a new program that it says will enable Maine's forest landowners and loggers to receive low-interest financing for the purchase of environmentally-friendly equipment to help protect and improve water quality in and around logging operations.

The Maine Forestry Direct Link Loan Program is administered by MFS in partnership with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Maine Municipal Bond Bank, and local lenders. The program provides an incentive for landowners and loggers to purchase certain

equipment that will help reduce pollution risk on logging operations. "Increasing the use of Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) through incentive financing is one of many innovative approaches the Maine Forest Service is implementing to achieve desired outcomes in Maine's actively-managed woodlands," said Maine Forest Service Director Alec Giffen.

"Green-certified" landowners and loggers, and those who have received training in harvest BMPs from the Maine Forest Service or other qualified programs, are eligible to apply.

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A Tribute to Abigail Holman

By the time you read this, you will hopefully have adjusted to the sudden and untimely death of Abby Holman. You will have also read and heard many well deserved tributes of her dedication and hard work. I hope this process brings comfort and closure to all of us, and that we remember who she was and what she did for us, using that memory to strengthen us both professionally and personally.

I had a long and close relationship with Abby. I met her during the first forestry referendum, where she encouraged me to get involved in the campaign and guided me through the unfamiliar territory of public speaking engagements and debates. As Executive Director of the Council, she later encouraged me to get involved on the Board of Directors of the Council and recruited me to serve on the Executive Committee.

Through the years, she was a mentor, a leader and a friend. She knew when to listen to our membership and when to advise us that we were making a mistake. It was from Abby that I learned the ins and outs of the Legislative process and got comfortable with the hearing process.

Though the years, Abby was a mentor, a leader and a friend.

Abby led the Council through some of the most difficult times our industry has faced. She took over in the aftermath of the first referendum, guiding us through another referendum and numerous legislative assaults on our rights to grow, harvest and process timber into products. There are many reasons, and many people deserve credit for the much improved image our industry has in Maine, but



Peter Triandafillou

we should remember the difficult days of Abby's leadership and her role in bringing that change about.

Abby was incredibly dedicated to our industry, always referring to us as "the good guys". She was a tenacious and effective adversary and a steadfast and loyal ally. These attributes earned her enemies in several quarters, but as the years have passed we've seen how often she was right.

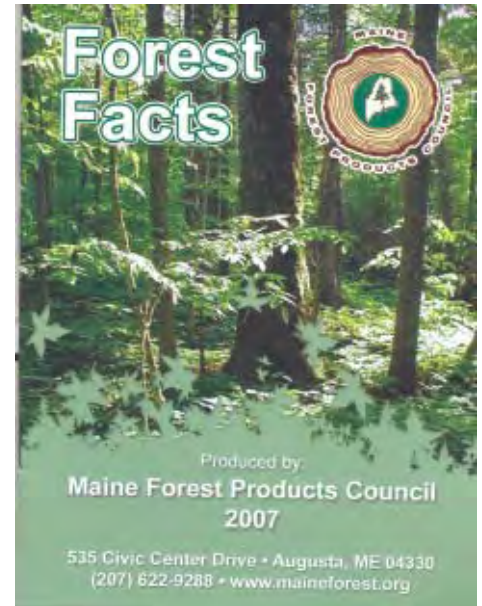
However, even in the darkest days, she maintained her own sense of keen humor. She frequently teased my technical tendencies by threatening to buy me a propeller beanie and a belt case for my calculator. She also accused Doug Denico of checking under his bed each morning to see who was out to get him.

Her dedication to our industry extended to owning her own Tree Farm, and she and her husband Andrew put into practice many of the rights she defended for us.

Abby was also a great mother and an accomplished outdoorswoman. One of my regrets is that we never made good on our plans to spend some time fishing and bird hunting together.

I can think of no better way to close than the following: I honored Abby as a colleague and loved her as a friend. My life has been enriched by

knowing her. For that I consider myself blessed.



Forest Facts Booklet is designed to serve as a quick reference to anyone wishing to have the most current knowledge of Maine's Forest Economy. This is a pocket size booklet 3 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches. The booklets are available at the Maine Forest Products office and are sold for \$1.50 each. Call Sue McCarthy (207-622-9288) or email (adminassist@maineforest.org)



Maine Forest Products Council
 535 Civic Center Drive
 Augusta, Maine 04330
 (207) 622-9288
 FAX (207) 626-3002
 www.maineforest.org

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Executive Director: Patrick Strauch
 pstrauch@maineforest.org

SFI Coordinator: Patrick Sirois
 psirois@maineforest.org

Communications Coord.: Joel Swanton
 jswan93426@aol.com

Office Manager: Kerry Casey
 kcasey@maineforest.org

Administrative Assistant: Sue McCarthy
 adminassist@maineforest.org

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MFS to Add Fire Protection Chopper

The Maine Forest Service's Forest Protection Division reports that it is entering the 2007 fire season with only 3 Hueys and 1 Jet Ranger flying. This is in contrast to 6 or 7 Hueys in the past. According to Division Director Bill Williams, given the maintenance cycle of the Hueys, the Division needs to have at least 6 in the rotation to keep 3 flying. In view of the equipment shortage, that will clearly not be the case during this upcoming fire season. At times, the Division will have only Huey available, and there is a significant possibility that there will not be any Hueys flying at times throughout the fire season.

For this reason, Williams says, it has become an emergency for this Division to acquire replacements for the Huey helicopters. The Division can no longer afford to maintain the fleet that it once did. Over the past 12 months the Division has had to put over \$100,000 into each of the 3 remaining Hueys to make them airworthy for this season.

It has become necessary to replace the Huey with a newer helicopter that can provide aerial forest fire suppression similar to what the Huey provided. The Division has moved forward with the purchase of a Bell 407 that will be delivered in late August. This first purchase begins the replacement process to ensure adequate forest fire suppression resources for our state well into the future.

Williams went on to point out that "there has been no increase to the Forest Protection Division budget as a result of the helicopter purchase. The funds used to acquire the Bell 407 resulted from several slow fire years, budget cuts and a significant effort to reduce spending in preparation for the helicopter purchase."

The Division is paying for the helicopter in one year with a significant increase to the fire suppression tax, but that tax will drop back down after this year assuming the Division does not experience an unusually bad fire season.

While some landowners have voiced concern over the tax, Williams pointed out that the average cost per acre has varied little since 1997.

Reminders: Save the Dates.....



June 8th

PIMA Annual Golf Tournament

Fox Ridge Golf Club

Portion of the proceeds to benefit Abigail Holman's daughter, Molly

Contact # (207) 991-0125



July 12th

MFPC Golf Tournament

& 19th Hole Reception -

Bangor Municipal Golf Course



Sept. 14

Log-A-Load

Golf Tournament



Sept. 23rd & 24th

**MFPC Annual Meeting
Caribou, Maine**

Policymakers and the Industry

For members of the forest products community, however, these repeated misperceptions pose a constant dilemma at the Maine Legislature. Each session, a seemingly endless stream of bills is introduced that can potentially have a detrimental impact on one segment or another of the forest products industry. More often than not, the best that can be said about these bills is that they are founded on a misunderstanding of the issue at hand. For their part, legislators have to contend with hundreds of bills in a few short, hectic months, so they have neither the time nor, at times, the inclination to do what it takes to understand the bill on which they're being asked to vote.

The Legislature, of course, is not the only forum in which general misperceptions of the realities of the Maine Woods come into play. For the past several months, MFPC has been monitoring the development of LURC's next Comprehensive Land Use Plan. To summarize our observations, it often seems as if, in the eyes of some of Maine's policymakers, 400 years of successfully managing Maine's forests has rendered the forest products industry little more than one among many special interests with an opinion about how the unorganized territories should be regulated in the future. Indeed, in draft sections that have been released, the language is skewed heavily toward concepts such as "wilderness" and "primitive activities", and there is little acknowledgment of the role played by an industry that works hard to maintain its position at the cutting edge of a global economy.

A vision of the Maine Woods that is shaped and articulated by those who know the woods best; The forest products industry.

What is needed is a Vision of the Maine Woods that is shaped and articulated by those who know the woods best: the forest products industry. In other words, we need to begin telling our own story. There are two closely related goals that should be our focus in defining our vision of the Maine Woods. First, if our industry is to continue to make its traditional contribution to the Maine economy and its rural communities, the citizens of Maine must have a better understanding of how our industry

works, what it has achieved, and how it can be supported in order to thrive in the future.

For example, we know that there is more timber available in the forests of Maine than there has been anytime since the first US Forest Service inventory taken more than 40 years ago. Does the public know this? Moreover, we are well aware, having committed significant time and resources toward achieving it, that Maine leads the nation in percentage of certified forestland. Does the public know this?

These and other facts need to be set before the public repeatedly in order to show Maine citizens that their goal is being met: Maine's woods are clearly being kept productive for the present and sustainable for future generations. If we don't tell that story, who will?

Misguided regulations can negatively impact the industry's prospects.

The other major goal to be pursued involves the Legislature and its understanding of how the forest products industry works, the challenges it faces and,

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Show the Way . . . *(Continued from page 4)*

consequently, how misguided regulations can negatively impact the industry's prospects. Taxes, health care costs, energy costs, and transportation costs. These are perhaps the four most pressing issues facing our industry, the challenges that are mounting higher every year as we attempt to maintain and build our businesses. Despite our articulating these concerns repeatedly to policymakers, it often seems as if progress toward developing a mutual understanding comes, at best, painfully slowly. On the contrary, the forest products industry often seems to be viewed by some members of the Legislature as being of secondary importance, with some policymakers unable to make the connection between an expanding economy and the accompanying increase in tax revenues that will enable them to fund critical programs.

As part of the Vision of the Maine Woods, then, members of the forest products industry need to educate policymakers and the public about how their businesses are impacted by rising costs. Moreover, we need to make clear that there is an obvious connection between our ability to compete and expand our businesses, our need to ensure that income exceeds costs, and our ability to remain a critical part of the Maine economy.

No one values more the open landscapes than the people who live and work in them.

Given the beauty and traditions that define the Maine Woods, it is perhaps easy to understand how the average Maine citizen can succumb to the illusion of wilderness and untouched territories. No one values more the open landscapes than the people who live and work in them. Nonetheless, it is critically important for Maine citizens and lawmakers alike to recognize that the best way to ensure the sustainability, and the availability, of the forest landscape is to support the industry that has owned and maintained that landscape for 400 years. In order to support the industry, they need to understand both the industry itself and the Vision the industry puts forward of how the Maine Woods can remain, for many years to come, the resource it has been for centuries.

In the months ahead, the MFPC Board of Directors and I will be working to expand upon our Vision of the future of the Maine Woods, as well as to work together with Maine policymakers to ensure that policies developed for the forests, and for the industry that works in that forest, are balanced and effective.

The recent report from the Brookings Institute spoke in depth about Maine's "quality places". For the people who work in, and live around, the Maine Woods, those quality places are our backyard. We look forward to working with our rural neighbors and others to ensure that those places, and the industry that sustains them, are healthy and plentiful for generations to come.

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SFI Unveils Chain-of-Custody Labels

In October of 2006, SFI issued the SFI Requirements for Fiber Sourcing, Chain of Custody, and Product Labels. The document outlines procedures and requirements for organizations using SFI on-labels and making marketplace claims about SFI-certified content.

The SFI program has four different labels and also allows participants to include statements regarding recovered (recycled) content. The four labels are the:

- ◆ 100% Certified Content label for products coming directly from SFI and CSA certified forests;
- ◆ % Certified Content label for products with a verified percentage of certified content that follows percentage based methodology and that excludes “controversial sources” as defined by the PEFC;
- ◆ Volume Credit label for products that exclude “controversial sources” and follow the volume credit methodology; and
- ◆ 100% and X% Recovered Fiber labels for verified recovery claims.

As of March 2007, 26 companies were participating in the SFI chain-of-custody program.

SFI Separates from Founding Association

On January 1, 2007, the SFI program became fully independent of the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA).

In 2000, the Sustainable Forestry Board (SFB) was established as an independent non-profit group with broad participation from wildlife and conservation interests and charged with the responsibility for administering the SFI Standard.

With the changes completed in January, the 15 person multi-stakeholder board is the sole governing body for the SFI program. Five of the board members represent forest product companies, five represent non-profit environmental groups, and the remaining five are from broader forestry interest areas.



New Financing.....

(Continued from page 1)

MFS will determine what equipment is eligible for financing and ensure that applicants are certified. Participants also agree to utilize pre-harvest planning worksheets available from the Maine Master Logger Harvest Integrity System. Periodic monitoring by the MFS will document the improvements and practices of participating loggers.

An advisory committee will review approved loans and provide guidance on eligible equipment.

In its first two months of operation, the program has already helped loggers upgrade equipment in both central and northern Maine. MFS estimates the demand for linked deposit funds at approximately \$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000 annually.

For more information on the Maine Forestry Direct Link Loan Program, contact the Maine Forest Service at 1-800-367-0223 in state, or 207-287-2791 or go to www.maineforestservice.gov.



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Lee Chick, CPA - Principal — lchick@bdmp.com

Renee Bishop, CPA - Principal — rbishop@bdmp.com

Jim Maynard, CPA - Principal — jmaynard@bdmp.com

100 Middle Street
PO Box 1100
Portland, ME 04104-1100
Tel. (207) 775-2387
Fax (207) 774-2375

36 Pleasant Street
Bangor, ME 04401
Tel. (207) 942-1600
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SPONSOR A TEACHER ON MAINE TREE'S 2007 SUMMER TEACHERS' TOURS

One of the Maine TREE Foundation's most popular programs, the tenth annual Teachers' Tours, offers those interested, the opportunity to sponsor one or more teachers this summer. "Last year thirty-three businesses, large and small, sponsored teachers on the tours," says Sherry Huber, Maine TREE's Executive Director. "These companies were pleased to support this opportunity for teachers from all over the state." The cost of sponsoring a teacher is \$600 for each four day tour.

The 2007 tours are set for Rangeley Lakes and Western Mountains, July 10 -13 and Central Maine's Penobscot-Hancock Highlands, July 17- 20. Each tour begins with a Project Learning Tree workshop. Visits are also planned to industrial woodlands and Tree Farms, Outdoor Classrooms and wood products manufacturers and paper mills.

Resource professionals, including foresters, both state and private, loggers, land and mill owners, scientists, educators and community leaders provide an opportunity for in-depth discussions about forestry issues throughout the week.

If you would like to sponsor one or more teachers on one of the 2007 Teachers' Tours, please call (207) 621-9872, email mtf@gwi.net, Further information may be found on the Teachers' Tour page of the Maine TREE Foundation's website:

www.maintreefoundation.org



Maine Trucking Interests Seek Higher Interstate GVW's

Members of the MFPC and Maine Motor Transport Association will travel to Washington, DC on May 22 - 23 to lobby the Maine Congressional delegation and others on trucking issues.

The primary purpose of the group's trip is to continue efforts to seek a 100,000 lb weight limit exemption for six axle combination units on Maine's entire interstate system. In 1998, Congress provided an exemption from the federal gross weight limit on the Maine Turnpike and a portion of I-95 in Kittery. The remaining interstate routes in Maine north of Augusta remain subject to the federal GVW limit of 80,000, forcing trucks legally loaded to Maine standards to travel secondary roads instead of the interstate. In addition, states and provinces surrounding Maine all allow 100,000 pounds or more on their interstate systems, placing Northern and Eastern Maine at a competitive transportation disadvantage.

A June, 2004 study commissioned by the Maine Department of Transportation found "*The economic benefit to Maine resulting from exempting currently non-exempt interstate highways in Maine from federal truck weight limits is an estimated \$1.7 to \$2.3 million per year.*" Given the significant increases in fuel and paving costs since 2004, this economic benefit is likely far larger today.

In addition, the study confirmed that allowing truck's legally loaded to 100,000 pounds to travel the interstate would reduce truck traffic on secondary roads in local communities where school buses and tourists frequently encounter large trucks, reducing the number of truck trips and improving overall traffic safety in the state.

Sadly, a recent fatal highway accident in Hampden involving a tractor trailer (non-forest products) that could have been traveling on the interstate if this exemption existed highlighted the issue again.

Other possible topics on the group's DC agenda include:

- The Federal Highway Reauthorization Bill.
- Regulatory issues, including hours-of-service and electronic on-board recorders.
- Tolls / Fuel Taxes / Privatization.
- Boutique Fuels / Alternative Fuel Mandates.

For more information contact Pat Sirois at the MFPC, 622-9288, psirois@maineforest.org



Natural Resources Network Legislative Reception Planned for May 22

Members of Maine's Natural Resources Network have reached out to the Maine Legislature, inviting them to a reception on May 22 from 4 pm – 7 pm at the Maine Sportsmen's Conference Center in Augusta. The purpose of the reception is to officially introduce our new network to Maine legislators and provide an opportunity to get to know members and discuss issues of mutual concern.

Represented by Patrick Strauch and Don Tardie, the MFPC continues to play a lead role in the Network, formed last winter by members of Maine's natural resource based industries, including forest products, farming, fishing and traditional recreation. The Network provides an opportunity to strengthen our connection with each other, the Maine public and policy makers. Network members meet weekly, working together to promote our businesses and steer public policy in the right direction. Members include SWOAM, SAM, the Maine Farm Bureau and several other organizations representing the natural resource community.

We have already seen the effectiveness of the Network in this legislative session when we can speak as a unified voice with our allies on areas of common concern. For more information about the reception, contact Patrick or Sue McCarthy at the MFPC office.

MFS and SFI Collaborate on Temporary Bridge Program

The Maine Forest Service (MFS) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) have been collaborating on the development of a steel skidder bridge Education and Loaner program. For its part, MFS has combined portions of several grants, all of which promote the increased use of temporary crossings and BMPs.

The intent is to develop an educational outreach program on assembly and use of temporary stream crossing structures. This latest effort will compliment existing "Innovative Crossing" endeavors such as wooden bridge mat construction and the use and effectiveness of HD polyethylene arches.

The first set of bridge panels, funded through a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service Gulf of Maine Program, were field tested with great success this past winter. Their placement saved the operator from a 4000-foot skid, thus reducing additional NPS risk, as well as other possible smaller stream crossings within an important salmon watershed. Upon inspection, no design changes were recommended.

An additional three bridges are under constructions with 3 - four foot wide panels, 25 feet long. Workshops will be conducted during the Spring/Summer 2007 at four mills where the bridges will reside. Host mills will house bridges when not in use and let MFS know when they are loaned out. No charge for use, 3 months max or returned within 10 days after completion of harvest, whichever is sooner.

LP in Houlton is the SFI sponsor who will assist SFI and MFS with early summer workshop. The second set is scheduled to go to Robbins Lumber in Searsmont, ME where additional educational outreach will take place.

For more information call Chris Martin, MFS, 287-1073 or Pat Sirois, ME's SFI Coordinator, at 622-9288.

Maine Legislative Update

MFPC's Executive Director Patrick Strauch and lobbyist Michele MacLean, with support from members, have spent most of the last four months at the state house actively representing members' interests on a wide variety of proposed legislation.

Of the close to 2000 bills introduced, we are actively tracking close to 200 that could potentially impact our members. We are also working closely with our allies in the Natural Resources Network – SWOAM, SAM, and others. It appears likely that this legislative session will extend well in to June.

Below is a brief summary of some of the key legislation we have been dealing with this session. At this date, many of these bills are still in a state of flux and final status will not be certain until the end of the session. We will prepare a complete legislative summary of bills at that time.

For more information about a particular bill or to find out how to participate in the weekly MFPC Technical Committee and Manufacturing Committee legislative conference calls, contact Patrick or Sue McCarthy at the MFPC office

LD 9 - An Act To Continue the Axle Weight Law Changes beyond September 15, 2007

This bill, which MFPC supports, extends public law 2005, chapter 426 which is scheduled to sunset September 15, 2007. This law amends the calculation of tandem axle weight fines for 6-axle trucks hauling special commodities to clarify that the lower of the fines specified in statute applies. It also amended the axle weight fine schedules to eliminate relatively steep fine increases for smaller violations for trucks hauling forest products. It also eliminated axle weight fine violations during the months of January and February on most state roads.

LD 340 - An Act To Require the replacement of Trees Cut in Shoreland Areas

This bill, which MFPC supports, extends public law 2005, chapter 426 which is scheduled to sunset September 15, 2007. This law amends the calculation of tandem axle weight fines for 6-axle trucks hauling special

commodities to clarify that the lower of the fines specified in statute applies. It also amended the axle weight fine schedules to eliminate relatively steep fine increases for smaller violations for trucks hauling forest products. It also eliminated axle weight fine violations during the months of January and February on most state roads.

LD 695 - An Act Concerning Applications Processed by the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission

This bill amends the permit application fees set by rule by the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission to remove the limits regarding subdivision applications and zoning petitions.

Comments: This bill establishes final pricing for permits under the LURC system. In general land management fees were increased moderately, however most of the increases were in development permits. We worked to clarify LURC directors' authority to charge applicants for the cost of public hearings.

LD 736 - An Act To Protect Small Woodland Owners

The Maine Tree Growth Tax Law requires the owner of a parcel of land in the program to file a sworn statement with the State Tax Assessor or municipal assessor every 10 years. If a plan is not filed, then the assessor is required to withdraw the parcel from the favorable taxation under the law. This bill, which MFPC supports, requires the State Tax Assessor or municipal assessor to provide notice to a landowner who fails to timely file the sworn statement and allow the landowner 6 months to file the sworn

Legislative Updates..... *(Continued on page 10)*

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Legislative Updates..... *(Continued from page 9)*

statement to avoid having the parcel withdrawn. We supported SWOAM's efforts to seek the clarification provided by this bill.

LD 823 - Resolve, To Create an Effective Coyote Control Program

This resolve directs the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to review the existing coyote control program. The commissioner shall report the commissioner's findings and recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife by December 30, 2007. The Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife may submit legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature. As amended, the bill would establish a Task Force to review existing programs and efforts for creating, enhancing and maintaining critical deer habitat in the state and reducing predation by coyotes. This will provide a forum to seek resolution to concerns over deer yard management and efforts by IF&W to seek additional regulation on their management. Patrick Strauch will be representing the MFPC on the Task Force.

LD 850 - An Act To Reduce Taxes

This bill, which MFPC opposes, provides a framework for comprehensive income and sales tax reform, shifting more of the tax burden to the business community. Concerns over provisions to tax packaging and increase the real estate transfer tax were identified by MFPC.

LD 885 - An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Study the Costs of Providing Certain Services in the Unorganized Territories

This bill implements the recommendations of the Commission to Study the Cost of Providing Certain Services in the Unorganized Territories established by Resolve 2005, chapter 125. MFPC will be requesting language be placed in the statute to assure that the UT indexing calculation be reviewed every other year to assure it matches up with LURC funding levels.

LD 1258 - An Act To Clarify the Laws Governing Landowner Liability

This bill, which MFPC supports, clarifies existing law to ensure that a landowner is not liable for the actions of a recreational user of the land, whether those actions have an impact on the landowner's property or property of another.

LD 1376 - An Act To Preserve Farmland and Timberland

Submitted by MFPC, this bill removes the value of eligible farmland and timberland from the calculation of the Maine estate tax. It is proving difficult to build support for this in the greater debate on tax reform.

LD 1419 - An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Working Group

This bill, which MFPC opposes, establishes an independent advisory council to represent the public interest in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and to provide counsel to the manager of the waterway and the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands within the Department of Conservation. The bill elevates the status of the waterway in the department by making it a separate region within the bureau. It creates an endowment fund to support capital acquisitions and improvements, historic, cultural and educational programs and facilities. The bill requires an annual report by the Commissioner of Conservation to the Legislature

LD 1454 - An Act To Care for Working Families

This bill, which MFPC opposes, requires an employer to pay each employee a minimum of one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked by the employee. An employer is not required to provide to an employee paid sick leave in excess of 72 hours or 9 days annually. Paid sick leave may be used by an employee during an absence from employment due to the illness of the employee or the illness of an immediate family member.

Legislative Updates..... *(Continued from page 10)*

LD 1477 - An Act Concerning the Natural Resources Protection Laws and Related Provisions

This bill amends last session's legislation and subsequent DEP rules which placed significant new restrictions on development and other changes of land use in areas designated as "significant wildlife habitat", specifically shoreland bird habitat and vernal pools. We are working with the DEP and IF&W to assure that forestry exemptions in the rules are maintained and that newly mapped significant wildlife habitats allow appropriate harvesting operations to occur.

LD 1576 - An Act To Establish the Leaseholders' Bill of Rights

This bill, which MFPC opposes, amends the laws governing the relationships between lessees and lessors, including recreational camps. It allows a lessee to assign or transfer the lease. It limits the annual lease fee to no more than 2.5% of the fair market value of the real property leased. It prohibits a lessor from mortgaging or otherwise encumbering the buildings, fixtures and improvements owned by the lessee. If a lessor terminates a lease without cause, the lessor shall reimburse the lessee for the fair market value of all buildings, fixtures and improvements on the real estate. Violation of these provisions makes the lessor ineligible for tree growth tax benefits. If title to the land on which a lease exists is transferred to a different owner after the effective date of

LD 1737 - An Act To Amend the Conservation Easement Laws

This bill enacts changes to the laws governing the creation, alteration and termination of conservation easements. It requires that easements must clearly recite the conservation purposes and public benefits of the easement. This bill also allows the Attorney General to be a party in any action affecting a conservation easement. It also establishes a conservation easement registration system administered by the Secretary of State and State Planning Office. We requested the bill be amended to assure the Attorney General only become involved in easements if there is a problem, such as non-performance by 3rd party administrators or financial failure of the party holding the easement.

Energy Bills Out of Committee

The Natural Resources and Utilities and Energy Committees have debated and voted on the Governor's bill of Implementation of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (**LD 1851**). The majority report of the committee passes the Governor's version, creating a DEP Cap and Trade Program with auction proceeds to be split between high efficiency energy conservation and direct consumer rebates. The report mandates a reduction of 0.145 cents per KWh for Transmission and sub-Transmission customers. The minority report of the committee passes the Governor's bill with some additional reports back to the committee, as well as specified deadlines. This is a major issue for our Manufacturing Committee members who worked to develop a position that highlights concern over increasing energy costs, lack of a comprehensive energy policy.

Additionally, The Committee has voted out an amended version of **LD 1381**, "Resolve, to Ensure the Success of Regional Climate Change Efforts", which creates a study by the Office of the Public Advocate to identify options for reducing any RGGI-related costs to taxpayers.

LD 413, "An Act to Amend Maine's Electric Utility Restructuring Laws", would have allowed T&D utilities to get back into the generation business. The committee has used this vehicle to create a study on the elements of restructuring, including T&D generation, as well as looking at ways to obtain benefits for Maine ratepayers under ISO-NE.

LD 678, "An Act to Limit the Eminent Domain Authority of a Transmission and Distribution Utility", has been amended to require a T&D utility proposing to construct new transmission lines to notify the PUC and, in some cases, obtain a certificate of public convenience prior to purchase or leasing of lands for construction, therefore avoiding a potential rate increase of 8%.





The Maine Forest Products Council
 535 Civic Center Drive
 Augusta, Maine 04330

Calendar of Events

MAY

- 15 9:00 am – 12 noon MFPC BOA Augusta, MFPC
 22 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm NRN, SAM Conference
 Legislative Reception Center
 22-23 Maine Trucking Fly-in Washington, DC

JUNE

- 8 *PIMA Golf Tournament - Fox Ridge Golf Club*
 14 9:00 am – 12 noon MFPC Exec. Committee Augusta

JULY

- 9-27 Mechanical Harvesting Norway, Oxford Hills
 Training Program Technical School
 10-13 Forests of Maine Teachers' Tour
 Rangeley Lakes and Western Mountains
 12 9:00 am – 12 noon MFPC Exec. Committee Bangor
 12 1:00 pm MFPC Summer Bangor
 Golf Tournament
 17-20 2007 Forests of Maine Teachers' Tour
 Central Maine's Penobscot-Hancock Highlands

AUGUST

- 9 9:00 am – 12 noon MFPC Exec. Committee

SEPTEMBER

- 14 Log-a-Load Golf Tournament Lincoln, JATO Highlands
 23-24 MFPC Annual Meeting Caribou

OCTOBER

- 10-12 Wood Products Mfg. Assoc. Annual Meeting Lancaster, PA
 For more info. e-mail: woodprod@wpma.org



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