FPInnovations and Resolute invest in $21-million biochemicals pilot project

By Cindy Macdonald, Editor

ONTARIO’S MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND FORESTRY HAS TAKEN STEPS TO SAVE A HERD OF CARIBOU ON AN ISLAND IN LAKE SUPERIOR BY MOVING HEALTHY ANIMALS TO ANOTHER ISLAND WITH AN EXISTING HERD. THE ANIMALS WERE TRANSPORTED BY HELICOPTER FROM ONE ISLAND TO ANOTHER.

A statement from then-Minister Kathryn McGarry in December said: “We will be transporting a suitable portion of the caribou population to the Slate Islands to ensure the continued viability of this important species on an island free from predators.”

“There is an existing caribou population on the Slate island and the transported animals will augment the existing herd and breed safely, which we hope will expand the population.”

According to an article on CBC News, the herd on Michipicoten Island in Lake Superior was reintroduced in the early 1980s. The population was as high as 700, but has decreased to less than 100 due to predation from wolves.

Minister McGarry said there were several competing opinions and plans on what to do, including those who wanted to let nature to take its course.

In the CBC News article, a representative of the Michipicoten First Nation, Leo Lepiano, said the ministry’s action came after extensive lobbying from the community. “It is very unfortunate that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry allowed the situation to get to the point where the translocation of caribou is required,” he said.

Continued on page 7

THUNDER BAY, Ont. — FPInnovations and Resolute Forest Products announced a significant investment to take the development of the TMP-Bio process to the next stage. The pilot project in Thunder Bay, Ont., will focus on developing ways to efficiently produce and commercialize biochemicals derived from wood, contributing to the development of a bio-economy in Northern Ontario, as well as elsewhere in Canada.

Resolute is contributing $3.5 million and hosting the pilot project at its Thunder Bay pulp and paper mill.

TMP-Bio is a patented technology developed by FPInnovations with financial support from Natural Resources Canada’s Transformative Technologies Program. It can produce cellulosic sugars and high-quality H-lignin.

The $21-million project is builds on investments made in 2012 by Resolute, the Ontario Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bio-Economy (CRIBE), and Natural Resources Canada.

Continued on page 19
NEW DARK ROAST
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Two kilns destroyed by fire at Kenora sawmill

An overnight fire at Kenora Forest Products in northwestern Ontario destroyed two of the mill’s drying kilns.

Workers returned to the site a few days later and resumed production. Mill manager Glen Hansson told CBC News that some lumber was being dried by one remaining kiln, and the company was examining other business strategies for the excess wood.

Damage is estimated at $850,000 and Hansson said it could take between eight to 12 months to replace the two kilns.

Millar Western acquires Alberta remanufacturer

Millar Western Forest Products continues its growth strategy with the acquisition of Spruceland Millworks, including its manufacturing operations in Acheson, Alberta, and its woodlands assets. The transaction brings together two companies that have enjoyed a productive business relationship for decades.

Spruceland Millworks is a value-added manufacturer and international distributor of SPF wood products. Started in 1982 by Ben Sawatzky with a simple table saw and a second-hand forklift, Spruceland now has more than 100 employees and operates a 130,000-sq. ft. manufacturing facility.

This transaction will integrate Millar Western’s existing sawmill operations with Spruceland’s value-added manufacturing capabilities. Spruceland will operate as a division of Millar Western under its existing management team and brand.

Millar Western produces SPF and aspen lumber, pulp and bioenergy at facilities in Whitecourt and Fox Creek, Alta.

CEOs Richard Garneau retires from Resolute Forest Products

Resolute Forest Products has appointed Yves Laflamme as Resolute’s new president and chief executive officer, succeeding Richard Garneau. Garneau announced his retirement on Feb. 1. Laflamme has held progressively senior positions within Resolute, frequently on the wood products side of the business.

According to a company statement, under Garneau’s leadership, Resolute established a competitive cost structure and diversified asset base, a conservative capital structure and a sustainable business strategy. His unwavering commitment to a safe workplace and environmental stewardship has earned the company North American and global recognition.

Laflamme previously served as senior vice-president, Wood Products, Global Procurement and Information Technology for Resolute.

Resolute Forest Products has a diverse product range, including market pulp, tissue, wood products, newsprint and specialty papers. The company owns or operates some 40 manufacturing facilities, as well as power generation assets, in the United States and Canada.

Chapleau contractor buying Atikokan pellet mill from Rentech

A forestry contractor based in Chapleau, Ont., is buying a wood pellet mill that currently serves the Atikokan Generating Station from its bankrupt owner Rentech.

Northern Ontario Business reports that “a numbered company (2607043 Ontario Inc.), affiliated with True North Timber, signed an asset purchase agreement on Dec. 11 to buy the Atikokan mill which was put for sale by debt-ridden Rentech last fall.”

Rentech, a producer of pellets and wood chips, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in the U.S.

Rentech’s wood pellet mill in Wawa, Ont., was idled last year “due to chronic mechanical problems and the cost associated with fixing it,” according to the Northern Ontario Business article.
Bumps on the road

BY CINDY MACDONALD

WHILE RESEARCHING THE ARTICLES ON TRANSPORTATION IN THIS ISSUE, IT BECAME CLEAR THIS SECTOR IS STILL FACING CHALLENGES, AND THAT MORE ARE ON THE HORIZON.

Autonomous vehicle and electric vehicles will be a disruptive factor, but of greater urgency to the forest products sector is the shortage of drivers.

Comments made by several forest products indicate that the availability of transportation is taking a toll on the bottom line.

The National Post reported on Feb. 2 that Weyerhaeuser Co. chief executive Doyle Simons said that availability of transportation services has been a challenge, especially in the past quarter.

Simons said the company faced truck and rail disruptions, mainly in December, and took a US$10 million to US$15 million hit in the fourth quarter.

The former CEO of Resolute Forest Products, Richard Garneau, also told analysts that a shortage of truck drivers caused the company to slow production in December. The lack of drivers and harsh winter conditions resulted in insufficient wood chips for some of its Quebec pulp and paper mills.

Both executives said they are not the only companies facing this problem.

In the National Post story, Stephen Laskowski, president of the Canadian Trucking Alliance, acknowledged there is a capacity problem in the industry.

He said the trucking industry is struggling to convince enough young people to enter the industry to replace the many retiring drivers.

On the technology side, FPInnovations is expecting to have a fully electric Class 8 truck ready for highway testing by the middle of 2018. In its impact 2016-2017 report, the research organization says it will take the experience gained in an electric airport shuttle project and apply it to the forest sector.

You may have noticed earlier that I wrote the former CEO of Resolute referring to Richard Garneau. He announced his retirement in early February. The press release from the company spoke glowingly of his accomplishments, but for me personally, his most notable was the marked improvement in Resolute’s safety record. I used to work on a magazine that tracked the safety performance of pulp and paper companies, and I could see the change in the numbers once Garneau took the reins. To me, this is the accomplishment he should be most proud of, because getting everyone home safe every day should matter more than a company’s financials.

IN THE NEWS

Continued from page 3

Quebec town using wood chips for traction on winter roads

The town of Rosemère, Qué., is testing a novel product as a traction aid for icy roads: wood chips treated with magnesium chloride.

According to a report on CBC News, Rosemère Mayor Eric Westram said the town is switching from conventional materials to something more eco-friendly and efficient.

“All this salt and all those materials end up in the river,” said Westram. “So if you want to be conscientious of the environment, you have to look at other alternatives.”

The wood chip product is sold as Eco-IceGrip, and is manufactured in Joliette, Qué., by EMC3 Technology. The company’s website says the material is a traction aid, suitable for pedestrian areas, parking lots and “side roads with light traffic or where the speed limit is below 40 km/h and covered with packed snow.”

The product is said to gradually release de-icer and become firmly set in the ice or packed snow. The company states that it can be used in conventional salt spreaders.

NB invests $1M in Arbec OSB upgrade

At the Arbec funding announcement (from the left): Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Bill Fraser; Miramichi Deputy Mayor Brian King; Pierre Gingras, executive vice-president of Arbec Forest Products; and Les Flett, Miramichi mill manager, Arbec Forest Products.

Two agencies of the New Brunswick government are investing up to $1 million to support a $10-million upgrade of Arbec Forest Products’ production facilities in Miramichi.

The investment will secure new equipment and technology for a facility that produces oriented strand board for the construction industry. It is expected the new equipment will increase productivity and quality control, maximize raw materials, be more environmentally-friendly and improve overall competitiveness.

“Opportunities NB and the Province of New Brunswick have been real partners in our efforts to grow production at our Water Street facility,” said mill manager Les Flett. “We have enormous confidence in the skills of our workforce here in Miramichi and we hope that the more than $10-million worth of capital investments we are making speak to that very clearly.”

The provincial investment of up to $1 million is in the form of a non-refundable contribution, with $500,000 coming from Opportunities NB and $500,000 from the Miramichi Regional Economic Development and Innovation Fund. Opportunities NB is a Crown corporation that seeks to attract and support opportunities to grow the economy and create jobs.

Production at Arbec’s Water Street plant has significant secondary economic benefits by supporting jobs in the forestry and transportation sectors.

Arbec purchased the Miramichi plant in 2011 and began production in 2012 following renovations. The company currently employs 124.

Continued on page 5
Des Rosiers becomes Ontario’s new minister for forestry

Changes in January to the cabinet of Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne placed eight women, including three new ministers, in key roles across government. Nathalie Des Rosiers, a rookie MPP for Ottawa-Vanier, joined cabinet as the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Kathryn McGarry, who formerly held the forestry portfolio, became Minister of Transportation.

Des Rosiers was first elected to the provincial legislature in the fall of 2016. She is a constitutional law expert. According to her website, Des Rosiers served as the general counsel for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association for several years. She also had a private law practice and has been an administrator at the University of Ottawa.

Western Forest Products buys U.S. processing facility


The 18-acre Arlington operation has 170,000 sq. ft. of covered storage with rail access. The company will use the site as a centralized specialty products distribution centre while implementing capital upgrades to the kilns, planer and other processing facilities.

The location offers direct rail service and proximity to Western Forest Products’ major U.S. markets.

“This asset in Washington State also strengthens our global competitiveness by positioning Western to mitigate the damaging effects of duties on our products destined for the U.S. market,” said Don Demens, president and CEO of Western.

Western is the largest coastal British Columbia woodland operator and lumber producer, with seven sawmills and one remanufacturing plant.

Forestry supporters speak out at pre-budget meetings

The Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA) was among those presenting to Ontario’s Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs during its pre-budget consultations in Thunder Bay on Jan. 15.

OFIA’s president and CEO, Jamie Lim, stated, “As a province, we need to acknowledge that trees are the answer. Our forests can support growth, sequester carbon through long-term wood products and allow Ontario’s northern and rural communities to thrive.”

Lim further commented, “If it is our sector’s ability to adapt and innovate that has allowed us to thrive and remain a foundational pillar in Ontario’s economy for more than 150 years.”

Lim told a local news site, tbnewswatch.com, that one of the concerns for Ontario’s forestry sector right now is the uncertainly about what will happen after July 1, 2018, the expiration date for a policy that currently allows the forest industry to operate under an exemption to the Endangered Species Act will expire.

Atikokan mayor, Dennis Brown, told the committee there is a lot of uncertainty in small communities throughout the north when it comes to the future of the sector and the availability of wood to feed mills if companies no longer operate under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, according to tbnewswatch.com.

For Brown, it comes down to the issue of jobs, which can mean the difference between a community like Atikokan surviving or disappearing.

To access OFIA’s pre-budget submission, call 416-368-6188 or visit www.ofia.com.

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Former farmer recognized as a Green Leader for planting new forest

Trent Massey used to be a farmer raising cows, chickens, pigs and goats in Echo Bay, Ont. But when he had to close down the business and sell his livestock, he and his wife were left wondering what to do with their sprawling 30 acres of land.

When Massey was introduced to Forests Ontario’s 50 Million Tree Program (50MTP), things fell into place. 50MTP provides funding support and technical assistance to landowners wishing to plant trees.

“Loving the outdoors and wildlife,” Massey explained. “I wanted to see more deer passing through, I wanted the benefits of a windbreak during winter, and privacy from the highway that runs next to our property. Trees can provide all of those things.”

Massey worked with Brent Atwell of REGEN Forestry, a Forests Ontario planting partner, to conduct two plantings on his property. Massey requested to have hands-on involvement from start to finish. He prepared the land himself, plowing the fields and tilling the soil.

White spruce, jack pine, white cedar, Norway spruce, and poplar were all planted – an impressive total of 5,500 trees in all.

Massey’s relationship with Atwell, and his keen interest in forestry, landed him a job with REGEN Forestry. He is now the resource manager with the organization, a role he enthusiastically enjoys.

Massey is recognized as a Green Leader, an award which recognizes individuals for their commitment to tree planting and land stewardship. “We commend Trent for diversifying his farm and planting trees,” says Rob Keen, CEO at Forests Ontario. “Those trees will help to sequester carbon and improve the quality of the soil, air and water on Trent’s property.”

Ontario government proposes extension to forest regulations

Only days after a new Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry took office, the Ontario government proposed two measures to address stakeholder concerns about species at risk legislation and its relationship to forest operations.

The government has posted a proposal to extend “the current regulatory approach to Crown forestry” for a two-year timeframe. In effect, the proposal would extend an exemption that currently applies to forest operations in managed Crown forests (which meet certain conditions). The exemption is set to expire on July 1, 2018.

The province is also proposing to create an independent, expert panel to provide advice on a long-term solution for species at risk in Ontario’s managed Crown forests. This panel would include representatives from northern municipalities, Indigenous leaders, scientists and forestry practitioners.

The proposal is open for public comment until Mar. 5. “Our government has listened to the concerns of northern municipalities, Indigenous communities, environmental organizations and the forest industry – and we want to find a solution which strikes the right balance as we deal with the negative effects of climate change,” Nathalie Des Rosiers, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, said in a media statement.

The independent, expert panel will work to identify innovative local approaches and potential pilot projects for consideration as part of the development of the province’s long-term approach to protecting species at risk and their habitat while minimizing impacts to the forest industry.

Three workers treated after fire at Vancouver sawmill

A major fire at Terminal Forest Products’ Mainland Sawmill in south Vancouver was quickly contained by Vancouver fire crews and a fireboat operating on the Fraser River. According to CBC News, initial reports are that a burning acetylene tank sparked the fire in the basement. It quickly moved up through the centre of the mill to the third floor and was burning through the roof by the time firefighters arrived.

Three employees of the mill were treated for injuries. According to the website of Terminal Forest Products, the Mainland Sawmill provides premium custom cutting services for high-value, high-grade logs.
These photos show various steps of the process. According to a CBC News article on Jan. 27, Art Rodgers, a research scientist with the ministry, was in charge of developing the protocol to move the animals and helped coordinate everyone involved.

Rodgers said he organized several groups of people to work on the project, including a wildlife capture company, ministry aircraft staff, a transport aircraft and veterinarians.

The operation to move the caribou began on Jan. 13. The protocol called for healthy caribou to be netted. They were then restrained, blindfolded and sedated.

“Once you get the blindfold on, it’s a little bit like a horse. They tend to settle down. As long as there’s not too much noise going on around them, they really do calm down quite quickly,” Rodgers told CBC News.

The animals were placed in a special bag for the helicopter transfer. During the trip, Rodgers and veterinarians monitored the animals. Once they arrived at the Slate Islands, the caribou were moved outside, released from the bags and given a reversal of the sedative.

“We expect their survival will be very good,” Rodgers told CBC. “We outfitted all of the females with GPS collars and we’re checking their movement and activity every day to make sure that everything is good.”

A female caribou has been offloaded from helicopter on the Slate Islands. She still has eye covers on and is sedated, but the orange bag that keeps the animals bundled up for transport has been removed.

Caribou has been woken up at its new home, the Slate Islands.

Caribou after it has been collared and woken up on the Slate Islands.

Caribou with eye covers on and sedated but removed from orange caribou “sleeping bag.”

Photos courtesy Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.
EOMF working on carbon offsets for community forests

KEMPTVILLE, Ont. — The Eastern Ontario Model Forest (EOMF) has partnered with Bluesource Canada to develop a program to generate carbon offsets for community forests that are certified through the EOMF Forest Certification program.

The offsets will fall under an Improved Forest Management (IFM) Practices protocol.

The new partnership with Bluesource Canada, a developer of forest carbon and other greenhouse gas (GHG) offsets, supports EOMF’s vision to promote sustainable forest management practices on private forest lands across Ontario.

In the partnership, EOMF and Bluesource Canada will provide guidance and a framework for the development of forest carbon offset projects that generates economies of scale. Through the aggregation of multiple community forests, the two organizations say this framework will reduce project costs such as inventory and verification, allowing more money to be re-invested back into the forest.

Astrid Nielsen, general manager of the EOMF, describes this as “a great opportunity for those forests who have been going above and beyond in their forest management practices.”

Jamie MacKinnon, vice-president of Bluesource Canada, explains further. “Within this partnership, we are preparing community forests to take advantage of this opportunity as soon as the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change publishes the impending forest carbon protocol for the cap-and-trade market.”

The first step for a forest to develop carbon offsets through forest carbon protocols is to become certified, making the EOMF an ideal starting point for community forests interested in this opportunity. The EOMF has been promoting sustainable forest management since its inception in 1992, and is a leader in private land forest certification.

“It will be an opportunity for forest owners to be recognized for all the good work they have done over the years. It’s an easy fit for the EOMF as it builds on our existing certification program and is in line with our vision of promoting sustainable management of our forest resource. In addition, this is really exciting as it provides an economic incentive to keep forests on the landscape which is a critical component to combating climate change,” Nielsen states.

MacKinnon says Ontario’s cap-and-trade program “provides a significant opportunity to channel investment in GHG reductions back into our communities in ways that create jobs, contribute to biodiversity and ensure the sustainability of our forest ecosystems.”

Happy Camper

Steven Moody president of MER Forestry is a very satisfied customer. Some might even say he’s a “Happy Camper.”

That’s not an easy statement to make when you’re working 3,000 kms away from your home-base which normally for MER Forestry is central New Brunswick’s Blackville community.

Recently, Steven Moody relocated his harvesting operation to Ear Falls, Ontario. His John Deere 803 MH and Log Max 6000B harvester operate a single shift, twenty days on and ten days off rotation. “Having a combination that works consistently day in and day out makes the absence from home a little easier to swallow,” Moody says.

“Since March, we have experienced no downtime to speak of. Log Max Forestry Inc based out of Moncton, New Brunswick are constantly staying in touch with us. The service technicians are superb and are no more than a phone call away. They are more than capable of ‘guiding’ us through any issues that might come up. That translates directly to dollars in my pocket.”

Moody goes on to say, “I would highly recommend the Log Max product to anyone in the business today or looking at getting into the business. I have no doubt that a huge part of my success today is due to the Log Max product and their support.”
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Two Sudbury truck dealerships joined forces in late 2017, bringing customers of both businesses a wider selection of vocational and highway trucks. The owners of Cambrian Truck Centre purchased Northland Truck Sales Ltd., which expands the company’s product line to Freightliner trucks.

Cambrian’s general manager Denis Legault says the Freightliner addition complements Cambrian’s existing line of Western Star trucks. The Freightliner brand holds about 30 per cent market share in North America among vocational and highway trucks. “Vocational” usually refers to Class 8 trucks for specialized hauling, utility, food and beverage, government, construction and refuse applications.

“We now have a wider range of available vehicles, and can go down to a class 5 truck, which could be used for courier, utility and landscape applications,” says Legault.

Legault feels that having two locations will also help streamline operations for the service departments. “We’re currently setting up procedures that will let us share overflow work and result in less downtime for customers.” The service departments at both Cambrian and Northland are open from 7 AM to midnight, Monday to Friday. This allows customers to do business during the day and have repairs done in the evening hours.

Cambrian and Northland technicians are factory trained to work on Detroit, Mercedes, Cummins and Mitsubishi diesel engines. They are also factory trained for Allison transmissions, Fuller transmissions and Meritor axles.

Legault comments that the truck market was soft in 2017, although it ended on a strong note. In the first month of 2018, he said quotes were more numerous than the previous year. Consequently, “we’re preparing by bringing in inventory so it will minimize the lead time for popular builds.”

Legault has noticed a trend toward higher horsepower engines with more torque. “A lot of the issues with engines that meet the new emission standards have been worked out, and customers are starting to accept this new technology,” he says. “The new engines are more reliable, and users are definitely saving money on fuel.”

Legault notes that both Western Star and Freightliner offer Detroit engines, with proven models that meet the new emission standards.

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Training program will help trucking companies lower operating costs

Today’s operating environment for the commercial transportation industry is marked by growing fuel costs and the need for increased environmental responsibility. Natural Resources Canada has redesigned the online SmartDriver for Highway Trucking (SDHT) program to help the trucking industry reduce operating costs while decreasing GHG emissions.

NRCan states that heavy-duty vehicles accounting for 37 per cent of GHG emissions from the transportation sector. Fuel-efficient equipment and the driving practices featured in the SDHT program can help individual drivers reduce their fuel consumption by up to 35 per cent.

Commenting on the new program, Yvette Lagrois, president of Ontario Truck Training Academy, said: “This modernized program will help Ontario Truck Training Academy continue to outline the benefits of fuel efficiency and educate drivers on the impacts of safe, energy-saving driving behaviours.”

Developed in consultation with industry, NRCan’s training program has online, in-classroom and on-road training materials to help drivers and instructors improve their driving efficiency.

SDHT learning materials are available free of charge to drivers, fleets and training organizations.

Hince Transport upgrades fleet with electronic logging devices

A small transportation company in Hearst, Ont., is staying ahead of the technology curve by installing electronic data logs on its fleet of trucks. The mission statement of Hince Transport talks of being an innovative leader, and promoting safety, reliability, punctuality and customer service by using the current best practices. The new technology will allow Hince Transport to do just that.

An electronic logging device (ELD) is technology that automatically records a driver’s driving time and other hours-of-service (HOS) data. This allows easier, more accurate HOS recordkeeping. An ELD monitors a vehicle’s engine to capture data on whether the engine is running, whether the vehicle is moving, miles driven, and duration of engine operation (engine hours).

ELDs or other onboard recording devices became mandatory for carriers in the U.S. last December. They are not yet mandatory in Canadian jurisdictions. They are intended to help create a safer work environment for drivers, and make it easier and faster to accurately track, manage, and share records of duty status.

Gino Hince, president and CEO, has been installing ELDs in his trucks, at a cost of about $1000 vehicle, plus a monthly fee.

The ELDs have reduced paperwork, says Hince, “and it seems that we’re going a good direction with it.” And he’s noticed the electronic oversight has changed the workplace. “From the moment you start the ELD in the morning, it’s a race all day long, to the end. There’s no room for small repairs, flat tires, etc.”

With the cost of upgrading and the more comprehensive data tracking, Hince has raised his rates somewhat.

Hince Transport has a broad service offering. For one local mill, for example, Hince hauls logs in the bush, log waste and finished products on highways, and resin from sites in the U.S.

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**SAFETY**

**Sawmill executives says substance abuse is the top safety risk**

**BY WORKPLACE SAFETY NORTH**

Like a wisp of smoke, a waft of alcohol, or a tiny pill, it’s difficult to measure the exact size of the problem of substance abuse in the workplace, but a group of sawmill industry workers and managers has placed the issue firmly at the top of their safety agenda.

Last June 2017, a volunteer group of subject matter experts met face-to-face for a sawmill workplace risk assessment at Workplace Safety North (WSN) headquarters in North Bay, Ont. The group of 15 representatives from management, labour, government, and not-for-profit organizations, was facilitated by Sujoy Dey, Ph.D., corporate risk officer at the Ministry of Labour (MOL).

When it came time for the final vote on the top risks, only actual workers and managers in the sawmill industry could vote. To ensure an open and fair voting process, handheld electronic devices recorded votes anonymously. Both labour and management agreed: the top danger sawmill workers face is substance abuse.

“As they identified specific conditions and situations that could result in injury or illness, we asked the group, ‘What keeps you up at night?’” says Dr. Dey. “And both workers and managers agreed: the number one risk in sawmills is substance abuse.” Dey notes the category includes not just alcohol and recreational drugs, but also prescription drugs, such as pain medication.

Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs – prescription or not – is a longstanding safety concern in the workplace, and it’s a difficult thing to measure (unlike, for example, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board statistics on slips, trips, and falls in the workplace).

“An interesting outcome of the workshop was that the number one risk was not on Workplace Safety North’s radar as a priority concern,” says Tom Welton, WSN industrial director. “WSN historically uses WSIB [Workplace Safety and Insurance Board] statistics to provide a clear picture of workplace injuries and trends.

“The risk assessment workshop provided direct feedback from industry experts about their perception of the workplace. By using leading rather than lagging indicators, WSN can be more proactive,” says Welton.

Three of the top 10 risks involve psychosocial or mental health issues: substance use, lack of focus, and stress. As more workplaces gain a better understanding about the importance of taking a holistic approach to health and safety and having a supportive workplace culture that encourages both self-care and concern for co-workers, research also supports an increased focus on overall well-being.

The results of the workshop were reviewed by the Ontario volunteer industry advisory committee for Forestry, Paper, Printing, and Converting sectors. The committee, in conjunction with WSN, is supportive of the next step: a detailed analysis of the root causes of substance abuse in the workplace, and the creation of an effective prevention plan.

WSN provides province-wide Ministry-approved workplace health and safety services for mining and forest products sectors, as well as businesses and communities across northern Ontario.

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**The workshop identified these top 10 health and safety risks in sawmills:**

1. Substance Abuse: Under the influence of drugs and alcohol in the workplace
2. Training: Employees taking shortcuts
3. Not properly locking out or guarding equipment
4. Age: Inexperience of new, young workers who don’t see the dangers
5. Psychosocial: Lack of focus, distraction of worker while performing duties
6. Slips, trips, and falls
7. Occupational disease: Loss of hearing, ringing in the ears
8. Psychosocial: Stress, including job and family pressures
9. Working from heights: Absence of engineered anchor points
10. Caught in or crushed by mobile equipment
Following FPInnovations and Laval University’s industrial NSERC Chair, Alberta Transportation recently changed its winter weight premium policy allowing an estimated average of eight days of WWP extension.

In Alberta, one of five Canadian provinces to allow premium weights for log hauling during the winter, the onset of the winter weight premium (WWP) season traditionally started when local frost depths reached 1.0 m. Thanks to the recent policy change, it will now start at a frost depth of 0.75 m and end at a thaw depth of 25 cm. Alberta’s starting frost depth threshold will now be consistent with thresholds used in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Although eight days of extension is predicted based on recent winter freezing patterns, even greater extension will occur in warmer winters when freezing rates slow and the time between 0.75 m and 1.0 m frost depth grows longer.

The policy change will generate more than $2 million in haul savings for the forest sector annually. Other benefits include an estimated reduction in pavement maintenance costs of $1.4 million annually and the operation of fewer trucks on the road for the same total volume (safer, reduced greenhouse gases). The WWP program also is available to heavy haulers and the extended WWP period is expected to benefit their business through greater flexibility as to when and how they transport heavy loads. The shallower frost depth requirement will also allow operations in the southern part of the province, where frost depths don’t consistently reach 1 m, to now benefit from WWP.

This win-win policy change is a result of several years of research and, more importantly, collaboration between FPInnovations, Alberta Transportation, and academia. “The key ingredients here were the identification of a true industry need and collaboration between all parties towards a science-based outcome with tangible benefits to our members and the forest sector,” notes FPInnovations’ executive vice-president Trevor Stuthridge.

FPInnovations initially conducted layered elastic modelling of frozen Alberta-style pavements and winter truck loadings to document the minimum frost depth that could be used to start WWPs without negatively impacting pavements. Preliminary results indicated that shallower frost depths provided enough support to heavy loads but further investigation was needed to validate these findings.

FPInnovations teamed up with Laval University’s industrial NSERC Chair on the interaction between Climate, Pavements and Loads (i3C Chair), led by Professor Guy Doré. In their state-of-the-art, full-scale loading simulator, Doré’s team built a replica of a typical Alberta pavement and applied a series of wheel loads. The fully instrumented pavement was entirely frozen and pavement responses were collected at different frost depths. The results corroborated and reinforced the preliminary findings from the advanced modelling conducted by FPInnovations. Similar results were obtained with a thicker Quebec-style pavement also recently tested by Laval University. A wide range of weaker Alberta pavement structures were modelled and the analysis confirmed that there would be no reduction in service life resulting from the reduction in starting frost depth.

For more information, please contact Glen Légère (glen.legere@fpinnovations.ca), research manager, transportation and infrastructure at FPInnovations.
Trade

Softwood duties take effect, legal challenges underway

Anti-dumping and countervailing duties on Canadian lumber imported to the U.S. went into effect on Jan. 3. The duties are the latest step in the ongoing trade dispute over softwood lumber.

The U.S. Department of Commerce slightly lowered its previously-announced rates, saying it agreed with company allegations that “ministerial errors” were made in earlier calculations.

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Canada’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, issued a statement on Jan. 3, reiterating the Canadian government’s position that the U.S. duties on Canadian softwood lumber are “unfair, unwarranted and troubling.”

“They are harmful to Canada’s lumber producers, workers and communities, and they add to the cost of home building, renovations and other projects for American middle-class families.”

The Canadian government has already begun legal challenges of these duties under NAFTA and through the World Trade Organization, where Canadian litigation has proven successful in the past.

The government of Canada made a broad-ranging complaint to the World Trade Organization regarding the United States’ trade practices, including its action in the softwood lumber dispute. Several industry groups have stated their support of the legal challenge against Canada’s trading partner.

Unifor’s national president, Jerry Dias, commented: “The U.S. is trying to bully us, and we’re not going to stand for it. Canada’s forestry sector is following the rules and we’re confident that we will prevail—again—in international tribunals.”

In addition to imposing duties on softwood lumber, the Trump administration recently imposed preliminary duties on newsprint imported from Canada.

“These rates tabled last night by the U.S. on uncoated groundwood paper represent the third action that stands to hurt hard working men and women in our mill communities across Canada,” says Derek Nighbor, CEO, Forest Products Association of Canada. “These duties are unwarranted and without merit and we 100% support the federal government’s WTO filing position. Canada and the U.S. share a longstanding and important relationship, but in the face of these unfounded trade actions it’s important that our government defends Canada’s interests.”

According to FPAC, the Government of Canada complaint said U.S. procedures broke the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) Anti-Dumping Agreement, the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes.

Susan Yurkovich, president of the BC Lumber Trade Council, also spoke in support of the federal government’s legal action filed with the WTO.

“B.C. lumber producers welcome the Government of Canada’s efforts to vigorously defend Canada’s interests in trade relations with the U.S. For decades, the Canadian lumber industry has been subject to unfair and unwarranted duties imposed by the U.S. Department of Commerce, and has filed appeals under the NAFTA and WTO agreements. We know that when unbiased entities review these unfair trade practices, they have found in Canada’s favour.”

In the wide-ranging trade complaint to the World Trade Organization which was made public on Jan. 10, the Government of Canada cites almost 200 cases of alleged wrongdoing by the U.S., according to media reports. CBC reports that U.S. trade representative Robert Lighthizer issued a rebuttal calling Canada’s case an “ill-advised attack on the U.S. trade remedies system.”
Supplied by Murray Latta Progressive Machine

Murray Latta Progressive Machine is celebrating a milestone in 2018: 100 years as a successful machine manufacturing and distribution business.

The current business was formed by a merger of Progressive Mill Supplies (est. 1954) and Murray-Latta Machine (est. 1918) after working together for more than 50 years. With the recent addition of Brunette Machinery Company, the firm has expanded its forest industry presence even further by adding Brunette products and its 70+ years of machine building experience.

Since 1954, Murray Latta Progressive Machine has been a trusted manufacturer and distributor of planer mill equipment, parts and consumables. “For all these years our technical knowledge, pride in workmanship and dedication to excellent customer service have been our highest priority because this is the key to our longevity,” says a company statement about the 100th anniversary. “We manufactured and refurbished complete planer lines and wood waste processing equipment for over 50 years, and we have leveraged this experience to develop equipment upgrades and components to enhance productivity, quality and safety. Additionally, we represent other industry-leading equipment suppliers to provide the full spectrum of capital equipment, parts and repair services for all of your planer mill equipment needs.”

Murray Latta Progressive Machine offers:

• Sales and integration of planer and wood waste processing equipment.
• Planer equipment upgrades to increase productivity, quality and safety.
• Pro Edge-Tec III – Fully automatic planer cutter head knife grinder.
• Highest quality planer replacement parts and consumables.
• In-house equipment refurbishment and component repair services.
• On site installation, maintenance and training.

The company intends to celebrate the 100th anniversary not only by reflecting on its proud past. It is “focusing on future success while connecting with customers from all over the world to celebrate their part in helping us become what we are today.”

You can follow the 100th year celebration on the company’s website, www.mlpmachine.com

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It’s a free service
Structure Craft begins production of mass timber panels in B.C.

By Cindy Macdonald, Editor

StructureCraft, an engineer and builder of timber structures for 20 years, has added to its capabilities. It is now the first North American manufacturer of DLT (dowel-laminated timber), an all-wood mass timber product.

The company built a new 50,000-sq. ft. timber facility in Abbotsford, B.C., last year to house the production line for DLT.

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StructureCraft’s facility in Abbotsford also houses a completely automated production line for dowel-laminated timber using custom-designed machinery from Europe. There are a number of DLT plants in Europe, but StructureCraft is the first to produce the mass timber product in North America.

The DLT production process begins with dimensional lumber, generally SPF sourced from B.C., explains Gerald Epp Jr., estimating engineer. The lumber is visually graded and defects are removed. Next, the pieces are finger-jointed into strands the length of the desired panel. Then a four-side moulder finishes the sides and applies any desired surfacing to the visible plane. The strands are then dowelled together to form larger panels up to 12 ft. wide x 60 ft. long.

The moulder can give a distinct profile to the visible edge, so the panel can have a repeating visual pattern. “So, architecturally speaking, it’s quite an advantage,” says Gerald Epp.

StructureCraft continues its focus on engineering, fabrication and installation of signature timber structures - from mass timber and tall wood to complex free form geometry. But now the company has the added element of being a manufacturer of a mass timber product.
**New TLA president says contractor sustainability will be focus**

Mike Richardson was elected president Truck Loggers Association at the association’s recent annual meeting.

Richardson has 42 years of experience in the forest industry. He is currently a partner in Tsibass Construction Ltd., a stump-to-dump logging contractor based in Campbell River, B.C. He also spent 14 years of his career working for both a major licensee and a First Nations licensee. “I’ve worn a few different hats over the years and I believe there is common ground that can be reached so all parties can be successful,” said Richardson.

“The Contractor Sustainability Review must be our main advocacy focus in 2018,” he said. “The TLA has worked hard to have the Review happen and we look forward to working with government and industry to implement any recommendations that improve the lot of timber harvesting contractors in B.C.”

The Truck Loggers Association represents 489 independent forest contractors and their suppliers operating in British Columbia.

**Logging truck driver killed in B.C. crash**

On Dec. 29, 2017, the driver of a loaded log truck died after a collision with an empty, stationary log truck that had lost traction on a hill, according to the B.C. Forest Safety Council. The incident occurred near Fort St. James, B.C.

A fatality report from the council explains: “After the collision the loaded truck left the road and the load of logs moved forward and partially crushed the cab. As a result, the driver of the loaded truck was fatally injured.”

The road conditions were reported to be icy.

The council notes that this was the tenth harvesting fatality of 2017.

**Tolko changes certification to SFI standards**

Tolko has received SFI Sustainable Forest Management and Fibre Sourcing certifications for its woodland operations, effective December 1, 2017.

The forest products company said SFI certification will replace any current CSA certification that Tolko holds.

“Over the past several months the Woodlands team has put in a large amount of effort through changes in processes, documentation and through external confirmation audits to successfully achieve this certification,” the company said in a statement.

Tolko Industries is a major producer and marketer of lumber, veneer, plywood, and oriented strand board, with manufacturing operations across Western Canada.

**Komatsu to acquire Quadco and Southstar harvesting equipment**

Komatsu is expanding its line of forestry equipment with the acquisition of the Quadco and Southstar forestry attachment operations from Prenbec Equipment of Quebec. The deal excludes the forestry equipment businesses of Tanguay and Forespro delimiters.

The acquisition will be made through a wholly owned subsidiary of Komatsu in the United States and is expected to close in February 2018.

Adding the Quadco felling heads and Southstar large harvester heads to the existing lines of Log Max and Komatsu small and medium-sized harvester heads will allow Komatsu to offer its customers a full range of forestry attachments.

Quadco and Southstar will continue to operate as independent companies within the Komatsu group and will maintain their existing sales networks. In order to offer improved value to customers, a forestry attachment division within Komatsu Forest AB will be formed, which will manage the Quadco, Southstar, and Log Max brands.

**Bandit Industries celebrates 35th anniversary in 2018**

Bandit Industries will celebrate 35 years in business in 2018. The company began as Foremost Fabrications in a small one-room shop. The first chipper was a Model 100 Brush Bandit. That chipper became so popular in the industry, the company explains, that most people knew Foremost Fabrications as “Bandit,” so in 1986, the company officially took the name Bandit Industries.

“Thirty-five years is a long time to be in business,” said president and co-owner Jerry Morey. “That’s why we’re going to take some time in 2018 to appreciate where we’ve been, what we’ve accomplished, and how we want to keep innovating and evolving – for our employees, for our customers, and for our industry.”

Bandit has grown in the last 35 years, continually refining its machines, adding new models and product lines. Today, the company says more than 60,000 Bandit machines are in use all around the world, and more than 200 dealer locations serve customers in six continents.

Bandit’s product lineup includes hand-fed chippers, stump grinders, skid-steer attachments, whole tree chippers and The Beast® horizontal grinders.
FPInnovations and Resolute invest in $21-million biochemicals pilot project

Continued from page 1

Officials gathered Jan. 22 to announce the biochemicals project.

The investment announced on Jan. 22 covers cost of capital and R&D, and has the support of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), CRIBE, FedNor, the City of Thunder Bay CEDC and Natural Resources Canada.

Richard Garneau, president and CEO, Resolute Forest Products, said the company is pleased to continue its strategic partnership with FPInnovations by providing both a host facility and financial support to this venture. He noted that the project will help create opportunities to diversify the use of wood fibre into higher-value-added products.

According to FPInnovations, market interest for sustainably sourced green biochemicals and biofuels continues to build. The development and availability of significant quantities of bio-sourced chemicals, such as the cellulosic sugars and high-quality H-lignin produced by the TMP-Bio process, is a key step in growing new markets for the forest products sector by connecting it to the biochemical supply chain.

“Today’s announcement will help establish a fully functioning biorefinery plant that will speed up the development, production and commercialization of green biochemicals derived from wood, helping companies diversify and create jobs,” said The Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and Minister responsible for FedNor.

Reza Moridi, Ontario Minister of Research, Innovation and Science, commented: “The world is looking for bioproducts made from sustainably-managed, non-food sources. Ontario is one of the largest biotech clusters in North America. By applying innovative solutions like the TMP-Bio Project, the forestry sector is creating new opportunities in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.”

According to FPInnovations’ Impact 2016-2017 Review of Activities document, the TMP-Bio research team developed a modified CTMP/TMP (chemi-thermomechanical pulping/thermo mechanical pulping) process, accompanied by enzymatic hydrolysis, for the production of 2G sugars and H-lignin. “This TMP-Bio process is unique in its treatment of biomass, which combines a mild chemical treatment and low-temperature mechanical refining, resulting in clean sugar and high-quality H-lignin streams.”

It goes on to explain: “The 2G sugars produced will be converted by companies into intermediate chemicals, most commonly lactic or succinic acid. These platform chemicals are then transformed into a broad range of products such as polyurethanes, paints, plastics, textiles, cosmetics, and personal care products.”

H-lignin is a relatively new biomaterial and applications are currently being developed in the lab, FPInnovations reports.
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