



## Association News

### Incoming ALC President Wiedeman's Address

Mike Wiedeman, the new President of the American Loggers Council (ALC), had a simple message for the members attending the September annual meeting, "Working together to meet common goals, we can accomplish great things!"

Wiedeman explained that there are opportunities for loggers as the world begrudgingly shifts to renewable energy.

He stressed thinking outside the box, pointing to three of his goals, including building strategic alliances.

"As the wood products business transitions to include renewable energy, our need for partners and new alliances increases as well," Wiedeman said. "We need to sit down with the potential customers of woody biomass, both nationally and internationally, so that we can better meet their needs now and in the future. I am asking Cat and John Deere to help make this happen."

He also stressed the importance of the ALC speaking as one national voice. "It is imperative that all states initiate their Master Logger Certification. Our trading partners will demand it.

Lastly, he said it was vital that the industry develop a better way to exchange information and share experiences. "We need to construct a clearinghouse for potential opportunities. In the coming weeks, I will be asking our Executive Committee for the formation of a taskforce that includes both members and partners to identify potential business opportunities."

Lofty goals -- but important ones -- for the industry to evolve and continue to be a vital piece of the nation's future.

### Rough Year for Sawmills

Figures compiled by the Western Wood Products Association will come as no surprise to those in the industry.

Softwood lumber production at mills in the 12 Western states declined for the third straight year, falling to 12.995 billion board feet in 2008. The total was down 20.4 percent from the previous year and represented the lowest annual Western volume since WWPA begin compiling statistics in the 1950s.

Prices received for lumber declined even more steeply. The estimated wholesale value of Western lumber was \$3.66 billion, a decrease of 40 percent from \$6.1 billion set in 2007.

Oregon remained the largest lumber producing state in the country, despite a significant drop in production. Sawmills in the state produced 4.7 billion board feet, some 23.5 percent less than in 2007. The wholesale value of Oregon's lumber was nearly 43 percent lower at \$1.26 billion.

Output from Washington state mills declined 18.4 percent to 3.89 billion board feet. California lumber production totaled 1.92 billion board feet, down 16.8 percent from 2007.



A 33 percent drop in housing starts shrank U.S. lumber consumption to 41.9 billion board feet, down 19.8 percent from 2007 totals, or a drop of just over 10 billion board feet. Housing starts totaled 906,000 in 2008, the first time starts have dipped below 1 million since World War II.

WWPA expects lumber markets to recover, although slowly, starting in 2010.

### **AF&PA Applauds Passage of FLAME**

The American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) applauded passage in the U.S. Senate of legislation to improve efforts to fight catastrophic wildfires by creating a dedicated fund within the Forest Service to pay for fire suppression activities and prevent other valuable land management programs from being raided in heavy fire years.

The legislation, known as the FLAME Act, was recently passed as part of the 2010 Interior & Environment Appropriations Act.

“The FLAME Act will provide adequate fire suppression funding without other programs having to suffer. We are thankful for the leadership of Senators Bingaman, Murkowski, and Feinstein on this issue and hope the legislation can move quickly through conference and to the President for his signature,” said AF&PA President and CEO Donna Harman.

As the bill now heads to conference with the House, AF&PA will urge conferees to include the FLAME Act in the final appropriations package. Fire suppression costs consume over half of the Forest Service’s discretionary budget. Between 1999 and 2003, \$2.2 billion of the \$3.5 billion spent on fire fighting was diverted from other Forest Service programs. It can take years to get these funds repaid -- if they are repaid at all -- a practice that causes severe disruption in the delivery of other Forest Service resource management programs.