



LOGGING ASSOCIATIONS: CHANGING HORIZONS

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Many logging associations across the nation are seeing changes this year, with some states starting new groups and others undergoing personnel transitions. As the logging force continues to shrink, the associations that represent them are responding to the shift. For some, this shift is a rallying cry for organization. Others continue to struggle with financial issues; some are holding their own.

What is the purpose or reason for a logging association? Some provide insurance through the association or a related group; others provide training, including safety and SFI. Many watch legislative issues and provide a voice for loggers. With some associations, to acquire insurance you must be a member. Others provide training at a discounted rate for members. Whatever the reason, all loggers, whether members or not, benefit from these groups.

■ NEW ORGANIZATIONS

A bright spot in the mid-Atlantic area is the formation of the North Carolina Assn. of Professional Loggers (NCALP). This group officially formed late last year after many organizational meetings and several prior attempts by a few determined loggers. Previously, loggers were loosely joined at the hip of the state forestry organization (NCFA) and its ProLogger Training Program. Right now NCALP is functioning under an "acting" Executive Committee, headed by logger Chip Capps, that is conducting association business pending a full membership meeting to be held in June.

The group has hired Doug Duncan as its Executive Director. A graduate forester, Duncan is very familiar with

the industry and had previously worked with a logging equipment dealership. Prior to that he was in charge of the ProLogger Training Program at NCFA.

NCALP has held seven regional meetings so far and has three others scheduled. The association plans to divide the state into 10-15 areas, each with an elected director. "Our goal is to keep driving times to around 30 to 45 minutes for the meetings," says Duncan. "We think the small groups will be able to address local issues and have a good network on state and national issues." A statewide meeting is anticipated this summer.

The NCALP has applied for membership in the American Loggers Council, has been approved by the membership committee and is awaiting full board approval, which is anticipated this spring.

One of the group's main recruiting tools is a website (now being developed) that would serve as an information network for members. The Loggers Business Exchange is a web-based system that would give members access to information on markets, trucking, DOT regulations, fuel prices, equipment dealers, insurance options, office supplies, etc. It would also include tax, safety, and environmental regulations, Duncan believes that 90% of North Carolina loggers regularly use the Internet for business purposes. NCALP's goal for the first year is 300 members. (See the *ALC Eagle* in this issue of *TH* for more information and contact listings.)

Another relatively new group is

emerging in Alabama, where there seems to be a growing dissatisfaction with the existing logger organization, the Alabama Loggers Council, which was formed in 1992 as an affiliate of the Alabama Forestry Assn. A group of loggers, mostly past board members of the Alabama Loggers Council, formed Independent Logging Contractors of Alabama (ILCA) a couple of years ago.

Prominent organizers include Hunkey Daniel, Ezell Castleberry and Rickey Carnes, all of who were very active in the formation of the

Alabama Loggers Council. The ILCA mission includes promoting professionalism, improving safety, researching new markets and being a logging voice. An ILCA membership also includes membership in the Southern Loggers Cooperative, enabling members to participate in that group's bulk fuel buying program.

Current ILCA Chairman is Carnes, who presides over quarterly meetings. The group is growing slowly and now has upwards of 40 members, among them current American Loggers Council President Castleberry. "We're working towards developing this thing into a real voice for the loggers of Alabama," comments Castleberry. "We see a real need to have our own voice. We are losing our workforce to competition. Besides our group, one local Chamber of Commerce has formed a committee to look at loggers' problems. The committee includes some of our state representatives as members."

As is the case in other states and regions, the new Alabama group is

