

TIMBER PROFESSIONALS COOPERATIVE

Dear Wisconsin Forest Industry Stakeholders,

In years past, Wisconsin and the Lake States region has seen several pulp consuming mills close. Those which remain have been sold and purchased several times with an average ownership of 5 to 7 years. This new way of doing business has created an unstable market for raw forest products, small communities, and family run businesses, with enormous personal investments, to provide sustainable forest management services.

Loggers and log truckers impacted by unstable markets have given much thought to finding solutions to curb this instability. As such the cooperative concept has been discussed multiple times as a tool to create stability and to some degree, control of industries destiny. The announcement of and subsequent closure of the Verso mills in Wisconsin Rapids and Duluth MN in June of 2020, provided the impetus to move forward with the formation of a cooperative with a focus on long term ownership of a wood consuming facility.

The following is an activity update for the newly formed Timber Professionals Cooperative. (TPC) The TPC is the result of commitment and ongoing efforts from a cooperative steering committee consisting of representation from the seven Wisconsin and Michigan regions served by the Great Lakes Timber Professional Association.

Formation of the TPC which consists of loggers and log trucker members, was the first step toward development of a larger multi-stakeholder cooperative which will include multiple membership classes. Ideally these will represent the various individuals and/or entities with a vested interest in the long-term success of the forest products industry in the region. Because of its early formation, TPC is leading the organization of this larger cooperative which has unofficially been named the "Consolidated Cooperative." As efforts move forward with more membership classes identified, this multi-stakeholder cooperative will become formalized and will include input from the other membership classes.

The "Consolidated Cooperative" name was chosen to add credence to an "all inclusive" ownership structure for the livelihood and wellbeing of every person from the mills start to finish operation. This includes landowners, loggers, mill workers, service providers, and communities who support these efforts. Although it was not a cooperative, Consolidated Papers was owned and operated by a Wisconsin family that had many of the same interests and values being re-created with the multi-stakeholder cooperative.

With time being of the essence TPC is moving forward to gain data access regarding the sale of the WI Rapids Verso mill, pursuing a general feasibility study for the purpose of gathering information and answering questions regarding the mills current condition and ability to produce economically viable products. TPC has identified potential markets for products that we believe can be produced at this mill as well as potential financing for purchase of the mill.

The cooperative is a serious effort to provide a stable, long-term ownership structure that truly has the best interest of Wisconsin and its workers as a priority. Your acknowledgement and support of this Wisconsin based grass roots effort will add credibility towards making this a reality.

If you have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to contact us at 877-284-3882 or timberprofessionalscooperative@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



Dennis Schoeneck

