



# WSRI UPDATE

*“Improving wood supply operations through research”*

## Summer 2016

**Dear WSRI Members, FRA Members, and Friends:**

Welcome to this issue of the **WSRI UPDATE**, an E-Newsletter designed to keep you up to date on what’s happening at the Wood Supply Research Institute – where we are *“Improving wood supply operations through research.”* Foresters and loggers who would like to be added to the mailing list to directly receive the WSRI quarterly e-newsletter should contact WSRI Executive Director Steve Carruth at [stevecarruth@yahoo.com](mailto:stevecarruth@yahoo.com)

### WSRI Annual Meeting



A well-attended and productive 2016 WSRI Annual Meeting was held (jointly with the Forest Resources Annual Meeting) in Colorado Springs, Colorado on May 4, 2016. The meeting agenda included: budget and dues discussions, a membership update, a marketing project report, discussion on whether WSRI research should be available only on a fee-basis for non-members and the appointment of the following 2016 Executive Committee. Industry Consumer Members: John Quillian – WestRock, Chris Beckham –International Paper, Logger Members: Crad Jaynes - SC TPA, Danny Norman – Resource Management Service, Supplier/Dealer Members: Sean Bennett – Broad Arrow Timber, Marcus Beard – The Price Companies, Woodland Owner Members: Tom Trembath - FIA, Aaron Welch – Weyerhaeuser Co., Associate Members: Bill Miller – F&W, Don Taylor - SRS

## **WSRI Retiring Executive Director Honored**

At the 2016 Annual Meeting WSRI Chair Crad Jaynes (right) thanked retiring WSRI Executive Director Jim Fendig (left) for his fourteen years of service to WSRI.



Jaynes presented Fendig an appreciation plaque and leather bound keepsake book of “tribute letters” from colleagues who had worked with Jim throughout his distinguished forest industry career. Also presented to Jim was a WSRI Board of Directors resolution granting Fendig lifetime WSRI membership. Jaynes noted that Fendig had given him a WSRI Chairman’s gavel in the past, and Jaynes announced that this gavel would now be passed on from Chairman to Chairman in the years ahead. FRA National Chairman Tom Reed thanked Fendig for his years of service to the industry and presented him with an FRA logo jacket.

## **New Executive Director Appointed**



Jaynes introduced new WSRI Executive Director Steve Carruth. In making this introduction Jaynes noted, “We carefully reviewed the applications of the top five candidates for this position and the Search Committee was unanimous in its selection of Steve. Not many know that he was the original executive director (on loan from Westvaco Corp) when WSRI was established 17 years ago. Steve brings excellent forest industry knowledge and association management skills to WSRI. We expect Steve will continue the strong record of planning and completing valuable WSRI wood fiber supply chain research projects compiled by Jim Fendig over the past 14 years. WSRI is pleased to see Steve Carruth return to WSRI service.”

Carruth’s education and work experience includes: BSF – Virginia Tech, MSF-West Virginia Uni., Procurement Forester-Westvaco, Harvesting Research Project Leader-Westvaco, Wood Flow and Administrative Supervisor-MeadWestvaco, and Operations Manager – KapStone Charleston Kraft.

In accepting the Executive Director position Carruth noted, “I have been a longtime believer in the value of WSR and I was privileged to serve earlier in my career as the Executive Director when WSRI was initially formed.” Carruth highlighted the importance of the WSRI Technical Team and its work in reviewing research projects and seeing them through to completion. Carruth shared his goal of reaching out WSRI members to communicate with them at all stages of research progress, noting that research should serve as a catalyst for communications among WSRI members. Carruth also thanked retiring Executive Director Fendig for his leadership, his years of service, and his help in the transition process.

### **Research Project Updates**

#### **“Utilization of Phone Application Technology to Record Log Truck Movements,” as a lead-in to “Factors Affecting Delivery Time from the Stump to the Mill and Return.”**

Tom Gallagher, Associate Professor at Auburn University, reports progress on the WSRI trucking app that Dr. Tim McDonald has developed at Auburn to track the movements of log truck drivers and to enable the drivers to identify and explain the reasons for delays in their movement throughout the work day. Gallagher notes that each driver will have a unique ID, that “stop events” will be recorded along with the reasons, and that the data will be archived, collected and aggregated and so mill and in-woods turnaround times, delivery cycle times, etc. can be determined

Gallagher is currently testing the app in three states, and one of the project deliverables will be a free phone app. Gallagher also noted that the research project might also be able to compare the system time efficiencies of hot-loading vs. setout trailers.

#### **“Logger and Trucker Compensation Indices”**

Forisk Consulting’s Shawn Baker has presented the interim results of Forisk’s research to determine and compare logging labor and log truck driver compensation with compensation of similar positions in competing industries (agriculture, construction, oil and gas, finished wood products, etc.) via the calculation of an index to compare and determine the relative competitiveness of trucking and logging labor in the industry. Baker’s interim report uses Bureau of Labor statistics data and he notes that that there may be some questions in the applicability of BLS data to log trucking. He reported that the BLS data would be a foundation for building an industry-specific index. Baker notes that the project’s final results

will present more than wage rate indices; it will actually include benefits and represent total compensation. Baker expects the final research report to be ready later this summer.

### **WSRI Technical Team Reviews Potential 2017 Research Projects**

WSRI's Technical Teams play a vital role in the production of the one formal product of the Institute: publishable research. The research that WSRI funds must address topics that inform the membership about issues that impact the business of wood supply and have the potential to strengthen the wood supply system.

In February and March of this year, WSRI received eight pre-proposals for research projects from a diverse group of universities and private companies. The organizations that submitted these proposals were made aware of WSRI's interest in receiving proposals by several means including information that is spreading tied to our marketing efforts.

During March and April, the 11 members of the current WSRI Technical Team independently reviewed the submissions. In mid-April, team leader Sean Bennett (Broad Arrow Timber) convened a conference call of the team members. Executive Director Jim Fendig along with incoming Executive Director Steve Carruth sat in. The potential projects were sequentially discussed with each team member in attendance presenting their thoughts on the potential merits of the project, its potential to meet the objectives of WSRI, and its potential to be completed by the submitting research organization in a timely manner at a budget WSRI can afford. After the discussion each team member was asked to identify his first, second, and third choice for potential funding. There was an extremely high degree of consensus in the rankings on the part of the team.

The team then decided to instruct team leader Bennett to respond to the top three candidate organizations, Auburn, Michigan Tech and Virginia Tech with a request to develop full proposals for their projects including details on methods, budgets, timing for completion and deliverables. The deadline set for receipt of full proposals is June 10<sup>th</sup>. Team Chair Bennett also contacted the organizations that did not make the first cut to thank them for their submissions.

Once the full proposals come in the Technical Team will review them and decide what to present to the WSRI Board of Directors. The team may recommend, or not recommend, any of the projects based on the team assessments. The decision to fund or not fund projects belongs to the Board. It is expected that information should be in front of the Board in July.

Members of this WSRI Technical Team are: Sean Bennett (Chair) – Broad Arrow Timber, Rusty Booker – Drax Biomass, Jeff Jenkins – Glatfelter, Chris Becklean – International Paper, Bruce Gritzinger – KapStone, John Quillian – WestRock, Mitchell Presley – Mid-Star Timber Harvesting, Joseph Parnell – Parnell, Inc., Danny Norman – Resource Management Service, Aaron Welch – Weyerhaeuser and Don Taylor – Sustainable Resource Systems

## **WSRI Facebook Page Update**

Since its launch in October 2014 the WSRI Facebook Page has received 200+ likes (followers). We encourage all foresters and loggers with an interest in the wood supply chain to check out the WSRI Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/woodsupplyresearchinstitute>

and to click the “like” and “follow” buttons so you can keep abreast of the latest wood supply research developments.

## **Research Project Proposals Requested**

- WSRI receives project proposals from anyone year round. **We encourage you to submit a research project proposal that will improve wood supply chain operations!**
- Project proposal-format is a brief three-part email communication. 1 - Name of Project & background of need, 2 - Expected deliverables, and 3 - How Project data might be used. Send proposal to [stevecarruth@yahoo.com](mailto:stevecarruth@yahoo.com) .
- Project suggestions will be reviewed by a WSRI Technical Team. Selected project concepts will be sent to potential researchers as a formal RFP or as a request for detail. A final research project selection will be made by the Technical Team and sent to WSRI Board for approval.
- Completed research Projects are made available on the WSRI web site—<http://wsri.org/> and through Technical Releases published by FRA.

With best wishes,

*Crad*

*Steve*

Crad Jaynes, WSRI Board of Directors Chair. Steve Carruth, WSRI Executive Director

**The Wood Supply Research Institute (WSRI) is a joint project of professional loggers, forest landowners, wood consuming mills, educators, and manufacturers that facilitates and funds research to promote and improve efficiency in the wood supply system.**