Don’t get left behind as industry recovers
Sign up for CLP training today!

It has been several decades since we had such a feeling of optimism in our industry as a backdrop to the Certified Logging Professional (CLP) training program. Earlier this week, the Maine Forest Products Council hosted a legislative breakfast in Augusta where all the industry sectors spoke regarding recent trends. It was heartening to hear that nearly every paper mill in the state is investing millions in its facilities to diversify products lines and increase consumption of pulpwood. Sawmills, after a lull in production for decades are making investments that will result in production targets that challenge all-time highs.

It’s in this environment that we are rolling out this year’s schedule for CLP initial training and recertification sessions. As consumption by mills grows, there will be greater need for logging capacity than we’ve seen in decades. That logging capacity can only grow with additional logging personnel who are trained in efficient and environmentally sensitive practices and possess an ethic of safety for themselves and the other people with whom they work.

We are in the dawn of a new era in our industry and the CLP program is poised to do its part. If you have been certified by CLP in the past, please consider becoming current once again. If you are already a fully subscribed CLP and know of others who could benefit from the training, do what you can to encourage them to participate. To support this period of growth, we have received support from Maine’s SFI Implementation Committee that allows us to defer some of the cost for recertification in 2019. In 2019, the first 600 loggers who register for recertification will receive a discount of $25 resulting in a net cost of $125 for recertification. This offer also applies to loggers who become recertified in 2019. SFI also is funding an additional 100 CLP field visits to aid with inspections and provide consultation.

The CLP program has been the industry standard since 1991, but we sometimes take its benefits for granted. So it’s worthwhile to remember its accomplishments.

- Maine logging injuries and illnesses rates are among the lowest in the country.
- CLP is the northeast’s largest training program with more than 1,200 participants.
- CLP’s success at reducing workers comp rates for both conventional and mechanical logging is recognized nationally. CLP mechanical rates will drop to 10.5 percent this spring with participating loggers paying up to 48 percent less.
- CLP’s significant focus on best management practices (BMPs) has resulted in CLP’s recognition as Maine’s DEP contractor certification equivalent. This allows for earthwork within the shoreland zoning area, including installation of permanent or temporary stream crossings.
- The CLP Board will look to improve forest industry workforce development through innovative training, education, and mentoring programs.

The camaraderie, information exchange and networking opportunities that occurs during CLP training sessions has resulted in many individuals improving their business relationships and by extension their businesses.

Because our goal is continuous improvement, CLP is embarking on a strategic plan to improve programming into the foreseeable future. It is our commitment to be a program for loggers and by loggers.