

NOVEMBER 2022

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Official Newsletter of the Maine Forest Products Council



Message from the Executive Director

PAT STRAUCH

The last month has been an exciting one for Maine's forest products industry. The month kicked off with the [Bangor Daily News' annual Maine Forest Products publication](#). The Council was featured on page 16 with a half-page advertisement and a column highlighting ongoing investments and emerging opportunities in the industry. Since the time of that publication, LP Building Solutions announced plans for a [\\$400 million expansion](#) of the Houlton facility and Sappi announced plans for a [\\$418 million investment](#) to convert Paper Machine #2 and expand production.

There is no doubt that our industry has some challenges ahead - labor shortages, inflation, high cost of diesel fuel, just to name a few - but these investments are a strong show of confidence and will be key to capturing future markets and securing relative stability for the industry moving forward.

These investments also highlight just how connected the entire industry is, from the stump to the mill, and how important it continues to be for all players, from loggers and haulers to foresters, landowners, mills and producers, to band together to fully take advantage of the opportunities ahead, and to find solutions to our common challenges.

These are exciting times for our industry; The Council looks forward to continuing to serve as a venue to bring all sides together to forge one common path forward. When we work together, great things happen for our industry and the entire state of Maine.

Pat

This issue:

Message from the ED

PAGE 01

Election Update
Annual Meeting Presentations

PAGE 02

2022 MFPC President's Award
Commission to Study the Role of
Water

MFPC Comments to USFWS

PAGE 03

Innovation and Investments

PAGE 04

Innovation and Investments
Cont.

EPR Stakeholder Process

PAGE 05

MFPC Regulatory Calendar
Newsletter Sponsors

PAGE 06



Election Update

Now that Election Day has passed and the dust has settled, not a whole lot has changed politically. Despite record-breaking spending in multiple races, the overall lay of the land has remained relatively unchanged at both the national and state levels.

The U.S. Senate will remain in Democrat's hands by a tight 50-49 seat margin. The remaining seat will remain undecided until after a runoff election on December 6 in Georgia. Prior to the November election, the Senate was at an even 50-50 split with VP Kamala Harris holding the tie-breaking vote.

The U.S. House is the only place where we saw some movement, although not in Maine. While some races are still up in the air, Republicans are within one seat of taking the House (as of the time that this was written) and are expected to win a small majority, flipping this chamber from blue to red. Congresswoman Chellie Pingree easily sailed to victory and will continue representing Maine's First District. Following a ranked-choice voting tabulation, Congressman Golden won re-election and will continue representing Maine's Second District.

The State Senate is nearly unchanged. Democrats picked up the Waterville district and Republicans picked up the Auburn district, but the numbers remain the same as they were prior to the election with [22 Democrats and 13 Republicans](#). The Auburn seat will be subject to a recount, but it is unlikely that the end result will change. Democrats nominated Sen. Troy Jackson to serve as Senate President for a third consecutive term and returned Sen. Eloise Vitelli as Majority Leader and Sen. Mattie Daughtry as Assistant Majority Leader. The Republicans elected Sen. Trey Stewart as Minority Leader and Sen. Lisa Keim as Assistant Minority Leader.

In the State House, Democrats picked up three seats, leaving the balance of power at [82 Democrats, 67 Republicans and 2 unenrolled members](#). The Democrats have not yet caucused to elect leaders. Republicans selected Rep. Billy Bob Faulkingham as the Minority Leader and Rep. Amy Arata as the Assistant Minority Leader.

The 131st Maine Legislature will convene for the first time on Wednesday, December 7. Statutory Adjournment for the First Regular Session is June 21, 2023.

Cloture, which is the last day to submit legislation for consideration during the First Regular Session, is just about a month away. If there is a bill you would like to be considered, please reach out ASAP.

Annual Meeting Presentations Now on Website

Click images below to view





Brian Flewelling Receives 2022 President's Award

The Maine Forest Products Council awarded Brian Flewelling of Easton with the organization's 2022 President's Award at a board meeting on Thursday, November 10. The award, presented by MFPC Board President Ryan McAvoy, was presented to Flewelling in recognition of his public service to the forest products industry as an exceptional businessman in the financial field, for his participation in MFPC policy guidance and for his leadership in the organization's fundraising activities over the last 18 years.

Flewelling began volunteering to help with golf tournaments and fundraising in 2004. During that time, he helped raise nearly \$300,000 to support MFPC's mission and membership. In addition to fundraising, Flewelling, a banker with Key Bank, provided invaluable insight into the health of the industry.

"Brian has graciously served MFPC, SFI and many other organizations as a volunteer for decades, and he has always done so with a great sense of humor and a smile," said Ryan McAvoy, MFPC Board President. "It was an honor to present Brian with this well-deserved award, and to express tremendous gratitude on behalf of the entire Council for Brian's many contributions to our organization and industry."

Update on the Commission to Study the Role of Water as a Resource in the State of Maine

On Thursday, November 10, the Commission met for a fourth time to vote on five recommendations to be included in the final report to the next legislature. Each of the five recommendations were adopted. The final report will be reviewed at a fifth and final meeting following Thanksgiving.

Recommendations to the 131st Legislature included:

- Establishing a new study commission to continue the work of this commission.
- An amendment of the Water Resources Planning Committee to emphasize centralization and enhancement of data collection.
- Amending the Maine Agricultural Water Management Board to enhance draught preparedness and resilience.
- A continuation of the study of the legal status of groundwater rights and ownership in Maine.
- Legislation to require testing and reporting of PFAS contaminants in water extracted for commercial bottling purposes.

To view the full slate of recommendations, [click here](#).

MFPC Comments to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

This month, MFPC sent comments to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the Canada Lynx Actions and we signed onto a letter sent by our industry partners, NAFO, regarding the Endangered Species Status for Tricolored Bat. Links to our comments are included below and may also be found on the Regulatory Calendar located on the Legislative Action page of our website.

[MFPC Canada Lynx Actions](#)

[NAFO Tricolored Bat Comments](#)



Maine Continues Long History of Forest Innovation & Investment

By Patrick Strauch, Executive Director of the Maine Forest Products Council
[Printed by the Bangor Daily News](#)

The forest products industry has been an integral part of Maine's economy, culture and heritage for hundreds of years. While supporting an \$8.1 billion industry, our sustainably managed working forests also provide unparalleled recreational opportunities, critical wildlife habitat, climate benefits, and clean water and air that make Maine a place like no other.

Each year, the forest products industry sustains 33,500 jobs, paying \$1.8 billion in payroll and \$278.4 million in state and local taxes. According to University of Maine research, one out of every 24 jobs in Maine is associated with the forest products industry, making it critical to our economy. These benefits are all possible thanks to diverse wood markets that support healthy forests and rural economies.

The forest products industry has been a cornerstone of economy since before Maine became the 23rd state in the Union. It is woven into the fabric of our past, and, thanks to investments and innovation, the Maine Forest Products Council is confident that our industry will continue to grow despite some transitional bumps in recent years.

Just recently, the Maine Forest Products Council joined our 2022 Outstanding Manufacturer of the year, LP Building Solutions, in celebrating the grand re-opening of their Houlton Facility. Thanks to a \$150 million investment, the Houlton Facility is now the first location on the east coast producing LP SmartSide, an innovative and popular siding material that is in high demand. With this investment, the Houlton Facility will be secure for years to come.

There are countless examples of investments and innovation taking place now in the industry. Pleasant River Lumber has made several major improvements to modernize and expand. Robbins Lumber Company has also made significant investments in biomass and technology, allowing their company to stay on the cutting edge.

Timber HP is investing \$85 million to transform the shuttered Madison Mill into a wood fiber manufacturing facility. Irving Sawmills in Dixfield recently invested \$26.5 million in a state-of-the-art planer mill that will allow Irving to use scanning technology to capture more value in logs. Our paper mills are investing in new technologies to diversify their product lines and remain competitive in the global marketplace.

With innovation, led by the University of Maine's Composites and bioproducts divisions, investments by industry leaders and an increased awareness of the need for renewable, sustainable and recyclable materials like wood, the future is bright

Click images below to view news coverage of recent announcements



Sappi to invest \$418M to rebuild Skowhegan mill



Louisiana-Pacific Building Solutions in Houlton is expanding





Investments and Innovation cont.

for the forest products industry in Maine, but to harness the opportunities in front of us, the industry will need 5,000 additional employees by 2030.

We celebrated National Loggers Day on October 12. Established by a bipartisan group of U.S. Senators including our very own senators, Susan Collins and Angus King, it recognized the challenges loggers face on the front lines of a turbulent economy. The immediate challenge Maine faces is replacing an aging workforce and bringing more people into the working economy. Maine's forest industry is healthiest when all the sectors of forest economy (landowners, loggers and wood manufacturing and mills) are operating at full capacity. MFPC is working with other associations, government officials and policy leaders to achieve the vision of a growing forest economy.

For our industry, opportunities are abundant. With a little Yankee ingenuity, there is no problem we can't solve.

Extended Producer Responsibility Stakeholder Process to Begin Next Month

The Department of Environmental Protection (the Department) will conduct a series of stakeholder meetings addressing rulemaking topics for 38 MRS 2146 Stewardship program for packaging beginning December 2022. The Department has divided rulemaking into the following topic areas, each serving as a subject for at least two separate stakeholder meetings:

I. Producer exemptions – December 2022

- Meeting 1: Thursday, December 8th from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EST
 - To RSVP to this meeting, use this link: [EPR-Exemptions-#1 Stakeholder Meeting Registration Form](#)
- Meeting 2: Thursday, December 22nd from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EST
 - To RSVP to this meeting, use this link: [EPR-Exemptions-#2 Stakeholder Meeting Registration](#)
- Focus-meeting (tentative): Tuesday, January 17th from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EST

II. Municipal reimbursement – January 2023

- Meeting 1: Tuesday, January 10th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EST
 - To RSVP to this meeting, use this link: [EPR-Reimbursements-#1 Stakeholder Meeting Registration](#)
- Meeting 2: Tuesday, January 24th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EST
 - To RSVP to this meeting, use this link: [EPR-Reimbursements-#2 Stakeholder Meeting Registration](#)
- Focus-meeting (tentative): Tuesday, February 14th from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EST
-

RSVP links for meetings after this topic will be provided in future newsletters and be made available for access from the EPR for packaging [website](#).

III. Recyclability, auditing, and program performance – March 2023

- Meeting 1: Tuesday, March 14th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EDT
- Meeting 2: Tuesday, March 28th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EDT
- Focus-meeting (tentative): Tuesday, April 11th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EDT

IV. Education and investment – May 2023

- Meeting 1: Tuesday, May 9th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EDT
- Meeting 2: Tuesday, May 23rd, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EDT
- Focus-meeting (tentative): Tuesday, June 13th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EDT

V. Payments and reporting – July 2023

- Meeting 1: Tuesday, July 11th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EDT
- Meeting 2: Tuesday, July 25th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EDT
- Focus-meeting (tentative): Tuesday, August 8th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm EDT

The Department requires those planning to attend a stakeholder meeting to RSVP using the links provided above (or in future newsletters for meetings scheduled after February 2023). All stakeholder meetings will be held in person and virtually; all participants, regardless of whether they are attending in person or virtually via Teams, will be able to comment. If you plan to attend a meeting virtually, you will receive the link to the virtual meeting after you RSVP using the registration link above. For stakeholders attending meetings in person, meetings will be held in room 101 of the Deering Building located at 90 Blossom Lane, Augusta, Maine 04330.

MFPC Regulatory Calendar

Issue/project	Agency	Comment period deadline
Maine PFAS in Food Packaging Alternatives Market Data Request	Maine DEP	Friday, December 16, 2022
Review of Chapter 100 Forester Classifications and Code of Ethics	Professional Forester Licensing Board	Thursday, January 26, 2023
Extended Producer Responsibility Program for Packaging	Maine DEP	Ongoing
PFAS in Products	Maine DEP	Ongoing
Moosehead Regional Planning Process	Maine LUPC	Past deadline
Endangered and Threatened Species Listing	Maine IFW	Past deadline
Brookfield White Pine Hydro, LLC	FERC	Past deadline
Canada lynx Species Status Assessment	US FWS	Past deadline
Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Tricolored Bat	US FWS	Past deadline

Newsletter Sponsors

