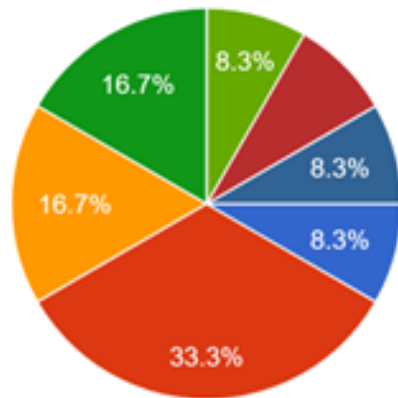


Board Survey Analysis 2022 vs 2024



Q1: Please indicate from the following list which business category best describes your organization

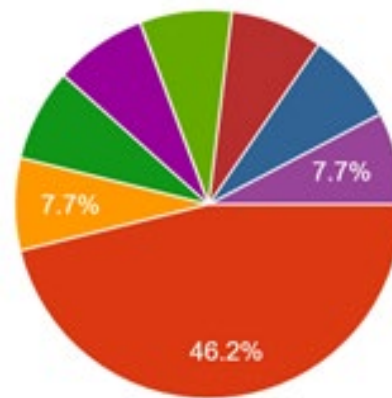
2024



- Logger/Trucker
- Landowner
- Sawmill
- Pulp & Paper
- Energy
- Banking
- Equipment Sales
- Consultant

▲ 1/2 ▼

2022

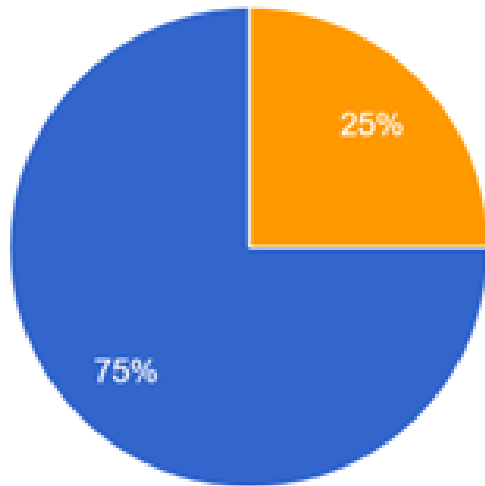


- Logger/Trucker
- Landowner
- Sawmill
- Pulp & Paper
- Energy
- Banking
- Equipment Sales
- Wood Procurement

▲ 1/2 ▼

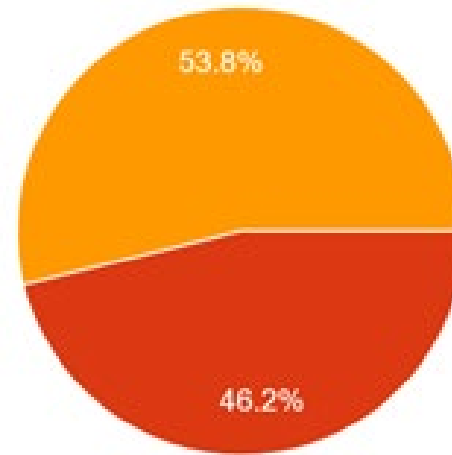
Q2: Please indicate how you compare your business income to two years ago?

2024



- Below 2022
- Same as 2022
- Above 2022

2022



- Below April 2020
- Same as April 2020
- Above April 2020

Q3: What are your top three business challenges for next year?

2024

- Operating costs
- Labor
- Logging capacity
- Markets
- Unpredictable weather
- Availability and price of fiber
- Electricity costs
- Price of pulp on global market

2022

- Workforce
- Fiber prices
- Trucking/logging capacity
- Inflation
- Regulatory threat
- Housing

Q4: What are your top three business opportunities for next year?

2024

- Diversification
- Carbon projects
- Market interest in climate benefits of wood products
- Better grade recovery
- Managing costs
- Partnerships
- Workforce improvements

2022

- Carbon projects
- Geographic expansion
- Continued strong housing demand
- Better equipment and harvesting ops
- Training and education
- Solar projects

Q5: Which word would you use to indicate your opinion of the market outlook for your business in 2025?

2024

- Tough
- Guarded/hopeful
- Reserved
- Stagnant
- Uncertain
- Rebounding
- Poor
- Depressed
- Bleak

2022

- Cautious
- Challenging
- Good
- Optimistic
- Uncertain
- Tentative
- Concerned
- Undecided

Q6: What are your hopes for the 132nd Legislature?

2024

- Increased bipartisanship
- Willingness to listen
- Cooperation
- Stable legislative climate
- Leave sector alone
- **Rescind/amend PFML**
- Assistance for maintaining private roads used by public
- Energy cost mitigation

2022

- Balance
- Fewer attacks on industry
- Regulatory stability
- Provide for increased natural gas
- Increased knowledge of industry
- Leave sector alone

Q7: Which policy issues would you like to see MFPC engage on in 2025?

2024

- PFML
- Tribal relations
- Encourage new wood markets
- Reduction of timber excise tax
- Workforce attraction
- Improved business climate
- Monitor climate initiatives/carbon impacts to industry

2022

- N/A

PFML Update

- Revised rules have been put out for a second round of public comment

Public Hearing

Tuesday, September 17 at 9 am

Maine Department of Labor, 45 Commerce Dr., Augusta

- Public comment period through September 30
- FMI: <https://www.maine.gov/labor/rulemaking/>

Improvements in revised draft include:

- The timeline for opt-outs has improved at the request of the business community. Employers can apply to opt out of the program after the first quarter (April 1, 2025).
- The process for applying for an undue hardship has improved
- Affinity relationships have been removed from the program, but they were replaced with ‘significant personal bond’. Unfortunately, this doesn’t necessarily improve the program.
- It has been clarified that reasonable notice must be in writing.
- Employers will now be notified if leave is approved or denied.

Ongoing Concerns:

- The rules lack flexibility and lock employers into specific private plans if they opt out of the program.
- Employees who are found guilty of fraud are not required to repay the fund and will only be blocked from receiving benefits under the program for one year.
- No waiting period is required in between qualifying events, so employees could utilize intermittent or reduced-schedule leave on an ongoing basis.
- The definition of ‘significant personal bond’ is overly broad and ripe for abuse. For example, geographic proximity is considered an indicator of a family-like relationship.

Ongoing Concerns (cont.):

- The limit of one designee for affinity relationships has been removed.
- Employees can submit applications for benefits up to 90 days after taking leave under the program (there are 12.8 weeks in 90 days), so in theory, nearly all of the leave can be exhausted before applied for.
- Employees can draw from the program on **day one** of employment.
- Employees can draw from the program while working another job with no reduction to benefits.

Outreach

- Candidate Breakfasts – RSVP today to attend!
- Forestry Summit
- Legislative event(s) TBD
- MFPC/UMaine Economic Analysis Report

Candidate Breakfast Series

- **Keeley's Banquet Center on Monday, September 23rd from 7-9 a.m. in Portland**
 - RSVP's include 25 candidates, 6 members, 4 staff/others
- **Le Fleurs on Wednesday, September 25th from 7-9 a.m. in Jay**
 - RSVP's include 11 candidates, 6 members, 4 staff/others
- **Dysart's on Monday, September 30th from 7-9 a.m. in Bangor**
 - RSVP's include 14 candidates, 10 members, 4 staff/others
- **Governor's Restaurant on Wednesday, October 2 from 7-9 a.m. in Presque Isle**
 - RSVP's include 8 candidates, 4 members, 2 staff/others
- **MFPC Headquarters on Monday, October 7th from 7-9 a.m. in Augusta**
 - RSVP's include 22 candidates, 7 members, 5 staff/others

Anticipated Issues

- Tribal Outreach – outside legislature
- PFML ongoing negotiations
- Stranded cost of energy, renewable portfolio planning
- Monitoring and reporting on carbon markets
- Public landscape planning of private land. (e.g., Recreation, wildlife management, carbon)
- Climate Council goals, emerging opportunities for wood & trees
- Spruce Budworm mobilization
- Commercial forestry excise tax/UT evaluation issues
- Implementation of LD 1881 (DEP Ch. 375, ACF Ch. 575)