

GUEST EDITORIAL

LOGGERS WORKING FOR LOGGERS

Danny Dructor, Executive Vice President
American Loggers Council

Ever since John Deere fashioned a revolutionary steel plow in 1837, the company has delivered products and services to support those linked to the land. Recently the company hosted 54 members for the 2018 American Loggers Council (ALC) summer board meeting held July 20–21 in Moline, Illinois.

ALC members learned about the company's rich forestry history during a tour of Deere & Company World Headquarters in Moline. We also toured John Deere Davenport Works, walking the same assembly line where the company's L-Series II Skidders are manufactured. And we visited the John Deere Parts Distribution Center, a massive 2.65-million-sq.-ft. facility that stocks more than 900,000 unique parts, where we learned of the incredible logistics required to deliver parts typically within 24 hours. We also got to test the full range of Deere forestry equipment at the company's Demo Site in Coal Valley, Illinois.

John Deere sponsors the ALC and is an important partner for protecting and growing the logging industry, promoting logger safety and productivity, and advocating on policy issues that are important to loggers. At our July board meeting, the ALC continued to grow as the national voice for professional timber harvesters by adding a new voting member, Southern Loggers Cooperative, which gives loggers access to affordable fuel. The board also voted to further promote the American Master Logger Certification (AMLC)

and TEAM Safe Trucking (TST) programs. The AMLC seeks to recognize and promote highly professional timber-harvesting companies that meet or exceed high performance standards. It provides a vehicle for these harvesters to share ideas and effect positive change for the industry. The program is active in 18 states and growing. TST programs provide a full online safety curriculum at no cost to forestry transportation owners, drivers, and safety professionals. There are an estimated 88,000 forestry drivers in the United States. The goal is to reach five percent of these drivers by the end of the year.

To further enhance the ALC's policy work in the nation's capital, the board authorized the council to retain a consulting firm in Washington, D.C., to help promote its policy initiatives. They also discussed a recent ALC online survey in which loggers across the country overwhelmingly voted to encourage the council to support public policy that aligns timber harvesting and logging activities with agriculture, in order to receive the same benefits and exemptions that agriculture receives under federal law.

The ALC will continue to grow, thanks to sponsors such as John Deere as well as to the dedication and hard work of its board and members. We are loggers working for loggers, and the ALC is well-positioned to strengthen and protect America's logging industry for years to come.



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Our new L-Series II machines
are simply better.