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The Cutting Edge →



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Cover Art: Deborah Roach

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The Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc. (TIMPRO CT) is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)6 non-profit corporation. Our mission is to enhance the image and understanding of the forest products industry throughout the state through public outreach programs, education, and a commitment to professionalism among our members.

TIMPRO CT NEWS

In this issue we welcome three new Board members: Kyle Joray, Corey Ridel, and Dan Slater. Kyle will be familiar to you from the Winter 2025 issue where we profiled him as our youngest member. Corey was a presenter at our June 5 Annual Meeting and Workshop. Dan is a new member and already a big supporter of Timpro.



Standing left to right: Peter Hart, Mike Hinman, Dan Slater, Austin Harmon, Kyle Joray, Stanley Burr, Bob Carrington

Seated left to right: Corey Ridel, Doug Moore, Joan Nichols, Kit Serafini, Sam Burr, Henry Gundlach

Next, you may have noticed the last two newsletters were thinner with fewer pages and less copy. That's because Microsoft ended support for its Publisher software, the program with which this newsletter was formatted years ago by Joan Nichols. We tried out several replacements before choosing Affinity and this is the third issue being produced with the new software. And while the learning process is still ongoing, we're back to 12 pages with the formatting in place. Thanks for being patient while we worked this through.

Finally, we can report success in our effort to obtain financial support for members seeking bridge mats. See the information on the opposite page.

Photo courtesy of Veronica Serafini

Membership in the Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association

Membership is open to sawmills, loggers, foresters, landowners, supporting businesses and anyone else interested in supporting the forest products industry in Connecticut. Benefits include educational programs, a voice in the Connecticut Legislature, a listing on the TIMPRO CT website, current information on issues affecting the forest products industry, a free subscription to ***The Cutting Edge*** and more.

Dues are \$150/year. \$25.00 for student memberships.

Applications are available by calling TIMPRO CT at 860-948-0432 or visiting the website at www.timproct.org.

CT Temporary Bridge Grant Program



Application period opens September 1st 2026

Funding for this program is made possible through the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Wood Innovations: Temporary Bridge Funding Program and in cooperation between the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc. (TIMPRO) to be used to provide bridge mats or temporary bridges to loggers and other qualified users for the purpose of protecting water resources during forestry-related operations requiring temporary crossing of streams and other water resources.

This Rent-To-Own Program requires applicants to submit an application and a pre-specified rental amount (20% of the total bridge cost due in a single upfront payment to TIMPRO.

- Applicants must be residents of the State of Connecticut
- Applicants must be members of TIMPRO
- Applicants may only apply for a maximum of 16 timber mats or 1 pair of steel bridge panels during the duration of this grant

Users are required to sign a contract acknowledging that mats/bridges may not be used as collateral, sold, or transferred to another party without the written permission of the USFS. Additionally, users must submit quarterly self-reports to TIMPRO once titles for the mats/bridge have been transferred.

Any mat or bridge that has surpassed its useful life must be disposed of in accordance with federal and state law and reported to TIMPRO.

For more information or to submit an application, please contact Kit Serafini at (860) 948-0432 or email info@timproct.org

This is a US Forest Service Wood Innovations: Temporary Bridge Funding Program.

"Funding provided by the USDA, USFS Infrastructure CT Temporary Bridge grant program administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection."



"The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact us at (860) 418-5910 or deep.accommodations@ct.gov if you: have a disability and need a communication aid or service; have limited proficiency in English and may need information in another language; or if you wish to file an ADA or Title VI discrimination complaint.



TIMPRO EVENTS - KIT SERAFINI, TIMPRO SECRETARY

PLANT SCIENCE DAY AUGUST 5

Joan Nichols and I attended the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station's 116th Annual Plant Science Day on August 5th at their outdoor research facility, Lockwood Farms in Hamden. The grounds were absolutely beautiful, as always. I personally enjoy viewing the different varieties of chestnut and apple trees they have there, along with their pollinator garden and their experiments on growing vegetables in kiddie pools.

TIMPRO was set up in the exhibitor tent alongside 32 other exhibitors, representing a range of organizations, including UConn, 4-H, the CT DEEP Wildlife and Forestry Divisions, the US Forest Service, various garden clubs, and even Yale Peabody. There were over 970 visitors that day, and almost everyone who passed by stopped to look at our display and inquire about what we were doing.



The most common question we received this year was, "Where can I find CT forest products?" Many visitors commented that they would purchase Connecticut products if they knew where to find them. The second most asked question was about local sawmills, with each person expressing frustration about buying subpar lumber from "big box stores." I directed many individuals to TIMPRO's website, where they can filter for sawmills on our "Find a Professional" page.



2026 GOSHEN FAIR LAL FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

For many years, TIMPRO proudly organized fundraising campaigns for Log A Load For Kids during the Celebrating Ag event at both the Woodstock and Brooklyn Fairgrounds. However, due to a decrease in attendance at this one-day event, it was decided to move the fundraiser to the Goshen Fair, which takes place annually on Labor Day weekend.

Thanks to dedicated volunteers and generous donations from businesses across Connecticut, this weekend was a success. TIMPRO organized a daily drawing over all three days of the fair—Saturday, Sunday, and Monday—during the wood-chopping contests.

Throughout the event, the main fair announcer regularly shared information

about Log A Load For Kids, the daily drawing item, emphasizing that 100% of the proceeds would go to the Connecticut Children's Miracle Hospital in Hartford. Joan Nichols and the wood-chopping event announcer made announcements during the competitions, while our volunteers walked through the audience, selling tickets.

On Saturday, Henry Gundlach of South Norfolk Lumber donated a cord of firewood, including delivery. The winner, from Trumbull, felt bad about the long delivery distance but was eager to receive the wood. In response, Henry contacted Scott Edwards from Maple Row Farm and informed him about the fundraiser. Scott graciously agreed to deliver the load of firewood and even donated the wood himself!



On Sunday, United Ag & Turf generously donated a Stihl chainsaw.

On Monday, E.R. Hinman & Sons donated a beautiful black locust wooden bench and table that attracted quite a few people.

Thanks to everyone's contributions, an incredible \$3,736 was raised during this three-day fundraiser. Over \$4000 had already been raised from earlier events so our total is over \$8000 total so far!

Photos opposite page courtesy Kit Serafini

Photos above right: Maggie Serafini as Paul Bunyan with his blue ox Babe
Above: Joan Nichols and Henry Gundlach announce the drawing.

These photos courtesy of Kit Serafini

Right: Jerry Bellows, Deb Carrington, Mike Hinman, Kit Serafini, Bob Carrington standing left to right behind the bench and table donated by ER Hinman

Photo courtesy of Kate Moore



CELEBRATING WOOD

CT-DEEP DIVISION OF FORESTRY WINS WOOD UTILIZATION GRANTS

In a recent phone interview, Nicholas Zito, Forest Practices Act Forester, CT-DEEP Division of Forestry, shared information about the two federal grants his Division has won. The goal of the grants, totaling \$750,000, including a five-year USDA wood utilization grant of \$250,000, is to improve marketing of local wood products.

Improved marketing is no small matter. As the grant application laid out, "Connecticut has seen a drastic reduction in production and labor statistics of the primary forest products industry. Between 2001 and 2020, the total number of certified forest practitioners has reduced by 27% and the total volume of forest products harvested has reduced by 60%. Of the remaining certified forest practitioners, approximately 50% are over the age of 55. In 2024, Perma Treat Corporation, Connecticut's third largest sawmill (2.19 MMBF/year) whose primary business focused on low grade material, closed its doors contributing to the continued shrinking of the forest products industry. According to economic impact reports analyzing forestry, logging, and sawmills, Connecticut has experienced an approximately \$12 million contribution reduction between 2017 and 2022."

Getting started, Zito explained, "My first task was to assemble a Wood Utilization Team (WUT) of people knowledgeable about the field. Forestry is now thinking more about industry but our team has individuals from the Division of Forestry, urban forestry, private forestry, the state sawmill, and state land managers as well as folks from Hull, the South Central Regional Water Authority, and small producers of wood products such as City Bench. I've tried to get someone from every part of the industry. We want to give a boost to industry as a whole that would make a lasting difference."

Zito says his perspective reflects his experience as a farmer. "I'm aligned with 'Connecticut Grown' so my intent is to try to boost Connecticut Grown products. For wood products, we know most of our primary producers don't dry them or at least don't kiln-dry them so it's hard to be an end-of-use producer. For someone looking to build a shed, say, getting local wood is hard. We don't have secondary kilns. One person on our WUT has to ship wood to Massachusetts to be kiln-dried".

The grant will fund a number of steps to help local wood manufacturers improve the availability and commercial value of their products. One step is a web-based ArcGIS map displaying location, contact and product information, and links to storymap opportunities for showcasing participant facilities and products. Another is a single posting location for RFPs (Request For Proposals) across all forest products industry sectors including Urban and Community Forestry Projects being funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The grant will also fund an educational resource and job posting board for interested job seekers and employers.

Critical to success is enabling producers to build inventory. "Most mills are family-run and realistically don't have an inventory," Zito said. "We also need to let consumers know about available wood products. A problem is that there are no Farmers Markets for them as there are for farm produce. He will use some of the grant to purchase branding irons so producers can burn a logo into their products and raise public awareness of their products. "We'll offer them at discount to encourage mills to use them."

Thinking back to his early days as a procurement forester, Zito reflected, "For me the perspective has changed. People are getting to know a little more and seeing that the state is trying to help. We're trying to demonstrate how our sector has changed. We're trying to encourage people to sell their story. Selling the story is always the best way."

DOAG Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt (far right) announced the grants at a ceremony held at the State of Connecticut sawmill. The event showcased the many "Connecticut Grown" products the sawmill produces for us all under Sawyer Jim Moore.



Cover photo: Fish ladders made from local oak

Clockwise from above left: Adirondack deck chairs, porch, siding; etching the state icon; state plaque for signage; Picnic tables at a state park.

Photos this page courtesy of Nick Zito



FRENCH FIREFIGHTING ON PAPER VS ON THE GROUND

On paper, France has one of the best Forest Fire protocols in the world. But on the ground it's a different story. The problem is the gap between written laws and actual enforcement.



On July 17, New York Times reporter Catherine Porter wrote, "For decades, France has prided itself on its unique, pre-emptive military-style firefighting strategy that has proved highly successful. It slashed the number of hectares burned each summer by almost three-quarters and largely spared the country from catastrophic blazes that have consumed its neighbors in Italy and Spain." But global warming has overtaken the best-laid plans for fire prevention and training. "We never expected this," said Mr. Jauffret, 59, a former military pilot who transitioned from fighting wars to fighting fires in 2007. "Before, it was the south that was burning. Now, it's the whole of France that is burning, or could burn."

By mid-July 11,000 fires had destroyed nearly 90,000

acres – more than had burned the entire previous summer.

Pre-emption, Porter noted, now focuses on attacking small fires before they can grow: "Over the past four years, [the government] has bought hundreds more fire trucks; ordered four more planes, known as Canadairs, to boost its existing fleet of 12; and introduced a new firefighting military regiment in the country's southwest, with 600 specialized firefighters. It has also updated its 32-year-old fire defense strategy, acknowledging that it now needs to do even more to pre-empt the fires before they start, and to redesign the landscape to make it harder for fires to spread."

Porter described how the military-level approach is directed from an old military base in Nimes: "During fire season, Thierry Carret, France's director for forest fire operations, hosts a meeting there every morning and evening with the country's top fire commanders, who call in from across the country."

"Meteorologists trained in fire prediction pore over maps that divide the country into 255 zones, assessing which are most at risk of fires that day. The regions most at risk have higher temperatures, stronger winds, and lower humidity. Once those regions are identified, planes, loaded with fire retardant, are deployed to patrol the skies over the high-risk areas. On the ground, fire captains send firefighters there too."



This page, clockwise from above left: Firefighting team; Meteorologists at Nimes HQ study maps; Inflatable tank serves as a water reservoir

Opposite page: top, Canadair plane rinses off salt water after picking up and dropping a load on a fire; bottom, Firefighters heading to a fire line.

"When firefighters cannot immediately contain a fire," she continued, "the commanders send in reinforcements on the ground, along with a second wave of planes... including Canadair planes, which can scoop eight tons of water from rivers, lakes or the Mediterranean in 12 seconds and then drop it on a fire. On big fires, the pilots work in groups, dropping water in tight formation every 15 seconds."

In 2002, the government's new forest fire strategy required physical breaks in forests and pastures, so fires will run out of fuel. Property owners had to clear vegetation within 50 meters, or 164 feet of their property. Mayors were supposed to impose fines of about \$860 for non-compliance.



But that's where the system broke down. A later New York Times investigation by Porter, Ségolène Le Stradic, and Samuel Granados of satellite imagery found four years to the month later that many residents of 23 evacuated villages did not clear vegetation near their homes because they could not afford the high annual cost and/or because they did not own the land where the brush was growing.

Nationally, more than 60 percent of French properties don't comply with the state regulations, according to Christophe Chantepy, a fire expert at the National Forests Office, citing visits that officials make to roughly 10,000 properties each year.

"There were very few actual changes made after 2022," said Arthur Guérin-Turcq, an academic at the Sorbonne University, who wrote his doctoral thesis on the aftermath of the 2022 fires and grew up in the area. "There were no new fuel breaks or land management adjustments, and very few new firebreaks were created," he said. After 2022, he added, "We basically went right back to business as usual."

UPDATE: The European Union has added to firefighting capacity facilitating loans of firefighters among EU members. Headquartered in Brussels, a 24/7 emergency response hub handles calls for backup and coordinates help. Furthermore, The New York Times reported September 9, "It is building its own fleet of firefighting helicopters and planes.



Photos these pages courtesy of Dmitry Kostyukov



Bits and Chokers

THE FUTURE OF MASS TIMBER IS CLOSER THAN WE THINK

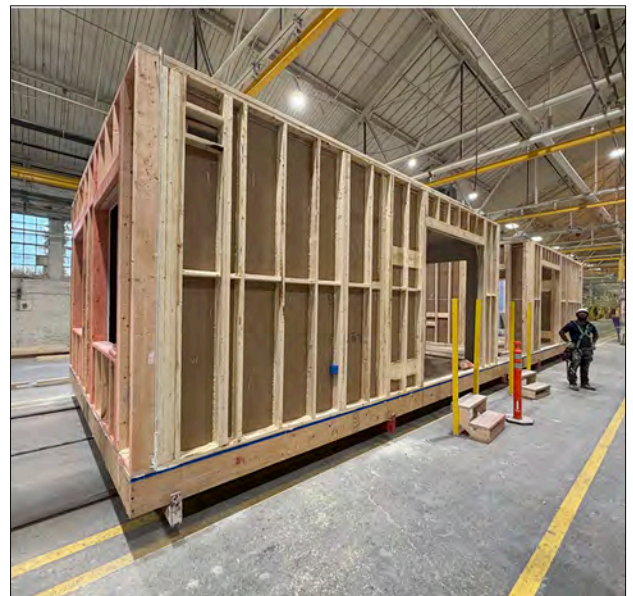


egress stairs (below left), thus creating its own design elements. Gypsum board covers zones housing building utilities.

The NEFF team also visited a manufacturer of mass timber - Volumetric Building Companies (VBC) in Berwick, Pennsylvania. VBC (bottom right) that transforms 2" wooden boards for stud framing into "rooms, kitchens, and bathrooms wrapped in weather barrier, complete with ducts, piping, insulation and finished..." Trucked to the building site, "they are then craned into place and assembled like large Lego blocks..." With 5 workers, the factory can complete one wall every 7 minutes!



Photos courtesy of New England Forestry Foundation



THE ALLURE OF SPALTED WOOD

On the face of it, spalted wood is a poor choice for instruments. Spalting occurs when a fungus grows in wood and leaves dark lines. When several different fungi invade the same wood, they compete with each other for territory. The resulting dark lines mark the boundaries of zones colonised by each strain. Different fungal strains create different kinds and levels of stainings.

If the wood is left to itself, the fungi weakens it and ultimately it decays. Yet Richard Ash, a luthier, seeks it out for use in crafting dulcimers. In fact, he writes, woodworkers are known to take freshly cut planks of wood, not yet dried, and leave them in a forest for a while, covered in moldy leaves. The right amount of spalting does not affect tone or strength but does enable a luthier to create a distinctive appearance. The pictures below show what is considered slight, i.e. "just right" spalting, and the resulting instrument.

Top: A 32" plank of spalted wood, bookmatched, with a 6" ruler laid on top for scale

Bottom: Purpleheart/padauk dulcimer with spalted hackberry top

Photos courtesy of Richard Ash, folkcraft.com





1133 Litchfield Road
Norfolk, CT
06058

CT Professional Timber Producers Association

**Look for mailings or check the
website for further details and
any changes to the Calendar of
Events.**

**Ideas for classes you would
like offered?**

**Contact TIMPRO CT:
1133 Litchfield Road
Norfolk, CT
06058**

860-948-0432

info@timproct.org

**Articles, ideas, pictures
you'd like to see?**

hallie.metzger@gmail.com

For more information:
keneyarksustainability.org

Tickets available from
Eventbrite



Get Involved

The Board of Directors is seeking members who are interested in helping out with various activities throughout the year such as CEU programming, fairs, Ag Days at the State Capitol in March, Plant Science Day in August in Hamden, programs at the Agriscience Centers and more. The Board, made up of business owners, just like yourselves, is keenly aware of the demands on your time. Any amount of time, no matter how minimal, is greatly needed.

Contact TIMPRO CT for more information:
860-948-0432 or e-mail: info@timproct.org.