

NORFOLK WOODLOT OWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

www.norfolkwoodlots.com



June 2020

President's Message

Wow! Talk about a different world! We vacillate between fear of what Covid-19 can do to our families and irritation complying with rules designed to help protect us. We all wash our hands after touching anything that could have been touched previously by another person. My exceedingly dryer skin is testament to me following that procedure. And of course, the social distance dance. But we are all learning and coping.

Board members struggled on how to publish the NWOA newsletter. We could not meet face to face, so it was basically an email discussion. The NWOA members with internet and emails were relatively easy given computers and internet. Our editor and Board Secretary, Dr. John Morrissey, could take contributions emailed by other board members, and put the newsletter together from his computer. Eric Ferguson, our website caretaker and Board Treasurer, could post the newsletter on our website, www.norfolkwoodlots.com. But the paper newsletters were a problem. It usually takes a few people gathering at a board room at the Norfolk office on Culver St. to fold and stuff newsletters into envelopes. Given the strict Covid-19 rules, at that time, we missed the mailed version of the April 2020 edition even though the electronic version was sent. With a slight relaxation of the Covid-19 rules and the use of a much larger room with desks separated 6 feet apart, we can mail out the paper version of the June 2020 newsletter plus the missed April 2020 newsletter. Enjoy!

We welcome your comments, thoughts and ideas for our newsletter, workshops and Annual Meeting. Especially on the AGM, we work hard to make it fun and informative, so your feedback is essential. Thanks. You can post them on our website www.norfolkwoodlots.com or call me at 519-426-2782 or email me at [johndewitt@kwic.com](mailto: johndewitt@kwic.com)

John de Witt

Forest Service Recommends Hugging Trees While You Can't Hug Others

The Icelandic Forestry Service is encouraging people to hug trees while social distancing measures prevent them from hugging other people, [RÚV](#) reports. Forest rangers in the Hallormsstaður National Forest in East Iceland have been diligently clearing snow-covered paths to ensure that locals can enjoy the great outdoors without coming in too close a contact with other guests, but can also get up close and personal with their forest friends.

“When you hug [a tree], you feel it first in your toes and then up your legs and into your chest and then up into your head,” enthuses forest ranger Þór Þorfinnsson. “It’s such a wonderful feeling of relaxation and then you’re ready for a new day and new challenges.”



“Viktor and a poplar” via skogur.is

In a time when close contact and embracing is discouraged for risk of COVID-19 infection, trees can offer a sense of comfort, says Þór, although he urges visitors to the national forest to take precautions not to all hug the same tree. He recommends that people walk deeper into the forest, rather than stopping at the first tree they encounter. “There are plenty of trees... it doesn’t have to be big and stout, it can be any size.”

People should take their time, Þór says, to reap the full benefits of their tree-hugging. “Five minutes is really good, if you can give yourself five minutes of your day to hug [a tree], that’s definitely enough,” he says. “You can also do it many times a day – that wouldn’t hurt. But once a day will definitely do the trick, even for just a few days.”



via skogur.is

Rangers have marked out intervals of two metres within the forest so that visitors are able to enjoy nature without fear of getting too close to one another. “It’s recommended that people get outdoors during this horrible time,” says Bergrún Anna Þórsteinsdóttir, an assistant forest ranger at Hallormsstaður. “Why not enjoy the forest and hug a tree and get some energy from this place?”

When you find the right tree, Þór has further recommendations for getting the most out of your embrace. “It’s also really nice to close your eyes while you’re hugging a tree,” he says. “I lean my cheek up against the trunk and feel the warmth and the currents flowing from the tree and into me. You can really feel it.”

Choose a living tree and check for ants and ticks before contact.

A Solid Wood Bioheat Guide for Rural and Remote Communities in Ontario

This helpful guide has been created as a primer on wood heat, and is aimed at the residential, commercial and institutional sectors. It explains, in plain language, the advantages of using wood heat, the types of wood fuel (cord wood, pellets, chips briquettes), and wood burning systems. There is excellent information for the layperson and expert alike.

The guide is the result of partnership between FPIInnovations, Natural Resources Canada, and the Government of Ontario. For the full guide, go to:

<https://cribe.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Brochure-Bioheat-Guide-6.5x9-EN-lowres.pdf>

Chip shortage looms as sawmills cut production

By: The Working Forest Staff

Supply cuts that were supposed to bolster the beleaguered lumber market are now effecting the wood chip supply required to make sought-after toilet paper and wipes during the coronavirus pandemic.

About 25 percent of Canadian sawmill capacity is shut after producers from West Fraser Timber and Canfor idled operations amid a price slump and poor outlook for spring building as the coronavirus spread.



“The slowdown has reduced the output of wood chips that pulp mills rely on to make everything from toilet paper and wipes to cardboard boxes and paper bags,” said Derek Nighbor, president and chief executive officer of the Ottawa-based Forest Products Association of Canada.

Without federal aid to get some sawmill capacity back online, input costs could rise or there could be a shortage of the materials pulp mills need for household products, he said. Panic buying has already caused shortages of

toilet paper and other hygiene products in supermarkets around the world.

“The demand from pulp mills has gone up at a time when we’re starting to see the chip supply become scarce from the sawmills,” Nighbor said in a telephone interview with *The Working Forest*. “It could drive the cost up or there could be product constraints for sure in the months ahead.”

High production costs in Canada squeezed profits for sawmills. The U.S. housing market remains under pressure as the coronavirus spreads, and lumber futures plunged a record 32 percent in March.

“U.S. housing starts are looking pretty bleak for the next couple of quarters. In the U.S. JP Morgan recently announced they are tightening lending requirements for mortgages,” adds Nighbor.

Nighbor says the industry is optimistic that Canada’s government can tweak its wage subsidy program to help forest operators qualify and bolster their access to cash to help them survive the coming quarters. Canada exports the bulk of its pulp, paper and packaging products and the U.S. is one of its major markets.

“We’re in a crisis here. We need more of our sawmills running. We are an industry that is up against some tough markets right now, but unlike a lot of other sectors, we do not need a bailout. We just need a bit of a hand up to help manage some of our cash flow in the coming months so we can move quickly into recovery,” explains Nighbor.



“The most urgent problem is cashflow and keeping companies operating, we are also working with the government on what can do when we come out the other end of this pandemic. What are the shovel-ready projects and investment opportunities at our mills across the country that we can move on? What can government do

to step up and make these investments attractive to business,” explains Nighbor.

“Once we nail down the available cash flow supports, we would like to see a robust stimulus package that we can partner with the government on to further transform the industry and drive more environmental improvements in our operations. There are lots of opportunities, but money is going to be tight for a while,” he adds. “We need to ensure our workers, whether they are working or laid off are looked after. These government support programs need to be flowing and need to be supporting those workers and their families. The next stage is to have the appropriate cash flow support to keep as many mills operating as we can and as many people working as possible.”

COVID-19 has not stopped global trade of forest products

By: The Working Forest Staff

WRI Market Insights — The Coronavirus Epidemic has negatively impacted the supply chains for numerous industry sectors worldwide the past few months.

Many commodity products saw reduced trade during March and April, a result of reduced demand, closures of manufacturing facilities to protect workers, constraint in the handling the capacity of goods at many ports, and widespread financial distress. However, one sector that has remained fairly strong during the initial period of the epidemic is the forest products industry.

Demand for toilet paper, face masks, disinfecting wipes, corrugated paper for cardboard boxes, and wood products for home renovations are just a few forest products that have been in unusually high demand in many countries during this spring. A closer look at the March 2020 trade data, the first “Coronavirus month,” reveals that global trade of lumber, logs, wood chips and pulp increased in March as compared to the previous month.

The following snapshot illustrates a few interesting examples from the WRQ of positive developments in the forest industry sector from February to March this year:

- **Softwood Logs** – China increased imports by 14% m-o-m, with most of the added logs originating from New Zealand, Germany and Russia. Log imports to SouthKorea rose 19%, while Australia and Canada shipped about 70% more logs in March than in the previous month.
- **Softwood Lumber** – Lumber shipments from New Zealand and Canada were up 32% and 25% m-o-m, respectively. Lumber importation was up in most of the major markets in March, including China (+59% m-o-m), the US (+27%), the United Kingdom (+13%), and Japan (+10%).
- **Wood Pulp** – Three of the four largest pulp-exporting countries, Brazil, the US and Chile, increased its shipments between 12% and 26% in March (m-o-m). The five top importing countries all purchased more pulp in March than in February, with China and South Korea increasing their volumes the most (40% and 29% respectively).
- **Hardwood Chips** – China, Portugal, and South Korea imported more chips for their pulp industry in March than in the previous month. Most of the major chip exporting countries, including Australia, Thailand, South Africa, and Brazil shipped more chips in March than in February.

In the coming months, numerous countries around the world are planning to ease lockdown policies and loosen the rules that are restricting house constructions, international commerce and consumer shopping. These changes may further benefit many companies in the forest industry sector. However, expect a rough road ahead.

Members can renew their membership, online, using the NWOA website www.norfolkwoodlots.com and pay online with PayPal. Go to the website and then to **Members Area**, then to **Member Renewal**. You may also print the membership application form and renew by mail. Members who renew early would be eligible for the AGM prize draws.
