

Timber Measurement Society
Central Committee, Fall Meeting

MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL MEETING OF THE TIMBER MEASUREMENT SOCIETY
OCTOBER 18-19, 2006, MEDFORD, OREGON

October 18

The meeting was called to order sharply at 8:30 AM by Chairman, Jerry Youmans, with 44 people in attendance. Given that the market for logs and lumber is the worst it has been since 1964, the turnout was better than expected. The following minutes will be somewhat brief as the PowerPoint presentations given by many of the speakers will be available on the TMS website:

http://roundwood-measure.com/TMS/medford_2006/medford_2006.html



Tribal scaling program update - Thelma Alsup (BIA Regional log scaling coordinator/check scaler, Warm Springs, Oregon)



Thelma gave us a report on her work at getting consistent tribal scaling guidelines and certifying scalers and check scalers. She works with various tribes in the Northwest on the above and organizes roll-outs and training. She is also responsible for check scaling tribal wood. She coordinates scaling with government agencies and the private sector. Besides policy and scaling budgets for the tribes, she also works at making sure that the scalers are equipped with handheld data recorders and the appropriate software. Thelma represents nine tribes. In the future, she will be looking at standard taper ratios on a tribe by tribe basis and is planning on setting up taper studies to accomplish this.

Log data processing system - Bill McFarling (Black Hills Log System Supervisor, Pope and Talbot, Spearfish, South Dakota)



Bill demoed their log data processing system. The system manages truck weigh-in including a sample tare weight system (whereby it randomly selects tare weights at a desired frequency) and has many safeguards to insure that weight is not accidentally or purposely manipulated. The system also error-checks and gives an audit trail. It also selects sample scale loads and quality check loads at any desired frequency. The system verbally tells the truck driver where to unload the logs based on log sort and if from an agency. The system stores all individual log data and all load data. It has an excellent load/log querying system whereby one can get almost any information quickly and simply. The system manages all log data and QC information, tabulates the log yard inventory, and calculates payments to all contractors and landowners. The system is marketed by Round2 Consulting out of Boise Idaho.

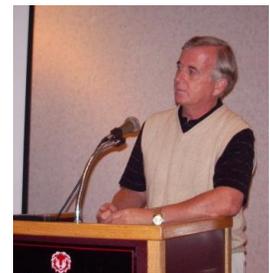
Cubic log scale: defunct or still worthwhile – Rich Ernst (Forester, USFS Forest Management Service Center in Fort Collins Colorado)



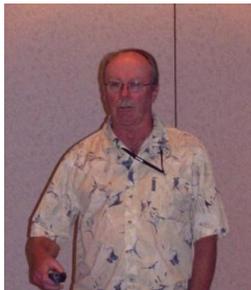
Rich stated that the US government stance for federally owned timber, is that they are still on cubic and have no plans on deviating from that. There are a few caveats to this, in that Alaska and salvage sales are allowed to continue with Scribner. Their focus is on tree measure rather than scaling, and the new focus is on weight based sales. He stated that the official position is to not go back to board foot measure and that the USFS is committed to measuring timber volume in cubic units.

Biomass and Stewardship sales – Blair Moody (Forester, BLM, Ashland Resource area)

Stewardship contracts allow the exchange of wood fiber for services rendered. Stewardship sales are not intended to replace the normal timber sales program. These sales still have to live up to the management standards such as NEPA, EIS, etc. The main focus is forest health and to mitigate fire hazard by removing small commercial and noncommercial trees, but can also cover noxious weeds, campground maintenance, etc. They collaborate with rural communities, businesses and other agencies. Biomass is also a strong focus, as these trees tend to be small and government policy is moving toward this direction given energy goals and demand. Much of the aims of this program come from the “Healthy Forest Initiative” and “Green Energy”. In 2005 they offered 71,000 tons of biomass (10,000 in Oregon and Washington). In 2006 there will be approximately 200,000 tons of biomass offered.



New method of cruising biomass – Dave Johns (Check Cruiser, USFS, R5: a new method of cruising biomass)



Dave developed a method using orthoquads (satellite images that are digitally corrected) to estimate cubic foot volume per acre. The system uses 3-P and a density index (which was developed by Rich Ernst). Basically one estimates biomass volume from aerial photos and the estimate is corrected by sample cruising on the ground. They have found this system to be accurate, easily applied, and lower cost method of obtaining volume.

Weight scale – Frank Cooper (Measurements Specialist, BLM, Eugene, Oregon)

The BLM does not sell sawlogs via weight, however, they do use weight-sample scale, and weight for biomass sales. Frank has found that weight is being manipulated via leaving the logs on the ground on biomass sales, which are sold on weight, and thus has reservations regarding the usefulness of it for selling BLM wood where the purchaser has flexibility to leave wood on the ground (especially for sawlog sales). Frank presented some information which showed that wood can lose more than 30% of its weight simply by letting it dry out.



Scribner log rules committee update – Frank Duran (in place of Camille Smith who was unable to attend, USFS Regional Measurements Specialist, Portland Oregon)



Many of the Scribner log rules were updated via the work done by the Cubic Log Rules Committee research. Rules affecting oversize knot deductions, twist, pecky rot, pistol butt, forks, etc. These rule changes were done to give updated guidelines for any logs scaled via Scribner. The changes are effective immediately and will appear in the next variation of the USFS board foot handbook.

State of the art timber cruising, a.k.a. vertical scaling – Jon Aschenbach (Vice President of Sales, Atterbury Consultants, Portland Oregon)

Jon covered the current standard procedures and algorithms utilized in cruising. Jon demonstrated the new style reloscope, which works very well even in dark, low light stands. John covered the important areas of focus for cruisers including variables such as form class and bark thickness. He recommended that cruisers spend time with scalers to learn about how they handle defect deductions.



Taper ratios – panel discussion

The issue of outdated butt-cut taper ratios (standard taper) which are used in some regions were discussed as well as the fact that USFS taper ratios are set at a regional level via regional supplements. Some timber purchasers have developed proprietary taper ratios based on surveying taper ratios. This issue seems to be most critical on the east-side of region 6, but has impacted all regions as a result of the transition to more second-growth timber and private timber (which tends to grow in lower site class areas) rather than government sales. It was mentioned that there needs to be more work done on developing accurate taper ratios, but aside from region 5 (California), the state of Idaho, the Black Hills region, and some private companies, there has been little work done on developing accurate taper ratios for butt-cut logs. In addition, with the USFS being only a small player, it is not clear who can carry the ball on standardization.

Weyerhaeuser scaling profile: how they handle log measurement – Mike Hayes (Scaling Manager, Weyerhaeuser, Longview, Washington)



Mike has 30 plus years experience measuring timber in the Northwest. He went over the changes he has seen at Weyerhaeuser over his career, including the change to almost all mechanized logging. Weyerhaeuser uses both Scribner and cubic. Their scalers undergo an extensive scaling training program, which typically takes from 3-5 years. They ship many logs to Asian customers and some of the ships will haul 9.7 million board feet. Their success in developing a strong customer base for their logs is a result of their high expectations on log manufacturing quality, highly trained workers, and excellent feedback mechanisms to insure that everybody is aware of their performance.

The drivers of product recovery – Matt Fonseca (Manager of log utilization and lumber quality control, Plum Creek Timber Company, Columbia Falls, Montana)

Matt covered the variables that drive recovery of particular products. He showed how recovery of lumber, plywood, and residual products (chips, sawdust, shavings, bark) will vary given the type of mill (stud, dimension, board, or hardwood, plywood.), the efficiency of the mill, specie, and given the particulars of log characteristics (diameter, length, taper, etc). He also covered how the unit of measure affects or even distorts product recovery.



Business Meeting

The membership took nominations and decided that next year's meeting will be held in Longview, Washington on October 17-18, 2007.

Jerry Youmans (TMS Central Committee Chairman) brought up the issue of inactive chapters, namely the Cascade and Calvada districts. Dave Johns of the Calvada district said that he will try to reactivate the Calvada district, but nobody stepped forward regarding the Cascade district. It was noted that the Intermountain chapter (Rocky Mountain/Black Hills and east of the Cascade Mountains in Oregon and Washington) was still active and with good attendance.

There was a request to move the Central Meeting to the Spring rather than having it in the Fall, however, the membership was more in favor of keeping it in the fall.

Scaling Instructions of the next day's log rollout – Jeff Hedlund (Scaling Supervisor, Boise Building, White City, Oregon).

Jeff gave the scaling specifications, safety equipment needed, and directions from the hotel to the Boise Building mill in White City.

The first day's meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM with a social dinner following at a local pizza place whereby the membership partook in pizza, beverage and many stories.

October 19

The second day was called to order in the log yard of Boise Building. Fifty-four hand picked and highly defective logs were laid out for scaling in three disciplines (Scribner long-log, Scribner short-log, and cubic). The membership scaled the logs and a "school book" answer was ascertained, in all three of the disciplines, via reviewing the logs (scalers had the option to scale the logs in one, two, or all three of the methods). The "school book" answer was: Scribner long-log, gross BF, 29,750; net BF, 16,260. Scribner short-log, gross BF, 34,890; net BF, 21,470. Cubic, gross CF, 4,851.2; net CF, 3,073.1. The scalers with the closest volume in each of the three disciplines were:

Scribner long-log – Al Blankenship: gross BF, **29,940**; net BF, **16,380**

Scribner short-log – Frank Cooper: gross BF, **34,870**; net BF, **21,820**.

Cubic – Matt Fonseca: gross CF, **4,810.0**; net CF, **3020.2**.

Congratulations to Al and Frank, as well as the rest of you that scaled these logs; they were handpicked based on the fact that they had many difficult to spot and/or quantify defects (not typical logs that we contend with daily).

Thanks to all those who gave a presentation and assisted in putting on this successful meeting. Special thanks goes out to Bill McFarling (our computer manager) Jeff Hedlund (who hosted the rollout), Ernie Bauer and Mike Hayes who contributed photos. See you next year in Longview (October 16-17), or at the Intermountain meeting this coming April in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho (probably April 5-6, but TBD). The following page includes a list of attendees and more photos from the meeting.



Chairman, Jerry Youmans; Secretary/Treasurer, Thelma Alsup; Vice-Chairman, Matt Fonseca

List of attendees at the Timber Measurement Society Meeting in Medford Oregon, October 18-19, 2006

Clarence Adams, USFS, Roseburg, OR
Thelma Alsup, BIA, Warm Springs, OR
Jon Aschenbach, Atterbury Consulting, Beaverton , OR
Ernie Bauer, Idaho Board of Scaling Practices, Lewiston, ID
Gary Baylous, Pacific Rim Scaling Bureau, Lacey, WA
Al Blankenship, Northwest Log Scalers, Cove, OR
Bill Bryant, BLM, Klamath Falls, OR
Denis Callagher, USFS, Ketchikan, AK
Rollie Carrick, Northern California Log Scaling Bureau, Fortuna, CA
Frank Cooper, BLM, Bend, OR
David Dean, Electronic Data Solutions, Jerome, ID
Ken Dinsmore, USFS, Sitka, AK
Frank Duran, USFS, Portland, OR
Rich Ernst, USFS, Fort Collins, CO
Matt Fonseca, Plum Creek Timber Company, Whitefish, MT
Steve Hagen, BLM, Salem , OR
Mike Hallinan, BLM, Eugene, OR
Mike Hayes, Weyerhaeuser, Longview, WA
Jeff Hedlund, Boise Building, Dallas, OR
Frank Jarmello, Northwest Log Scalers, Portland, OR
Dave Johns, USFS, Quincy, CA
Karen Jones, USDA, Yreka, CA
Kathy Kirkham, BLM, Klamath Falls, OR
John Kreachbaum, USFS, Prineville, OR
Larry Larson, BLM, Eugene, OR
Bill McFarling, Pope & Talbot, Spearfish, SD
Blair Moody, BLM, Medford, OR
Dennis Moore, Northwest Log Scalers, Portland, OR
Randy Queen, Yamhill Log Scaling Bureau, Oldtown, ID
Phil Rousseau, Simpson Timber Company, Shelton, WA
Greg Scheid, BLM, Eugene, OR
Regina Seastrom, BIA, Inchelium, WA
Pat Serna, USFS, Anderson, CA
Georgia Simpson, BIA, Inchelium, WA
Mark Terhune, BLM, Eugene, OR
Kevin Tracy, Boise Building, LaGrand, OR
Pete Van Sickle, Idaho Department of Lands, Coeur d' Alene, ID
Chad Vetter, BLM, Medford , OR
Carter Walton, Pacific Log Scalers, Portland, OR
Chris Westwood, Washington DOR, Puyallup, WA
John Wilder, BLM, Eugene, OR
Richard Wilfong, Hampton Tree Farms Inc, Salem , OR
David Wilson, BLM, Medford , OR
Jerry Youmans, Potlatch, Lewiston, ID



The meeting is just about to get underway. Bill McFarling is manning the laptop and Jerry is trying to get folks away from the coffee and into their seats.



David Dean and Matt Fonseca (David is becoming a pretty good scaler for a helicopter pilot and software developer).



Thelma Alsup, our Secretary Treasurer giving her presentation on tribal scaling.



Frank Cooper, winner of the closest "east-side Scribner, and the most stylish hard-hat.



Our Chairman, Jerry Youmans, enjoying the warm weather and the only defect free log in the roll-out.



Everybody had a great time scaling and probably saw more twist and oversize-knot deductions in one day, than we normally see in a month.

