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American Loggers Council Members Meet in Washington, DC

Loggers take their issues to the Hill

March 23, 2015 – Hemphill, TX - On March 19-21, members of the American Loggers Council met in Washington, DC with coordinated efforts to present issues important to the timber harvesting industry to lawmakers up on Capitol Hill. Over 60 members were in attendance, including representatives from Caterpillar Forest Products, John Deere, Forestry Mutual Insurance and the Southern Loggers Cooperative.

Over 100 hill visits included discussion on major issues such as Youth Careers in Logging, Truck Weight reform, comprehensive forest service timber management reform, and wildland fire suppression funding on federal lands.

On Thursday morning, ALC members were briefed on these four issues by ALC staff and heard a presentation from Frank Gladics pertaining to possible reform of the USFS Small Business Administration (SBA) set aside program for timber sales.



Thursday visits included a face-to-face with Senator John McCain (R-AZ) to discuss the merits of his Flame Act Amendment that has been introduced in the Senate that would help to eliminate the practice of “fire-borrowing” by the US Forest Service which takes dollars from other

budget line items to cover catastrophic fire events and does not leave the Forest

Service the dollars that they need to perform land management activities that would help to alleviate the occurrence of catastrophic fire events.

Other issues that were brought to the attention of the policymakers include the reintroduction of the 'Right to Haul Act' which would allow state legal weight tolerances to travel on the Federal Interstate Highway System, and garnering support for the Youth Careers in Logging Act which has now been reintroduced in both the House and Senate as HR. 1215 and S.694 respectively.

Following all day Thursday and Friday morning visits to the Hill, members gathered at a Friday afternoon briefing session where presentations were made from Congressman Tom McClintock (R-CA) who Chairs the all-important House Resources Committee Subcommittee on Public lands and the Environment. Members also hear



from Bryan Rice, the Director of Land Management for the U S Forest Service, and Bill Imbergamo, Director of the Federal Forest Resource Coalition. Both Caitlin Rayman, Director of the Office of Freight Management and Operations with the Federal Highway Weight Administration and Luke Loy, Senior Engineer for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Vehicle and Roadside Operations Division were on hand to discuss the latest in CSA issues as well as the release of the long-awaited comprehensive truck size and weight study that should be released later this Spring. The discussions were rounded out with Candace Schnoor from John Deere giving some insight into the economic outlook for the forestry sector in coming years, and Kevin Thieneman, President of Caterpillar laying out a challenge to the ALC to work with partners to improve the image and ability to attract and retain new workers into the timber harvesting industry.

On Saturday morning, the ALC Board of Directors held their spring meeting where committee reports were given and strategies were discussed to pursue further action on all legislative priorities.

ALC President Myles Anderson remarked that “this is probably the best fly-in that I have attended yet. Every year, our members return to the Hill better prepared to discuss the priorities, and more organized than the previous years.” ALC Legislative Committee Chair Jim Geisinger also commented on the progress of the group and the recognition that the American Loggers Council now receives as an important resource for those members on the Hill who need to be educated on the issues and needs that are impacting the timber harvesting industry.

About American Loggers Council

The American Loggers Council is a non-profit 501(c)(6) organization representing timber harvesting professionals in 30 states. For more information contact the American Loggers Council office at 409-625-0206 or visit their website at www.americanloggers.org.

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