

# WSFPI construction program nearing midway point

Brand new machinery lies in waiting around the mill, poised for installation in the surrounding plants. With a minimum of fanfare, WSFPI is carrying out its \$5.5 million renovation, replacing old, worn equipment and streamlining manufacturing systems.

The most visible change has been the erection of a new plywood plant at the Warm Springs site, utilizing some equipment from the existing Madras plant and adding an automatic lay-up line. Many of the other improvements are not immediately apparent but should result in substantial savings by cutting manufacturing waste.

WSFPI manager Ralph DeMoisy reports that of the 34 items budgeted for renovation, 14 are complete. Most phases of the operation, from log handling to veneer peeling, are undergoing modernization with hardly a skip in the production beat. The usual June or July shutdowns are scheduled for two consecutive weeks at the end of August, when a good part of the remaining construction will take place, said DeMoisy.

But a number of changes have already been made, he reported. Out in the log yard one new sorting shovel is doing the work of two LeTourneaus and one decking shovel. A water truck and road grader

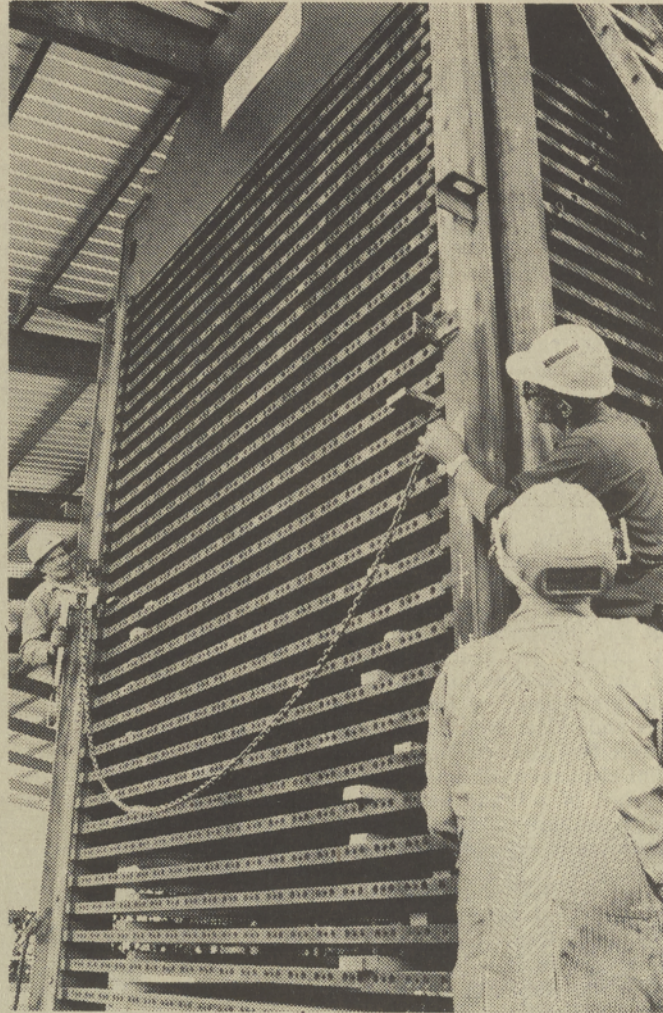
have been added to the forest operations.

Engineering in the sawmill is 75% complete and construction 10%. All the major equipment has arrived, including a new carriage, head rig and edger. One structural change will be the opening up of the building to eliminate the bottleneck at the trimmer. Another change will be the installation of a hand-pull green chain in the sawmill to replace the edge sorter, which has been responsible for lumber breakage.

In the aged stud mill, renovation is 85% complete: New saw systems have been installed to increase lumber recovery. Yet to be installed is a remanufacturing edger that will cut 2" x 3" and 1" x 4" pieces in addition to the 2" x 4" studs now being produced.

WSFPI was selling cores through the winter, said DeMoisy, because marketing them was more economical than processing them for studs. Now the lathe in the veneer plant has been modernized to peel cores to 5/4" instead of the current 7".

The transfer of the plywood plant from Madras to Warm Springs, about 50% complete, is being accomplished without an interruption in production, DeMoisy explained. While one of the hot presses is being installed in the new building,



the other press in Madras is being operated around the clock. When the Warm Springs press is operational, the second press will be moved down.

Plywood production should be streamlined with the new automatic lay-up line, which awaits only electrical wiring. The line will sandwich veneer and apply glue automatically, speeding production and requiring fewer people. DeMoisy noted that workers are not being laid off as a result of the renovations, but rather that some positions will not be re-filled when they are vacated.

By the first of August the plywood plant should be ready for "shake-down," said DeMoisy, a start-up period designed to rid the new system of bugs.

WSFPI's major renovation was launched as a result of a nine-month study of mill operations conducted by consultants last year. The study recommended that existing systems be updated before expansion is considered.

*Construction workers aligned the 2500-pound plates on one of two presses being moved to Warm Springs from the WSFPI plywood plant in Madras. The new plywood plant should be operational by the first of August for "shake-down."*

Spilyay Tymoo Photo by CDS

## Smith president Timber council will provide forum for tribes

Timbered tribes from Maine to Alaska now have an official association to represent their interests and Warm Springs is playing a key role. The Intertribal Timber Council was born June 28 in Seattle when thirteen tribes agreed on proposed articles of organization and elected a nine-member executive board.

Ken Smith, Warm Springs general manager, was chosen to be the first president of the timber council. Smith was instrumental in the council's formation and during the past two years has encouraged timbered tribes to gather and share their concerns.

### Encouraging Communication

Among the council's ongoing activities will be to carry on the established tradition of an annual timber symposium. Previous symposia have brought together tribal, government and private interests to pool their expertise and explore solutions to timber management problems.

Other functions of the timber council will be to monitor legislation affecting Indian timber, advise and work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in developing the full potential of tribal forest resources, assist tribes in the establishment of timber enterprises, and encourage the training and development of Indian foresters.

The timber council may eventually become a lobby group for timbered tribes, said Smith. Also being considered are a newsletter to keep members informed and a

staffed office to handle council business.

But for now, Smith and his board will volunteer their time, doing what they can to facilitate communication among member tribes. "It's time well spent," said Smith, "because we don't spend enough time on this important resource."

One of the board's initial concerns will be the location of funding. The council's only income derives from membership dues (\$100 per year for each member) and the funds supplied by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the annual symposium. Smith indicated that the board planned to approach the Economic Development Administration as a potential source.

### Dollars and Conservation

"We're dealing with a resource that should be generating more dollars," said Smith. Many tribes feel that the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been conservative in its harvest allowances, failing to maximize the resource while it slowly loses its value. But the timbered tribes are also committed to conserving the resource.

In the preamble to the timber council's articles of organization, the tribes' concerns are clearly stated. Calling the forest resources "vital to the economic and social welfare of many Indian nations and Alaska Native Corporations," the preamble goes on to say, "The management of these

valuable and renewable natural resources not only provides income and employment opportunities for our people, but also affects our lives in many other ways. The harmony of man, trees and other vegetation, soil, water and wildlife which collectively comprise the forest community influence our very emotional and spiritual well-being.

"The Intertribal Timber Council is hereby established to pursue and promote the conservation and development of our timber resources for the benefit of our people."

Smith sees the council as an advisory body to timbered tribes. "We can't tell them what to do," he said, "but we can show them what's possible." Tribes are "more involved in setting policy and making decisions," observed Smith,

but he would like to see that involvement increase at all levels.

Timber council president Smith is joined by vice president Keith Little (Navajo), secretary Tom Loder (Coeur d'Alene) and treasurer Gary Morishima (Quinault). Other board members elected to staggered terms of one and two years are: Jerry Lucas (Makah), Andy Jack (Colville), Lawrence Latham (Hoopa), Gene Bell (Flathead), and Danny Gutierrez (Santa Clara Pueblo).

The remaining charter members include Spokane, Metlakatla Indian Community of Alaska, and the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy of Maine.

Membership is extended to "any Indian tribe or Native Alaska Corporation with a

demonstrable interest in the management of Indian timber resources," as stated in the articles of organization. Non-voting associate membership is also available to anyone "supporting the purposes of the Intertribal Timber Council."

Among the first associate members are Weyerhaeuser and Navajo Forest Products Industries.

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