

MONTANA LOGGING ASSOCIATION

'25 Year in Review

MLA Mission

To elevate the professional status of Montana timber harvesters, support their work, and ensure our state's renewable forests continue to provide opportunities for future generations.

MLA Leadership

Executive Committee

Kevin Kanduch – President
Shawn Heyer – Vice President
Ben Smith – Secretary/Treasurer
Karl Kanduch – Imm Past President
Regional Area Representatives:
Doug Yeager – Northwest
Kevin Donally – Southwest
Brad Bodle – Headwaters

MLA Staff

Coleen Michael – Admin Director
Erica Potts – Insurance Account Manager
Regional Representatives:
Justin Doble - Southwest
Tim McEntire - Northwest
Jason Todhunter – Headwaters

MLA Board of Directors Full List -- <https://www.logging.org/board-of-directors>

Celebrating 50 years
July 1976- July 2026 

Strategic Plan Overview

The Montana Logging Association's five-year strategic plan outlines four key goals guiding our staff and board of directors.

1 Deliver High-Value Services to MLA Members

The MLA continues to provide industry-specific services that promote professional development, safety, and insurance access.

- Three regional representative conducted on-site safety visits for participants in Montana State Fund Trade Group and Associated Loggers Exchange programs travelling over 73,690 miles to support member safety and outreach.
- Jason participated in monthly OSHA conference calls as part of our industry alliance, focusing on health and safety priorities and areas of special emphasis. That information is then directly conveyed to MLA Members that could be impacted.
- Regional representatives hosted 26 in-person First Aid/CPR & Wildland Fire workshops using updated training videos and interactive CPR manikins. Workshops are held in regions around the state to be accessible to MLA members. Each year our training program is updated with new content.
- Justin and Tim met with Idaho Safety consultants in Coeur d'Alene to keep a good working relationship with other logging Safety Consultants discussing industry trends in accidents and claims.
- Jason, Justin and Tim participated in the Montana State Fund Safety Forum in Helena meeting with safety consultants from other industries.
- Justin facilitated the Forest Stewardship Workshop for Loggers in Kalispell and offered 8 different workshops for continuing education. The Accredited Logging Professional Program continues to set the standard for logger training in the US offering business workshops.
- MLA Services represents nearly 200 work comp policies for our members between the Associated Loggers Exchange and Montana State Fund. MSI offers competitive workers' compensation insurance programs to MLA members.
- Provide health insurance options—including individual, group, Medicare, and ancillary products—through BlueCross BlueShield of MT, Mountain Health Co-op, and Pacific Source.

2 Advocate for Montana Timber Harvesters

We serve as a visible and effective voice in policy and legislative matters.

- During the 2025 Legislative Session, MLA lobbyist, Jason Todhunter actively worked on 24 bills and monitored over 50 additional bills related to natural resources, transportation, taxation, and work comp.
- Jason Todhunter engaged MLA members to participate in legislative committee meetings and provide valuable input.
- Collaborated with strategic partners to promote and protect the industry:
 - ✓ American Loggers Council <https://americanloggerscouncil.com/> <https://www.facebook.com/americanloggerscouncil>
 - ✓ American Forest Resource Council <https://amforest.org/> <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanForestResourceCouncil/>
 - ✓ Federal Forest Resource Council <https://fedforestcoalition.org/>
 - ✓ Montana Wood Products Association <https://www.montanaforests.com/>
 - ✓ Montana Trucking Association <https://www.mttrucking.org/>
 - ✓ Montana Taxpayers Association <https://montax.org/>
 - ✓ Treasure State Resources Coalition <https://treasurestateresources.net/>



- Regional representatives and MLA leaders participated in Treasure State Resources Legislative Showcase Jan 2025 meeting state legislatures from across the state and industries.
- Attended contractor meetings for Sun Mountain Lumber and Weyerhaeuser.
- Attended the USFS Contracting Officer and Timber Purchaser's Meeting
- Tim McEntire is participating in the working group for Region One Appraisals
- Met with congressional staff from Senator's Steve Daines, and Tim Sheehy's offices, and Congressman Troy Downing and Ryan Zinke several times throughout the year.
- Maintained active board representation with the ALERT Foundation, AFRC, ILC, MWPA Foundation, NW MT HooHoo, and the American Loggers Council (represented by Past President Ken Swanstrom)
- Participated in AFRC's Region One monitoring meetings with the Flathead, Kootenai, Lolo, Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Helena-Lewis & Clark, and Custer-Gallatin National Forests
- Submitted comments on various state and federal issues including the Montana Sportsman Conservation Act, Biden's Old Growth and Mature amendment, Interim 4(d) rule for the Contiguous US, DPS of the North America Wolverine, recovery Plan for the Canada Lynx, DNRC's project at Spencer Mountain and Beaver Lakes and Rescinding of the Roadless Rule
- Helped to coordinate the 2024 Montana State Capitol Christmas Tree
- Interviewed by several news media including the KTVQ News, the Flathead Beacon, Daily Interlake, Hungry Horse News and Kootenai Valley Record on relevant industry issues.



3 Promote Forestry's Future Through Education & Public Engagement

We're committed to strengthening the profession's public image and expanding educational opportunities.

- Managed the @MontanaLogging Instagram account to highlight the benefits of active forest management
- Sponsored and participate in REAL Montana, a two-year leadership program focused on agriculture and natural resources
- Promoted Montana Forest Products Week, including assisting with student tours of logging operations and mills
- Presented at Hellgate High School in Missoula with Beth Dodson providing students an opportunity to run the MLA's logging equipment simulator
- Engaged with students at the FFA Ag Expo and Career Fair, and supported Three Forks FFA's forestry program
- Presented to the University of Montana Forestry Program on legislative topics
- Sponsored a booth at Intermountain Logging Conference promoting the Montana Logging Association programs and engaging with members.
- Presented at the Foresters Forum annual conference for natural resource professionals
- Participate in the Montana Forest Council developing educational programs for logging contractors, their employees and landowners
- Provided a presentation to the HICHAS Research days safety forum on how the MLA has utilized grant funding the past few years to improve safety programs that the MLA provides.
- Published 6 bi-monthly "Timber Roots" articles in *Montana Logger*, featuring MLA members statewide
- Maintained active Facebook page @MontanaLoggingAssociation
- Coordinated a booth at the Montana State Fair in Great Falls to promote the MLA and the industry



Strengthen MLA's Internal Health & Sustainability

We continue to build a resilient and responsive organization.

- Operated under a regional format with three regional representatives and an administrative director for improved member contact
- Communicated regularly through on-site safety visits, weekly emails, our website, Facebook, and a bi-monthly newsletter
- Continue to promote the benefits of supporting the association and recruiting new members while retaining existing members
- Maintained safety services contracts with Montana State Fund and Associated Loggers Exchange
- Held Executive Committee and MSI Finance Committee meetings, in accordance with MLA By-Laws to monitor the state of the association's membership and finances.
- Held three board of director's meetings conducting business of the association and providing educational and networking opportunities.
- Conducted the MLA's 49th Annual Membership Meeting in May with the inauguration of President Kevin Kanduch for his two-year term.
- Continue to be a supporter of Log A Load for Kids and Shodair Children's Hospital



Stay Connected

- **Facebook:** @MontanaLoggingAssociation
- **Instagram:** @MontanaLogging
- **Email:** mla@logging.org
- **Phone:** 406-752-3168
- **Website:** www.logging.org

