

Eldon "Tope" Knauf

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Wales, Wisconsin: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yPsGv2w0Ao>

Active Forest Management Needs Improved Rural Manufacturing Options

I would like to point out that timberland management necessitates the conversion to a product. If I was to give you each an acre of forest -- standing on your acre are merchantable trees that are measured to be 20,000 board feet -- [and] you have a medical emergency needing \$2,000. In this case, if you were offered a hundred dollars per 1,000 for your trees by a sawmill, you'd probably take it.

If that sawmill was not there, what is the value of your trees? Today's competitive world takes more than one sawmill. It takes a manufacturing group to have successful forest management. The primary function would be to produce lumber. You would need a placement for your byproducts, chips and shavings, produced in the production of lumber. Historically, that has been a pulp mill, a particle board plant, medium-density fiberboard plant, which used your byproducts.

A current example that has just occurred in Missoula, Montana. In the area around Missoula there was once a pulp mill, a particle board plant, and sawmills. Without these facilities there is a large volume of timber that now has potentially a negative value, becoming a liability. Both private, tribal, and public timber -- which could be worth billions of dollars located north of Missoula to the Canadian border west to Bonners Ferry, Idaho -- [but] there is no ability to convert to products of the timber in that area.

Another thing, due to closure of sawmills over the past approximately two years, three to four billion board feet of lumber production has been eliminated. This will increase the cost of homes and prevent the usual use of catastrophic impacts. We can't use the fires that takes place on the forest and ultimately reduces the value of standing timber.

As a nation we have lost jobs, skills, and communities who were involved in forest management through their efforts. We no longer manage our forest land. Our only tool available is fire, which we, as human beings, have little or no control of.

Thank you.

My name is Eldon R. Knauf. My nickname is "Tope" -- T-O-P-E -- and I have

been involved in the forest industry all my life. There may be a question as to my qualifications. Private foresters have little exposure and don't publish.

My first breath of life was air from the Camas [Washington] pulp mill. I was born two blocks north and my family was employed within that complex. My father spent 40 years employed in that company and successor companies, raising to the position of President of Crown Zellerbach Export Corporation.

Uncles and cousins involved in logging and forestry on the Colville Indian Reservation furthered my interest in the logging industry and forestry. Thus, my interest and my career in forestry and forest products manufacturing.

I received a degree in Biological Forestry from the University of California in 1956. In 1965 I became manager of a sawmill manufacturing housing studs in Willits, California. This led to employment in two Fortune 500 companies, Georgia-Pacific and the spinoff company Louisiana-Pacific -- with forest products experience through the west, which included timberland acreage, sawmills, pulp mills, and at one time my staff at one location included 61 foresters.

I'm presently living in Wisconsin amongst the hardwoods, having trouble in diagnosing what happened in these closed canopy hardwoods. Recognition of the necessity of manufacturing which creates a value for a standing tree was developed through appraisal and acquisition of sawmills throughout the west.