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Quarterly Newsletter from Source Verified GoodWood® - January - March 2024

# The Quarter Round

## New Member Spotlight

We welcome two new members who embody New Mexico's traditional and modern craftsmanship at the highest level. Additional information and photos are available on their websites and ours!

### Meet the Producers

#### Pfeifer Studios

[customercare@pfeiferstudio.com](mailto:customercare@pfeiferstudio.com)

1-866-804-1909

**Pfeifer Studios** designs and builds breathtaking furniture in Bernalillo, New Mexico. They design and create furniture with a passion for exceptional materials and craftsmanship.

Pfeifer Studios features a line of **sustainable furniture** crafted from *Source Verified Good Wood* harvested in the Jemez Mountains and as well as Urban Wood designs crafted from non-native elm trees harvested to protect and preserve the Rio Grande bosque.

#### Wholesale Timber and Viga, LLC

300 Calle Industrial  
Bernalillo, NM 87004  
(505) 867-1200

**Wholesale Timber and Viga** produces stunning products harvested from New Mexico's forests including heavy timber and viga trusses, rough-cut lumber sawn to order, viga and latillas, carved doors and corbels.

Their in-house artists, including carvers, carpenters, and blacksmiths, can design and build amazing, one-of-a-kind entries and other features for your home.

## *Source Verified Good Wood® - An opportunity to put your name on what you believe.*

Through forest verification and chain-of-custody the Source Verified GoodWood® program gives its members a chance to put their name on something they believe in. We are a collaborative membership community of open-minded leaders who are committed to the stewardship of our forests, communities, and local economies.

*GoodWood®* membership is open to anyone who shares this commitment! Unlike other certification programs that are complicated, lengthy, and expensive we are a source-verified branding initiative that is accessible and affordable. We are also the only program that verifies wood from National Forest System lands.

As a **member**, you gain visibility for supporting our forests and communities. As a **consumer**, you support healthier forests and mindful businesses with each purchase. Together, we create a committed community helping to find harmony between forests and commerce. To become a member or find out more about *Source Verified Good Wood* and products, please visit our website: [www.goodwoodverified.com](http://www.goodwoodverified.com).

## *A note from Rachel*



Spring in New Mexico – cold, hot, snow, drought, windy, or rainy? The answer is...YES! There is a saying out of North Dakota, “*Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a snow full of slush.*” I think that sums it up!

I also feel a little spring in my step due to all the great things happening in the *GoodWood* program. I have been working with more of our amazing producers here in New Mexico. We are pleased to welcome two new members, **Pfeifer Studio** and **Wholesale Timber and Viga**! Both these businesses are in Bernalillo, New Mexico, employing local artisans to design and craft wood products from our local forests.

We are also gaining momentum on our effort to initiate an in-state lumber grading program to support New Mexico's small lumber mills. On the horizon I see viga harvested from New Mexico's forests, locally graded, and being used to support New Mexicans' roofs, all thanks to our efforts at *Source Verified Good Wood*.

In this final year of the USDA grant that facilitated our program's inception, we remain optimistic that the commendable efforts of *GoodWood* in support of New Mexico's forests, watersheds, communities, and forest industry will persist.



## Tour of GoodWood Member Walatowa Timber Industries in Jemez Pueblo, NM

Story and photos by Rachel Bean, Forest Stewards Guild

The clangor of sound created by an industrial-sized woodchipper, band saw, debarker, log truck, and various other machinery washed over the crowd of 30 natural resources managers and practitioners waiting for their field tour to begin. On a sunny day in early February, they were gathered in the woodlot of *GoodWood*® member **Walatowa Timber Industries** (WTI), a sawmill owned and operated by Jemez Pueblo in northwestern New Mexico. This tour was part of the first annual New Mexico Tribal Fire and Forest Summit, a three-day gathering of Tribal staff, members, and partners from across the state who came together to advance their professional knowledge, learn from their peers, and discuss the opportunities and barriers that they face in their work.

**Terry Conley**, mill Owner, and **Pat Ragan**, mill Manager, guided the group to a quieter side yard where ponderosa pine poles sat waiting to be peeled by hand to create custom vigas.



Hand-carved viga at Walatowa Timber Industries, Jemez Pueblo, NM

After a brief round of introductions, Terry and Pat explained the 15+ year history of the sawmill and its journey to current-day production, including how diversification of both their products and client base has been imperative to their success. WTI crafts and offers a wide range of forest products, including rough sawn boards, timbers, and beams, machine peeled poles, hand peeled vigas, woodchips, sawdust, firewood, wood pellets, and more depending on the season and specific client requests. Most of their raw product, ponderosa pine logs, comes from Forest Service land that has been thinned to improve forest health and reduce the hazard of high severity wildfire. Similar to other *GoodWood* member mills, no part of the tree that passes through WTI is wasted.



Sawdust made from wood waste at Walatowa Timber Industries

While the group meandered around the woodlot, Pat explained why WTI decided to join *GoodWood*: for a small business, every customer matters, whether that is a hardware store purveyor looking to stock bags of wood pellets or an individual homeowner interested in building or upgrading their house. There is a subset of potential customers who specifically seek locally sourced and sustainably produced wood products, and membership in *GoodWood* connects WTI to those clients. While this subset was once comprised mostly of well-to-do homeowners, the inclusion of *GoodWood* in Build Green NM has opened the door to builders who are looking to capitalize on tax credits for sustainable construction. The inclusion of the updated viga span charts in the state building code has also expanded opportunities for WTI to sell and market their vigas and other traditional load-bearing products.



Home heating pellets made from waste wood at Walatowa Timber Industries

By the end of the tour, many attendees were asking questions about how their communities could follow WTI's example to build up small-scale indigenous-owned sawmills. Stepping away from the din of machinery and into the vans that would transport them away from the woodlot and back to the Summit, everyone left with a better understanding of the full circle of forest restoration – from the land to the loggers to the sawmills to the consumer – and the importance of keeping it local.



## Source Verified Good Wood® - Making a Difference in New Mexico!

Marie Rodriguez, Promise PCES, LLC

The *Source Verified Good Wood*® program verifies, brands, and markets wood sourced from responsibly harvested forests in and around New Mexico. Its overarching mission is to restore and safeguard New Mexico's precious forest and water resources. By fostering healthier forests that exhibit greater resilience to wildfires, insects, and other challenges intensified by our changing climate, *GoodWood*® plays a vital role in the stewardship of our forests and the communities that depend on them.

As suggested by the name, the program verifies the source of wood products bearing the *Source Verified Good Wood* brand. We track the custody of the wood from its source through production, all the way to retail sale.

While several global brands certify wood products as originating from responsibly harvested trees, only the *GoodWood* brand provides the dual assurance that the wood is both responsibly harvested and locally processed. This commitment directly benefits not only our forests and watersheds but also our local communities and businesses.

### Why do we need to thin the forest?

Unfortunately, New Mexicans know from first-hand experience that wildfires present a significant threat to our forests, watersheds, and communities. In New Mexico, forests frequently suffer from overcrowding due to an abundance of small-diameter trees. A crowded forest allows fire to spread easily from tree-to-tree as a fast moving, dangerous, and destructive crown fire.



Crown fire, 2011 Valles Caldera National Preserve (Credit: Rourke McDermott)

When a forest becomes too dense, sunlight and water become scarce resources, leading to weakened trees that are vulnerable to insects and diseases. Forest thinning involves the removal of smaller and/or less healthy trees, allowing the remaining trees to access adequate light and moisture for robust growth. Healthier trees, in turn, exhibit greater

resilience against forest insects and diseases. This becomes particularly crucial in light of our warming climate.

*GoodWood* products are crafted from smaller-diameter trees obtained through forest thinning.



Overcrowded Forest, Jemez Mountains, NM (Credit: Marie Rodriguez)

While wildfires can still spread through a thinned forest, they are less likely to escalate into crown fires when the trees are spaced farther apart. In an open forest, the fire tends to burn through grasses, shrubs, dead branches, and litter resulting in a less destructive *surface fire*. Additionally, the intensity of a wildfire is influenced, in part, by the availability of fuel. Thinning the forest significantly reduces the fuel load (provided the thinned material is removed from the forest), thereby mitigating the destructive impact of future wildfires.

Fire is both an inevitable and essential process in New Mexico's forests. Forest thinning plays a crucial role in enabling these ecosystems, as well as people and communities, to coexist harmoniously with fire.

### Why don't we thin more of our forests?

Forest thinning is a labor-intensive and costly process. First, each tree is carefully felled, its branches are trimmed, and the resulting log is transported to a designated area known as a *landing* within the forest.



TC Company bringing logs to a landing Jemez Mountains, NM

These stacks of logs may undergo partial processing on-site or be loaded onto trucks in their entirety and transported to a mill for further refinement. At the mill, the logs can be transformed into one or more products and either sold as a finished item or used as raw material for further manufacturing elsewhere. The precise steps, as well as their timing and locations, can vary depending on the specific project. However, the overarching truth remains: *transforming a tree from its natural forest habitat into a retail-ready product is a complex and resource-intensive process!* An alternative approach involves burning all this biomass, which, unfortunately, has its drawbacks. Not only is it also time-consuming and costly but burning un-thinned forests and/or copious amounts of slash can be risky and can emit large volumes of CO<sub>2</sub> in the form of smoke. Moreover, we firmly believe that such extensive burning of usable wood constitutes an unconscionable waste.

### How does Source Verified Good Wood make a difference?

While there is little disagreement regarding the need for forest thinning, disposing of the residual biomass presents a “wicked problem” to which there are no simple solutions.

We believe we can contribute significantly by adding value and boosting demand for wood products sourced from forest thinning in New Mexico. Our approach involves branding and marketing these products, allowing consumers to directly support the hard work of our local producers and land managers.



Hand carved Vigas, Olguin's Inc. Taos, NM (Credit [Olguin's, Inc.](#))

When consumers buy *GoodWood* products from our member producers, they not only acquire quality crafted items; they also play a vital role in restoring and protecting our forests and watersheds. Additionally, their support extends to local businesses, ensuring that their dollars remain within New Mexico.

Our members produce an array of wood products including lumber, vigas, timbers, and beams. Additionally, they specialize in crafting meticulously hand-carved vigas,

exquisite furniture, decorative corbels, inviting entries, and sturdy gates that are also works of art.



Solid wood armchair hand carved from a solid log of Source Verified Good Wood Ponderosa Pine (Credit: [Pfeifer Studio](#))

But that's not all: our dedicated members also produce firewood, heating pellets, animal bedding, and mulch. Nothing goes to waste!

Feel free to explore our website to [Meet the Producers](#) and discover the diverse array of products available.

### Opening New Markets for GoodWood

**Build Green New Mexico** - GoodWood products are now eligible to earn credit towards *Gold* or *Emerald* level certification under [Build Green New Mexico](#), making builders and homeowners eligible for New Mexico's sustainable building tax credit!

**Changes to the Residential Building Code** - Vigas, which are intrinsic to our traditional building style, have historically been relegated to a decorative role unless accompanied by an engineer's certification. However, thanks to *Source Verified Good Wood*, a span chart has been incorporated into [New Mexico's Residential Building Code](#) allowing the use of vigas in load bearing applications.

**Buy Local Study** - Dovetail Partners (a member of the *GoodWood* planning team) has prepared a [report](#) to highlight the measurable benefits of “Buy Local” programs.

**Bringing an Affordable Lumber Grading Program to New Mexico** – Grade-stamped lumber, beams, and vigas command higher prices than rough-cut or ungraded products. Currently, lumber grading services are provided from out of state, making them inaccessible to many small producers. We have been collaborating with manufacturers, experts, and educators to explore ways to bring grading services within reach for New Mexico's producers.

Accomplishing this goal will ultimately require legislative action and a long-term source of funding. However, we believe this effort could ultimately increase the value of lumber, vigas, beams and timbers harvested and manufactured here in New Mexico.



## Defining What We Believe



Source Verified Good Wood® offers our members the chance to "...put

their name on what they believe." We recognize that asking a business to incorporate our brand is a big ask. In the marketplace a brand is held in high regard, and we work to ensure the *GoodWood* brand is held in similar esteem. We meticulously verify the origin and practices of the source forest, ensuring that the wood meets our standards for purpose and practices. From there, we track the chain of custody for *GoodWood*, from its source through processing, to retail sale. Only then can our members proudly display the *GoodWood* brand. By associating their brand with ours, our members publicly endorse their commitment to what they believe.

Consumers can trust the *GoodWood* brand. While many products are labeled as 'sustainable' or 'green,' these terms can be quite broad, and their meanings vary depending on context. Unlike certifications such as 'organic' or 'fair trade,' there is no universally accepted definition or governing body for what qualifies as a 'green' or 'sustainable' product. Consequently, companies have considerable flexibility in using these terms. Basically, anyone can claim that their products are 'sustainable,' 'local,' or 'green.' However, consumers who choose products with the *GoodWood* brand can be confident that they are making environmentally and socially responsible choices.

## Defining New Frameworks for Forest Management

*GoodWood* frames eligible products by the source, intent, and practices of forest harvest. *GoodWood* products can also meet the standards of most commonly used frameworks for evaluating forest management such as the Rainforest Alliance's framework for *sustainable forest management* which includes that: "...sustainable forest management must keep a balance between the three main pillars: ecological, economic and socio-cultural. The goal of sustainable forestry is to allow for a balance to be found between making use of trees while maintaining natural patterns of disturbance and regeneration." While varying global entities have different, nuanced definitions for SFM the definitions all fall into a consistent framework.

More recently *climate smart forestry* has been added to the existing framework of *nature-based solutions* for mitigating and adapting to climate change. Wood products derived

from *climate smart forestry* are considered *climate smart commodities*.

Like *sustainable forest management*, *climate smart forestry* has various nuanced definitions that consistently align within a similar framework of management principles. In a recent *position paper* (and more detailed *policy statement*) the **Forest Stewards Guild** clearly describes and connects the various management frameworks of *sustainable forest management*, *nature-based solutions*, *climate smart forestry*, and *climate smart commodities*. In the Guild's capacity as "a leading voice for ecologically, economically, and socially responsible forestry," they provide specific recommendations for engaging in climate smart forestry and developing standard criteria and indicators. **Dovetail Partners** has published an *article* discussing the difficulty in defining *climate smart forestry* noting that "...the way we define the term could impact every corner of the forest and wood products sector." Check out the links and find out more!

## Defining Old Growth – a Follow-up

In our last Quarter Round (December 2023) we highlighted a report published by **Dovetail Partners**, *Old growth forests: How much is enough?*

In their report Dovetail highlighted the complexity, difficulty, and importance of defining old growth forests. They have followed up by inviting individuals with diverse perspectives to read and respond to the report.

These guest responses have been compiled into a single document.

*Old Growth Report: Guest Responses*, available on Dovetail Partners website and well worth the read!

The responders are:

- [Marcella Windmuller-Campione](#) - Marcella is an Associate Professor with the Department of Forest Resources at the University of Minnesota.
- [Dr. Alexander Evans, Forest Stewards Guild](#) - Zander is the Executive Director of the Forest Stewards Guild
- [Dave Atkins](#) - Dave is a Family Forest Owner and President of the Montana Forest Owners Association
- [Joseph Vaughn, CF](#) - Joseph is a Key Account Manager at NCX



## Accomplishments and Looking Ahead

### Accomplishments

This quarter we worked to increase membership and support of Source Verified Good Wood. In January **Rachel Wood** met with **Aaron Everett** of the [Climate Smart Wood Group](#) to talk about GoodWood and the need for tracking the source of forest products. **Rachel Bean** attended the first annual *New Mexico Tribal Fire and Forest Summit* and had an opportunity to share information about GoodWood with Tribal staff, members, and partners from across the state as well as to learn about the opportunities and barriers that they face in their work.



*New Mexico Tribal Fire and Forest Summit field-day tour of Walatowa Timber Industries.*

On February 26, **Rachel Wood** presented the concept of an in-state lumber grading program to the New Mexico Construction Industry Division (CID) Technical Advisory Committee and received a very positive response!

March 2, **Rachel** sat down to an interview with **Miles Conway**, for the [Santa Fe Area Home Builders Association Radio Hour](#) and on March 16-17 she attended the SFAHBA Home Show / Remodelers Showcase. Wood products on display from *GoodWood* members included decorative spiral carved posts, latillas, and corbels from **Olguin's**, a beautiful large carved corbel from **Wholesale Timber & Viga**, and a eye-catching table of ponderosa pine from **Pfeifer Studio**. **Rachel** hosted a display with member photos, company names, locations, and product descriptions.

**Rachel Wood** continued to work directly with *GoodWood* members including providing information on global timber traceability and the [European Union De-forestation Free Regulation](#) as requested by a member. She also continued her outreach to potential new members including **Spotted Owl Timber**, **Barela Timber Management**, and **Southwestern Lumber Sales**.

Additional communications and outreach activities included an article written by **Marie Rodriguez**, published in the March/April 2024 edition of the [Green Fire Times](#), printing

brochures and rack cards to advertise the program and our members, and updating the website.

We have also been busy keeping up with program administration including convening a meeting of our larger working group in January and submitting performance and financial reports to the U.S. Forest Service. **Rachel Wood** as well as **Katie Fernholz** met with our new contact at the Santa Fe National Forest, **Ron Perry**, to bring him up to speed with the project. **Marie Rodriguez** verified additional projects on National Forest System lands. Wood products coming from these projects can now be branded as *Source Verified Good Wood*. Our logo has also been renewed by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

### Looking Ahead

This is the final year the *Source Verified Good Wood* program will receive funding through the CFRP grant. The program is exceeding our expectations, but the best is yet to come as our efforts to open and access new markets such as green building, vigas, and “buy local” are just beginning to gain traction and an in-state lumber grading program is within our grasp.

While the program benefits members, our forests, and the community, it is not financially self-sustaining. **Rachel Wood** has been working hard to gain support for the program beyond the grant period. **Rachel** has engaged **Vicki Pozzebon** of [Prospera Partners](#) and **Keirsten Pickens**, local food and farm advocate and grant writer, for work on a sustainability and out-year funding plan. She has also met in-person with **Anitra Pickett** of the [U.S. Green Building Council](#) (USGBC) staff and joined the USGBC to facilitate the inclusion of *GoodWood* into [LEED](#) (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) the most widely used green building certification system.

**Rachel** also met with **Ralphael D'Amato**, the new director for the **Wildfire Resiliency Training Center** at **Luna Community College**. **Rachel** has been working with **Grace Sorenson** of the U.S. Forest Service's [Wood Innovations Program](#) to discuss future funding opportunities. She has also reached out to the **New Mexico Foundation** and the **New Mexico Partnership for Responsible Business** to discuss sponsorship of the philanthropic projects and efforts of the *Source Verified Good Wood* program.

The Quarter Round is produced with funds from the USDA-Forest Service, Collaborative Forest Restoration Program.

Grant Number: 21-DG-11030000-010

CFRP Project Number: 11-16 Rev.

Project Title: Planning - Expanding Market Opportunities for New Mexico Wood - revision  
Grant Project Period: 05/27/2021 – 05/31/2024 (2019 award)

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