

- Benefits of buying local
- Source Verified - better than "certified"
- Bringing vigas back to support New Mexico's roofs
- Getting the word out
- Fire, forests, and GoodWood



Quarterly Newsletter from Source Verified GoodWood® - March 2023

# The Quarter Round



## Member Spotlight

On February 2, Matt Allen of Mt. Taylor Manufacturing (Milan, NM), along with his son, Jordan who operates Out of the Woods Manufacturing (Albuquerque, NM), attended the Santa Fe Area Home Builders Association (SFAHBA) luncheon.

Following the luncheon Miles Conway (SFAHBA) interviewed Matt and Jordan for his podcast *Build Together*.

Matt and Jordan talked about:

- Forest restoration in the Zuni Mountains,
- Working together in their family-owned-mill and wood product manufacturing businesses,
- The amazing array of products they produce and their plans to expand,
- The Importance of locally owned and operated mills in New Mexico.

Matt shared his opinions about local verification by Source Verified GoodWood versus international forest certification programs. He also gave his whole-hearted support to our efforts to amend New Mexico's building code regarding vigas.

[Tune in](#) to listen to their lively and informative conversation and learn more by visiting [www.mttaylormanufacturing.com](http://www.mttaylormanufacturing.com)



Mt. Taylor Manufacturing - [Sawmill](#)

## We Must Put Our Name on What We Believe In

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 and the only program that verifies wood from Forest Service lands.

Our community promotes partnerships between ethically minded wood products companies, builders, and consumers to foster a spirit of collaboration and cooperation. As a verified member, you gain visibility for supporting our forests and communities. As a customer purchasing GoodWood products, you support healthier forests and mindful businesses. Together, we create a committed community helping to find harmony between forests and commerce. To become a member or find out more website: [www.goodwoodverified.com](http://www.goodwoodverified.com).



## A note from Rachel

Spring is here and everything is growing including the GoodWood program! Our efforts to open more markets to GoodWood product are taking root. Last year GoodWood products were accepted under Build Green New Mexico (BGNM) and in February I applied to New Mexico's

Construction Industry Division (CID) to simplify the use of vigas as load-bearing material in New Mexico's unique adobe construction. We are also marketing the significant benefits of buying local – remember GoodWood is local wood protecting *your* forests and watersheds and benefitting *your* communities!

We would like to see our local producers sell graded vigas - and even graded lumber - locally and our producers are working to expand their ability to mill construction-quality lumber and vigas. Supply and demand can create a "Field of Dreams" scenario, it is a leap of faith for producers to expand their operations. Their faith is in our program to help create and grow markets for GoodWood products. Our faith is in builders, retailers, and consumers to recognize the value in buying Source Verified GoodWood.

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*"Nothing great is created suddenly, any more than a bunch of grapes or a fig. If you tell me that you desire a fig, I answer you that there must be time. Let it first blossom, then bear fruit, then ripen."*  
~Epictetus

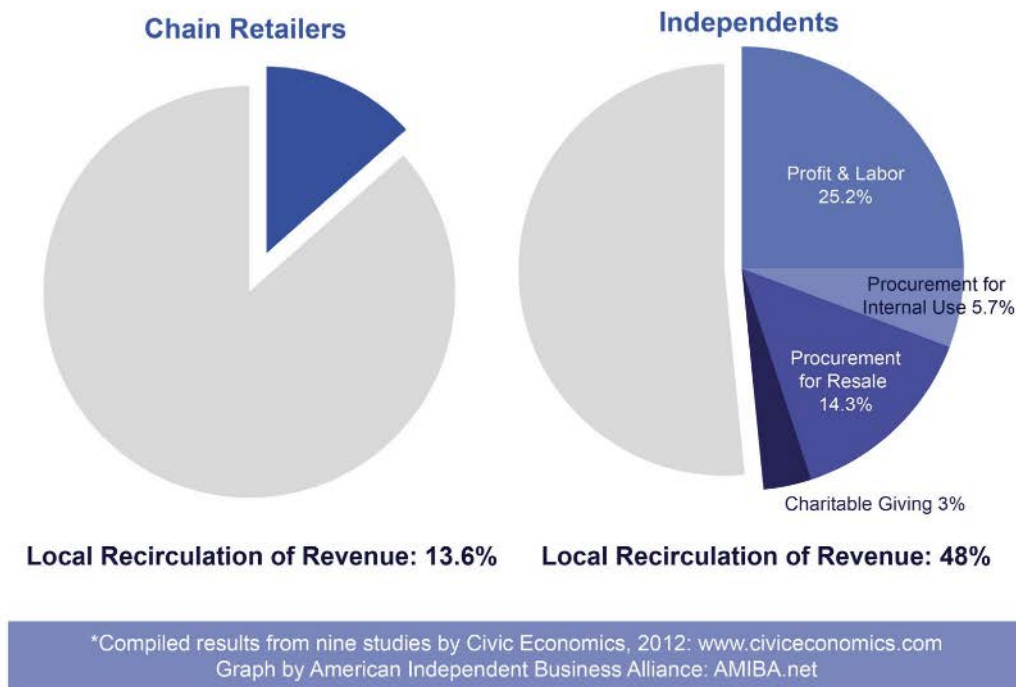
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# Buy-Local Initiatives Provide Economic Benefits, Jobs, and Business Opportunities

K. Fernholz, Dovetail Partners

Buy-local has been a common tagline and marketing strategy in farmers' markets and other consumer products for many decades. Buy-local initiatives promote regional services and goods. Efforts to support buy-local initiatives can apply to all types of products and services, including forest products. By knowing where wood and other forest products come from, consumers can buy products grown and processed in the area, so local workers are supported, community economies are strengthened, and fewer fossil fuels are used for transport. Whereas purchases of non-local products send funds out of the community, expenditures on locally produced products recirculate through the local economy (on average as much as three times, also see Figure 1), creating a beneficial multiplier effect while helping to restore and care for local forests. With increased sales, companies hire more workers, creating local job opportunities; and this activity results in tax and payroll receipts. These efforts can also educate and raise awareness with the general populace about the importance of protecting and improving forest health and increasing the sense of connection to and responsibility for their local forested lands.

**Figure 1. Comparison of Local Recirculation of Revenues between Chain Retailers and Independents**



Source: American Independent Business Alliance <https://amiba.net/project/local-multiplier-effect/>

The Source Verified Good Wood® program is an example of a buy-local initiative. The program is based in New Mexico and strives to protect forests from catastrophic wildfire, insects, and diseases during this critical time of climate change. By fostering a market for responsibly sourced local wood products, the program allows more acres of restoration to be done, and benefits the forests, people, and economic well-being of the Southwest now and into the future. Buying wood with the GoodWood® label allows consumers to help protect forests by using local wood products sourced from management practices that improve forest health and decrease the risk of catastrophic wildfire. These purchases translate into local economic benefits, jobs, and business opportunities.

Read more about buy-local initiatives, in the report, [Buy Local Initiatives to Support Forests & Forest Products and Services](#),





## Source Verified GoodWood - a Different Kind of Forest Certification

Builders as well as most DIY'ers have seen the logos of various forest certification organizations such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). Their logos appear on everything from lumber to the sticks you stir your paint with. According to their website FSC was established in 1993 as voluntary certification for sustainable forestry, promoting environmentally sound, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests and now certifies over 200 million hectares of forest world-wide. Certification requires adherence to [10 standards](#) (also available on their website.)

Source Verified GoodWood reviews many of the same standards as FSC and other certification systems including that all wood is legally and responsibly harvested and that basic environmental protections are in place. However, GoodWood goes further ensuring that the purpose of tree harvest is to protect and restore the forest. We examine any potential impact to forest structure, composition and function. We look at the direct effect to the forest ecosystem and how the trajectory of forest succession may be affected over time especially the protection and recruitment of large and old trees. We look at the protections and enhancements to wildlife habitats as well as soil and water resources.

The standards for other forest certification programs are relative to the country of origin. Our standards are the same regardless of the source. It would be fair to say that any wood **legally** harvested in New Mexico would meet or more likely, exceed any global certification standard. Only wood harvested for the *benefit* of the forest can carry the GoodWood logo. Most important – wood carrying other certification brands are not sourced locally – GoodWood is. The carbon footprint of good wood does not include transportation across oceans, continents, or the nation, only across county lines.

Notably, in 2021 as FSC was kicking off its general assembly, organizations and advocates from across the globe penned an [open letter](#) citing the urgent and immediate need for the wood label to reform its organization, stating that it may be undermining rather than supporting the global stewardship of forests. Source verified GoodWood is a local organization. GoodWood products come from your local forests and are harvested, processed, and sold locally. With GoodWood, you know where your wood comes from!



Photos above show wood products harvested and processed in the Jemez Mountains, Sandoval County by Walatowa Timber Industries as part of a collaborative landscape effort to restore and protect your public lands.

## Viva la Vigas! Bringing vigas back to once again, support New Mexico's roofs!

Bringing vigas back into New Mexico's unique building style as load-bearing support for roofs rather than ornamental embellishments is a priority for the GoodWood program. The use of vigas in holding up our roofs goes back over 1000 years!



Pueblo Bonito (M.Rodriguez)

Pueblo Bonito in Chaco Canyon National Monument was constructed between 800 and 1125 AD illustrating the use of vigas to support ceilings, roofs, and windows.

The historic buildings that give the plazas of Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and our rural villages their unique character still have vigas supporting their roofs as they have for hundreds of years.

The Palace of the Governors in the Santa Fe Plaza is the oldest, continuously occupied public building in the United States and its roof is supported by vigas. In modern southwestern décor vigas typically serve no structural function. The decorative vigas are simply attached while a separate truss bears the load of the roof.



Palace of the Governors, Santa Fe Plaza (post card scan)

The transition from function to décor came about in 2004. New

Mexico's building codes were updated with language that required vigas to be graded by an approved agency or installed with an engineer's certification. Both these efforts are costly and time consuming. It became cheaper and quicker to install a viga as a decoration beneath a trussed roof than to use the viga to support the roof. Interestingly, an accepted standard for grading vigas did not (and still does not) exist.

To make the use of vigas straightforward and affordable, GoodWood project manager, Rachel Wood, with support from the New Mexico Small Business Administration, worked with engineers from Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia labs to create engineered span charts that dictate the placement of vigas based on size and species as well as anticipated loading. These complex tables have been simplified to the most conservative recommendation suitable for state-wide use, except in alpine areas with expected heavy snow loads.



Ornamental vigas (stock image)

In February, Rachel submitted the final report (2022 *New Mexico Span Chart*) to New Mexico's Construction Industry Division (CID) along with an application to allow vigas to be used in load bearing applications provided they are installed according to the span chart. Keep your fingers crossed 🤞!

## Getting the word out!

**January 20 - Kim Shanahan** published an [op-ed](#) in the Santa Fe New Mexican supporting GoodWood's efforts to bring vigas back into New Mexico construction in a supporting role – supporting a roof that is!

**January 23 - Rachel Wood** staffed a booth at the 2023 Legislative Reception. The booth and invitation were courtesy of **Miles Conway**, Executive Officer of the SFAHBA – thanks Miles!

**February 2 - team members, Rachel Wood and Marie Rodriguez** attended the SFAHBA Luncheon. **Miles Conway** put together a fast-paced agenda for the packed venue and invited Rachel and Marie to present. Rachel gave an overview of the Source Verified Good Wood program and Marie explained how the program contributes to restoring and protecting our forests. **Steve Hale**, of Build Green New Mexico (BGNM) updated a very attentive audience on the changes in BGNM that allows builders and homeowners to earn points towards the Sustainable Building Tax Credit by using GoodWood products in their building and landscaping. Steve will also be publishing an article in the upcoming issue of the New Mexico Home Builders Association [Housing Journal!](#)

Lunch was provided by the **Santa Fe YouthBuild** program who also attended the luncheon. The Santa Fe YouthBuild program participants prepare to take the GED and participate in vocational skill development programs where students gain construction or culinary skills.

As noted on page 1, *Member Spotlight*, **Matt Allen**, and his son **Jordan Allen**, also attended the luncheon and sat down for a conversation afterwards on Mile's podcast, [Build Together](#).

**March 11-12 - Rachel Wood and Rachel Bean** staffed a booth at the SFAHBA [2023 Santa Fe Area Home Show and Remodelers' Showcase](#). Visitors to the booth were interested and enthusiastic about the prospect of using *verified* local, sustainable wood. As the supply and diversity of products continues to grow, it seems there are builders who would be happy to work with our members.

**Ongoing** -We are updating all our print and online information on Source Verified GoodWood to better market the program, our members, and their products.

Marketing is only one benefit of being a GoodWood member. Visit our website ([Participate | svGoodWood \(goodwoodverified.com\)](#)) to find out how to join and about the benefits of becoming a member!



## Fire, Forests, and GoodWood

We talk a lot about how GoodWood supports protecting and restoring New Mexico's forests and watersheds. In this article we take a closer look at the ecology of our ponderosa pine forests, why forest thinning is so important, and why it is important to use wood that is a by-product of forest restoration.

### Ponderosa pine forests evolved with fire.

- Over the past 10,000+ years lightning ignited fires spread continuously over the landscape every 5-25 years.
- Fueled only by grasses and the needles and litter cast from the trees, these fires burned with low intensity and severity, killing tree seedlings but without enough heat to kill mature trees or damage soils.
- Large and old trees eventually died, fell, and begin to decompose. When the rotting log burned, it burned hotter than just grass and needles, scarifying the soil and preparing a seedbed for new trees.
- These seedlings grew into saplings, shedding needles each year, eventually creating continuous fuel-bed that fire could spread through. By this time some of the trees were large and healthy enough to withstand the fire while the smaller, weaker trees were killed.
- This cycle perpetuated an open forest structure with groups and clumps of trees and a grassy "park-like" understory uniquely formed and maintained by fire.



—Rourke McDermott

**Open forests were optimal for capturing and storing water.** The open canopy allowed rain and snow to reach the forest floor but provided enough shelter to protect the precious moisture from the drying effects of the wind and sun.

**The forest is more than the trees.** It is dynamic system of living things. Take, for example, the amazing symbiotic and mutualistic relationship between the ponderosa pine forest, the Abert's squirrel, an ectomycorrhizal fungus, and the northern goshawk.



Abert's squirrel –  
coniferousforest.com

The open ponderosa pine forest is the ideal habitat for Abert's squirrel. Ponderosa pine seeds are the favorite food of the Abert's squirrel and provide their primary source of nutrition. The squirrels can travel from branch to branch through the treetops, feeding on the cones, buds, and twigs of ponderosa pine trees as well as fungus, mushrooms, and tree sap.

A by-product of the squirrel's activity is spreading the spores of an ectomycorrhizal fungi that is beneficial to the survival of ponderosa pine trees.

The open pine forest structure is also well suited to the maneuverability and hunting behavior of the northern goshawk. It just so happens that Abert's squirrel is a favorite prey of the northern goshawk.



Northern goshawk – wdgf.gov

This just one example of the complex and intertwined dynamic of structure, composition, and function in the ponderosa pine forest ecosystem.

### 19<sup>th</sup> century settlement ultimately removed fire from the ponderosa pine forests.

In many areas of the southwest fire was excluded from our forests long before organized fire suppression. Early settlers inadvertently affected the spread of fire simply by grazing their livestock. As previously mentioned, historic fires spread through grasses and litter.

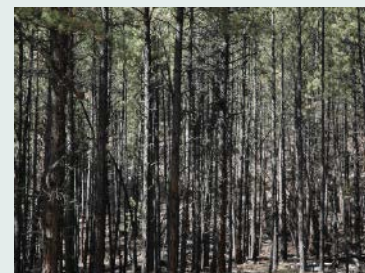
- Sheep and cattle ate the grass that carried the fire.
- Roads and trails created by wagons, horses, and livestock also interrupted the spread of fire across the landscape.
- Later, organized fire suppression effectively stopped the spread of wildfires.

Settlement also brought about logging. Logging at this time had a purpose – to cut trees for building or profit. Often the ownership of the land was separate from the ownership of the timber. In many parts of New Mexico the intensity of logging was devastating.

In less than a century, forests dominated by groups of large trees and open forests were now choked by dense stands of small trees. Closed forests captured snow and rain in the canopy, where it was sublimated into the atmosphere instead of being absorbed into the watershed. The change in structure and composition affected all functioning aspects of the complex and intertwined ecosystem including degrading wildlife habitats.

These changes dramatically affected how fires burn.

- Historic fires burned with low intensity and severity (i.e. not killing trees or destroying soils)



Dense pine forest. M. Rodriguez

- Contemporary fires are fueled by burning trees instead of grasses and burn with far greater intensity and severity. Forests are consumed and soils are superheated. The structure, composition, function and productivity of the forest is impacted well into the foreseeable future.

These types of fires are difficult or impossible to control and threaten homes and lives, and endanger firefighters. The denuded forest and hardened soils are vulnerable to flooding and debris flows and threaten our watersheds and our lakes, rivers, and streams.



*Las Conchas fire and post fire effects, 2011, Valles Caldera National Preserve staff photos*

#### Find out more!

- 1994, Touchan, Ramzi; Swetnam, Thomas W.; Allen, Craig D.; Fire History and Climatic Patterns in Ponderosa Pine and Mixed-Conifer Forests of the Jemez Mountains, [Northern New Mexico Fire effects in southwestern forests: Proceedings of the second La Mesa Fire symposium; 1994 March 29-31; Los Alamos, New Mexico \(usda.gov\)](#)
- [Wildland Fire in Ponderosa Pine: Western United States \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)
- [Abert's Squirrel - Bandelier National Monument \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)
- 2019, The Durango Herald, [Abert's squirrels are friends to the ponderosa pines](#)
- 2017 USDA Forest Service, RMRS, [Northern goshawks: A 20-year study of ecology and habitat on the Kaibab Plateau](#)
- [www.afterwildfirenm.org](http://www.afterwildfirenm.org)

## Forest thinning is critical to protecting and restoring New Mexico's forests.

While excluding fire from our forests contributed significantly to a decline in forest health, current conditions provide little opportunity to use fire safely and effectively across the landscape. Selectively cutting smaller and less healthy trees, while leaving large and old, as well as young, healthy, and well-formed trees (a.k.a. thinning the forest), is the best tool to restore forest structure and reduce the potential for severe and damaging wildfire. Forest thinning is supported by land managers, forest industry, and the environmental community. Forest thinning also is expensive and time-consuming – each tree must be cut individually. Also cutting the tree is only the first step. After the trees are cut, we need to remove them from the source forest. If we leave the trees in the forest, we increase the fire hazard rather than lessen it.

Burning the material in place can also be risky. The risk of burning slash can be lessened by piling the material and burning it during the winter. This is also expensive and time consuming and generally leads to a backlog of untreated slash across the landscape. Obviously, it is better to store a tree's carbon as a useful wood product, rather than sending it into the atmosphere - so what is the hold-up!? The problem is the cost to remove the wood generally exceeds its value. While thinning costs can vary based on many factors, studies show average costs exceed \$1000/acre with much of that cost (34-40%) going to extract the wood ("stump to truck cost.") The US Forest Service cites a need to thin 20,000,000 acres of Forest Service land and 30,000,000 acres on other federal, state, tribal, and private lands over the next ten years – that pencils out to over \$50,000,000,000!

By milling the wood into the highest value product possible, we can reduce the cost of thinning and more acres can be thinned. This is the driving force behind Source Verified GoodWood. By opening higher value markets such as BGNM, vigas, and lumber we can make a difference. By purchasing Source Verified GoodWood, *you* can make a difference. Don't forget to check out our current members and producers to see all the products available [Meet the Producers | svGoodWood \(goodwoodverified.com\)](#).

#### Find out more!

- [The cost of forest thinning operations in the western United States: A systematic literature review and new thinning cost model \(usda.gov\)](#)
- [Thinning the Forest for the Trees | US Forest Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

