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P.O. Box 669, Winthrop, WA 98862
www.bearcreeklumber.com

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25 YEARS

In 1977, Bear Creek Lumber was just a half-crazy idea. Why not sell lumber to our many friends who were building, but having trouble finding the kind of wood products that they wanted to use, most of which weren't sold at the regular lumber yards? Something natural, good looking and priced fairly. For company founder Cloud Bannick, a carpenter who was just building his own house, lumber wasn't just a commodity. It was something to admire and enjoy, something to feel in your hands. He knew how hard it was to find good lumber. He liked to examine his wood when it arrived. For him, having his own lumberyard was like a small child in a candy store. Pure pleasure. From this dream, a business has grown.



Bear Creek Lumber has changed tremendously in the 25 years since Cloud sold his first load of cedar boards to his contractor friends. This month, the company has a load shipping to China. A home owner from Antiqua is buying his third house package since 1985. Architects from around the country regularly specify Bear Creek to their clients. A company literally started on the kitchen table now has 4,000 sq. feet of offices. The lumber is everywhere, piled high inside and out, over six acres of land, with an additional twenty industrial acres to expand on. The size of the operation may have changed, but the product hasn't. Beautiful lumber and timbers, carefully chosen and lovingly cared for.

The philosophy has remained constant, too. Selling exceptional wood products to people who appreciate them for what they are. Bear Creek Lumber strives to offer customer service that is both personal, and efficient. In a world of soulless corporations, no one needs another Mc Lumber. Not our customers, and not our employees, who faithfully mirror the company's mission in everything they do. The company uses cutting edge technology so it can ride the tidal wave of communication changes while holding on to our small-is-beautiful roots.

Good lumber is even harder to come by these days, and few people enjoy finding it as much as Cloud does. These days he likes to mix a little golf, mountain biking, or snowboarding into his afternoons when conditions are right, but he still is at work every morning, either in the yard enjoying his lumber, or at his desk discussing lumber availability with new acquaintances and old buddies. He likes to think about retirement, but he knows what he ideally would do is spend more time visiting mills and customers, in his quest to connect the right board with the right project. One more chance to enjoy the lumber the way he always has.



Bear Creek Lumber Clear Western Red Cedar Pergola rafter detail
Submitted by Douglas D., Southhampton, NY



A Log's Journey: From Here to Hawaii

A Douglas fir log, seen here with salesman Joe Hammer, is on its way to Hawaii to be part of the **Pan Pacific Festival** in Honolulu, where it will be used as part of a traditional Japanese log ceremony. Joe hand-peeled the log himself and will take the bark, at his feet, home to use as landscaping mulch on a dry slope by his house. The log measures 36 inches in diameter, and comes from a selectively logged forest area not far from the lumberyard.



About the Festival: Since its inception in 1980, the mission of the Pan-Pacific Festival Matsuri in Hawaii has been to promote intercultural friendship, and overcome language and geographic barriers through shared interests. Today, the festival is one of Hawaii's largest cultural events. In Japan today, a matsuri is generally thought of as a community event that brings excitement to the streets and invites participation. Matsuri in Hawaii was originally intended as a cultural bridge: visiting participants from Japan would be able to enjoy the familiarity of Japanese music, crafts, traditions, and foods, while Hawaii residents, and other visitors would gain a deeper appreciation of Japanese sensibilities and cultural heritage.



The original Bear Creek Lumber yard, 25 years later. Once piled high with lumber, it now is home to a fruit orchard and softball field.



Growth rings show how the tree grew quickly at first, with wide growth rings. Then as the canopy closed, growth rings became tighter. At a certain point, the canopy was disturbed, by fire or bug kill and growth rings widened again for a short time until the forest grew thick again, limiting its growth for the rest of its life. This tree was probably a sapling in the 1700's.

About the log: Eastern Cascade forests are subject to a variety of trauma, the least of which is selective logging. Bug kills, wind storms, heavy snows, earth-sterilizing forest fires (mostly caused by lightning), root rot, and overgrowth all conspire to limit growth, or kill, hundreds of trees in their prime. Once a large tree has fallen, or is taken as a log, the forest floor comes alive with young new trees. From this new generation, another giant will fight its way through the crowd until it owns all the sunlight, and water, in the sixty feet around its base.

B.C. Bug Kill Threatens Industry

A massive beetle kill in British Columbia's Interior region is starting to affect markets. Some traders suggest significant, and lasting, effects. Williams Lake, B.C. is ground zero for the outbreak, but the 1.25 million acres infested by mountain pine beetles extend well into other key Spruce-Pine-Fir lumber producing regions. The Forest Service doubled the annual allowable cut of the Lakes Timber Supply Area in B.C. from 1.5 million cubic meters to 3 million (about 570 million board feet, B.C. log scale). Allowable cuts in other affected areas have also been raised significantly.

Some producers say they're concerned that the beetle salvage will lead to increases in production, which would fly in the face of current market conditions. That bodes ill for Canadian mills recently hit with a countervailing duty on shipments to the U.S., but one major producer noted that the industry's ability to increase capacity is limited, and the volume of potential salvage far exceeds the industry's ability to mill it. Thus he doesn't anticipate a major boost in lumber production in the province. And, where mills do increase production to handle beetle timber, they may decrease output at other locations, so that there is no net increase. "We haven't seen the full impact of it from a supply standpoint yet", said a source with a major Canadian company. He added that a general decline in log quality recently has resulted in J-grade output falling from normal 15% of total production to about 3%.

Beetle salvage is accompanied by a significant amount of blue stain. Japanese importers are mostly intolerant of stained lumber. While home centers in the U.S. often accept some stain, the volume usually associated with beetle salvage will likely be unacceptable for many.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Sustainable Forests Are A Fact

Wood is very important in our daily lives. How can we be sure that forest are being managed sustainably? Sustainable forest management involves managing the forest for their multiple benefits today (clean air, clean water, recreation, timber, wildlife habitat, etc.), without depleting future generations ability to manage the forest for their needs. Over the long term, we should harvest no more than what the forest grows, nor degrade the forest's capability for growth. Have North American forest been managed sustainably? The National Hardwood Lumber Association offers these facts:

*The United States still has 70% of the forest land it had in pre-colonial times. The decline in the U.S. forest land area stabilized shortly after 1900, following the end of widespread agricultural clearing, and has remained relatively constant since.

* Since 1952, the amount of hardwood growing stock (all live trees greater than 5 inches in diameter) in U.S. forest has grown by 82% while the amount of hardwood saw timber (large trees) has more than doubled.

* Since 1952, total growing stock in U.S. forest (hardwoods and softwoods) has increased by 27.6%.

* The volume of standing growing stock, and saw timber can only increase when we harvest less timber than is available for harvest (total growth minus natural mortality).

Thus, for the last 50 years, North America's timber resource has been managed sustainably. However, timber is not the only component of sustainable forest management. We must also sustain biodiversity, production of clean air and clean water, wildlife habitat and other benefits that forest provide.

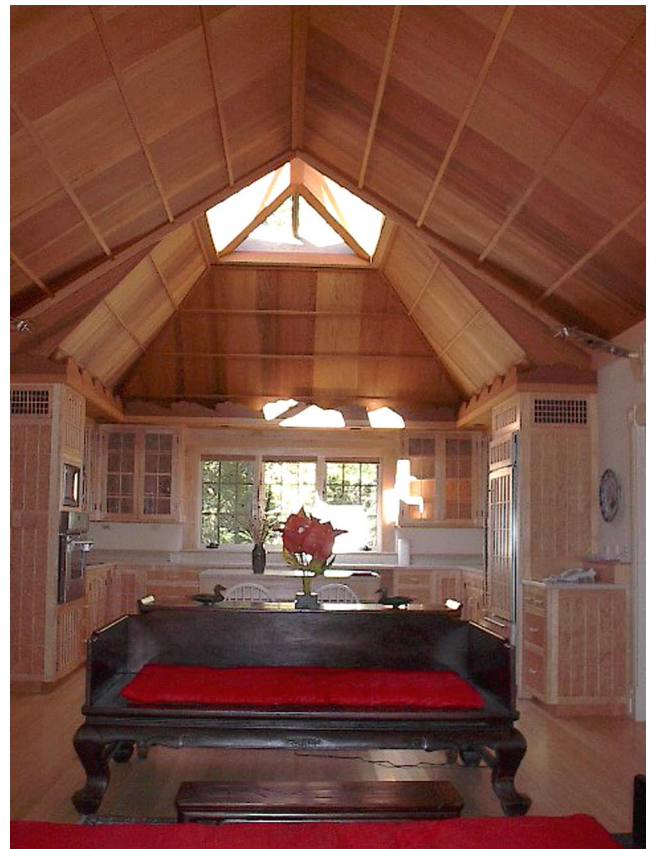
“Why isn't the environmental movement demanding that the steel and concrete industries submit to an audit of “sustainability?” ... Because emotive images of forests sell memberships.” Patrick Moore, one of the founders of Greenpeace, in a column on forest certification.

Redwood Supplies Continue to Dwindle

Log supplies in the Northwest have somewhat stabilized, with 15% more logs available than last year. In California, however, the situation is reversed. The California Department of Forestry harvesting permit process takes up to six months to gain approval, and so many mills are chasing the same supply, that many mills now buy logs from out-of state just to survive. Seven of the major mills in the Redwood region have closed permanently since 2001. Many more have curtailed their operations. Redwood supplies are becoming increasingly difficult to find.

Duties Imposed Upheld by Commission

The U.S. International Trade Commission voted 4-0 today that lumber imports from Canada threaten material injury to the U.S. industry. As a result, a 27.2% combined countervailing and anti-dumping duty on Canadian shipments to the U.S. will go into effect later this month. The 27.2% duty is the highest ever levied in the lengthy lumber trade dispute between the U.S. and Canada. Canada has already filed appeals to the duty with the World Trade Organization and NAFTA, but final rulings on those appeals are not expected until at least early 2003.



A kitchen in Maine: Bear Creek Lumber Western Red Cedar 1x 20 clear and miscellaneous yellow cedar rafters.

Submitted by Brian R.,

Blue Hills, Maine

BEAR CREEK LUMBER
P.O. Box 669 Winthrop, WA 98862
(509) 997-3110 fax (509) 997-2040
www.bearcreeklumber.com
Ela Bannick, Editor Sage Bannick, Feature Writer

Our webmaster has been adding all the in-coming photos of lumber and wood applications to our already well-stocked website. If you haven't visited the website, www.bearcreeklumber.com, in awhile, take a moment to visit. You'll enjoy the browse!