

Sun Mountain Lumber, Inc.

Deer Lodge, Montana – Member Since January 2009



What do Zumba and Logging have in common? The answer is Sherm and Bonnie Anderson! Sherm and Bonnie are the owners of Sun Mountain Lumber, Inc. in Deer Lodge, Montana. In addition to Sun Mountain Lumber, Sherm has owned and operated Sun Mountain Logging, LLC since 1976 and more recently started Sun-Up Ventures, LLC (a construction company) in 2001 and Sun-Up Fitness Center (complete with Zumba classes).

Sherm started operating a logging truck when he was 15 years old for his father's logging crew. He has a long history in the timber and wood industry. He has served as President of the American Loggers Council and has earned numerous awards and recognitions from business and industry leaders. He even served as a state Senator representing Deer Lodge and Helena in the Montana State Legislature (2003-2004).



Sun Mountain Lumber Office in Deer Lodge, Montana.



Log trucks (above) and logging equipment (below) ready for spring maintenance program.



The family-run businesses are an extension of Sherm's

commitment to the people of Deer Lodge. Deer Lodge is the county seat of Powell County, Montana and was once an important railroad town, serving as a division headquarters for the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (the Milwaukee Road) before the railroad's local abandonment in 1980. The sawmill was the major employer in Deer Lodge, so when Louisiana-Pacific put the mill up-for-sale, Sherm and his wife Bonnie decided to launch a new phase in their lives. They purchased the plant in 2004 and have since continued the legacy of producing a high-quality product and employing many Deer Lodge residents. Sun Mountain Lumber, Inc. is the largest private employer in the Deer Lodge Valley and helps keep the local economy thriving.

Sun Mountain Lumber, Inc. operates two manufacturing facilities in Deer Lodge, a solid stud mill and a fingerjoint plant. The Sun Mountain team realizes there are many choices when it comes to buying lumber. To be the stud supplier of choice, the company strives to go above and beyond customer expectations. Sun Mountain wants each customer to have a good experience with every transaction, so they are willing to go the extra mile. The company can provide end branding, waxing, bar-coding and many other custom options. Sun Mountain uses the railways BNSF and Union Pacific to be more flexible and cost conscious when shipping to customer destinations.

Douglas Fir and Lodgepole Pine are the main species used in production at Sun Mountain. Also, Engleman Spruce and Sub-Alpine Fir are processed in smaller volume. Sun Mountain also accepts Mountain Pine Beetle killed timber that contains blue stain. The blue stain is not a structural defect and has no impact on the structural application of the lumber. The mill can produce both eight and nine foot lumber and can accept either eight or nine foot log length multiples. When processing, the log quality has an impact on how the log goes through the lumber manufacturing process, and therefore the mill has a number of requirements and specifications that each logging company must follow.

The sawmill and planing operations employ 150 full-time workers on two shifts. When the fingerjoint facility is in operation, it employs an additional 60 people. Sun Mountain Lumber, Inc. produces approximately 120 mmbf annually at the sawmill and planing mill.



Rough 2X4s headed to the stacker.



Dave Johnson, "Shipping Czar" inspecting blue stain lodgepole 2X6 stacked lumber.

The fingerjoint plant is not currently operating, but when it was running prior to the recession, it produced approximately 130 mmbf of fingerjointed studs in 2x4 and 2x6. In addition to the sawmill, Sun Mountain Logging employs 50-60 full-time workers. Another 100 people work in other contracted logging companies where Sun Mountain Lumber purchases logs.

Sherm said, "We are constantly striving to create a safer working environment. One thing we do is monthly mock OSHA inspections, which include follow-up of any necessary changes of equipment or procedures." The dedication to safety is also shown



Filing room crew, Supervisor Steve Fullmer, Mike Stebers and Nelson Bohrer.

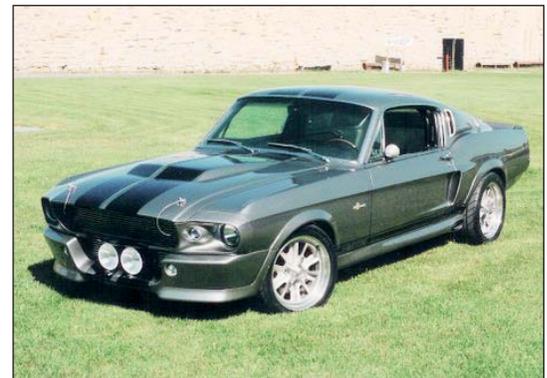
in the installation of a complete dust-collection system covering all major machine centers and the chip room. The system will improve the environmental housekeeping and any combustible wood dust problems. The project should be completed sometime in June of this year.

Sun Mountain has experienced some small incremental increases in the stud markets, but for the most part, prices and demand have been relatively flat. Despite the slow growth, Sherm and Bonnie are optimistic and plan for a long-term future in the industry. Sherm expressed a need for the US Forest Service to be more helpful and provide timbers sales from the 5 million acres of dead beetle-kill Lodgepole Pine located in Montana. He said, "It often appears all over the country that we see a lot of talk, but very little action. We continue to hope that the pendulum is swinging towards wise management of our natural resources." Sherm believes that the majority of Americans want to see better management of National Forest resources.



Packaged and ready to go . . . shipments are moved by rail on Union Pacific or BNSF.

The small community of Deer Lodge has long been dependent on Sun Mountain sawmill and logging operations as a major employer in the area, and Sherm and Bonnie are dedicated to continuing that legacy. They contribute countless amounts of time, energy and resources in serving the community. They are very active in their church and politics. They serve on hospital and library foundations, bank and museum boards, and in many other organizations outside the community.



*Sherm likes his cars!
"Eleanor" a 1967 Shelby Muscle Car.*

If you are in the Deer Lodge, Montana area, Sherm invites you to stop by and visit. If you are not interested in just looking at another sawmill, you may have an interest in visiting the wonderful community-owned museums, where Sherm and Bonnie house and display their antique and classic car collection.

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