

## Master Logger Spotlight - Fadden Chipping & Logging

**C**ONWAY, NH - Like many loggers before him, Tom Fadden realized early on that he didn't like working inside. He was in his early 20s with a job in a furniture factory when he decided the woods was where he wanted to be.

"I really wasn't making much money and I always enjoyed working in the woods and I thought I'd go into the firewood business," Tom recalls. "I bought a used skidder, a John Deere 440, I believe it was a 1967 skidder, from Eddie Nash Equipment in Colebrook, and bought a couple chainsaws and started working in the woods, then said the heck with the firewood and started logging and pulping and that's pretty much how I got going."

That was in 1980, the start of Fadden Chipping & Logging, and the business is still going strong in Conway, New Hampshire today.

On a recent winter morning Tom was in a wood lot he first cut back when he started out more than 30 years ago, his son, Tommy, with him preparing to run a feller buncher and other workers for Fadden Chipping & Logging already on the job.

The company has grown a lot since the days when Tom would head into the woods alone. Counting himself and his son, there are about a dozen employees in the woods while his wife, Vicki, runs the office and handles all the book keeping.

Fadden Chipping & Logging operates two TimberPro 735 feller bunchers, three John Deere skidders and one CAT skidder, three excavators, a dump truck, two Peterbilt trucks for roundwood and a Peterbilt and a Western Star for chips, two Hood slashers, and two Morbark chippers. Tom's favorite piece of equipment? "The one that isn't broke down at the moment," he said.

The company works on a range of lots, from small private holdings to large landowners like H.C. Haynes. On some jobs the company works with foresters, at other times Tom and his son do all the planning and communication with the landowners,

but ultimately the decision is up to the landowner to meet their objectives.

Fadden has been harvesting in the same region from the very beginning, these days mostly staying within two hours or less of Conway. The most distant job the company has going right now is in Brentwood, New Hampshire, Tom said.

Tom said there have always been challenges to logging but two of the biggest today are the unstable

chip market and the difficulty finding and keeping enough good workers. New Hampshire's biomass market has been through some well publicized rocky years recently and although he's able to sell chips right now there's no way to know how much longer that will be true. He has good workers that have been with him for many years but there is turnover and anytime a job becomes vacant it is very difficult to find a quality replacement, he said.

Tom and his son, who started working with him in his early teenage years, often build landings and roads on the weekends. During the week Tom runs whatever machine he has to, but he spends the majority of his time in the slasher, putting him in control of the processing of the wood. Fadden Chipping & Logging became Master Logger certified when working for NewPage after the company encouraged them to seek certification.

"We'd been cutting for them for a while and they said they'd like to see us get Master

Logger certified," Tom said. "Once we got certified we just maintained it, and I think it does help on getting some jobs but mostly on maintaining contracts with the paper companies, they always like that if you are Master Logger certified, they all agree they'd like to have it done that way."

At this point, Tom plans on keeping the company at about the same size it is now and continuing to do a quality job as a Master Logger.

"I don't think we do much any different from anybody else," Tom said. "We just try to utilize the wood as best we can and stay within the guidelines."



*(Above) Tom Fadden, at right, with his son, Tommy on a job recently.*

*(Below) Fadden logging operations underway.*

