

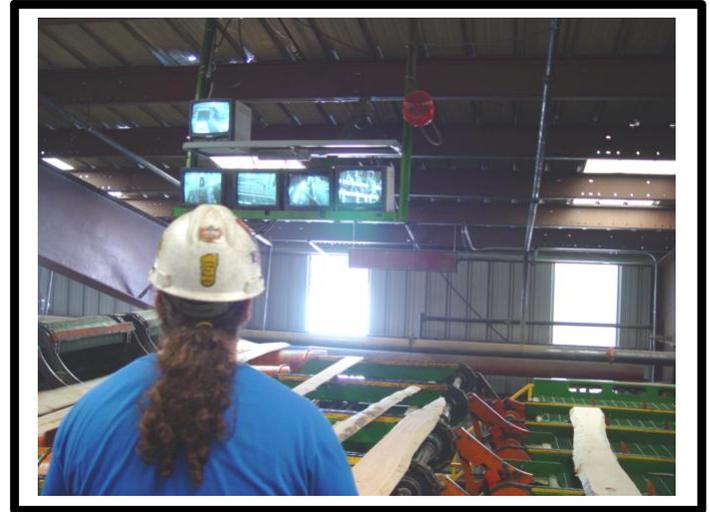
# State & Private Forestry

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Working together for healthy forests and communities

**In Seeley Lake, Montana, family-owned Pyramid Mountain Lumber Co. has been a fixture for 52 years. Thanks in part to the National Fire Plan Economic Action Program, and many other community resources, they might just be around for the next 52 years.**



*Pyramid Mountain Lumber Co. in action*

In November of 2000, after stockholders announced plans to shut Pyramid down, the community came together to find out what could be done.



Pyramid knew what they needed to do: modernize. But they didn't have the resources to do it. With help from Missoula Economic Development Corporation, low-interest government loans, and some generous lenders within the community, Pyramid soon had a refinancing and modernization plan.

They purchased state-of-the-art equipment that uses lasers and robotics technology to get the most out of every log. **"It blew me away – it's extremely powerful,"** said Head Engineer, Ken Pearson. That's no small feat considering Pearson's expertise in mechanical and electrical engineering.

Here's where the National Fire Plan comes in – the employees needed training to make the equipment pay off – training that is only available from the Newnes Company in British Columbia.

**Through the Forest Service's Northern Region, State and Private Forestry Division, and Montana Department of Commerce, Pyramid received an Economic Action grant of \$38,904 to help with training costs.**

***"It's made a huge difference...it's so important I can't tell you how important it is...without the training I couldn't do this,"*** said Pearson.

Pyramid has the numbers to prove it – in one 60-hour shift they are already producing 25% more than they had been producing in an 80-hour shift, according to Comptroller, Loren Rose.



These days, Pyramid Mountain Lumber is setting new production records about twice a month.

***"It's a whole new world,"*** said Quality Control Specialist Mike McGrew, who has been with Pyramid for 17 years. ***"I know lumber inside and out and am no stranger to computers, but at first, these machines were killing us."***

After Pyramid brought a trainer down from British Columbia to spend a week with them, it was a different story.

***"I emerged confident and knowledgeable – now, I can make these machines dance,"*** said McGrew.



*Top left ~ Ken Pearson, Head Engineer*

*Above ~ Newnes optimizer scans logs*