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## ***Written for the National Hardwood Lumber Association, Allied Angle column, by Scott Dane***

The title of this column, “Allied Angle”, is the very essence of this submission. Allied (def) – (adj) joined by or relating to members of an alliance; (v) combine or unite a resource or a commodity with another for mutual benefit; side with or support. Organizations must develop “allies” to effectively represent the membership and all sectors of the industry.

But we don’t. There is an endless list of national alphabet soup organizations (ALC, FRA, AF&PA, NAFO, SAF, NHLA, AWC, SFI, FLA, FFRC), not to mention state organizations, representing every sector of the timber and forest products industry. By that alone, it should be obvious that although there may be loose affiliations, most are still working independently of the others. We are not “allied”, at best we are loosely affiliated.

***“There is power in unity and there is power in numbers.”  
Rev. Martin Luther King***

Within the logging sector, Independence is one of the most admirable characteristics and strengths. It is also the greatest weakness.

But the common opposition to our industry is extremely well organized, funded, focused, collaborative, and structured. While we are fragmented, underfunded, disjointed, and internally competitive.

If we pooled our resources, found common ground, supported one another, had a unified message, and collectively invested in advancing our mutual agenda, then we would be a formidable force equal to, or more influential, than those that oppose what we represent.

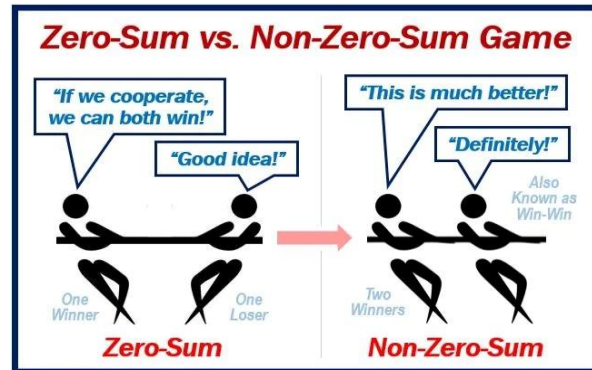


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Why don't we? It is simply a matter of ego, territorialism, and the concept of zero-sum game, meaning that if one organization does well, accomplishes something, gets credit, then another loses in some way. But that is a false narrative.

When one does well, we all benefit.

The opposition loves the infighting between the timber and forest products industry organizations. The lack of cooperation and collaboration ensures little is accomplished, and much is lost.



I can speak to that; I've been a part of it, I am guilty. But the challenges and threats are too severe to allow that to be the model. It has only resulted in failure and a real disservice to the members of the timber and forest products industry organizations, who have invested their lives, money, and time in forest management and forest products.

All timber and forest products industry organizations and associations need to truly become "Allied" and work together if we are going to succeed. It's time to recognize that the enemy is not us, it is not each of us against one another, and instead time to find common ground, pool our resources, coordinate our message, and convey a unified front. Only then will the timber and forest products industry organizations and associations be effective.

Better yet, timber and forest products industries need to partner with other natural resources sectors like farming, recreation, mining, ranching, fishing, etc. and form a Natural Resources Coalition. We all have common interests that are being threatened by common sources. Collectively we will be a formidable presence that will have the resources to influence to make a difference, divided we are failing.