



# THE BLACK HILLS OF SOUTH DAKOTA

## RTA PREPARES FOR ANNUAL FIELD TRIP

Railway Tie Association (RTA) members will visit the Black Hills of South Dakota June 4-6 for a look at past, present and future railroading in the plains states during the association's annual field trip.

"This area is rich in history from General Custer to the gold rush, from ties cut and floated down miles of timber flumes to the deepest coal mines in the world," said RTA Executive Director Jim Gauntt, adding that the railroads long have been a major player in this area. "Our trip will include a visit to a state-of-the-art treating plant, a couple of sawmills producing a variety of products and visits to a coal mine served by Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and BNSF's new yard in Donkey Creek. There is a multitude of things to see and do in the Black Hills, including visits to the badlands on the prairie, Mount Rushmore, the Crazy Horse carving, Homestake Gold Mine, Devils' Tower, the Custer Battlefield, and more."

Organized by Wheeler Lumber Company, the trip will not only focus on tie production but will also allow participants to "look at some of the customers the rail industry serves and learn a little local railroading history," said Jeff Parrett, vice president of Wheeler Lumber Company.

Participants will begin arriving in Rapid City on Saturday, June 3. On Sunday, June 4, participants will be able to enjoy a round of golf or tours of the local area. A reception and presentation by the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad (DM&E), sponsored by Merichem Chemicals & Refinery Services, will precede a bus trip, sponsored by Thompson Industries, to nearby Deadwood for dinner. Following breakfast on Monday, June 5, participants will depart for tours of the GCC Plant, which is served by the DM&E.

Later, the group will visit Wheeler Lumber Co., which, along with producing copper naphthenate-treated wood products, treats and fabricates railroad bridge

materials along with Department of Transportation bridge materials, utility poles, fence posts and miscellaneous treated wood products.

Next, the group will tour Pope & Talbot, a ponderosa pine sawmill that cuts boards and dimension lumber. The mill cuts approximately 500,000 board feet per year and also manufactures wood pellets for use in wood stoves.

Participants will enjoy a dinner at Spearfish Canyon Country Club sponsored by Wheeler Lumber Company before traveling to Gillette for the next day's activities.

On Tuesday, June 6, the group will tour the Black Hills Power plant and coal mines, whose coal mine and coal-fired power plant sits on site, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe's Donkey Creek Yard before enjoying a box lunch on the bus sponsored by Robbins Engineering Inc. Throughout the two main days of the trip, MiTek Industries will provide refreshments on board the bus.

In the afternoon, participants will tour Wyoming Sawmills in Sheridan, which is located at the base of the Big Horn Mountains and is primarily a mill cutting ponderosa pine and lodge pole pine but also is a manufacturer of engineered wood from its by-products. Serviced by the BNSF, the

mill "supplied enormous amounts of crossties, which were hand-hewn and floated out of the mountains on tie flumes," Parrett said.

That evening, KMG-Bernuth Inc. is sponsoring cocktails and dinner at the Wyoming Rib & Chop House that will be accompanied by a special presentation by Pete Hickerson, who served as executive producer of the Wyoming Public Television historical film about the tie hackers of Wyoming Tie and Timber entitled, "The Brotherhood of the Broadax: Wyoming Tie Hacks." The film was broadcast on the network on March 5, thanks in part to RTA financial assistance.

A registration fee of \$75 applies for those wishing to attend and includes on-site bus transportation fees to the various sites to be visited. Each attendee is responsible for making hotel reservations in the RTA room block. On June 3-4, attendees will be housed at the Best Western Ramkota, (605) 343-8550, for a room rate of \$89 per night. On June 5, attendees will be housed at the Hampton Inn in Gillette, (307) 686-2000, for a rate of \$89 per night. On June 6, participants will stay at the Best Western Sheridan Center, (307) 673-1696, for a rate of \$84 per night.

For more information on the field trip, contact Debbie Corallo, RTA administrator, at (770) 460-5553 or dcorallo@rta.org. §

### REGISTER

Yes, I will be attending the **RTA FIELD TRIP** June 4-6, 2006

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

FAX \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

#### PAYMENT TYPE

- CHECK (MAKE PAYABLE TO RAILWAY TIE ASSOCIATION)  
 MONEY ORDER     VISA     MASTER CARD

CARD # \_\_\_\_\_

EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SECURITY CODE \_\_\_\_\_

\*3-digit validation code from back of card

NAME AND BILLING ADDRESS IF USING CREDIT CARD:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Please include \$75 REGISTRATION FEE with this form and mail or fax to RTA, 115 Commerce Dr., Suite C, Fayetteville, GA 30214 • 770.460.5573