

# LOG TRUCKER

VOLUME 43 NUMBER 1

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JANUARY 2016

**J.I. MORGAN INC.**  
**NEW MEADOWS, IDAHO**





# REPORTING IN FROM...

## J.I. MORGAN INCORPORATED

Jl Morgan has been going since 1946. Now owned by Kyle Kerby and Claus “Ole” White Jr - the company has 16 trucks, including two lowboys located in the New Meadows, Idaho area. Jl Morgan primarily does work with Potlach, the Evergreen Forest saw mill and Idaho Forest Group.

Jl Morgan Inc.

## NEW MEADOWS IDAHO

New Meadows is a rural city located in **Adams County, Idaho**. With a population of 496, the city is home to the last surviving **Pacific and Idaho Northern Railroad Depot**. The depot was built in 1910 and the town was formed in 1911. New Meadows is located at the junction of **US-95 and state highway 55**. The railroad was a “farm to market” method of transportation until 1940 and then as a timber railroad. The depot and railroad functioned until 1972. **Meadows Valley School** serves the area and the town also has two ski areas: **Brundage Mountain** and **Little Ski Hill**.

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By Brandon Hansen

When a company has been around for nearly seventy years, employs scores of people in a small rural town and works in the region's forests - it becomes more than just a place of work but rather part of the community.

To say that J.I. Morgan Inc.'s history goes back a long ways would be an understatement. The New Meadows, Idaho logging and trucking company's legacy stretches back to the 1940s and continues to roll on into the second decade of the 2000s.

The town of New Meadows, located in west-central Idaho, got its start because of the Pacific and Idaho Northern Railroad. Now

(Continued on Page 14)  
**See "JI Morgan"**

# HISTORY STILL IN THE MAKING

**GOING STRONG SINCE THE 1940s, JI MORGAN KEEPS ROLLING IN AND OUT OF NEW MEADOWS, IDAHO**



JI Morgan's new Western Star truck has its Peerless trailer unloaded by Dallas Wilmar in a Link-Belt Loader. Driving the truck is John "Smitty" Smith.



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John "Smitty" Smith poses in front of JI Morgan's newest truck - a 2016 Western Star - purchased from Idaho Truck Sales. Smitty is the longest tenured driver at the company and has done a little bit of everything. "If it wasn't for the people we have and the knowledge they have we wouldn't get very far," company boss Kyle Kerby said. "You're only as good as your employees."

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DALLAS WILMAR loads JI Morgan's 2016 Western Star out on the landing. The temperature was five degrees Fahrenheit, but that's just another winter in Idaho for driver John "Smitty" Smith and the JI Morgan company.

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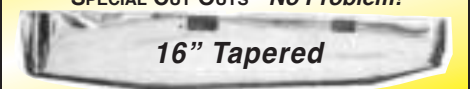


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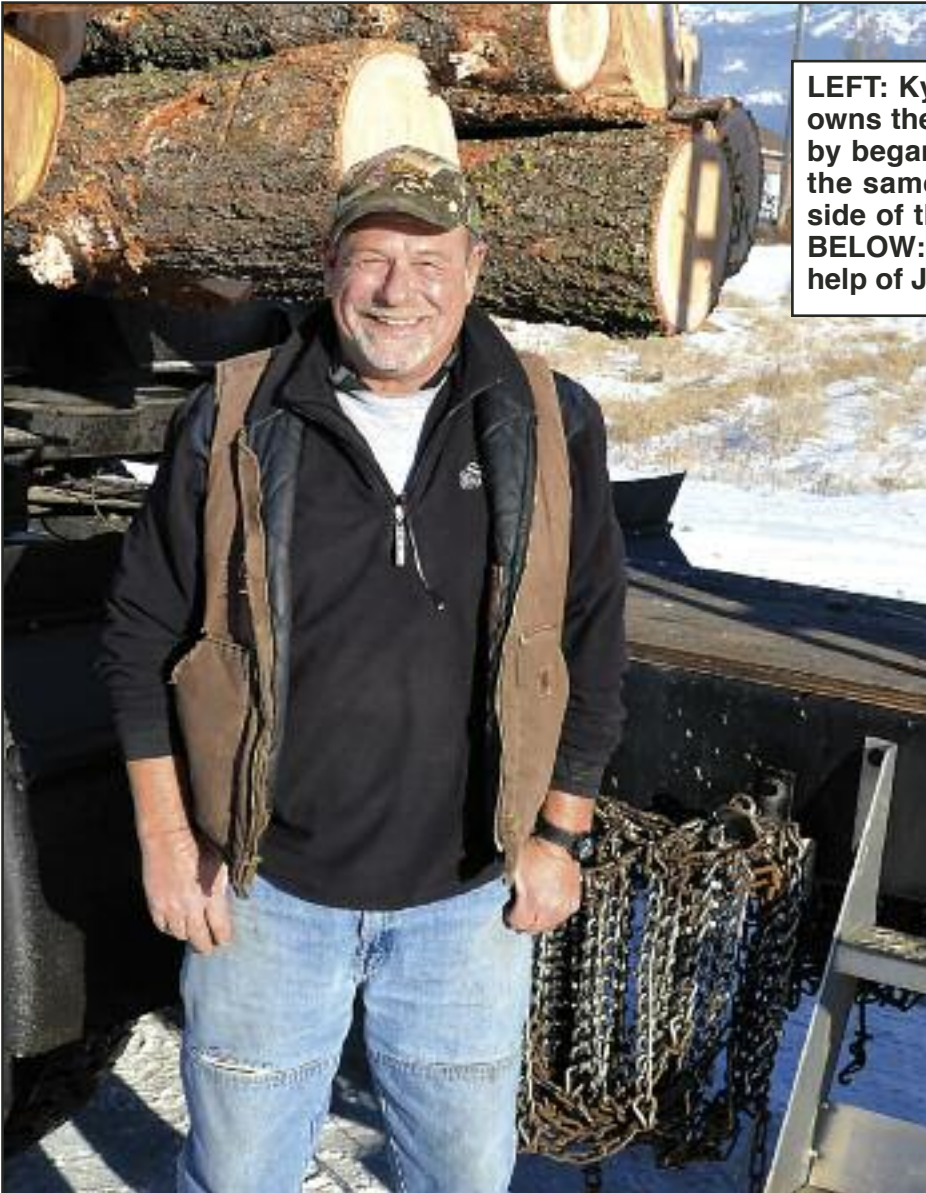







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LEFT: Kyle Kerby is the great nephew of JI Morgan and owns the company along with Claus "Ole" White Jr. Kerby began working for the company in the 1970s around the same time White did. Now Kerby runs the trucking side of things while Ole runs the logging side of things. BELOW: John "Smitty" Smith puts on wrappers with the help of JI Morgan driver Mike Wallace.



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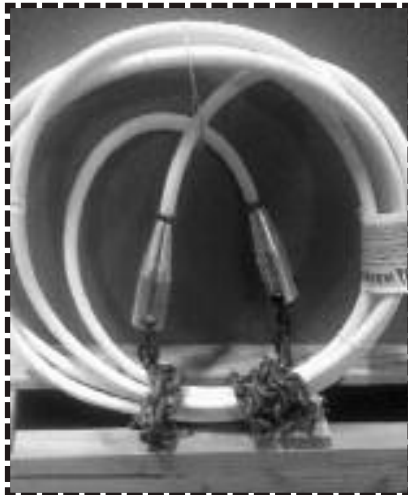
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Galatians 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."





WITH LIGHT AT A PREMIUM, John "Smitty" Smith gets his truck ready to head up to the landing for JI Morgan.

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**Coming Soon New 2016 5700XE DC Western Star 4 axle tractor,** Detroit DD16 560 HP, 14,700# steer axle, Detroit DT 12 12 spd overdrive automated trans., Detroit 40,000# rears with rear locker on 40,000# airliner air ride suspension, 13,200# steerable pusher axle, 244" wheel base, 48" air slide 5th wheel, all alum. wheels on 11R22.5 and 255/70R22.5 tires. NAP...**POR**



pusher, 244" wb, 11R24.5's on alum. wheels on steer and rear drivers, 255/70R22.5's on alum. wheels on pusher, 48" air slide 5th wheel. There will be approximately 390,000 miles when truck comes in. **N.A.P. .... POR**

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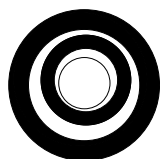
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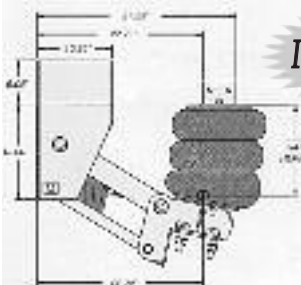
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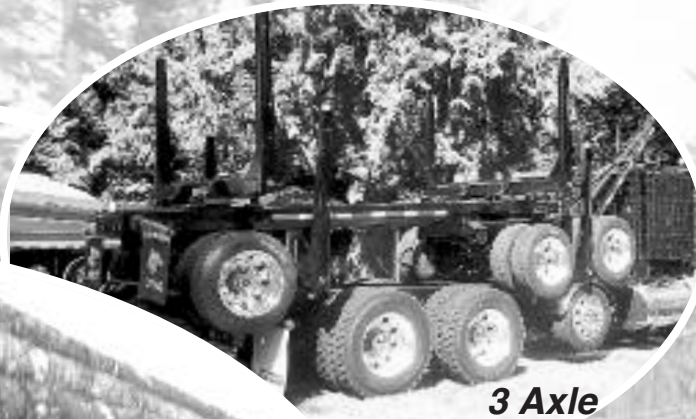
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# 14

## J.I. Morgan

(Continued from Page 4)

home to the only surviving PIN railroad depot, when the building was constructed in 1910, the formation of the town occurred just a year later.

The railroad was built as an early effort to create a north-south railroad for Idaho. While those efforts faded, the PIN Railroad was important in that it served as a "farm-to-market" transportation means until 1940 then as a timber railroad.

Boise-Payette Lumber Company, which would eventually merge with Yakima, Wash.'s Cascade Lumber Company to become Boise-Cascade - was a big player in the region forests before wanting to spin off their operations in the New Meadows region. So in 1946, the sold their operation to J.I. Morgan and the company was born.

As 2016 will be J.I. Morgan's 70th anniversary, it's now run by great nephew Kyle Kerby and Claus "Ole" White Jr.

Kerby operates the trucking side of things while White manages the logging.

The current version of J.I. Morgan has 16 trucks in their log hauling fleet - including two lowboys - and one logging side. They also have a logging road crew. Kerby got his start in the company in high school greasing trucks and fixing flat tires in the mid 1970s.

"I was always on the maintenance side of things," Kerby said.

White started at the company around the same time, and when Kerby's dad retired in the mid 1990s, the two took over the company. Now they primarily do work with the Potlatch Corporation - based out of Spokane, Wash. - the Evergreen Forest saw mill and the Idaho Forest

Group.

Most of the hauls by J.I. Morgan's log trucks make the trip to Grangeville, Id. 80 miles away and sometimes they head over to La Grande, Ore. which is nearly 200 miles away. Kerby said that the company's ability to adapt to marketplace changes has allowed them to stay in business. He points to a time in the 1990s when Boise-Cascade began closing area mills in their sparsely populated area and J.I. Morgan switched to hauling for Potlatch to keep the logs and paychecks rolling.

One of those adaptations has been a recent purchase in trucks. Of J.I. Morgan's 14 trucks, most are Kenworth T800s, because when you work with a certain kind of truck for 70 years it certainly begins to stick a little. The company tries to cycle through trucks every 10 years, and this time up they went with a Western Star from Idaho Truck Sales.

Idaho Truck Sales had a Western Star up at the Inter-mountain Logging Conference and Kerby always had a good relationship with the company ordering parts.

"I felt it was a good truck and I was totally impressed with the Detroit engine," Kerby said.

In April of this year, the company purchased the truck and using an Peerless long logger trailer, they put new Alpine bunk gear on the rig before it was delivered to New Meadows. The truck also has a two-axle pup trailer that can bump the 80,000 gross weight to 106,000 when the roads allow.

Driving the truck is John "Smitty" Smith, who has been with the company the longest. He also served for his country during the Vietnam War.

"He's done everything. He drives lowboy and we used him as a truck boss as well," Kerby

said.

Smitty is experienced as are most of J.I. Morgan's drivers. Many of them have decades of experience.

"If it wasn't for the people we have and the knowledge they have we wouldn't get very far," Kerby said. "You're only as good as your employees."

Their trucks haul logs off their own logging side and are also contracted out to other operations in the area. As always in the world of logging, finding a constant flow of jobs and work is a bit of a trapeze act. J.I. Morgan has stayed busy, and with seven Kenworth dump trucks - drivers can switch over from logs to rock in a hurry. It's nothing new to the company as they've built roads since 1946.

The company has a shop and


office in New Meadows. In the office, Dan Babineu operates the day-to-day business needs, while Barron Loper handles things in the shop. The company has a few field mechanics and a greaser at the shop to keep things running smoothly and handle the workload.

Other log truckers will come to the shop as well for repairs.

"We're like everybody else we just got to do what we have to do to keep everything running out on the roads," Kerby said.

J.I. Morgan works with Boise Kenworth and Idaho Truck Sales out of Lewiston for their trucking needs. Every year they bring each truck into their New

(Continued on Page 18)  
**See "J.I. Morgan"**




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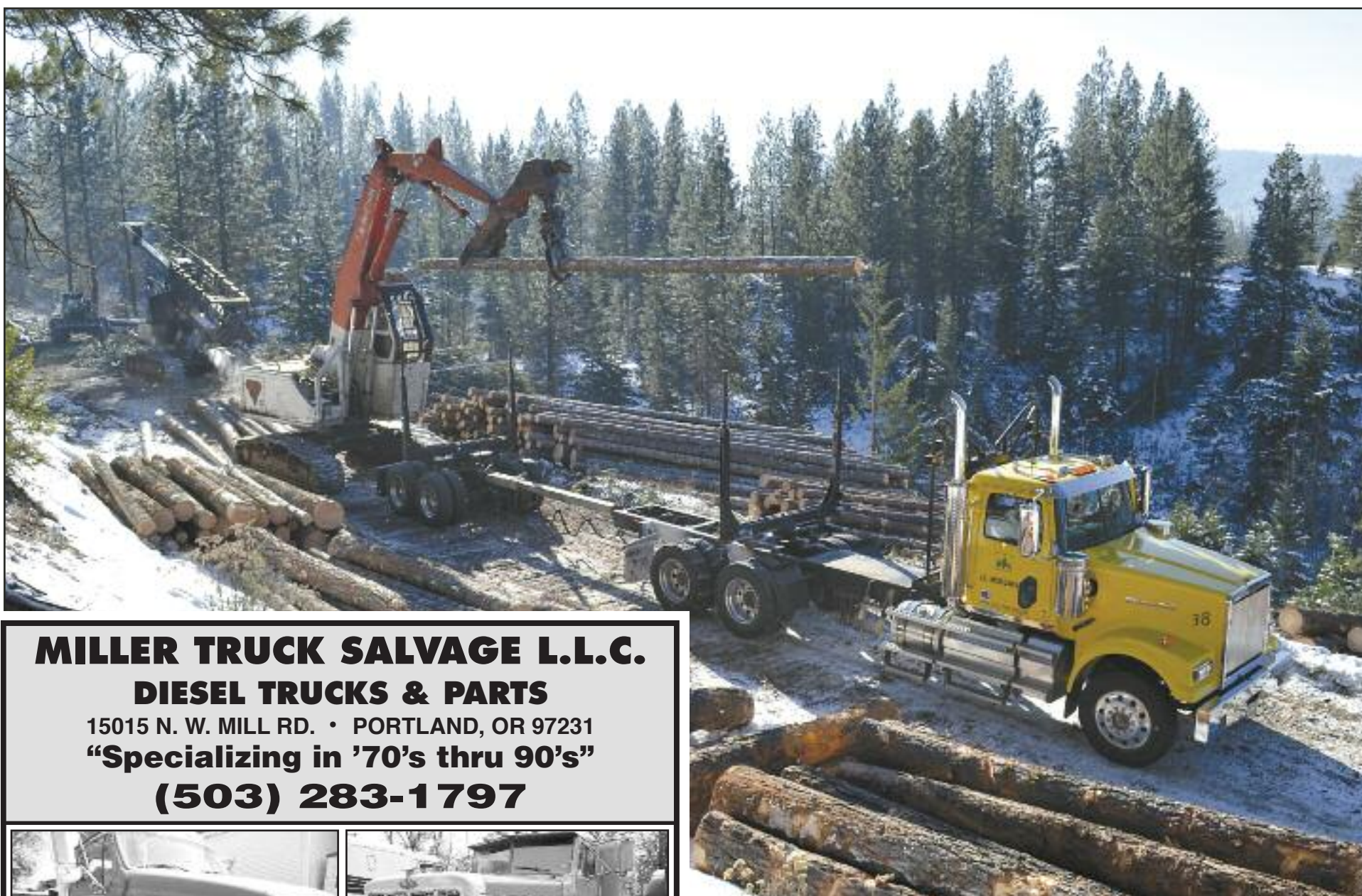
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LINK-BELT LOADER operator and Woods Boss, Bill Borgeson loads up John "Smitty" Smith's new 2016 Western Star 4900 SF. 2016 will be the company's 70th anniversary, after being founded in 1946 when Boise-Payette sold off their operations in the area to JI Morgan. Currently JI Morgan has 16 trucks, including two low-boys, and one lowboys. The company also runs a road crew when needed. They primarily work for the Potlach Corporation, Evergreen Forest saw mill and the Idaho Forest Group.



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WAITING FOR THE SCALES AND UNLOADING at the Idaho Forest Group mill in Grangeville, Idaho is John "Smitty" Smith's 2016 Western Star. JI Morgan mainly goes to Grangeville but can also make the 400-mile round trip to LeGrande, Oregon. The 2016 Western Star 4900 SF can haul 80,000 gross weight and that goes up to 106,000 pounds with a pup trailer.



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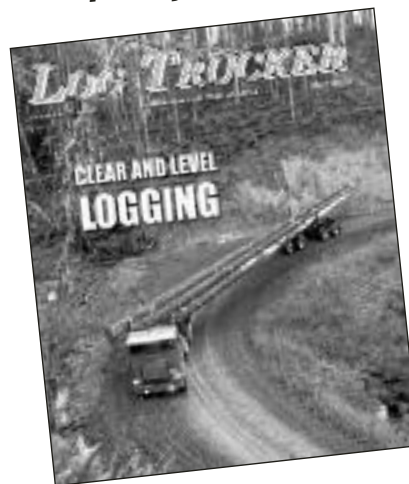
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Smitty meets another JI Morgan log truck heading down the road with a full load during winter in Idaho.



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**18 JI Morgan**

(Continued from Page 14)

Meadows shop for a complete maintenance shakedown.

On the logging side, White handles all the logging and bidding, while logger foreman Bill Borgeson has been with the company for over 40 years. In all, the company employs 45 people in a town of less than 500.

The logging side includes a processor, feller buncher, Cat skidder, along with a tong thrower and jammer.

"Most everybody here has worked for us for nine years and up," Kerby said. "We try to keep everybody furnished with 401ks, insurance and benefits and just stay in business."

J.I. Morgan is a member of the Idaho Associated Logging Contractors, and get their insurance from the Timber Product Manufacturer Association, which Kerby has been a past chairman of. Kerby has also been the president of the Intermountain Logging Conference. White is also serving on the Idaho Pro Logger Program and the Idaho Forest Practice Advisory Committee.

"We have good employees and we're committed to putting out quality logs," Kerby said.

They've done that since 1946, and will continue to do that in central-western Idaho, as they've diversified their operation and can adapt to changing marketplaces. J.I. Morgan has been around for a while and it's easy to see why.



JOHN "SMITTY" SMITH puts on wrappers after getting a load from the JI Morgan landing.

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**ROADING DONKEY:** In this photo, a proud crew stands in front of a well-maintained Washington Iron Works roading donkey. The drums on a roading donkey were always wide and they provided a more uniform pull during the skidding cycle. Yarding donkeys with narrow and deep drums lost power during a pull as the drum filled up with line. A sharp eye will notice the capstan head between the two fellas on the right. This tells me that this was in all probability an early machine before being equipped with hay wire drums as we know of today.

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**LOGGING TO A RIVER BED:** The logs in this old view are being yarded downhill to a gravel bar where they will be driven down stream during a high-water event. This is a swinging operation from another skidding operation out of the picture's view. This is apparent by the use of only one skid road, running up hill. The logs are being dropped off in a pile that will start breaking up in the high water, and will then start flowing down stream in a somewhat controlled manner.

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