

CAMP LIST:
Rib Lake Lumber Company Numbered Logging Camps –
FOLLOWING PURCHASE OF RLLC BY U.S. LEATHER CO. ON 3/23/1906

BY: R.P. Rusch and Michael Weckwerth
 Updated to February 12, 2012

Abbreviations: RLHe = Rib Lake Herald
 RLLC = Rib Lake Lumber Company
 SN = Taylor County Star News

Availability: The most current version of this
 list is at www.riblakehistory.com.

The source of information used in this list is from the *Rib Lake Herald*, unless otherwise indicated; where a date stands alone, eg. 10/10/1937, it refers to the date of publication within the *Rib Lake Herald*.

Camp #	First Date ¹	Last Date	Length of Operation	Foreman	Comments
1	11/2/1906	*	?	11/2/1906 - Tony Klister	Note: Camp 1 was among the first four camps begun in 1906 when the RLLC was purchased by the U.S. Leather Company. It is an unusual camp because it was located far from the Rib Lake mill and not connected to the Rib Lake mill by steam hauler or the RLLC railroad line. Rather, its logs were transported by rail from the camp near Goodrich through Athens, Abbotsford, Medford, and Chelsea to the Rib Lake mill. A Soo Line valuation report, Doc. #12401, reported that by 1915 the railroad tracks serving Camp 1 were in disuse, grown over by grass and "the bridges burnt". Camp 1 had closed prior to 1915 but the exact date is lost. The Rib Lake Herald reported logs being shipped from "Athens" to the Rib Lake mill as late as 12/17/1917. Register land surveyor David E. Tlusty in 2011 located site of former r.o.w. that served camp 1 at the point it crossed what is now sth 64; see -----

¹ Dates of Operation from Newspaper References, unless otherwise noted.

2	11/2/1906	9/5/1919	13	11/2/1906 - Mark O'Maley: #2. 10/4/1907 - John S. Kennedy	See Photograph #10,792, which an unknown prior source labeled "U.S. Leather Co. Camp #2, Township 33 North, Range 2 East, Section 33, Jim Hedrington, foreman"; this may be a photograph of RLLC Camp #2.
3	11/2/1906	1/31/1908**	less than 1	11/2/1906 - Angus McDonald	SPECIAL CAUTIONARY COMMENT: Photo 10,791 is a spectacular photograph of the camp crew standing on top of a camp barn building; this is <u>not</u> a picture of a RLLC camp; the printed text beneath the photograph reads "Osburn Lumber Company's Camp #3. Duncan A. McDonald, foreman, Rib Lake, Wis., February, 1901." While the W.A. Osburn Lumber Company eventually changed its name to RLLC, the photograph predates the name change. More importantly, this list is intended to provide information on the RLLC camps started following the takeover the RLLC by the US Leather Co. on 3/23/1906.
4	11/2/1906	11/14/1913	7	11/2/1906 - John S. Kennedy & James McDonald: #2. 7/21/1911 - Robert Aitken	
5	6/28/1907	11/17/1911	4	8/30/1907 - John Hedrington	
6	7/28/1911	10/4/1914	3	Johann "Otto" Ruesch	10/6/1911 - Walter Wagner as cook. The site of Camp 6 is west of Klostermann Creek in SW NE 12 33 2 E; a remnant of the dirt foundation for a log camp building as well as the root cellar site are clearing visible north of the junction of the Timm's Hill Trail and former Ice Age Trail on the Rusch Preserve—RPR 5/8/2011. As of Dec. 27, 2011, the entire site of Camp 6 is on protected land; Ann and Bob Rusch donated the S ½ NE ¼, Section 13, 33, 2 East, to the Ice Age Alliance, which already owns the portion of the campsite on the parcel within the SE NE, Section 13. The conveyances require that the Ice Age

					National Scenic Trail be built and maintained through the site and that the spectacular old growth hemlock-hardwood forest be perpetually preserved. The entire site is open year round to the public and can be conveniently accessed from CTH C through a parking lot and trail head maintained by the Rib Lake Ski & Snowshoe Club, Inc. A variety of signs at the campsite illustrate and explain the camp history, including the tote road and Camp 9 ice road.
7	9/6/1912	1/30/1914	1.5		
8	10/25/1912	6/19/1914	2		
9	4/25/1913 **	10/28/1921	8	11/29/1918 - Hugh McMillan	RLHe 11/29/1918 reports Dan Pilon as cook.
10	8/29/1913	5/12/1916	3		
11	3/24/1916	3/24/1916	?		
12	12/24/1915	2/25/1916	less than 1		
13	3/24/1916	3/4/1921	5	11/29/1918 - Herman Peterson: George Thums	RLHe 11/29/1918 reports Frank Weiland as cook. RLHe 6/9/1916: "Alphonse Collman cut his arm with an axe when it slipped while peeling bark at Camp 13."
14	5/10/1918	5/28/1924	6	11/29/1918 - John Mitchell	RLHe 11/29/1918 reports Louis Fleming as cook.
15	10/3/1919	10/14/1921	2		
16	9/5/1919	5/20/1921	2		Daniel McCluskey, lifelong area resident, in 2010 reports site of Camp 16 on the west side of Lemke Creek in SW ¼ 12 32 33 Town of Rib Lake—claims there is a clearing at the site. RPR's examination on c. 2010 aerial photo—doc # 14799A—shows clearing on NE NW SW 12 32 3E. RPR concludes on 5/28/2011 that is the possible site of Camp 16 and will try to visit the site with Dan.
17	8/15/1919	1/7/1921	?	8/15/1919 - Charles Burnett; 1/7/1921 George Burnett	Camp 17 went beyond 1921 - number of years is unknown. ¶ RLHe 1/7/1921 reports "the RLLC started another camp to be known as Camp 17. It is located in Township 32, Range 3 East. George Burnett is foreman. About 35 men will be

					employed."
18	6/25/1920	2/12/1925	5	1922 - Jim Peterson	Joseph A. Enders reports that he and Herman A. Rusch worked there one winter (1922) and Jim Peterson was foreman; 130 men worked out of Camp 18.
19	4/26/1923	2/12/1925	2		Source: Weckwerth #11776. ¶ Taylor Co. Star News, 2/12/1925: "Camp 19 - which is located near 28-31-4 - will soon be through and will be moved to 36-32-4 [this should read 36-31-4...RPR]. A spur has been extended to this new location." THE SECOND LOCATION OF CAMP 19 WAS 3 MILES EAST OF THE FIRST.¶ Map 12913 shows railroad and camp location. Registered land surveyor David E. Tlusty in 7/2011 photographed and mapped former railroad r.o.w. serving camp 19 where it crossed present sth 64; see-----.
20	5/7/1925		?	Charles Peterson; cook-Dan Pilon	No mention in annotated chronology. ¶ Taylor Co. Star News, 5/7/1925: "The RLLC is building a new camp, to take as high as 125 men. It will be known as Camp 20 and will be located about 15 miles southeast of Rib Lake. It is expected that the camp will be used about 4 years, logging a section a year from same. Charles Peterson is foreman and Dan Pilon is cook at the camp." ¶ Mike Weckwerth reports the camp location is NE 1/4 - NE 1/4, Section 26, T32N R4E, Town of Corning; "in middle of 40 owned in 2008 by John Kudick".
21	2/19/1921		?		Source: Weckwerth #11776 c. 2000 Mike Weckwerth comments: "The Rib Lake Lumber Co. Camp #21, operated pretty much the same years 1926-1934, but again this camp was closed 1932-1933. Bill (Natzke) said that there were about 60-80 men working and

					staying at Camp 21 most of the time.
22	May 1934	1935	unknown	Foreman unknown - <u>Star News</u> , 5/10/1934: "The woods operations will be in charge of Jim Peterson, veteran logger, who will make his headquarters at Camp 22."	<p>As of 5/12/2009, there is no mention of Camp 22 in the annotated chronology of the Rib Lake Herald. ¶ The Star News, dated 5/10/1934 reported that the sawmill of the RLLC would resume cutting after being shut down from April of 1932. The Star News further reported: "The RLLC of Delaware plans to open two logging camps about the middle of this month, and has made contracts with 6 jobbers to log hemlock and hardwood for the company, according to F.W. Warrington, General Manager of the company. ¶ The camps to be started up are #22 and #23....Camp 22 will log the north 1/2, Section 16 [Town 32 North, Range 4 West], and Camp 23 the south 1/2 of Section 3, Town 32 North, Range 4 East, in Lincoln County. The camps will put in about 5 million feet apiece. The woods operations will be in charge of Jim Peterson, veteran logger, who will make his headquarters at Camp 22." ¶ THE 5/10/1934 ARTICLE IDENTIFIED JOBBING CONTRACTS GOING TO MORGAN PETERSON, LAMBERT LAMBERTY, WILLIAM NATZKE, HERMAN KLEINSCHMIDT, CARL KRUEGER AND G.W. LUEDTKE, WITH LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS OF THE JOBBER CAMPS.</p> <p>The Rib Lake Herald 5/4/1934 reported: "The company will operate 2 camps, 22 and 23, on Section 16 [Town 32 N Range 4 East]. Operations of these camps will start from the 10th to 15th of May [1934], same as that of the jobbers. Camp 22 will log on the N ½ of Section 16, and Camp 23 on the S ½ of Section 3, Town 32 North, Range 4 E, Lincoln County. Camp 22 will put in about 5 million feet, and Camp 23 and equal amount." [Note by RPR: Despite this quote, it appears that only Camp 22 operated in Section 16.]</p>

					<p>The article dated 5/4/1934, is Doc. 13876. The same article listed by name the 6 jobbers working for the RLLC in 1934 and the legal descriptions of the land to be cut by the jobbers. A color-coded map showing these lands is Doc. #13876B.</p> <p>The 5/4/1934 article went on: “Hemlock will be logged now and must be out by Nov. 15. Then loggers will start on hardwood around Dec. 1 and these operations should be wound up around Apr. 1, 1935.”</p> <p>“Hemlock bark will be peeled on all operations and it is proposed to peel from 5,000-7,500 cords. Men will be given opportunity to peel bark on contract if they prefer to peel that way.</p> <p>“The woods operations are in charge of Mr. Jim Peterson, woods superintendent, and he makes his headquarters at Camp 22, and has a telephone there. He hires men on company operations.</p> <p>“WHEN WE LOOK BACK OVER THE PAST 3 YEARS, DURING WHICH OPERATIONS WERE AT A LOW EBB, AND YOU MIGHT SAY AT A STANDSTILL, THIS SCALE OF RESUMPTION OF OPERATIONS BY THE COMPANY IS ALMOST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE. IT WILL BRING BACK PROSPERITY LIKE NOTHING ELSE AND THIS SECTION HAS A LOT TO BE THANKFUL FOR. MEN WHO HAVE BEEN GLAD TO FIND WORK THE PAST 3 YEARS FOR MERE EXISTENCE WILL ONCE MORE CARRY A FULL DINNER PAIL AND EARN REAL MONEY.”</p> <p>Rib Lake Herald ____, 1934: “F.W. Warrington, General Manager of the RLLC, informed The Herald last Monday that the company has 2 camps started, #22 and 23, and at that time</p>
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				<p>there were about 60 men in each camp and probably there will be more men put on as the work opens up. “The jobbers are getting their camps ready and hiring men as they need them, and by the first of June, woods operations ought to be in full swing. “Chris Brandt is foreman in Camp 22 and his cook is Chris Winkle [sic].”</p> <p>The foregoing was part of the Anna May Kennedy scrapbook of clippings, Doc. 13433-101, - 082 and -142; the first source also reported the following: “WILL BUY 3 TRACTORS-F.W. Warrington, General Manager of the RLLC, informed us Wednesday that the demonstration of what a tractor can do in woods operations was so satisfactory that the company has decided to place an order for three tractors at once. The machines are rated at 24 horse power.” [RLHe 6/6/1934]</p> <p>“FIRST TRAINLOAD OF LOGS BROUGHT IN WEDNESDAY-The first trainload of logs was brought in from the woods Wednesday and consisted of 14 cars of logs to be sawed into timbers for use in the mill plant.” [RLHe 6/6/1934]</p>
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23	May 1934	11/7/1935	3		<p>The Star News, dated 5/10/1934 reported that the sawmill of the RLLC would resume cutting after being shut down from April of 1932. The Star News further reported: "The RLLC of Delaware plans to open two logging camps about the middle of this month, and has made contracts with 6 jobbers to log hemlock and hardwood for the company, according to F.W. Warrington, General Manager of the company. ¶ The camps to be started up are #22 and #23....Camp 22 will log the north 1/2, Section 16 [Town 32 North, Range 4 West], and Camp 23 the south 1/2 of Section 3, Town 32 North, Range 4 East, in Lincoln County. The camps will put in about 5 million feet apiece. The woods operations will be in charge of Jim Peterson, veteran logger, who will make his headquarters at Camp 22." ¶ THE 5/10/1934 ARTICLE IDENTIFIED JOBBING CONTRACTS GOING TO MORGAN PETERSON, LAMBERT LAMBERTY, WILLIAM NATZKE, HERMAN KLEINSCHMIDT, CARL KRUEGER AND G.W. LUEDTKE, WITH LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS OF THE JOBBER CAMPS.</p> <p>Lengthy Rib Lake Herald article dated 5/4/1934 on Camp 23 and 22 is printed in comments for Camp 22 above; see, also, Doc. 13876 and map, 13876A and B.</p> <p>Extensive information on the 1934 operations of Camp 22 and 23 are set forth in the comments section of Camp 22 above. Doc. 13433-101 reported "Robert Aitken is foreman in Camp 23, and his cook is George Kollman, who used to be in business in Rib Lake." This data referred to 1934.</p>
24	11/22/1935	8/16/1940	5		<p>9/10/1937; 4/7/1939; 7/14/1939; 8/18/1939; 11/13/1939; 11/17/1939; 1/12/1940; 8/2/1940 and 8/16/1940 from annotated chronology</p>

					11/22/1935 “Ben Larsen, John Pearson and Joe Jacek, have been in from Camp 24, on and off, the past two weeks;” to read the entire Rib Lake Herald from which this quote has been taken, see image #15779.
25	5/7/1937	8/16/1940	3	Matt Whiting	9/10/1937; 4/7/1939; 5/12/1939; 12/1/1939; 6/27/1940; 8/2/1940 and 8/16/1940 from annotated chronology.
26	4/7/1939	5/24/1946	7	Charles Kannenberg	4/7/1939; 5/12/1939; 6/2/1939; 6/4/1939; 11/17/1939; 3/8/1940; 6/28/1940; 7/19/1940; 2/14/1941; 7/11/1941; 12/5/1941; 6/14/1942; 2/26/1943; 1/14/1944; 9/21/1945; 5/24/1946 from annotated chronology. Site inspected, mapped (#15013), photographed and items collected(#15012) on 7/10/2011 by RPRusch and Daniel Mathias: a private road runs on former railroad north of camp buildings all of which are gone but for cement floor of former camp office—just south of which a hand pump still stands and functions. Site is NW SW NW20 33 4E , Town of Corning, Lincoln Co., Wi. THE BIGGEST SURPRIZE WAS A LITERAL PISS HOLE ABOUT 18 INCHES DEEP SURROUNDED BY BARE EARTH ABOUT 4 BY 20 FEET. Men in winter stepped just outside the bunk house and urinated rather than walking further to the outhouses. The salts from the urine has prevented vegetation to grow for 75 years---1944 when the camp closed to present—7/10/11. RP Rusch This site is included in the digital photos taken by RPR. Colored movie, “Time & Timber” made of Camp 26 in 1936; movie can be viewed at www.riblakehistory.com .
27	5/23/1941	1947	6	Christ Brandt, foreman Louis Flemming - cook	1/11/1941; 5/23/1941; 6/19/1942; 9/4/1942; 6/23/1944; 5/24/1946 "Gas cars collide"; 10/11/1946 3/14/1947 "Ralph Boyk killed"; from annotated chronology.

28	5/24/1946	1948 (Camp 28 probably in operation prior to 1946)	2		5/24/1946 "Gas cars collide"; 10/11/1946 1/24/1947; 2/20/1948; (2/25/1948 <u>Last Log Ceremony</u> - see Camp 28 #11190A, 10335, 12309 and 12310 [photo]); 3/5/1948 5/23/1948 "Last train of logs arrives at Rib Lake"; from annotated chronology

** Note: The actual dates of operation of the camps were beyond the dates shown in this list. Under some editors, the *Rib Lake Herald* regularly carried news from the camps; under other editors, there was little or no news of the camps. The *Rib Lake Herald*s published between January 1, 1922 and January 1, 1939, are largely missing; a variety of Rib Lake Lumber Company Camps operated during this timeframe. Information regarding those camps was lost with the destruction of these editions.

Numbered documents shown here may be viewed on the CDs entitled *Rib Lake History, Documents & Photos*; a copy of the CDs is available at the Rib Lake Public Library. As of July 31, 2008, an effort is underway to put the collection online.

References to the annotated chronology are to the *Annotated Chronology of the Rib Lake Herald*. It is available online at www.riblakehistory.com.

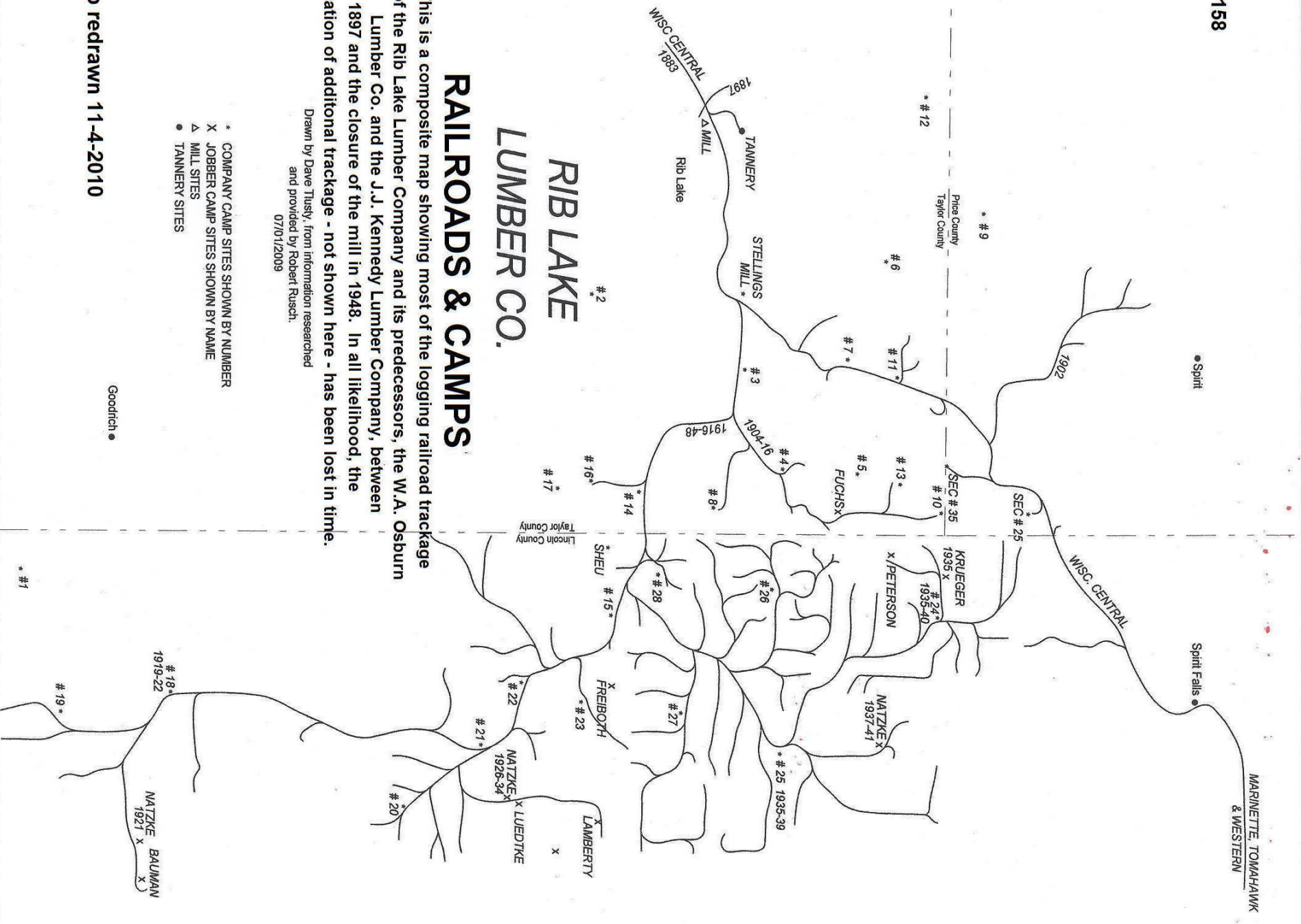
Special note regarding the numbering of camps shown here. This chart covers only the 28 numbered camps operated by the RLLC following the purchase of its stock by the United States Leather Company/Central Leather Company on 3/23/1906, and running to the liquidation of the RLLC in 1948. The prior owners of the RLLC and its predecessors used many of the same numbers to identify its camps. In addition, the Rib Lake based tannery numbered its camps. Finally, even some of the bigger jobbers numbered their camps; for example, William H. "Bill" Natzke operated his own jobber camps 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 between 1923 and 1941, producing logs for the RLLC.

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● Spirit

● Spirit Falls



RIB LAKE LUMBER CO.

RAILROADS & CAMPS

This is a composite map showing most of the logging railroad trackage of the Rib Lake Lumber Company and its predecessors, the W.A. Osburn Lumber Co. and the J.J. Kennedy Lumber Company, between 1897 and the closure of the mill in 1948. In all likelihood, the location of additional trackage - not shown here - has been lost in time.

Drawn by Dave Tusty, from information researched and provided by Robert Rusch. 07/01/2009

- * COMPANY CAMP SITES SHOWN BY NUMBER
- X JOBBER CAMP SITES SHOWN BY NAME
- △ MILL SITES
- TANNERY SITES

Map redrawn 11-4-2010

● Goodrich

* #1

19 *

18 *
1919-22

NATZKE BAUMANN
1921 X

20

NATZKE X LUEDTKE
1926-34

LAMBERTY X

X FREIBOTH # 23

27

* # 28

* # 25 1935-39

NATZKE X
1937-41

X/PETERSON

KRUEGER
1935 X # 24*
1935-40

10 *

13 *

5 *

FUCHSX

7 *

11 *

6 *

* # 9

* # 12

2

RIB LAKE

STELLINGS MILL *

TANNERY

Rip Lake

WISC. CENTRAL
1883

1902

WISC. CENTRAL

Pine County
Taylor County

Lincoln County
Taylor County

Marathon County

The Rib Lake Lumber Co. was formally created on May 6, 1902. On that date, the W.A. Osburn Lumber Co. - which had bought out the J.J. Kennedy Lumber Co. - changed its name to the Rib Lake Lumber Co.