



October 1, 2022

Hardwood Federation Industry Tidbits

by Dana Lee Cole, Executive Director, Hardwood Federation

USTR Extends China Tariffs Pending More Review

On September 2, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) announced that Section 301 tariffs on China would continue, pending further review of the trade sanctions, which cover various types of flooring, plywood, and mouldings. In May 2022, USTR kicked off the statutory four-year process to review China tariffs by notifying industry reps of the possible termination of the tariffs and opportunity for industry to request continuation. Because USTR received more than 400 requests for continuation, the tariff actions have not terminated. USTR will provide details on the next steps in the four-year review process in subsequent notices.

Fish/Wildlife Service Moves on Tri-Colored Bat Regulation

On September 13, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) proposed to list the tricolored bat as endangered under the Endangered Species Act, as a result of major population decreases caused by white-nose syndrome. The proposal could lead to new rules expanding buffer zones within the bat's habitat and seasonal restrictions on forest management practices. USFWS will accept comments on the proposal through November 14, 2022, and the Hardwood Federation will offer comments similar to those submitted regarding action on the northern long-eared bat. Comments can be made here.

Federation Partners with Farm Bill Allies

To leverage our top ag priorities, the Hardwood Federation (HF) team is preparing for the next Farm Bill by joining forces with the "Forests in the Farm Bill" (FIFB) Coalition and the Forest Climate Working Group (FCWG).

- **FIFB** convenes every five years to help shape forestry, biomass energy, and forest products policy as part of the larger Farm Bill package. This year, HF is serving on a FIFB subgroup to explore programs within the Farm Bill to increase demand for forest products.
- **FCWG** represents a diverse group of participants focused on forests and forest products as a solution to climate challenges, and HF is participating in

the FCWG's efforts to identify common forest related priorities for inclusion in the Farm Bill.

Additionally, we are working with colleague organizations that rely on and support the Market Access and Foreign Market Development programs.

Bipartisan Senate Posse Pushes Ag Exports

And on September 23, Senators Angus King (I-ME), Joni Ernst (R-IA), Tina Smith (D-MN), and Chuck Grassley (R-IA) introduced the Cultivating Revitalization by Expanding American Agricultural Trade and Exports (CREAATE) Act of 2022, which would double funding for USDA's Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) Program. These two programs are critical to expanding global market access for U.S. produced agricultural exports, including hardwood products.

There is limited time on the current Congressional calendar to move the bill forward before year end, but our industry remains optimistic that because a bipartisan group of senators are in agreement on the need to increase support for international agricultural market development, this bill will be reintroduced when a new Congress convenes in January.